IT'S A QUESTION OF RESOURCES AND TURF

There are many perplexing questions surrounding the use of the National Guard in the Persian Gulf War. The Guard has been a part of this space previously, the main one of which is the reluctance, nearly the refusal, of the Department of Defense to call and deploy the National Guard's combat units. None of the Army Guard's infantry or tank battalions reached the Persian Gulf, or did our combat aviation elements.

The main exception to this was the Guard's refueling assets, which flew missions to the region. The Air Force mobility and deployment of two of the Guard's F-16 units. The "Boys from Syracuse" and the South Carolinians, who won 3-2 against them in 2002, acquired themselves well very by all accounts. A South Carolina F-16 pilot had the first kill of an Iraqi fighter.

The Guard's record reinforces, in part at least, the stark differences between how the services handled this call-up. The Army did not call any combat-arms Guard units at the beginning, having been precluded from doing so by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's call-up directive. Instead, an additional part of the equation in the Army's thinking doubtless was their need for combat support, and combat service support units were mobilized and deployed, to function in the desert superbly. However, there simply were no such units on active duty, or if there were, they were in insufficient quantity to support a desert theater. A few of these units were mobilized to combat support, and combat service support units were mobilized and deployed, to function in the desert superbly. However, there simply were no such units on active duty, or if there were, they were in insufficient quantity to support a desert theater. 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