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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FORCE MIX: THE BIG QUESTION FOR THE LATE 1990s

The proper mix of forces between the active services and the Guard and Reserve remains one of the big question marks for the future. We at the NGAUS are not in the force structure business, so we won't be telling readers in this column how many Army Guard divisions or Air Guard wings there should be in 1995, or where they should be. This essay will be more general in nature and more political.

We published an interesting short article in this regard in this issue, "The Reserve Component Role in Future Force Structure," by COL Ralph E. Kahlan, the National Guard advisor to the commandant of the US Army War College.

Among other things, Kahlan makes the very valid point that if there is to be a 20-division Total Army, and two contingency corps in the active Army, there simply won't be enough active duty spaces funded to fill this force structure.

Without reciting from his article, speaking from the Capitol Hill perspective, we would surmise that many force structure decisions will be driven more by the resources available than either the new "threat," whatever that turns out to be, or the national strategy and President George Bush's New World Order. From a surprising source, confirmation of this conclusion comes from Admiral David Jeremiah, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

What about the threat of the future? Given the condition of the Soviet Union, the European threat obviously is vastly changed. The notion of the Red Army attacking through the Fulda Gap into the north plain of Germany, studied for generations at command and general staff colleges, is the threat of the past. Or at least, it is a threat that today carries with it a much greater warning time.

The political facts are that Con-

gress will decide how large the active Army and active Air Force will be upon the completion of the Iraqi operation. The concept of the New World Order will have something to do with that. Whatever comes of Crisis Response and Reconstitution will have something to do with it. But, when the bottom line is computed, it will have more to do with what the ruling members of Congress conclude is the real requirement than anything else.

For those of us at the NGAUS, this is more or less where the argument begins, not where it ends. Several assumptions and presuppositions seem obvious. First, the active services will not be as large as their uniformed leaders want or advocate. Some missions traditionally reposed in those services will have to shift to the Guard and Reserve.

With a much lesser threat in Europe than before the end of the Cold War, the requirement for fighter units will decrease. As Gen Merrill A. McPeak, chief of staff of the Air Force noted, the Persian Gulf War was fought with only 35 percent of the Total Air Force.

The Army's force structure in the Persian Gulf War was basically two corps and seven divisions. There are, today, 28 divisions in the Total Army: 18 in the active Army and 10 in the Guard—not including roundout.

Given the six months of logistics time required to put the two corps and seven divisions in place, even our critics would concede that—had it been necessary—the DoD had time to mobilize, postmob train and deploy Army Guard combat units. If airlift and sealift continue to be the factors constraining deployment, not combat readiness levels, then there is little valid argument for maintaining two contingency corps in the active Army or dozens of fighter wings in the active Air Force. Our two F-16 units mobilized, deployed and fought during the war, which proved that our Air Guard units are able to accomplish

their mission when called. Dozens of others could have done the same they had been called.

We in the Guard can continue to make the valid argument that since Guard units range from 25 percent to 50 percent of the cost of an active duty unit, that Congress should look to the Guard and Reserve for the combat and support force structure needed for nearly any national emergency. The nondeployment of the roundout brigades has nothing to do with this; indeed, the delays in calling them to active duty and the additional training to which they were subjected were an arbitrary decision the DoD could afford because it had other forces it could deploy.

The fact that these three brigades or several of the Army Guard's heavy divisions could have been called, deployed and fought in combat has nothing to do with hindsight. Recall two statements by active Army generals. LTG Calvin Waller, GEN H. Norman Schwarzkopf's deputy, declared last fall that the Army was months from being combat ready. He meant those units already deployed needed more training. That was said about our roundout brigades.

As late as February, the commander of the 3d Armored Division said his unit still needed more maneuver training. That's what was said about our roundout brigades.

When Guard members talk with members of Congress about the future of the Army and Air Guard force structure, they should point this out. Except where there is prepositioned equipment, there is no need for active duty forces that maintain a level of C-1 readiness. The time it takes to deploy equipment is long enough for any Guard unit to conduct postmobilization training and fly to the theater.

That means the cost savings associated with putting missions in the Guard and Reserve should always be a first option, not a last resort.

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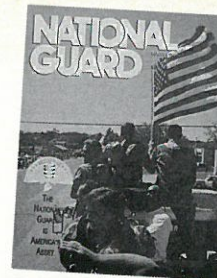
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NATIONAL GUARD Magazine's managing editor, CPT Pamela Lane, reflects on her mobilization and service in the Persian Gulf War as the S-4 (logistics) for the 372d Military Police Battalion, 1st Air Cavalry Division, 1st Air Cavalry Division, 1st Air Cavalry Division, 1st Air Cavalry Division.

Missouri MPs Are Called . . . Again

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In less than a year, members of the 1138th Military Police Company, Missouri Army National Guard, found themselves serving in two different wars: first for Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama and later in Saudi Arabia for the Gulf War.

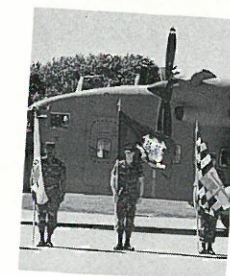


COVER:

War heroes again, the 1138th Military Police Company, Missouri Army National Guard, is greeted by hundreds of ecstatic Missourians upon their return from the Gulf War, only a year after serving in Panama's JUST CAUSE. Photo, Jerry Bratten. Design, Johnson Design Group.

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