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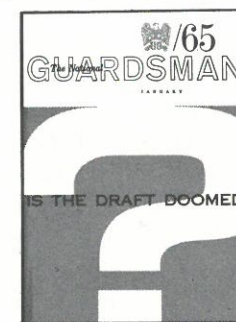
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It's a hundred years since the U.S. instituted its first "draft" into its Army. Now, its fate is uncertain.

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FOR a number of years, we have been witnessing a trend toward smaller Reserve Forces possessing a higher level of combat-readiness. One of the first major steps in that direction was the introduction, in the mid '50's, of the six-months active duty training program. Then, in 1959, reorganization brought the Pentomic tactical structure to the Army Guard and simultaneously reduced the number of Company- and Detachment-size units in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. Early in 1963, another reorganization was initiated and it, too, produced reduction in units, accompanied by a switch to the ROAD tactical structure.

The Army National Guard, itself, initiated several programs aimed at more efficient training and thus at an improved mobilization capability.

In addition, the priority system was introduced in 1959, under which certain Army Guard Divisions were included in the so-called "6x6 Program," with the objective of having six Divisions combat-ready within six months of M-Day.

Now, the Department of Defense and Department of Army propose a further streamlining of the Army's Reserve Forces, and a shift of all units into the Army National Guard. Thus, the Army Guard will maintain the units while the Army Reserve will manage the pool of individual officer and enlisted reinforcements, much like the system that prevailed before World War II.

This is certainly the most drastic move yet made toward attainment of maximum combat-readiness. The McNamara plan speaks in terms of maintaining all organizations at a readiness level which will permit their deployment to operational areas within 30 days of M-Day.

We in the National Guard cannot but subscribe to the principle of maximum readiness and likewise to the policies enunciated by Army leaders in the years following World War II, that "M-Day units will be organized in the Organized Reserve Corps only when the required units cannot be organized, equipped, trained and maintained in the Regular Army and in the Army National Guard."

In supporting organized units in the critical years following World War II and up to the present, the Army Reserve has given outstanding and dedicated service to its Nation. I hope that many Army Reservists will come over to the Army National Guard in their respective States and thus continue to make their skills and their dedication available to the Nation. I am certain that equal opportunities will be afforded to officers and enlisted men of the Army Reserve who desire to serve with us.

The proposed establishment of the Army National Guard as the Army's only Reserve Force of organized units, and introduction of a 30-day deployment goal, will present challenges which I am confident we will accept and objectives which I am positive we can achieve.

It goes without saying that we are distressed by that portion of the current plan which will require the inactivation of many Army National Guard Divisions and other organizations which have made so many outstanding contributions to the Nation's defense in the years since their founding. These organizations, with their great traditions, their array of battle honors, and their rich histories, are part of the heritage which all National Guardsmen cherish.

Many questions remain to be answered before all implications of the McNamara plan can be seen and understood. Many voices still must be heard, in the Pentagon, in the halls of Congress, and in State Houses across the Nation, before the proposal takes final shape. When the final decisions are made, I feel confident that National Guardsmen will exert their best efforts, as they always have, to translate those decisions into the readiest Reserve Force in the World.



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 National Guard Association
 of the United States

ONE ARMY RESERVE FORCE