**AN ASSESSMENT OF “ADD ONS” TO THE FY83 DEFENSE BUDGET**

In a reflection upon the National Guard’s contributions to the nation’s accomplishment in the past, President Ronald Reagan addressed the years yet to come, in these words: “I have no doubt that future historians will chronicle your own proud contribution to the security and welfare of the nation.” This was in the context of a message which the president dispatched to the 103d NGAUS General Conference.

Our own observation is that the National Guard, as an institution, will never let the town down. As each generation of leadership has kicked up the mantle, it has been carried on above everything else with the same zeal of non of combat readiness.

It can be understood, therefore, that the NGAUS was quite pleased that the president’s message paraphrased our own views in stating that, “A fully manned and well equipped National Guard is a national priority and commitment to be necessary to maintain the security of our nation.”

The National Guard—all of you out there—has taken a leadership role toward providing a “fully manned” force. At the last count, the Air Guard was nearing the 100,000 mark (its actual wartime requirement); the Army Guard had attained 99,000, which is the first time since 1975, was talking optimistically about reaching 417,000 by the end of FY 1982 and was setting a new timetable for achieving wartime strength of 448,000. The “fully manned” force is no longer a matter of speculation.

The second element of the president’s comment is more elusive—“well equipped.”

First of all, what is “well equipped” as opposed, for example, to “fully equipped”? We would submit that well equipped is defined as well enough to be capable of carrying out one’s mission. As a consequence we believe that the term “well equipped” is a relationship between “well equipped” and “fully equipped”—but at the moment the National Guard is neither.

The Department of Defense Authori-