In the introduction to the 1982 NGAUS Red Book, which is this Association’s annually published “game plan”, the point is made that we sorely need a potential for growth in the Army Guard and Air Guard as a logical continuation of the Total Force Policy. The 1982 position statement, approved by Bixloxi last fall, even more specifically calls for the subject of increased reliance upon the Guard (and the Reserve) to be examined in great depth because it may be more cost effective to maintain certain forces in the Guard and Reserve rather than in the active forces. We believe that the simplifications of effort to upgrade the role of the Guard and Reserve in the ‘80s and ‘90s—which we refer to as “Total Force II” is logical and inevitable. It was, therefore, with considerable interest that we read an article by Drew Middleton, the able and distinguished military writer of The New York Times. An analysis carefully timed to be released almost simultaneously with the proposed Defense Budget for FY 1983, Middleton’s article was based upon an interview with a well-informed “senior Defense Department official” who estimated that we could increase the Guard and Reserve by five to ten years more to “restore the military balance” between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

This official told Middleton that, in the administration’s view, the most present danger was the kind of situation that would involve conventional forces and that “escalation into global nuclear war was a remote contingency that we could not afford to prepare for”, because there must be preparation for limited wars and greater emphasis on the role that the Army and Marine Corps would play in such conflicts.

Middleton’s rhetorical questions echo our own thinking. Where is the maneuver for a 600-ship Navy, five more tactical air wings and two additional Army divisions?

We have pinpointed several of Middleton’s observations of significance to the Army and the Air Force.

Army: “Two additional mechanized infantry divisions means another 37,000 soldiers. Are they to be found in an Army some of whose divisions are ‘out of’ with National Guard brigades?”

Air Force: “The Air Force... intends to field five new tactical wings. How are the aircraft to be manned?” What additional base facilities will have to be installed and serviced to keep the aircraft flying?

Finally, Middleton points out what appears to be the ultimate dilemma as those above are indeed the intent of this administration:

The senior official insisted that the Reagan administration was not considering a return to the draft unless there was a national mobilization. So the question is how the manpower requirements of an expanded American military are to be met remains unanswered.

A possible answer lies in the careful and prudent analysis of what Total Force II might mean.

As Middleton notes, today’s Army is in a situation to field divisions in 30 days—what the Air Force should be able to do in a month. This is doubtless much too slow...but this is how we are doing it.

As noted in the 1982 Red Book, we are confident the Air National Guard could handle most of the required increase in the Air Force. The Air Guard aircraft would accommodate good answers to most of the questions raised by Middleton as to who would fly, maintain and secure the aircraft. The Air Guard track record is open to examination. The Air National Guard already flies more “fighter hour” training per cent of its total flying hours than any other U.S. military air arm and in the past, it has increased its flight activity from less than 24 to 2.4 in the activities. It would need some work in what the Air Guard can like to call “resourcing” to do the job, but the increase can be done without the complications of the Air Guard other than elsewhere.

On the Army side, the relationship between peacetime training and the wartime mission has only come into focus in the past several years with the advent of CAPSTONE.

There are a whole range of reasons for the Army Guard to continue to be a factor in the area of combat and combat support forces. These are the forces most urgently needed (especially if we are to raise new combat divisions) and these are also the forces most adaptable to the needs of state service in times of crisis.

We are confident that by the process of careful selection, separate brigades of the Guard could be brought together under new Army Guard divisions. While the number of Army divisions available for conventional warfare. We believe that the states can work together to produce effective multi-state organizations—and we should learn from the mistakes of the past how to make it work.

In short, we believe the National Guard system can be expanded to meet the growth of the growth, which the Army and Air Force needs, assuming we are not talking beyond the willingness of Congress and the administration to provide necessary resources. But we must never lose sight of the fact that this is for a force which becomes useful in a few weeks after major warfare erupts. That is why—we believe in all of the things that we in the Guard can do to secure this nation’s freedom— we continue to feel that it is essential and prudent to obtain legislative help to help to build an enhanced Selective Service System. This enhanced Selective Service will be able to meet wartime situations quickly, efficiently and fairly—when and if a national mobilization becomes necessary at some future date.