

# The National GUARDSMAN

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Exhausted, out of ammunition, surrounded by Government troops, this "Woman of the Viet Cong" surrendered to Government troops in the Cholon area of Saigon.

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IN a report which he was to deliver to the National Governors' Conference in July, Governor Tim Babcock of Montana emphasized a two-point theme with which the National Guard must be in full accord:

*That the National Guard has been compelled by the times to make commitments of greater scope and complexity, in both State and Federal mission areas, than history ever before has required of it;*

*That the concept of a military force with dual responsibilities and dual capabilities once again has proved to be sound and workable, as demonstrated by the Guard's "ready availability, professional competence, moral strength, devotion to American ideals" and, of course, its noteworthy performance.*

Governor Babcock recently was named Chairman of the Governors' Committee on the National Guard, Civil Defense and Natural Disasters. His words of commendation should hearten and encourage Guardsmen in every State, more especially since they were endorsed unanimously by the six other Governors who make up the Committee.

To buttress his case for the Guard, Governor Babcock recited some of the accomplishments on which his praise was based: notable improvement in the Guard's ability to cope with civil disorders, as illustrated by its restoration of order in more than 100 American communities in April; an efficient and highly successful mobilization of nearly 25,000 Army and Air National Guardsmen earlier this year to augment the Active Services; attainment of an unprecedented combat-readiness level by more than 200,000 Guardsmen in SRF-I, SRF-II and the "Combat Beef" force; completion of some 1,648 airlift flights to Southeast Asia alone by 1 May, to haul 27,189 tons of cargo and 53,121 military personnel for U.S. forces in combat.

The Committee concluded its report with five recommendations which burrow right to the core of the more serious problems with which the Guard has been beset in recent years. It recommended that:

(1) The Department of Defense provide modern equipment for the Guard in sufficient quantities and of proper types to assure maximum efficiency in the performance of both Federal and State missions, to include "sophisticated and effective equipment for the humane suppression and control of civil disorders;"

(2) The Department of Defense project, over a period of years, greater structural stability for both the Army and Air National Guard;

(3) The Department of Defense authorize the organization of new units to replace those ordered into active Federal service, in States where a maximum capability for the maintenance of law and order is necessary;

(4) Additional training assemblies be authorized to permit better training of National Guard units for duty in the suppression and control of massive violence;

(5) The Department of Defense be urged to program the retention of all Air National Guard units in order to keep trained and experienced personnel available, even though strategic assumptions may require changes in types of organizations.

We would not attempt to arrange the five recommendations in an order of relative importance, but it would be difficult to place any but the second—stability—at the top of any list of priorities. Relative stability more than any other single factor has been one of the Guard's major strengths as compared with those of other reserve programs, yet even the Guard has not escaped the destructive consequences of repeated reorganizations and structural upheaval—without end.

All of the recommendations deserve thoughtful and detailed consideration in the upper levels of the Defense hierarchy. ♦



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 From the  
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