What sized force is appropriate for the National Guard? DoD proposed it would have to be smaller, in fact, the smallest we have been since before 1916. The U.S. popula-
tion in 1916 was about 98 million. But a retired four-star Army general thinks we ought to be larger. The root of a new way of thinking about military force structure in the post-Cold War era comes from GEN Maxwell R. Thurman (ret.). He was a leading, if not a minor, in-
chief of U.S. Southern Command at the time of the U.S. intervention in Panama. Earlier, he was vice chief of staff of the Army and commander of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. A friend of the Guard, to be sure, but hardly an enemy of the active Army, in which he spent his en-
tire adult career, from ROTC to medi-
cal retirement in 1990. Further, he is respected in the Total Army as a vi-
sionary thinker, a relentless ques-
tioner of assumptions and conclu-
sions; and as a man with a very rigorous intellectual process.

General Thurman was the luncheon speaker at the NGUSA Executive Council meeting in Washington, D.C. To say that he made a very challenging presentation is to put it mildly. Several Guard leaders made a basic thesis in a couple of other forms be-
fore. He has generously given the NGUSA permission to quote him di-
rectly, although our lunch speakers are permitted to speak completely off the record thereafter.

The Thurman proposal has several major parts. The first and probably most important is that too many De-
defense and U.S. national-security plan-
ers have not succeeded in throwing off the Cold War paradigm for De-
fense planning. The Cold Warrior mindset pervades the thinking of all too many senior officers who have spent their adult lifetimes confronting the same question.

A second part of General Thur-
man's presentation is the suggestion that the National Guard, as the Militia of the Constitution, should be struc-
tured as a percentage of U.S. popula-
tion rather than based on the external "threat." While the Guard would con-
tinue to have combat-arms units, how many and what kind would be depend-
tent on the threat for the war-fighting portion of the force and the state mis-
sion for the domestic tranquility por-
tion. As America continues to be the world's only superpower, what we will need in combat-ready units will change from time to time.

General Thurman then goes on to suggest that the Guard should be either 25 percent or 30 percent of the population, just as it has tended to historically. The statistics suggest that the Guard's force structure has ranged from 19 percent to 24 per-
cent over most of those years. End-
strengths varied. LT Gen John B. Conaway, chief of the National Guard Bureau, often points out, for example, that the Army Guard's force structure has been at least 400,000 since 1915. DoD proposes to reduce it to 330,000 by 1995.

Finally, General Thurman would separate the two major functions the National Guard performs, at least for the purpose of structuring, equipping and training units in peacetime. He would create a war-fighting element composed of active Army and National Guard units. An appropriate mix of combat arms, combat support and combat service support units would be established. He accepts the JCS assumption that 18 to 20 divisions are required between 1995 and 2015. We don't agree with the next point, but he also suggests that none of the 18-20 divisions would be commanded by Guard officers, but, rather, all the Guard units would be roundout. The fact we don't agree with him is consistent with Army's leadership about the qualifica-
tions of Guard generals doesn't make the rest of his thesis bad, however.

The second part of the peacetime National Guard would be the "domestic tranquility" force. It would be composed of light infantry, military police, en-
gineers, medical units, communications and transportation. The type of units that were needed for the Los Angeles riots and Hurricane Andrew. All this structure, organized under "division" headquarters for peacetime training command and control, would be in the Guard Army because it would be re-
quired to be available to the govern-
ors. General Thurman makes quite a point of supporting the state-federal connection, and the constitutional pre-
cept that the National Guard remain under state control in peacetime. The domestic tranquility function is, in definition, a state-run function unless there is a declaration of national emergency.

General Thurman's plan would keep the Guard's structure and end strength at a constant level no matter what the world situation or the level of external threat. If the threat grew seri-
ous, to a level that during the height of the Cold War, for example, the war-
fighting portion of the National Guard would go up and the domestic tran-
quility forces would go down. This would not affect the state mission be-
cause the war-fighting units would be available for state duty unless they happened to be deployed overseas by the president.

... 

National Guard Faces Old Struggles

A second National Guardman went to the new republic of Yugoslavia as a civilian scholar. While there, he watched as this republic dramatically restructured its military defense and building the strong military that became the refuge of the thousands of former Soviet soldiers living in the country.

If the personnel numbers associated with the Army Guard were 780,000, the Army Guard might be considered "required" for the 1985-1995 period. We don't agree with that assessment. Even at 25 percent, we would field a force of 65,000, enough for the 1985-1991 period. What would the Army Guard have to achieve 400-500,000 personnel proposal and more than 60,000 more than today's end strength.

There is nothing either wise or possible. General Thurman clearly says "yes.

Cover:
Relatives of LTC Alfred Mendelson; Taiwanese officials; and MG Robert F. Enns (ret.), then NGUSA president; and MG Bruce Jacobs (ret.), HISMG executive director, gathered on Kunmen Island to pay tribute to a classic citizen-soldier. Photos: CPT Pamela A. Kane, managing editor, Design, Johnon Design Group.

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