



MG Robert F. Ensslin Jr., President, NGAUS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WHY ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBERS CANNOT BE ASSIGNED TO REPLACE AGRS

Unfortunately, one issue the NGAUS opposed in 1990 survived in a somewhat bobtailed version in the FY91 Defense Authorization Act. That was the proposal to assign regular Army officers and NCOs directly into Army National Guard units to replace 30 percent of our active Guard/Reserve (AGR) personnel. It not only is a bad idea, but if directly assigned may be unconstitutional.

That idea originated at least a year ago, if not earlier, in the pre-DESERT SHIELD era, and it seems likely to reappear once the Middle East crisis is settled. The idea comes naturally to those who viscerally believe that regulars are automatically better soldiers than Guard or Reserve members. And the threat of reductions in force (RIFs) is very much on the minds of congressional leaders.

It was said that the Defense drawdown of the 1990s would be the first one in American history in an all-volunteer, no-draft environment. Many of us remember the RIFs that followed the end of the Vietnam War. They were not pleasant for the junior officers and middle-rank NCOs who suddenly found themselves out of the service.

Many of those officers and NCOs genuinely wanted to remain on active duty. Many of them were high-quality soldiers and airmen who deserved a better chance at their choice of career. Some of those people joined the National Guard in that era.

However, it is well to remember that many of the personnel RIFed between 1972 and 1975 came from either draft-motivated junior enlisted men or junior officers who never intended to remain on active duty more than two or three years.

Today, with everyone in the military having volunteered in the beginning, and with many senior NCOs and most midlevel officers regarding military service as their career, at least for the first half of their adult lives, reductions in force are more painful and more of

a breach of contract between DoD and the individual. On the other hand, those of us who have come into the Guard from civilian occupations also know that when times change, the situation often changes.

This is just one reason why we in the Guard should feel no obligation to become the safety net for active duty personnel who face a RIF. Further, if we know anything, we know it will not be the Army and Air Force's best officers and NCOs who are about to be forced out. It would be only natural for the active services to keep their best personnel.

We should not let our active duty colleagues assume that their less desirable officers and NCOs are somehow better than our best. Nor should we permit them to argue that the Guard and Reserve can somehow improve its personnel manning by accepting RIFed active duty personnel.

Two courses of action suggest themselves in this situation, short of actually assigning regular officers to our units. First, many senior Guard leaders have regretted the drawdown in active Army and Air Force advisers in our units in recent years. Many of these officers and senior NCOs provided excellent support, advice and assistance to local commanders. Not too many years ago, in the Army Guard, we had at least one field grade officer per battalion and one senior NCO per company. Now, about the only active Army advisers we have remaining are those at state headquarters.

Of course, a second option would be to increase the resourcing of our active Guard/Reserve (AGR) program to full strength from approximately 70 percent today. Then, we could permit prior service officers and NCOs to compete for these new positions; some would undoubtedly be selected for such jobs.

What we oppose is the proposal to reduce our AGR funding by 30 percent and assign regular officers and

NCOs to these slots.

If the Army is required by Congress to implement this program, it probably will be forced into some circuitous methodology for such assignments because of the spirit, at least, of the Constitution. There seems little doubt that an adjutant general can refuse to have an active Army officer assigned to his units based on Article II, Paragraph 16 of the US Constitution, which states, "... reserving to the states respectively, the appointing of the officers. . . ." Many legal scholars extend this simple language to enlisted personnel.

The suggested solution to this problem is to "detail" active Army personnel to units. The resources to pay the AGR Guard member would be withheld; the active duty person would be offered in lieu of the Guard position. The adjutant general would have the choice of accepting the detailed member or leaving the full-time position vacant, although given this choice, not many would turn down the help.

However, we would conclude that even detailing active duty personnel to the Guard's full-time positions violates the spirit of the Constitution.

While it is true we could use additional full-time manning in the Guard in order to achieve even higher levels of readiness than we now enjoy, inserting active component personnel into our system is not the answer. We should be smart enough to welcome many of them if they leave active duty and apply to join our ranks. But acceptance should be our decision, based on proven performance by them. That will provide the best solution not only to enhanced readiness of the National Guard, but also retaining the best soldiers and airmen in the whole military system.

National Guard

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The media's negativism toward the military during the Vietnam War is having an impact on how it is being allowed to cover the Persian Gulf War. Military leaders remember how the bad press affected esprit de corps, patriotism, loyalty and core values.

Sandbagged in Washington 22

When a storm system dumped nine inches of rain on Puget Sound, Washington, in less than 24 hours, the National Guard came to the rescue, literally. A force of 345 Washington National Guard members took part in more than 300 missions, including search and rescue; victim evacuation; supply delivery; and sandbagging.

Planning for the 113th NGAUS Conference 26

Hawaii is the site for the 113th NGAUS General Conference, September 4-6. This promises to be one of the most exciting Conferences ever, in light of world events and their impact on the National Guard. The Hawaii National Guard Association and Brig Gen Edward V. Richardson, adjutant general of Hawaii, are planning an exciting agenda.

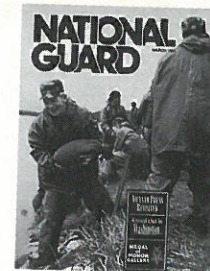
Medal of Honor Gallery Designed 30

MG Robert F. Ensslin Jr., NGAUS president, announced the acceptance of the final plan for the National Guard Medal of Honor Gallery to be built in the new National Guard Memorial. This gallery will pay tribute to Medal of Honor recipients in the National Guard who were mobilized.

NGAUS Position Statement Lists Priorities 34

The NGAUS Position Statement is published each year as part of the Legislative Action Plan. This year, the tremendous changes going on in the world leads the National Guard to another turning point in its service to this nation. The Total Force Policy appears destined for revision.

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COVER:

Washington National Guard members stack sandbags on a Fir Island dike, trying to keep raging flood waters at bay. Approximately 345 Guard members volunteered to help during the floods. Photo by SPC William Gregersen-Morash, 122d PAD, Washington National Guard. Design, Johnson Design Group.

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PUBLICATION STAFF

MG Bruce Jacobs (ret.) <i>Publisher</i>
LTC Reid K. Beveridge <i>Editor</i>
CPT Pamela A. Kane <i>Managing Editor (Deployed)</i>
Maj Jean Marie Beall <i>Assistant Editor/Features</i>
Belinda Reilly <i>Assistant Editor/Production</i>
COL W.D. McGlasson (ret.) <i>Interim Assistant Editor</i>
COL John C. Philbrick (ret.) <i>Advertising Sales</i>
Col David A. McLaughlin (ret.) <i>Controller</i>
Don DesJardins <i>Circulation Manager</i>

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NGAUS Position Statement
Statement of Position, Vision and Commitment in a Changing World