



Maj Gen John L. Matthews, President, NGAUS

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## A SCENARIO FOR A LARGER NATIONAL GUARD

What sized force is appropriate for the National Guard? DoD proposes that we ought to be smaller, in fact, the smallest we have been since before 1916. The U.S. population in 1916 was about 98 million.

But a retired four-star Army general thinks we ought to be larger. The root of a new way of thinking about military force structure in the post-Cold War era comes from GEN Maxwell R. Thurman (ret.). He was commander-in-chief of U.S. Southern Command at the time of the U.S. intervention in Panama. Earlier, he was vice chief of staff of the Army and commander of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. A friend of the Guard, to be sure, but hardly an enemy of the active Army, in which he spent his entire adult career, from ROTC to medical retirement in 1990. Further, he is respected in the Total Army as a visionary thinker; as a relentless questioner of assumptions and conclusions; and as a man with a very rigorous intellectual process.

General Thurman was the luncheon speaker at the NGAUS Executive Council meeting last August. To say that he made a very challenging presentation is to put it mildly. Several Guard leaders had heard his basic thesis in a couple of other forums before. He has generously given the NGAUS permission to quote him directly, although our lunch speakers are permitted to speak completely off the record if they wish.

The Thurman proposal has several major parts. The first and probably most important is that too many Defense and U.S. national-security planners have not succeeded in throwing off the Cold War paradigm for Defense planning. The Cold Warrior mentality pervades the thinking of all too many senior officers who have spent their adult lifetimes confronting the Soviet Union.

A second part of General Thurman's presentation is the suggestion

that the National Guard, as the Militia of the Constitution, should be structured as a percentage of U.S. population rather than based on the external "threat." While the Guard would continue to have combat-arms units, how many and what kind would be dependent on the threat for the war-fighting portion of the force and the state mission for the domestic tranquility portion. As America continues to be the world's only superpower, what it will need in combat-ready units will change from time to time.

General Thurman then goes on to suggest that the Guard should be either .25 percent or .30 percent of the population, just as it has tended to be historically. The statistics suggest that the Guard's force structure has ranged from .19 percent to .24 percent over most of those years. End-strengths varied. Lt Gen John B. Conaway, chief of the National Guard Bureau, often points out, for example, that the Army Guard's force structure has been at least 420,000 since 1916. DoD proposes to reduce it to 338,000 by 1995.

Finally, General Thurman would separate the two major functions the National Guard performs, at least for the purpose of structuring, equipping and training units in peacetime. He would create a war-fighting element composed of active Army and Army Guard units. An appropriate mix of combat arms, combat support and combat service support units would be established. He accepts the JCS assumption that 18 to 20 divisions are required between 1995 and 2015.

We don't agree with the next point, but he also suggests that none of the 18-20 divisions would be commanded by Guard officers, but, rather all the Guard units would be roundout. The fact we don't agree with him or the Army's leadership about the qualifications of Guard generals doesn't make the rest of his thesis bad, however.

The second part of the peacetime

Guard would be the "domestic tranquility" force. It would be composed of light infantry, military police, engineers, medical units, communications and transportation: The type of units that were needed for the Los Angeles riots and Hurricane Andrew. All this structure, organized under "division" headquarters for peacetime training, command and control, would be in the Army Guard because it would be required to be available to the governors. General Thurman makes quite a point of supporting the state-federal connection and the constitutional precept that the National Guard remains under state control in peacetime. The domestic tranquility function is, by definition, a state issue unless there is a declaration of national emergency.

General Thurman's plan would keep the Guard's structure and end-strength at a constant level no matter what the world situation or the level of external threat. If the threat grew serious, to a level of that during the height of the Cold War, for example, the war-fighting portion of the National Guard would go up and the domestic tranquility portion would shrink. This would not affect the state mission because the war-fighting units would be available for state duty unless they happened to be deployed overseas by the president.

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The personnel numbers associated with the Thurman proposal are mildly startling. At .30 percent, the Army Guard would be 780,000 in 1995, not the 338,000 the DoD is suggesting. Even at .25 percent, we would field a force of 650,000. And at the mean for the 1903-1985 period, what would the Army Guard's strength be? Answer: 494,000, nearly 1½ times the DoD proposal and more than 60,000 more than today's end-strength.

Is this either wise or possible? General Thurman clearly says "yes."

National Guard

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## FEATURES

### Manassas Maneuvers of 1904

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When then secretary of War Elihu Root set in motion the creation of a system for military field training, Major General Henry C. Corbin was determined to have an impact on this phenomenon. So in 1904, in Manassas, Virginia, he conducted the largest and most costly, to date, joint field training exercise for National Guardsmen and regular Army soldiers. It proved to be too much too soon.

### Remembering a Classic Citizen-Soldier

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When LTC Alfred Mendendorp, a Michigan National Guardsman, died in an artillery bombardment on Kinmen Island, Taiwan, during the Korean War, his family thought they were the only ones who felt his death was important. But recently, they learned otherwise when National Guard and Taiwanese officials joined them in the dedication of a monument built in Mendendorp's honor on the site where he gave his life for liberty.

### Kansas Army Guard Keeps Trucks Rolling

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For four weeks last summer, Kansas Army National Guard members from the 714th Maintenance Company and Nickell Barracks Training Center participated in GOLDEN CARGO '92. This exercise being touted as the largest peacetime movement of ammunition since World War II. This exercise was just part of a larger operation called ROVING WHEELS '92.

### Latvia Faces Old Struggles

28

A former National Guardsman went to the new republic of Latvia as a Fulbright scholar. While there, he watched as this new republic struggled to establish a new military defense force. It faces the problems of training and housing the soldiers, plus the interference of the thousands of former Soviet soldiers still in the country.

### Old Arsenal Is Home for the Florida Guard

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It was founded by the Spanish in 1565 as a military outpost to discourage French and British encroachment. In 1577, it was turned over as the site for a colony of Franciscan monks. Today, it is the home for the Florida National Guard headquarters elements. In the intervening 400 years, it has had a rich and varied



## COVER:

Relatives of LTC Alfred Mendendorp; Taiwanese officials; and MG Robert F. Ensslin (ret.), then NGAUS president; and MG Bruce Jacobs (ret.), HSMNG executive director, gathered on Kinmen Island to pay tribute to a classic citizen-soldier. Photo, CPT Pamela A. Kane, managing editor. Design, Johnson Design Group.

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