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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

PRESIDENT BUSH: AFFIRMATION OF THE TOTAL FORCE POLICY

The Total Force Policy as we know it originally was articulated by former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird in August 1970. Nearly 20 years later, its implementation mostly has been on the up-curve, particularly in the last decade as the services adjusted themselves to the idea that the Guard and Reserve were an integral part of the Defense establishment, fully capable of fulfilling their obligations in the defense of the United States.

From time to time, we have suggested that a formal restatement of the Total Force Policy, as enunciated as a "concept" by Secretary Laird in 1970 and formalized into a policy three years later by then Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, would be in order. We were heartened to find this restatement in President George Bush's White House national defense guidance.

The guidance stated: "The United States has never maintained active forces in peacetime adequate for all the possible contingencies we could face in war. We have instead relied on reserve forces and on a pool of manpower and industrial strength that we could mobilize to deal with emergencies beyond the capabilities of our active units.

"For almost two decades, our Total Force Policy has placed a significant portion of our total military power in a well-equipped, well-trained and early-mobilizing reserve component. Various elements of that policy—the balance between active and reserve forces; the mix of units in the two components; and the nature of missions given reserve forces—are likely to be adjusted as we respond to changes in the security environment. Reserve forces are generally less expensive to maintain than their active counterparts so, as we adjust force structures, retaining reserve units is one alternative for reducing costs while still hedging against uncertain-

ties. It is an alternative we must thoroughly explore, especially as we better understand the amount of warning time we can expect for a major conflict."

The president's statement is doubly welcome because it suggests the very sort of approach to Defense spending the NGAUS has been advocating for several years. When the issue surfaced as an Air Force initiative, we had some success in suggesting to Congress that in a time when active Air Force capabilities and numbers of aircraft might be headed down, that was not the time to be cutting the Air Guard. On the contrary, that was the time to be increasing the strength, expanding the missions and enhancing the readiness of the Air Guard.

With congressional support, the Air Force leadership agreed that when budgetary or strategic events dictate reductions in Defense spending, a bargain can be had without significant losses in combat readiness or capability by shifting missions from the active Air Force to the Air Guard.

This year, the challenge has been in the Total Army with the imperative to reduce its force structure not only because of pressures to reduce Defense spending, but also because of the declining perceived threat from the Warsaw Pact. This effort has been dubbed "Quicksilver."

In its first version, Quicksilver suggested drawing down the size of the active Army, the Army Guard and the Army Reserve about equally. This was reminiscent of the Air Force's first proposal to eliminate one fighter wing on active duty and one wing equivalent in the Guard and Reserve by reducing the primary aircraft authorized in our fighter squadrons from 24 to 18 aircraft. Thus, in the Army, this would have reduced active combat divisions from 18 to 15 and Guard divisions from 10 to eight.

As we successfully argued in the Force cases in 1988 and 1989, however, this is exactly upside down. The proper equation is this: When the active forces are to be significantly reduced, the size of the Guard and Reserve should go down either in percentage terms or even actual terms. In most instances, this would occur because part or all of the Guard and Reserve had been mobilized for actual wartime requirements or in response to a deterrence need for a military buildup such as occurred in the Berlin Crisis of 1961.

However, when the threat is diminishing, such as when a war has been concluded (the Vietnam War, the Cold War), the size and force structure of the active components can draw down. However, this is the very time when the residual missions formerly required to be fulfilled by forward-deployed, active Army or Air Force units can be shifted properly to Guard and Reserve units. Such units can respond to such contingencies given adequate resources, good training and the prospect of sufficient airlift and sealift to reach important theaters in time to make a difference.

President Bush and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft are on the right track with their restatement not only of the Total Force policy, but also for their recognition of the validity of relying on the Guard and Reserve in a time of deescalation of Cold War tensions. The Soviet threat has not gone away, and it will not. The Russian army was the largest in Europe even under the czars. The Soviet Union will continue to have vast military capabilities no matter how benign its rhetoric or desperate its domestic problems.

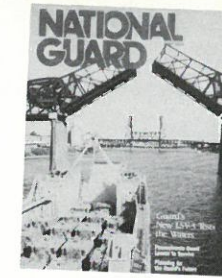
However, if the Red Army returns to Russian barracks, we can look forward to a new kind of Total Force Policy that relies even more heavily on the National Guard—as President Bush is suggesting.

National Guard

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COVER:

The *Somervell*, a new Washington Army National Guard asset, negotiates the Columbia River's various locks. As one of the largest vessels to go through the locks, it was often a tight fit. Photo, SFC Joe Zambone. Design, Johnson Design Group.

FEATURES

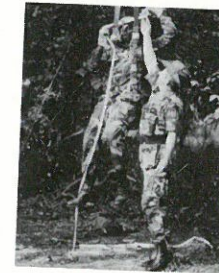
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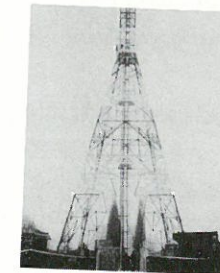
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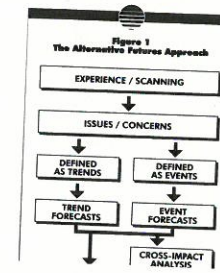
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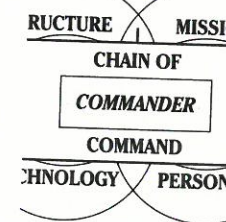
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With the ever-changing variables that affect the National Guard, Army Guard officers are taking a hard look at the way we plan for the future. The authors look at the methods involved in strategic planning.



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Making changes doesn't always have the intended effect, according to author LTC Darryl D. Eggleston, an organizational effectiveness expert. Commanders must use caution in making changes, he warns.



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