President's Message

President’s Message

Citizens Are the Foundation of America’s Armed Forces

Much has been said recently about America’s military, and about structuring our armed forces to meet the challenges of the 21st century. As we rapidly approach the end of this decade and of this century, predictions and plans abound as to what will and will not be done. Optimism prevails in many quarters because of the rapid change in technology, change that America is creating.

Changing technology has always impacted upon warfare. Longbow and crossbow advocates found themselves obsolete when railroads gained favor; moccasins in their turn became obsolete as vibes gained favor; today, smart bombs rule, as technology propels the envelopment of deployment further.

Yet, one factor is woven throughout all of this technological development: armies do not win wars. Their nations and their people win wars. Occasionally, we need to remind ourselves of this important precept, especially as we discuss our military. The rush to shrink, the pressures that maintain the present balance of costs and benefits and the need to save dollars must be accompanied by discussions that stress the role of the people involved. In a democracy, keeping the people involved is the foundation upon which the proposed “expansion” can be built.

Granted, our military forces must shrink. We recognize that as we reached an agreement to trim our forces back to a peacetime Army. The one large, overwhelming thrust does not exist anymore, and most everyone agrees that it will be years before another power arises to replace what we faced for more than four decades. Fortunately, we are one of a few nations that have a military force structure that maintains an intricate relationship with the people.

The Total Force Policy has brought the Guard and Reserve to the highest level of readiness ever in our national history. It has been demonstrated that Guard forces are more cost-effective than ever before, yet readiness and economics aside, the most important action we can take on our nation’s behalf is to maintain the national defense. We have this country’s defense of the United States is a story of reliance on the people. The Guard and Reserve are the very roots of the National Guard. Our historical heritage is one of reliance on those citizen-soldiers to protect themselves. Preaching economic realities to a new nation, the citizen-soldiers were the driving force to create a National Guard.

Our national heritage, our Revolutionary War, now the Army National Guard is unique in its history in this country. We must remember that the citizen-soldiers are the foundation of our forces, that our history is one of reliance on the people involved, and that every effort must be made to keep the citizen-soldiers at the highest level of preparedness.

The pressures to decrease the size of the military surely will continue. Through it all, we must remember that it is citizens and their military forces that protect this nation.

Featuring the Right To Save America

Pressing the Right To Save America

Citizens are the foundation of America’s Armed Forces.

The pressures to decrease the size of the military surely will continue. Through it all, we must remember that it is citizens and their military forces that protect this nation.

Featuring the Right To Save America

Pressing the Right To Save America

Citizens are the foundation of America’s Armed Forces.