TELLING OUR STORY IS PART OF ACCOMPLISHING THE MISSION

Duroing last month’s Conference in Detroit, we saw our audience thin considerably as Eastern seaboard state delegations packed their bags and returned to their home stations for preparation for call-up for Hurricane Hugo’s impact. The delegations from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands were absent from our activities as they already were activated by their governors for local relief from the worst hurricane in more than 50 years.

More than 5,000 Guard men and women from Puerto Rico, North Carolina, South Carolina and the Virgin Islands were called to state active duty to provide law and order, security, communications, medical and engineering support to their local communities after Hugo completed its destructive path through the islands, up the South Carolina and North Carolina coasts and finally inland. Little known is that Alabama, Florida and Louisiana Guard members also were called to provide communications and medical support to those areas.

The fact that the call-ups occurred during our Conference gave us a moment to ponder our constant national visibility during the past several years. It can be said that there’s a day that goes by without a member of the Guard on duty somewhere in this nation responding to a state or federal call-up. Our national visibility has never been higher than it has been during the past five years. There is no reason to think that this visibility will diminish, I suspect. If we have learned anything from history, it will increase.

It is important to note that the Guard was there for the Ohio phosphate mine disaster, for the Exxon Valdez oil spill, for the New England coast oil spills, for the Swift City jetliner crash and can be counted on to have a presence to serve the 185 passengers who survived. The Guard was there two summers ago to provide food products to the drought-stricken farmers of the Midwest and the South. The Guard was there assisting in fighting devastating forest fires that almost depleted our national forest reserves. And of course, the National Guard was ordered to state active duty for civil disturbance duty this past summer.

By early August, the National Guard had responded to two civil disturbance calls, 42 natural disasters and 87 other missions for a total of 111 missions for 1989. More than 4,400 Guard members had been called up for a total of 42,099 manhours in support of these missions. This was independent of the nation’s call to eradicate the drug threat.

For the first week in August alone, 31 states and territories had Guard members on duty for drug enforcement support missions nationally. Just to name a few, Alabama Guard members conducted cargo inspection and transportation of seized contraband for state and national drug enforcement agencies. The District of Columbia used 54 Army Guard personnel to conduct command and control functions and to provide military police support to the D.C. Metropolita

The District of Columbia used 54 Army Guard personnel to conduct command and control functions and to provide military police support to the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department. Oregon Guard members continued their support of Portland police operations. All 50 states provided aerial reconnaissance for marijuana and other drug operations at locations nationwide.

What is critical to note here is that while the Guard was there for state call-ups, the federal mission didn’t stop. Annual training for the states, the training and the District of Columbia continued as it would in any year without the many state call-ups. ORIs and ARTEPs continued to test our federal mission capabilities. Guard members performed their federal missions statewide and overseas. We continued to meet both the state and federal roles of the Guard without pause and without much attention to our ability to do more.

The fact that we have accomplished these missions means the mission is complete. We know what we have done and we know what we can do. In saying this, I know I am preaching to the choir. Are we telling the right people? Do we pass the word on to our neighbors, our fellow workers, our employers, the media and our legislators? Do we blow our horns and trumpet our successes? We should? No matter how many missions are accomplished, there are still more out there that will fall on us in the future. And there are still the "just thinking about" the Guard who will say the National Guard isn’t ready. When the hey naysayers and the critics can blame anyone but ourselves for not telling our story better?

During the resolution process at the Detroit Conference, a resolution passed that I consider the most important of the 70 resolutions that were adopted by the Association membership. It is number one on my list and it should be number one on every member’s list. It is called "The Resolution Concerning the National Guard’s "To provide all personnel in the National Guard with the opportunity to receive a high-quality, blue-collar, technical education." The resolution urges all members to renew their efforts to meet the first objective of the Association’s laws to educate our students, the media and the American people about the Army and Air National Guard in national security and defense. There is no greater story to tell other than us. We must take to bearing own drums and trumpeting the horns, because there is no more newsworthy service to state and nation than the National Guard. We must respond not only to our state missions but also simultaneously in a militarily to defend our nation’s domains. But will anyone know the story if we don’t tell them?

GEOGRAPHY SERVICES DEPARTMENTS

covering the nation’s national defense, defense mission. National Guard (NG) teams provided a crucial role in the clear-up operations.

DEPARTMENTS

COVER:

Washington Army National Guard members participated in the 14th annual Team SPIRIT Exercise in Korea. This was a chance for them to practice their wartime mission in a realistic environment. Photo, SSG Don Green, WAARNG, Design, Johnson Design Group.

BRIEFING

MG Charles M. Kiefner, President, National Guard

President’s Message

Washington Tie-Line

Views From the Field

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Publisher’s Notebook

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FEATURES

TEAM SPIRIT—Logistics Training

The 14th annual Teams SPIRIT Exercise in South Korea provided National Guard combat support and combat service support units in Korea with a unique “hands-on” feel for combat as they would fight in the field. These units make the Army role, from bases to bulwarks.

Rear Area Operations Field Tested

Rear area security, combat operations against regular or irregular enemy forces in the rear area, has not changed much since its early 1980s, the changes that have been implemented in rear area operations are stimulated in the National Guard and Reserve to provide command and control for this doctrine.

The Making of an Air Guard Pilot

The training of fighter pilots was big for Hollywood movies, but the reality of becoming an airman in the Air National Guard is far different. It takes hard work, dedication and that inner, intangible, intangible as it is, to make a good pilot.

Command Changes

Brig. Gen. Byrd should be the objective of ongoing command changes, many times this is not accessible and incoherent changes. The changes are important, and we must not see them as mere numbers or words. We must see the people behind the words.

Oil Spills—National Guard Cleans Up

The National Guard has been an unprecented number of oil spills in Alaska, in Delaware River, Delaware, National Guard played a crucial role in the clean-up operations.

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