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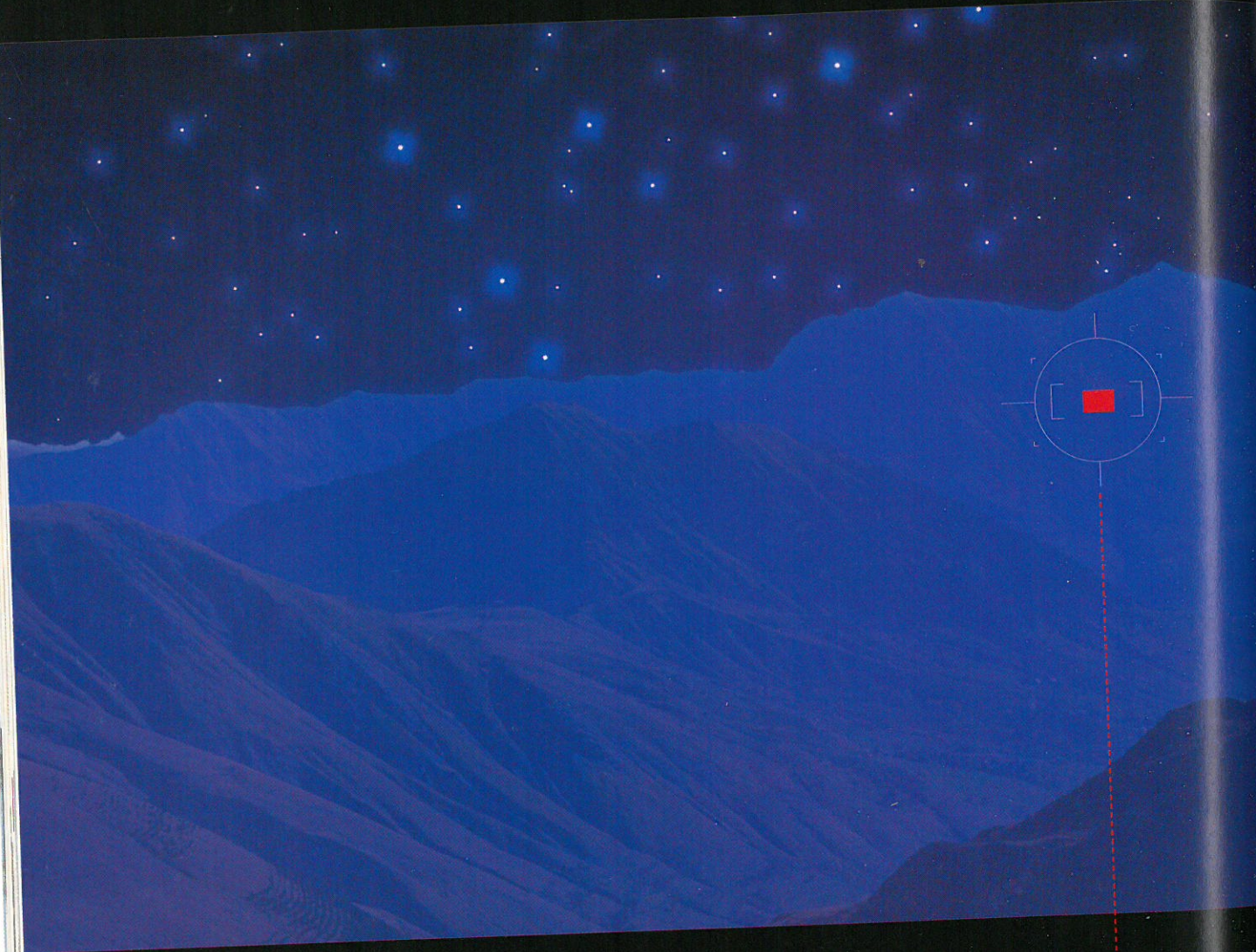
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Features

22 Modern Mission, Traditional Duty

In the two years since the Sept. 11 attacks, the National Guard has emerged as the go-to force at home during periods of heightened terrorism concern. From securing critical infrastructure to intercepting threatening aircraft to maintaining weapons of mass destruction response teams, the Guard continues to fulfill its traditional duty of homeland defense. The range and severity of current threats, however, make today's missions the most challenging in history.

26 Mounted Musicians

Stretching from New Mexico to New York, the National Guard not that long ago fielded 19 mounted bands that performed in local parades and acted as escorts for dignitaries. While these bands are gone—horses being completely replaced by motorized vehicles before World War II—their memory lives on among the few remaining former Guardsmen who once donned uniforms and made military music on horseback. In their memories and a few fading black and white photographs, a lost cavalry art and a forgotten era continues.

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