



Major General Edward R. Fry, President, NGAUS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

IS A NEW STRATEGY FOR U.S. SECURITY IN THE CARDS?

It was illuminating indeed to hear the following words from General Frederick C. Kroesen, the United States Army Europe/Seventh Army commander who was in the U.S. for a conference sponsored by one of our sister organizations, the Association of the United States Army (AUSA). "We can initiate the defense of Western Europe," General Kroesen told the somber-faced audience, "but to maintain that defense we need outside assistance and reinforcement."

By "outside" it must be assumed that General Kroesen refers to assistance that would originate outside of the theater in which his forces are contained. This is of substantial interest to the National Guard community since we constitute a substantial portion of the CONUS-based reinforcement which would be provided to the U.S. commander in Europe to support the battle plan in NATO.

This assumption is more than substantiated by the commander of United States Army Forces Command, General Robert Shoemaker. He notes that his area of responsibility takes in the deployment of 10 active Army divisions, eight Army Guard divisions and 4,000 Guard and Reserve units ranging in size from small detachments to combat brigades.

The words of Generals Kroesen and Shoemaker tend to sustain the paramount importance of having U.S. forces ready and able to mobilize and move out to defend U.S. primary interests in Europe. "How fast can you get to Europe to fight?" has been, for several years now, the criterion upon which a unit's usefulness is measured.

But in still another major presentation to the AUSA audience, General Edward C. (Shy) Meyer referred to the urgent need to build, equip, sustain and be prepared to deploy what he termed "the other Army". The "other Army",

one speculates, is the share of the force structure which we have rather casually consigned in recent years, to the "fractional piece" of the 1½ war strategy. Since the origins of this strategy are discussed in some detail in the 1981 NGAUS Position Statement, which appears elsewhere in this issue, we won't elaborate. What General Shy Meyer's AUSA talk suggests is that the tasks which might confront that "other Army", the Army for contingencies other than Europe, could be of such a magnitude, that to kiss it off as a "half war" could be the understatement—and the miscalculation—of a lifetime.

A "half war" in the Middle East-Persian Gulf-Southwest Asia region could—with relatively scant stretch of the imagination—soon take on many of the characteristics of a major war scenario. Such a turn of events would be serious enough in the isolation of the region. It would be incalculably more serious if this expanded and, perhaps, protracted "half war" were to occur simultaneously with a need to initiate the defense of Western Europe against a determined attack by Warsaw Pact forces. It is not necessary to be a great military genius to recognize that this possible two-theater scenario—no longer a far-fetched witches' brew—urgently requires extraordinary readiness on the part of active, Guard and Reserve forces. It requires modern equipment to be on hand, rather than on a drawing board. It requires the logistical capability to provide the factor of sustainability.

The most disappointing aspect of the situation is the fact that Pentagon planners do, we believe, have a good grasp of what is needed to insure that U.S. forces will have the wherewithal to give a good account of themselves and to win. But just with respect to resources needed to prepare the sus-

tained defense of Western Europe, over a period of 15 years, defense requirements for necessary modernization have consistently lost to the budget analysts in the intense competition for defense dollars.

Throughout this issue of NATIONAL GUARD, which is devoted to coverage of the 102d General Conference, there is a thread of continuity which is hung on the issues of manning, modernization and readiness for mobilization—the three M's. Of these issues, modernization is clearly the most vexing. There are no magic wands to be waved, no genie to be summoned, no three wishes to be granted. This is a tough, pragmatic situation.

It is especially frustrating for the Guard, and for the Reserve as well. We can accept the thesis that the research and development of the 1970's is on the verge of paying dividends. But we fail to see, in constrained defense budgets, that production orders are being placed which will allow any pipelining of significant new items of equipment into the troop units of the Guard.

It is our judgment, hopefully the result of mature consideration, that the dimensions of military responsibility which start to emerge from a reading of this enhanced 1½ war strategy, strongly suggest that we cannot afford a "third Army" in addition to the two previously mentioned: an Army of mobilized Guard and Reserve units equipped with hand-me downs and vestiges of the "come as you are war" pipe dream.

In war-fighting reality—just as in philosophical aspects—we can afford only one Army, one Air Force, one total force. Whether Guard and Reserve forces are to be part of the Europe-oriented Army, or "the other Army", it is essential that when the moment comes to move, shoot and communicate—they can do it in concert with the rest of the deployed force.

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1980

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DECEMBER 1980

NATIONAL GUARD

Official publication of the National Guard Association of the United States

December 1980 Volume XXXIV, Number 11



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COVER: The many faces of the NGAUS 102d General Conference are seen through the cameras of the members of the 106 Public Affairs Detachment of the Nevada Army National Guard. Cover design by Tom Powers of Bill Duffy Associates.

NATIONAL GUARD, December 1980. 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. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices, Copyright 1980 by the National Guard Association of the U.S. All rights reserved. All members of the NGAUS receive NATIONAL GUARD. Nonmember subscriptions: \$4 per year domestic; \$5 per year foreign. Bulk rate for 100 or more copies to the same address: 25¢ each. Single copies 50¢. The Editor welcomes original articles bearing on national defense, with emphasis on application to or implications for the National Guard. Manuscripts and artwork must be accompanied by return postage; no responsibility is assumed for safe handling. Opinions expressed by authors do not necessarily represent official NGAUS positions or policy. Likewise, publication of advertising cannot be deemed an endorsement thereof by this Association or its members.