Toward Maintaining the Technician Force

As we have said before in this space, our military technicians should not be considered when such civilian reductions in force are proposed. This is because they are not civilians. They are members of our units, and they function as a piece of the readiness equation of any unit. The National Guard Technician Act of 1968, which created our military technician system, tied itself to the Civil Service System solely to provide a fair and uniform basis of pay and retirement to the full-time force. This was long before the AGR system was launched by Congress in the late 1970s. There were no "green card" full-time folks in those days. The justification for rejecting this argument in 1968 is much the same as it was 15 years ago. Perhaps what we are really seeking is a way to reinvent the wheel. The Guard's units are sufficiently supported by full-time help as it is, the opposite of the cuts proposed here. In the Army Guard, full-time manning never reached even 70 percent of the outside requirements. Today, it has slipped to about 60 percent on average, with the lower-rated units now sitting at about 50 percent of required. An ancillary issue regarding our military technicians also has surfaced in papers suggesting several billions of dollars could be saved if all the AGR full-time force was corrected to tech. We have at least two problems with the assertions contained in this ad. First, the amount of savings is not accurate. The figures given are not completely and all the personal expenses not replaced with maintenance message of the technicians. Second, this is impossible because these organizations are doing valuable work. The Guard's leadership is to turn to the Guard members and speak with one voice on this issue. We are against all tie-lines for full-time manning, and we're not going to do it.

We also all support enabling our Guard to maintain its initiative as it moves to two proposals to provide Guard with credit for title 32 AGR duty. This would apply to a Guard individual who was converting from AGR to National Guard. The second initiative to provide more "leaves" (vacation leave) to provide more "leaves" (vacation leave) to train and maintain a force of trained and experienced Guard volunteers in the National Guard. The idea is not original, but it does have merit. We also support enabling our Guard to maintain its initiative as it moves to two proposals to provide Guard with credit for title 32 AGR duty. This would apply to a Guard individual who was converting from AGR to National Guard. The second initiative is to provide more "leaves" (vacation leave) to train and maintain a force of trained and experienced Guard volunteers in the National Guard. The idea is not original, but it does have merit. We also support enabling our Guard to maintain its initiative as it moves to two proposals to provide Guard with credit for title 32 AGR duty. This would apply to a Guard individual who was converting from AGR to National Guard. The second initiative is to provide more "leaves" (vacation leave) to train and maintain a force of trained and experienced Guard volunteers in the National Guard. The idea is not original, but it does have merit. We also support enabling our Guard to maintain its initiative as it moves to two proposals to provide Guard with credit for title 32 AGR duty. This would apply to a Guard individual who was converting from AGR to National Guard. The second initiative is to provide more "leaves" (vacation leave) to train and maintain a force of trained and experienced Guard volunteers in the National Guard. The idea is not original, but it does have merit. We also support enabling our Guard to maintain its initiative as it moves to two proposals to provide Guard with credit for title 32 AGR duty. This would apply to a Guard individual who was converting from AGR to National Guard. The second initiative is to provide more "leaves" (vacation leave) to train and maintain a force of trained and experienced Guard volunteers in the National Guard. The idea is not original, but it does have merit. We also support enabling our Guard to maintain its initiative as it moves to two proposals to provide Guard with credit for title 32 AGR duty. This would apply to a Guard individual who was converting from AGR to National Guard. The second initiative is to provide more "leaves" (vacation leave) to train and maintain a force of trained and experienced Guard volunteers in the National Guard. The idea is not original, but it does have merit.

Reinventing Government

The National Guard Association of the United States has been struggling for the past several years with the issue of full-time manning for our units. Budget year 1995 (FOY) is shaping up as a critical cycle for this vital subject.

Last year, this Association and the Guard's leadership were successful in blocking an administration move to cut the Guard's military technician force by 20 percent over five years. Such a cut would have been and still is unacceptable. But how is the situation changing? Is it getting better or worse? What actually is happening is a double handful on the Guard's full-time structure. We have absorbed the legitimate reductions associated with the force structure drawdowns. However, the administration's proposed—part of Vice President Al Gore's Reinvigorating Government Initiative—sought to redefine "civilian" federal employees across-the-board.

Beginning in 1990, the Congress has consistently supported an adequate level of military technicians for the Guard. That was the year that the Clinton administration sought to do much the same thing. The number of our military technicians in connection with an effort to reduce the Department of Defense civilian workforce. As we have said before in this space, our military technicians should not be considered when such civilian reductions in force are proposed. This is because they are not civilians. They are members of our units, and they function as a piece of the readiness equation of any unit.