

Maj Gen John L. Matthews, President, NGAUS

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## THE GUARD'S VALUED RETURN ON EVERY DEFENSE DOLLAR SPENT

It is inevitable. Our nation's plate is full, and the national leadership must find those accounts that can take the quickest, deepest cuts to pay for the growing domestic issues that need attention before the dawning of the next century. Health care and drug demand reduction, in which the National Guard is quite active, are just two issues our national leaders are in the midst of solving. What is the bottom line, how that is achieved and to what level are the debatable questions.

Since the national goal is to shift our focus and dollars internally, the theories about where the Defense budget numbers ultimately will land are as numerous as the number of Senate and House members on the Hill. The "high end" rests with those who continue to call for reliance on the base force strategy at around \$270 billion. For those who call for deeper cuts that demonstrate a force more reflective of the "threat," there is a prediction as low as \$200 billion.

As our congressional leaders wrestle with these questions, we remind them that the fundamental issue is the preservation of the nation's military capability. Given all the unknowns in the world today, we must preserve as much military capability as we can. Therefore, they must structure the Total Force in such a way that the military assets the United States has available today to respond to international and national crises are available tomorrow.

With this requirement, it is a given that the United States always will have a standing Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. We, like our Founding Fathers, realize that there is a need for a standing force to be the core of the contingency force, so that the president and the Congress can project support to our allies and for our national interests. However, at what level are they organized and manned is the challenge that faces the Congress.

The nation's earliest legislators

established an institution that can maintain force structure, provide military readiness and be a community-based force at the least amount of money, while adhering to the standards prescribed by the federal government. That institution is the National Guard, which allows the Congress to maintain a fully manned and ready force at a reduced cost in Defense dollars.

We know we have said this time and time again, but this is so important to the basic fabric of our country that it bears repeating. It is most appropriate for the national leadership to preserve the nation's military force structure in the National Guard because the Guard is a worldwide, wartime deterrent force that provides the states with the ability to meet the tranquility mission with the same trained military units; command and control; and communications. We are convinced that as the Congress and the administration march down the path to downsize the Total Force, the more sense it makes to move missions to the Guard to take advantage of its dual value to the nation.

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At the congressional year's outset, some of our national leaders took exception with the Defense leadership for not taking the opportunity to come up with sweeping, progressive changes that would produce a responsive, capable military force with the least amount of dollars. We hope that our elected officials also will take this opportunity to be progressive in their own thinking. For them, it is going to take hindsight (looking at our nation's military past and the Guard's ability to respond to a presidential call-up), foresight (envisioning a world where regional conflicts are occurrences that can flare up to Gulf War proportions) and commitment to preserving overall military capability.

Once the commitment is made, then the question arises: What should the

mix of the force be? This question can be answered, despite what has occurred over the past three years. Inevitably, Congress will be required to make hard choices between big-ticket items that carry visibility without delivering major forces to the theaters where they are required. Additionally, they will have to examine the relative costs and advantages of forces such as aircraft carrier battle groups, air wings and Army divisions. Which is the least expensive to maintain and which provides the greatest amount of capability. Then they need to consider what missions need to be preserved in the Army and Air National Guard.

This process already has begun. Undersecretary of Defense William Perry noted recently that as a result of the Cold War's end, the Navy chose to save carrier battle groups by mothballing most of its attack submarines.

The basic requirement is to determine those forces and missions that provide the most capability or value to our nation's defense. We don't profess to know what the mix within the services should be. We don't make those decisions, nor do we pretend we can. But we do know that all elements of the Total Force should be scrutinized. We also are convinced that the further Congress marches toward determining the appropriate level of Defense spending, the more sense reliance on the National Guard makes.

The National Guard's record in every national emergency speaks volumes in support of a strong national defense for the least amount of dollars. Therefore, however military capability is defined, the Army and Air National Guard can be the Total Force elements that allow the United States to maintain the much needed force structure that allows the command authority to deploy well-trained forces in a timely manner to the world's hot spots.

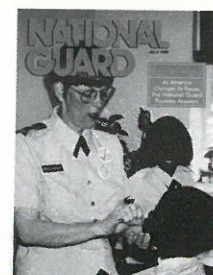
This solution should be inevitable too.

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### COVER:

MAJ Nancy Middlebrook, a Georgia Army Guard nurse, administers the polio vaccine to an Atlanta child during the Atlanta Project's immunization drive sponsored by The Carter Center. SMSgt Betsy Winn photo. Cover, Johnson Design Group.

### FEATURES

## America's Community-Based Force 14

Militarily and governmentally, the National Guard is one of the most notable achievements in our nation's history, said BG Joseph Hittle (ret.), USMC, in 1962. His words are just as true today. The Guard is America's community-based defense force ready for any state or federal mission it is called to face.

## The Nation's Domestic Mission Force 20

This compilation of stories gives a wide spectrum of what the National Guard responds to as part of its state mission. Guard members volunteer for many community projects to preserve the community in which they too live and work. The Guard's domestic mission is alive and growing all across America.

## Saving Our Young Before It's Too Late 28

The challenges that face our children today are so great that it takes an entire nation to ensure this generation stays on track to become productive American citizens. The National Guard has stepped forward to create youth development programs, which provide leadership, education and love for our nation's children.

## The Guard to the Rescue 32

The worst hurricane in the history of this nation is still visible in southern Florida. The memories for all those citizens are still real today. It is good to revisit how the Guard responded, how it helped save communities and why the Guard always must be the first to commit and the last to leave in domestic missions.

## On the Front Line of Health Care 38

The National Guard is also a leader in health care initiatives. The Tennessee Guard was one of the first to go into communities and provide health care to those who cannot afford it. Other states are following this historic initiative. Georgia, Kansas and Texas are just some of the states that have called out the Guard to fight illness.



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