



JAMES F. CANTWELL  
President  
National Guard Association  
of the United States

## Why My Unit, Not His?

THE realignment of the Army's Reserve Forces, proposed by Secretary of Defense McNamara and currently under study by the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee and the House Armed Services Committee, calls for the elimination of 15 Reinforcing Reserve Divisions of the ARNG and six of the USAR, in addition to many non-divisional organizations.

It is regrettable that in realigning the force, so many organizations with great traditions and splendid records of service are to be eliminated. It is understandable that the question most often raised these days is: Why this unit, or that? Why eliminate a highly-regarded Armored Cavalry Regiment, for example, and perhaps substitute a number of service-support units?

The answer is not simple; nor is the development and refinement of a force structure.

The responsibility for allocating numbers and types of ARNG units to the States, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia rests with the National Guard Bureau. We should be mindful, however, that the total numbers and types of units are determined, not by NGB, but by the Department of the Army, which, itself, must develop a force structure for both its Active and Reserve Forces within firm guidelines set at even greater levels.

It all starts with the National Security Council, which is the highest statutory agency responsible for advising the President on national security matters. This agency develops national policy which is, in effect, a framework within which the Departments of State and Defense develop and carry out programs designed to achieve national policy goals.

The critical agency in force structuring is the Joint Chiefs of Staff, acting in its advisory capacity to the Secretary of Defense. It recommends priorities for the Military Services, sets force levels, assigns missions, and, in general, acts as a super-coordinating agency.

Given their mission, equipment priorities, manning levels, and a dollar ceiling, the Services develop force structures for their Active and Reserve Forces.

In reaching decisions which influence force structures, the Joint Chiefs consider enemy capabilities and the shape and extent of existing threats to the security of the United States. It must in this critical era develop an over-all defense force capable of effectively countering a whole range of contingencies from limited aggression and guerrilla warfare to total nuclear war. It has for some years been the opinion of defense planners that the least likely type of conflict in which the United States may become involved is massive land and sea warfare. Believing this, defense planners, to an extent influenced by economics, have ruled out a requirement for a broad mobilization base. The Secretary of Defense, apparently with the concurrence of the Joint Chiefs, some time ago decided that there would be maintained in the Army a 22-Division force, deployable, to include 16 Divisions in the Active Army and six priority Divisions in the ARNG, in addition, of course, to necessary Air Defense, training, school and administrative type units. Even after this decision was made, there remained in the ARNG and the USAR a sizeable number of non-priority elements, including 23 Divisions, 15 of these ARNG. The proposal to realign would retain only the priority elements. Thus, the Army was compelled to reorganize its Reserve Force to provide within that limited force the type of units necessary to round-out the Army. All of the units retained would be in the ARNG.

Thus the Army was compelled not only to choose and cut, but actually to activate type units that presently are in neither the ARNG nor the USAR. This troop list then was handed to the NGB and there began the task of realigning the ARNG in every State.

Full details of the exercise at NGB would require more space than is available. I can assure, however, that there were good and cogent reasons, and sound and logical basis, for decisions made with respect to which units would be retained and which would be eliminated or reorganized in another Branch.

The overriding factor in each decision was a top-level requirement that Reserve Forces units retain the highest possible level of combat-readiness throughout the period of transition. Other basic ingredients in determining the fate of each unit were: (1) the potential ability of an organization, or a region, to maintain the required levels of strength and of mobilization-readiness; (2) the necessity for providing each State with a well-rounded "mix" of combat and service elements; (3) the availability of training sites, equipment storage facilities, etc., for units of a given type.

Thus, the area of choice was narrowed gradually from top to bottom. The final decisions on specific units became the unavoidable product of the guidelines and restrictions established at the highest policy-making levels. Company A was tabbed for retention, and Company B for elimination—not by individuals sitting in judgment—but by conditions, and the conditions were created by the nature of war itself as our national leaders view it. ♦



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