I was illuminating this thread by hearing the following words from General Fredrick C. Kroesen, the United States Army Europe/Seventh Army commander who was in the U.S. for a conference sponsored by one of our sister organizations, the Association of the United States Army (AUSA). "We can achieve the defense of Western Europe," General Kroesen told the somber-faced audience, "but to maintain this defense we need outside assistance and reinforcement." "By outside" it must be assumed that General Kroesen refers to assistance that would originate outside of the theater in which his forces are contained. This is of substantial interest to the National Guard community since it constitutes a substantial portion of the CONUS-based reinforcement which was promised to the U.S. commander in Europe to support the battle plan in NATO. This assumption is more than substantiated by the commander of United States Army Forces Command, General Robert Shoemaker, who notes that his area of responsibility takes the deployment of 10 active Army divisions, eight Army Guard divisions and 4,000 Guard and Reserve units ranging in size from small detachments to combat brigades. The words of Generals Kroesen and Shoemaker tend to sustain the hypothesis that mounting and deployment of having U.S. forces ready and able to mobilize and move out to defend U.S. primary interests in Europe. However, when can you get to Europe to fight? It has been, for many years now, the criterion upon which a nation’s usefulness is measured. But in still another major presentation to AUSA’s audience, General Edward G. Shively, who was in the Army, the "other Army." The "other Army," one speculates, is the share of the force structure which we have rather casually consigned in recent years to the "fractional piece" of the 1½ war strategy. Since the origins of this strategy are discussed in some detail, in the 1981 NGAUS Position Statement, which appears elsewhere in this issue, we will not elaborate. What General Shoemaker’s AUSA talk suggests is that the tasks which might confront "other Army," the Army for contingencies other than Europe, could be of such a magnitude, that to kiss off as a "half-war" could be understood—indeed the miscalculation—of a lifetime.

A "half-war" in the Middle East—Persian Gulf—Southwest Asia region could—with relatively scant stretch of the imagination—soon take on many of the characteristics of a major war scenario. Such a turn of events would be serious enough in the interests of the region. It would be inexcusably more serious if this expanded and, perhaps, protracted "half-war" were to occur simultaneously with a need to initiate the defense of Western Europe against a determined attack by Warsaw Pact forces. It is not necessary to be a great military genius to recognize that this possible two-theater scenario—no longer a fast-fetched witches’ brew—urgently requires extraordinary readiness on the part of active, Guard and Reserve forces. It requires modern equipment to be on hand, rather than on a drawing board. It requires the logistical capability to provide the factor of sustainability.

The most disappointing aspect of the situation is the fact that Pentagon planners do, we believe, have a good grasp of what is needed to ensure that U.S. forces will have the wherewithal to give a good account of themselves and to win. But just with respect to the resources needed to prepare the sustained defense of Western Europe, over a period of 15 years, defense requirements do necessarily modernization have consistently lost to the budget analysts in the intense competition for defense dollars. Throughout this issue of NATIONAL GUARD, we are devoted to coverage of the 102nd General Headquarters and Field Artillery thread of continuity which is hung on the issues of manpower, modernization and readiness for mobilization—the three Ms. Of these issues, modernization is clearly the most vexing. There are often magical words to be found, no genie to be summoned, no three wishes to be granted. This is a tough, pragmatic situation.

It is especially frustrating for the Guard, and for the Reserve as well. We can accept the thesis that the research and development of the 1970s is on the verge of paying dividends. But we fail to see, in constrained defense budgets, that production orders are being placed which will allow piping of significant new items of equipment into the troop units of the Guard. It is our judgment, hopefully the result of mature consideration, that production orders are being placed which will allow piping of significant new items of equipment into the troop units of the Guard. It is our judgment, hopefully the result of mature consideration, that production orders are being placed which will allow piping of significant new items of equipment into the troop units of the Guard.