OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Air Guard units occasionally made deployments to Europe in the 1960s. And a variety of C-97 missions were flown to many lands. But the organized, planned training of large numbers of members of the Guard overseas was still in the future.

Today, OCONUS training is considered routine. The Key Personnel Upgrade Program (KPU) in the Army Guard is a unique effort to tailor individual training of Guardsmen to the needs of the active Army in filling temporary vacancies during exercises or the opportunity to attend other field training opportunities. Guard participation in FORGER is now routine at the battalion and brigade levels.

The engineer road-building programs in Latin America also have provided unique training opportunities for the combat engineers and supporting troops such as logistics and military police that accompany them.

The Air Guard’s alert line in Europe, utilizing F-4 units, the Air Guard’s pro- gram of A-7 and C-130 support to U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), the road-building project in Ecuador—all are examples of the best kind of training in areas of the world where the Guard’s support is needed and welcomed.

For both the Army and Air Guard, one key factor in this training is paramount and must be emphasized. It is the training opportunities that are available and which cannot be equaled close to home. Overseas training exercises mobilization plans and requires units to train in environments that are less familiar to them. They must plan to operate in an area physically distant from them: they must master the plans they have made and execute them.

Equipment. A key element to ensuring the U.S. military can deter, fight and win is the continued procurement of modern equipment for the Total Force. We will continue to suggest that specific equipment be earmarked for the Guard. We will seek to ensure that the president’s budget contains adequate procurement of equipment for the Total Air and Total Air Force Combat ready equipment assistance. The U.S. policy of deterrence and implementation of the new INF treaty with the Soviet Union makes for conventional deterrence even more important. Two examples that have been widely discussed in Guard circles illustrate this point.

When Wisconsin’s 32d Infantry Brigade (Mech) deployed to West Germany in 1986, it trained on wheeled vehicles, rail-loaded to the home station to several U.S. ports and flown to Germany. Every vehicle was driven off the roll-on, roll-off ships under its own power. We understand that the Warsaw Pact observers took significant note of this fact because such a maintenance record was not what they expected from a National Guard brigade.

Exercising Bright Star the last two times and Exercise GALAXY each year are three U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) training exercises, involving the various locations the Middle East and South Asia Command, control, communications, computers and intelligence (C3I) are constantly key to whether the United States could be effective in combat with the Soviet East Coast with indigenous U.S. bases in the area.

In-operation rates for the communications system, installed and operated by a mixed force of active and Guard Army Armored and Army Reserve units was well over 95 percent throughout all the exercises. The Russians didn’t miss this fact, either, as evidenced by the Total Force’s high scores on this exercise.

CONCORD COVE: Defending the Canal

This year marks the 100th anniversary of 14 Air National Guard F-16 Fighting Falcons, the jet fighter with which on April 19, 1994, guarded the Panama Canal and in 1995. Colorado’s 140th Tactical Fighter Wing was one such unit pulling the Concord Cove mission this year.

LARGEST ARNG Reorganization Since 1968

In 1994, there has been such a major Army Guard reorganization as was approved recently by Secretary of the Army John Q. Martin Jr., and Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney. The Guardsmen away a brigade from Massachusetts and decide on Texas.

National Guard

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DEPARTMENTS

Cover: A Massachusetts Army Guard member and member of the 47th " Viking" Infantry Division reads himself for a day on one of Norway’s mountainous as part of this year’s Minnesota/Norway exchange training program. Photo, Read Hildreth, Design, Johnson Design Group.

President's Message

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Notebook

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