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National Guard Association
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The Guard Needs Incentives Now

THE National Guard Bureau estimates that during Fiscal Year 1972 the enlistments of 89,000 Army National Guard members and 14,000 Air National Guard members will expire. Some of these we can expect will extend their enlistments almost automatically. By far the greater proportion of the total are not likely to re-enlist unless they are offered certain incentives to do so.

The Adjutants General and Commanders of Army and Air National Guard units all the way down the line will be faced with a challenge of convincing enough men on-board to extend, or enlisting sufficient prior- and non-prior service men to maintain authorized strengths.

In a period in which it is anticipated that Draft calls will be falling, Active Forces strengths being further reduced and Volunteer Force goals vigorously pursued, the task will not be easy. If we are to maintain authorized strengths in a near-zero or zero-Draft environment, it will be necessary that the States conduct vigorous retention and recruiting campaigns to achieve authorized strength levels. Certain incentives, now available or about to be made available for the Active Services, should be authorized for the National Guard and other Reserve Forces. Assistant Secretary of Defense (M&RA) Roger T. Kelley, testifying before both the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, stated that the Department of Defense has under consideration such retention and recruiting incentives as enlistment/re-enlistment bonus, survivor benefits, early reserve retirement, broadened medical/dental and death benefits and other items. However, there are strong indications that the emphasis through Fiscal Year 1972 will be on support for the Active Forces, and it is not planned that these incentives shall become available for the National Guard and Reserves at this time.

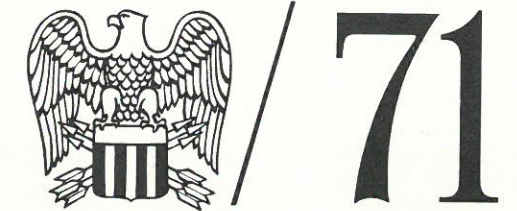
The NGAUS has urged Secretary Kelley to transmit at least what we expect would be the most effective of these incentives—re-enlistment bonus—to the Congress as a legislative proposal.

It has been pointed out to Secretary Kelley that if no incentives were to become available for the National Guard and Reserves at the start of Fiscal Year 1972, we stand to lose the far greater portion of those whose enlistments will expire. Thus, we would be compelled to recruit substantial numbers of new members, most of whom would require active duty basic and advanced individual training.

The loss of trained manpower reduces mobilization readiness. The cost of active duty basic and advanced individual training would exceed the cost of re-enlistment bonus.

It would make sense, therefore, from both readiness and cost viewpoints, to authorize payment of a bonus commencing at the earliest possible time. To delay action on this incentive for another year or more would lead, in our judgment, to declines in National Guard and Reserve strengths with resultant loss in readiness. We view this as unacceptable in light of Secretary Laird's increased reliance on these forces as strength of Active Forces is attrited.

This Association, therefore, strongly recommends as a wise course of action the authorization of an incentive program for the National Guard and Reserve in this session of the Congress. ♦



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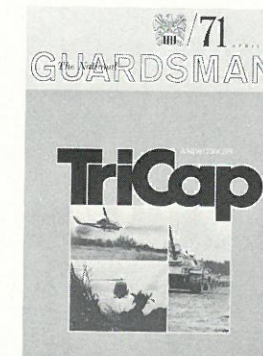
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