



JAMES F. CANTWELL  
President  
National Guard Association  
of the United States

## Blood for Defense

**D**URING the weeks just ahead, Army and Air National Guardsmen will be given an opportunity to offer a priceless gift to their comrades-in-uniform who are fighting in Southeast Asia. The gift is good health—even life itself for some—and its bestowal will come in the simple act of donating a pint of blood.

This gesture of support, made by a minimum of 250,000 National Guardsmen, will benefit thousands of U.S. fighting men.

The blood which is collected during the National Guard "Blood for Defense" program, as it has been labeled, all will be earmarked for defense use. It will be processed to obtain several vital blood components, or derivatives, which are being used by our forces in South Viet Nam. Chief among these is gamma globulin, which is given to Servicemen on duty in Viet Nam to protect them from the debilitating, often permanent, damage of infectious hepatitis. Equally important is serum albumin, highly effective in the prevention of shock. Far easier to ship, store and administer than whole blood, these derivatives are being used in ever-increasing quantities as the size of our Southeast Asian force expands.

Spokesmen for the Department of Defense say there has been no shortage of these critically important blood derivatives, but point out that U.S. stockpiles have been dwindling under the pressure of larger forces and a greater combat involvement.

When the problem was made known to the National Guard Association of the United States, it agreed to sponsor the "Blood for Defense" program, in cooperation with the American Red Cross. Through the program, we want to give every National Guard unit in the Nation, and every Guardsman, an opportunity to make this small, additional contribution to the success of our military operations in Southeast Asia and to the well-being of our fellow fighting men.

To reach our objective of at least 250,000 pints, donations from Guardsmen—and where possible, from members of their families—will have to average a pint a minute for the next six months. Actual collections will be spread across the entire Summer and Fall months, to permit orderly assimilation of the vast quantities of blood which will be produced.

When the collections are completed, we will be able to say that we have donated the largest supply of blood ever given by a single organization in the 30-year history of Red Cross blood-giving.

More importantly, we will have demonstrated once again that Guardsmen need only to be shown a job that must be done, and will move beyond the normal requirements of their mission, willingly and voluntarily, to get it done.

Even more important, we will have given thousands of U.S. Servicemen a better chance to live, and to escape a permanent impairment of health, as a result of their dangerous, arduous service in Southeast Asia.

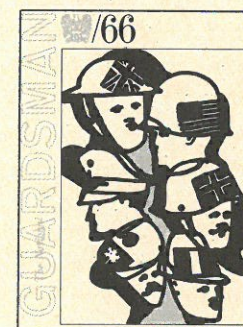
That's why "Blood for Defense" is *really* important, and that's why the wholehearted cooperation of every member of the National Guard is being sought. ♦

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The National

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Official publication of the National Guard Association of the United States. Publication office: Telegraph Press Building, Harrisburg, Penna. Second class postage paid at Harrisburg, Penna. All correspondence should be addressed to 1 Massachusetts Ave. N. W., Washington, D. C. 20001. THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN welcomes original articles bearing on National Defense, with emphasis on the Army and Air National Guard. Manuscripts must be accompanied by return postage, and no responsibility is assumed for their safe handling. Domestic subscriptions for home delivery: \$2 per year. A year's subscription is included within NGAUS members' annual dues. Subscriptions to foreign addresses, \$2.50 per year. Single copies, 25¢. Copyright, 1966, National Guard Assn. of the U. S. All rights reserved.

MAY, 1966

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