



MG Robert F. Ensslin Jr., President, NGAUS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A RESPONSE TO "TIME" MAGAZINE

It is nearly unbelievable that a major national news magazine, after the most successful mobilization and combat record of the Guard and Reserve since World War II, would publish an article that degrades the National Guard. If American readers believe what they read in *Time* magazine, which we hope they won't, they might think that the Army National Guard is the most rag-tag outfit in the Total Force. We want the National Guard community across the nation to know that the NGAUS leadership was just as offended by the article published June 10 as you were.

The article contained several factual errors that will be discussed below. It also contained a number of extrapolations to erroneous conclusions from situations over which the Guard community has no control. For example, lack of readiness is implied for a unit that receives insufficient TOW ammunition. We all know that such ammunition is in notoriously short supply for training because of its cost.

Moreover, a major thrust of this article is the allegation that the Army Guard harbors large numbers of "ghosts," personnel who are carried on our rolls and paid but who rarely or never drill or go to annual training. Commanders know this is false and a libel against the Guard.

This writer was interviewed for the article by one of its reporters, Kristina Rebelo. Although the article doesn't say so specifically, she said at the time that she had about 100 such reports of "ghosts." We could only observe that the Guard is composed of 575,000 men and women. Even if there were 100 such individuals, this would represent .0017 percent of the total National Guard. The Guard goes to drill and annual training 7.3 million times a year. Perhaps this lends some perspective to this "problem."

Time says: "... Some Guard officers fear that a determined drive to raise attendance and training stand-

ards could lead to massive disgruntlement in the ranks and a wave of resignations." All of us who know Guard commanders across the nation appreciate that they work hard to eliminate nonperformers from their units. AWOL Guard members are routinely discharged for less-than-honorable reasons or court-martialed if feasible. This is the real National Guard. Further, most commanders emphasize field and tactical training because that is what soldiers want; it is why they enlisted.

As a chief of staff of the 40th Infantry Division (Mech) in California once noted, "If they wanted to go to the beach, they'd be in Santa Monica, not here with us at Camp Roberts and Fort Irwin."

Depending on how one counts, there are 14 major points in the *Time* article that deserve refuting.

• **No-shows and poor training kept some units out of the war.** **Fact:** Out of 75,000 mobilized, there were two no-shows. Postmobilization training always has been assumed for virtually all Army Guard units. Indeed, the units mobilized underwent such training with great success.

• **Several thousand had not attended basic training.** **Fact:** The active Army controls basic training quotas and its schedule.

• **Some soldiers had dental problems.** **Fact:** Members of the Guard and Reserve are not eligible for military medical care in peacetime. In any event, dental problems were quickly fixed by dentists during post-mobilization training.

• **Roundout brigades that had been rated C-2 before the mobilization were declared not ready by regular officers after mobilization.** **Fact:** This is exactly what happened. What it left out, however, is the fact that these C-2 ratings were signed by the roundout brigades' parent division commanders, regular Army major generals. What also is apparent is that the combat readiness rules were changed for our

infantry and armor units after mobilization. They were not changed for the active Army units that were deployed to the Persian Gulf no matter what their readiness condition. Active Army units were deployed that were far less combat ready than our roundout brigades.

• **Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney is quoted as saying he didn't want to deploy units "before they were ready."** **Fact:** But the Army did deploy active Army units before they were ready. Active Army general officers testified to this on more than one occasion.

• **Units were not ready because of lack of chemical equipment.** **Fact:** Equipment is issued by the active Army.

• **Some members of the Guard enlisted solely for the pay and benefits, not to go to war.** **Fact:** True enough, and so did many members of the active Army, many of whom complained to reporters in the desert that they had enlisted to qualify for the Montgomery GI Bill, not to go to war. Life is tough all over.

• **In order to be appointed, adjutants general must be masters of politics.** **Fact:** Most adjutants general are appointed by their governors. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the chiefs of staff of the Army and Air Force are appointed by the president.

• **On the average, it costs one-fourth as much to train a Guard soldier as an active duty soldier.** **Fact:** Even when *Time* is trying to do us a fiscal favor, they get it wrong. It costs exactly the same to train a Guard soldier as an active duty soldier. What costs one-fourth as much as the active Army is the sustainment training of units. We in the Guard can produce a combat ready battalion, brigade or division for one-fourth the cost as the active Army.

• **"... It makes little sense to retrain units that cannot be readied."** (Continued on page 14)

National Guard

NATIONAL GUARD

JULY 1991

Volume XLV, Number 7

FEATURES

Battlefield Communications Take Wing 18

Pigeons were used, even as recently as the Korean War, to carry military communications when modern methods were incapacitated during battles. In World War I, countless lives were saved and battles won because of messages carried by racing homers. During World War II, the Army Signal Corps created the 280th Signal Company (Pigeon) for this very purpose.

Flight Surgeons on the Cutting Edge 24

Flight Surgeons now have the opportunity to experience the stresses facing pilots in high-technology fighters thanks to a new course, Top Knife. The two-week course, the first of its kind, is taught by the 114th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, Kingsley Field, Oregon.

Keeping Communications On Line 28

Knowing who is responsible for keeping your communications up and going can save a commander critical downtime and maximize his tactical effectiveness. Use of the backpack radio, radio remote and telephone are common soldier skills and should not require the support of signal personnel.

East Meets West, United States That Is 32

The 1st Battalion, 49th Field Artillery (FA), Wyoming Army National Guard, and the 3d Battalion, 197th FA, New Hampshire Army Guard, decided on a change of scenery recently. They spent their annual training switching equipment and exchanging training sites.

AGAUS Conducts Spring Meeting 36

The Adjutants General Association of the United States met in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for its spring meeting. Force structure was the most discussed issue during the meeting. Operation DESERT STORM took a close second as a panel discussed experiences and lessons learned.

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COVER:

Lt Col Gregory G. Bombinski (left), 114th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron (TFTS) pilot instructor, explains aircraft procedures to Dr. (Col) Ravindra R. Shah, clinic commander, 174th TAC Clinic, New York Air National Guard. Photo by Capt Sandra A. Kaufman, 114th TFTS. Design, Johnson Design Group.

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NATIONAL GUARD, July 1991. 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 1991 by the National Guard Association of the U.S. All rights reserved. All members of the NGAUS receive NATIONAL GUARD; \$7 of membership dues are allocated to a magazine subscription. Nonmember subscriptions: \$10 per year. 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.

