STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

BY

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ABSTRACT

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The Air National Guard plays a prominent role in support of our nation's national security objectives. Since its inception, the Air National Guard has evolved into a premier world class organization. It is an integral component of the Air Force's "Total Force Concept" and continues to expand its role in support of the strategy of "Global Reach and Global Power".

This paper will examine the historical evolution, current posture, and future of the Air National Guard.

My hypothesis is the Air National Guard has evolved into a vital national resource committed to the strategy of "Global Reach and Global Power".

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PART I - HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

GUARDSMEN LOOK SKYWARD

The Air National Guard, as a descendant of the Colonial Militia, possesses a proud heritage of dedicated service to our nation in time of need. There has never been a crisis in this nation's history where the Air National Guard was not present. It has made tremendous contributions to our nation's military objectives.

To find the roots of the Air National Guard's heritage one must go back to the turn of the 20th century in the early era of emerging aviation. In April 1908, a group of enthusiasts organized an "aeronautical corps" at the 7th Regiment Armory in New York City to learn ballooning.[1] This 1st Signal Corp, New York National Guard, began receiving instruction with a privately owned 35,000-cubic-foot balloon. These lessons were the official

beginning of the plan to make aeronautics a part of the study and work of the signal corp of the New York National Guard. Although the unit received instruction and assembled their own balloon, history does not reveal if they ever ascended in it. In 1910, the unit raised $500.00 to finance its first do-it-yourself airplane kit. However, their egos were deflated when they witnessed their pride and joy crash on takeoff during maneuvers that same year. In 1911, the Curtiss Aeroplane Company loaned the unit an aircraft and a pilot named Beckwith Havens. Later, Havens joined the unit as a private and was recognized as the National Guard's first aviator.[2]

In numerous states air enthusiasts continued their zest to form aero units within the Guard. Their inspiration was not only to establish Guard units but also to promote the visionary ideas of American aviation. However, as excited and enthused as these individuals were about aviation, the same excitement was not shared by the bureaucracy. This was a regrettable era for aviation in our nation's history. There was a resounding denial to recognize, expand, and capitalize upon the potential of the National Guard for furthering the advancement of America's air capabilities.

Events prior to World War I triggered a change in America's attitude toward aviation. On 1 November 1915, Captain Raynauld Bolling, a prominent New York attorney, was the catalyst responsible for organizing the Guard's first genuine aviation unit. Due to his efforts, the 1st Aero Company of the New York

National Guard was formed. It proved to be the forerunner of the 2nd Aero Company, New York National Guard, that was organized in Buffalo the following year. The two New York companies were called into Federal Service on 13 July 1916 and stationed at Mineola Aviation Field, Long Island, New York.[3]

WORLD WAR I

As America approached World War I the military hierarchy was struggling with the acceptability of mobilizing National Guard aviation units. The War Department's final vote was not to activate the Guard aviation units. Instead, the units were disbanded and the Guardsmen encouraged to volunteer for active duty. The Guardsmen did just that. This "Spirit of Volunteerism" evidenced in this period has transcended through time and contributes today to the success of the National Guard units. Volunteerism by Guard members has played a significant role throughout history in supporting our national security objectives and contributing to power projection and global reach.

When President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war in April 1917, Guardsmen provided a major pool from which the Army could draw aviators. Approximately one hundred aviators were immediately available. The majority of these came from the New York units. Accurate figures are not available as to how many Guardsmen served in the US aviation program during World War I. However, it is a widely accepted statement that they made substantial contributions to the war effort as individual volunteers.[4]

The Guard contributed four aces to the allied effort. The most famous was Major Reed Chambers who joined the Tennessee Guard in 1914. Chambers became an original member of the famed 94th Pursuit Squadron in France. On 14 April 1918, Chambers flew on the first combat mission ever ordered by an American commander of a US squadron of American pilots. He would be credited with six aerial victories during World War I.[5]

BETWEEN THE WARS

Following World War I, once again the federal bureaucracy demonstrated its lackluster support for National Guard units. However, a culmination point came with the passage of the National Defense Act of 1920. This early legislation was significant as it shaped the Army aviation units from which our current Air National Guard structure evolved.

Aviation became a permanent part of the National Guard in 1921. "Aero units" were included as organic units in National Guard infantry divisions during the reorganization that followed passage of the National Defense Act of 1920. Airpower advocates like Brigadier General William D. ("Billy") Mitchell, himself a one-time member of the Wisconsin National Guard (1st Wisconsin Infantry), helped make the concept of an Air Guard a reality. A large number of surplus World War I fighter aircraft allowed the Guard to organize air observation squadrons in all 19 of their divisions. Faced with smaller budgets and pressured by Army fliers for increased aviation assets, the Guard organized ten additional observation squadrons that were not attached to

divisional units.[6]

Guard aviation rose to a pre-eminent level following World War I. Brigadier "Billy" Mitchell predicted the National Guard aviation units would contribute toward making America more air-mined in military matters.[7] His predictions came true as these aviation units continued their vision of aviation growth and development. The activities and missions of the guard became imbedded in the public's eye. Their publicity became associated with some of the most colorful and adventurous names in the early history of flight. The most dramatic long distance solo flight in aviation was made by Captain Charles A Lindbergh. He was a member of the 110th Observation Squadron, Missouri National Guard. In 1927 he flew in the privately-owned plane, Spirit of St. Louis, non-stop from New York to Paris. During this period, it was common for aviation units to volunteer to fly mercy missions of a hazardous nature. These dramatic incidents made the local headlines and created news from Coast to Coast.[8]

This period was not only a boom to military aviation but it also brought with it a unique perception and image about aviation units in the National Guard. These units, when provided the proper equipment, were able to accomplish vigorous missions. The aviation units were always ready and waiting. No challenge seemed to big for these early aviation pioneers. Their courage, enthusiasm, and professionalism is what today's Air Nation Guard is built upon.

WORLD WAR II

President Franklin D. Roosevelt called the National Guard into federal service in the fall of 1940, following Germany's western offensive across France. The guard's 29 observation squadrons were ordered into federal service as non-divisional troops and quite often sent to a different Corps Area from that of its parent division. Approximately 4,800 National Guard aviation personnel were initially mobilized. They served in every major combat theater during the war.

This overnight acquisition of 29 Observation Squadrons created an organizational imbalance of unit types within the Air Corps. After the invasion of Pearl Harbor, redesignation of the Observation Squadrons was a common occurrence. Many of the Observation Squadrons were redesignated and changed over to other types of Squadrons. One-third of the Squadrons even lost their original numerals. Many of the unit's key personnel were used by the rapidly expanding Army Air Force (AAF) as trainers or "individual fillers" to help build new units. By V-J day, only nineteen of the Guard units still carried their pre-war personnel strength.[9]

The Air Guard played a vital role in World War II. This period of time saw the Guard severed from its state ties and, in many cases, unit identities changed. The Guard augmented the regular active air force with initiative and talent. National Guard aviators effectively trained large numbers of volunteers who entered the Army Air Force (AAF).

POST WORLD WAR II

The Air Force emerged as an independent service with the passage of the National Security Act of 1947. The new service was supported by a restructured Air Reserve component (ARC) with the newly designated Air National Guard serving as the nation's first-line combat air reserve force. The Air National Guard end strength was 58,000 personnel organized into 514 units. The heart of the program was eighty-four tactical flying units including seventy-two fighter and twelve light bomber squadrons.[10]

The creation of the Air National Guard was not fully accepted by Air Force hardline traditionalists.[11] Allegations were vicious and unending. Accusations centered on the Guard's inability to maintain a high degree of readiness because of its archaic command arrangements, obsolete aircraft, aging pilots, and low operational readiness ratings. In spite of these accusations, the Air Guard significantly matured in its first four years after the National Security Act. In terms of power projection it represented 70% of the Air Forces' total fighter strength in the continental US. Its personnel strength was 44,728 and had an inventory of 2,401 aircraft. The Air National Guard was following its flight plan for developing into a premier fighting force.[12]

KOREAN WAR

Any hard feelings and parochialism that existed between the Air Force and Air National Guard were put to rest during the

Korean War. This was the Air National Guards first "Official War" since being created. The Air Force found itself once again in a position of needing Air National Guard resources.[13]

A total of 66 out of the 92 flying squadrons were activated plus numerous support and technical units. A total of 45,000 personnel were put on active duty representing 80% of the Guard's strength.[14]

The first Air Guard fighter unit assigned to the Far East was the 136th Fighter Bomber Wing. The 136th was composed of the 111th (Texas), 154th (Arkansas) and the 182nd (Texas) Fighter-Bomber Squadrons. They arrived in Japan on 18 May 1951 and saw their first combat action on 24 May. The next unit in theater was the 116th Fighter Bomber Wing. Its fighter-bomber squadrons included the 158th (Georgia), 159th (Florida), and the 196th (California). The 116 arrived in Japan in July 1951.[15]

These two units compiled outstanding combat records. The 116th maintained one of its three jet fighter squadrons in South Korea on a rotational basis. The 136th completed movement of its entire organization to Korea in Sep 1951. Members of these two units plus individual guardsmen serving with other units flew a total of 39,530 combat sorties. They flew every type of tactical aircraft from jet interceptors to conventionally powered medium bombers. They destroyed 39 aircraft, damaged another 149, dropped 44,000 bombs, launched 31,000 rockets and fired over 16,000 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition. Four guardsmen were acknowledged as aerial aces. Contrary to Air Force expectations,

experience, not youth, proved to be a decisive factor in determining the effectiveness in the Korean conflict. Older pilots with World War II experience scored disproportionately higher in MIG kills.

The war was a turning point in Air National Guard history. It was the beginning of the Air Guard's development as a vital component of the Air Force. The reality was that properly handled Guard programs would significantly enhance air strength at a fraction of the cost of the comparable active duty units. Consequently, increased fiscal appropriations for the Air Guard began to enhance their modernization programs. Properly trained and equipped, the Guardsmen could effectively and efficiently augment the active Air Force. So successful was the Air National Guard through the Korean affair that it was called upon to assume increasing responsibilities as the nation moved into the cold war.[16]

EVOLUTION OF "TOTAL FORCE POLICY"

The "Total Force Policy" was adopted by the Defense Department in 1970. Its objective was to strengthen and rebuild public confidence in the reserves while saving money by reducing the size of the active duty force. The policy sought to ensure that all policymaking, planning, programming, and budgetary activities within DoD considered active and reserve forces concurrently. The major thrust for this initiative was the Air Force experience in working with the Air National Guard after the Korean War. The Air National Guard became part of the Air

Force's "Total Force Concept" beginning in 1953. It started with the runway alert program which was an experimental arrangement using guardsmen to augment the Air Defense Command. The experiment began on 1 Mar 53 when the 138th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (Syracuse, NY) and the 194th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (Hayward, CA) were put on alert. The experiment was such a huge success that the Air Force was clamoring for more squadrons. On 15 Aug 1954 eight Air Guard fighter squadrons took their places beside their regular Air Force counterparts in the first permanent augmentation of Air Defense Command's (ADC's) runway alert program.[17]

A second major happening during this period was the "Gaining Command Concept" which came into existence on 1 July 1960. The Air Force accepted responsibility for inspecting and supervising the training of all the Air National Guard units. The adoption of this program marked the beginning of the Air Guard's integration into the Air Force's operational structure on an across-the-board basis.[18]

The years from 1953 to 1960 saw a dramatic growth and modernization within the Air Guard. Closer coordination and integration with the Air Force continued. By 1960 the strength reached 71,000 which represented an increase of 26,272 over its pre-Korean level. The flying squadrons expanded from 84 to 92 squadrons. The missions had grown from air defense to tactical fighter, reconnaissance, troop carrier, heavy airlift, and aeromedical evacuation. By the close of this decade, Air

Guardsmen achieved an effective voice in the development of policies, plans, and programs related to their component at Air Staff and Major Command levels.[19]

This evolution and transformation of the Air Guard was accelerating at a rapid pace. It was obvious at this point in time that the Air National Guard was here to stay. Even with limited equipment resources it played key roles in our nations crisis'. What the Guard units lacked in physical assets was offset with a "Can-Do Attitude". Any future predictions from this time forward would certainly forecast the Air National Guard being a major participant in any future crisis requiring forward presence and power projection.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

The 1960's was a time period that the Air National Guard was able to again flex it muscle. The war in Southeast Asia was upon us and the Air Guard was there. The Guard's role in Vietnam had been triggered by the North Korean seizure of an American intelligence vessel, the USS Pueblo in January 1968.

In response to this incident the Air National Guard mobilized 9,343 people on 25 January 1968. The activated fighter units were combat ready and anxiously awaiting deployment orders. However, the units remained at home station in a holding pattern waiting and ready for deployment orders. The moment finally arrived in April when four fighter units received their orders for Vietnam. The F-100's from the 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron (Colorado) were first in the theater. They arrived at

Phan Rang Air Base on 3 May and were flying combat missions by 1 June. The other units to deploy to the theater with their F-100's were the fighter squadrons from the 174th (Iowa), 188th (New Mexico), and the 136th (New York). In addition, 85% of the 355th Tactical Fighter Squadron, which on paper was a regular Air Force unit, was composed of Air National Guard members.[20]

These fighter units were quickly integrated into the Air Force operations tempo. Prior to their return home in April 1969, they accumulated an impressive flying record. They flew 24,124 sorties and 38,614 combat hours. When the 355th is factored in, the sorties rise to 30,000 and the combat hours to 50,000.[21]

These five combat units won high acclaim from General George S. Brown who was the Air Force commander in Vietnam.

> *"They were the five best F-100 squadrons in the field. The aircrews were a little older, but they were more experienced than the regular units. They had done the same work on the same weapons for years, and they had the stability that a regular unit doesn't have."*[22]

The airlift community also contributed to the Southeast Asia cause. The first sizeable airlift involvement came during December 1965 when Guard lifters flew Christmas gifts to the troops. Beginning in January 1966 they flew 75 missions a month in support of the Military Airlift Command.[23]

Even though this war was unpopular back in the states, the Air Guard units performed admirably. The units demonstrated skill, professionalism, and valor in pursuit of their mission. The Air Guard was continuing its tradition of providing forward

presence and power projection.

THE GULF WAR

During Operation Desert Storm, American television viewers were treated to dramatic shots of combat-loaded F-16's preparing for take-off from Al Kharj Air Base in Saudi Arabia. The tail flashes on those aircraft were stencilled with "South Carolina" and "New York". Although largely unnoticed by the national media, they belonged to two Air National Guard fighter units, the 169th Tactical Fighter Group (TFG) of Columbia, South Carolina and the 174th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) of Syracuse, New York. From the first day of the war Air Guardsmen joined the attacks on enemy forces in Kuwait and Iraq.[24] It was a Carolina pilot who was the first to shoot down an Iraqi fighter the first night of the war.[25]

The Air Guard fighters merged well with their active duty counterparts in the 4th Tactical Fighter wing (Provisional) at Al Kharji. They participated in the air campaign from the first day of the war. At the close of the war they had accrued 3,645 missions and dropped 3,500 tons of ordnance without losing a single aircraft to enemy fire.[26]

The CENTAF commander, General Horner, humorously praised the performance of the South Carolina and New York Guard.

> *"They went up there and did a marvelous job. However, their laundry bill went up ten-fold when they got six or eight missiles shot at them the first day. Not what they had in mind for war, but they did a marvelous job."*[27]

However, the Air Guard's largest contributions were spread

across a wide range of support missions. The Guard's aerial tankers pumped over 250 million pounds of fuel into more than 18,000 aircraft. The airlifters flew some 40,000 hours, transported 55,000 people and 115,000 tons of cargo. Without these support functions the response to the Persian Gulf crisis might have been dramatically altered. The presence of the Air Guard had a dramatic impact on the success of the campaign. General Merrill McPeak, Air Force Chief of Staff, had nothing but praise for the Air Guard.

> *"We take aboard ANG squadrons that integrate directly into larger combat formations. And when they do that, as they did in Desert Storm, they are functionally indistinguishable from active duty squadrons."*[28]

PART II - CURRENT OPERATIONS TEMPO

TODAY'S AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The operations tempo of today's Air National Guard continues at a rapid pace. This section will address the unique attributes of the Guard and see the percentage of force structure it provides. Within the combat, mobility, and support areas specific missions are cited to illustrate the operation's tempo and its importance to the strategy of "Global Reach and Global Power".

UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES OF TODAY'S AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The Air Guard has a unique blend of resources which contribute to its ability to project power and provide forward presence. Adjectives that describe what the American citizen wants to hear about their military are: efficient, effective,

capable, strong, and representative. These proactive adjectives truly describe the ethos of the Air National Guard.

The Air National Guard infrastructure consists of 89 flying units, 578 mission support units, 115,000 personnel (18% of the Air Force personnel structure), and over 1,198 aircraft.[29] The key ingredient that makes the Air Guard strong is the quality of its people. The guard's 150 installations are located in communities where their members live, work, and govern. Air Guard membership represents a cross section of its demographic area which brings a wealth of diversified experience to the unit. The units are deeply imbedded in their communities. Most unit members serve well over 20 years. Many units have third generation members on their payrolls. Because unit members work numerous years in the same organization, a strong team develops with polished skills and extensive job knowledge.[30]

Economically, the Air Guard is a good investment for America. It is responsible for approximately 40% of the overall Air Force flying sorties yet utilizes less than 6% of the Air Force budget. The Air Force budget for FY 95 was $75 billion of which the Air Guard was appropriated $4.3 billion.[31] The part-time nature of the guard allows certain tasks to be performed, and military readiness to be maintained at a lower cost than that of a full-time force.

The physical infrastructure of the Air National Guard saves the American taxpayer billions of dollars each Fiscal Year. The Air Guard facilities are purely operational. There are no

expenses for schools, housing, hospitals, day-care centers, libraries, chapels, and gymnasiums. America's investment in the Air Guard is strictly producing deployment capability with no frills attached. Economically the American taxpayer is getting a big "Bank for the Buck". As future defense budgets continue to shrink, our future force structure will have to take a hard look at the Air Guard's proven effectiveness in relationship to its economic efficiency.

FORCE STRUCTURE FOR MOBILITY FORCES

The Air National Guard currently provides 9% of the strategic airlift capabilities.[32] As the US has become the sole military superpower, it has become increasingly relied upon to provide worldwide humanitarian assistance. Airlifters have proven their eagerness to contribute and have been invaluable in supplementing the active force in contingencies. The requirement for strategic airlift becomes even more important as we reduce forward presence. The Air National Guard desires to increase participation in this mission.[33]

At the present time the Air Guard provides 43% of the KC-135 refueling capability.[34] Future force projections show that approximately 50% of air refueling assets will be assigned to the Guard.[35] As in past contingencies such as Desert Storm, any future conflicts will require the immediate support of Air Guard tankers.

FORCE STRUCTURE FOR COMBAT FORCES

The fighter units are responsible for 30% of the Air Force

combat capability.[36] It is not uncommon to find many of our guard units deployed world wide in support of our national security objectives of forward presence and power projection.

Operation Provide Comfort began on 5 April 1991 when Saddam's troops initiated a campaign of genocide against the people of northern Iraq. Since then many of the Guard fighter units have been called into action to provide support for this humanitarian effort. It is ironical that this past June the 174th Fighter Wing, New York National Guard, was back for a second time flying the skies of Iraq. The unit was a previous participant in the 17 January 1991 air campaign package that gave Saddam Hussein a wake up call. Now four and one-half years later the unit is back projecting power and exhibiting their forward presence.[37]

Brigadier General John R. Dallager, serving as co-commanding general of the coalition task force stated:

> *"The Air Guard was great. It gives the people who rotate through here regularly from European bases an opportunity to get back to their home station and accomplish other things."*[38]

Lieutenant Colonel Ray Dufour, the 174th operations officer, stated that this mission is a reinforcement of the "Total Force Concept". He referred to it as a seamless operation in which most people didn't know that the 174th were guardsmen. They looked and performed just like the active component.[39]

Since the beginning of the Nato operation in Bosnia, the Air National Guard has been on station. Many of the Guard units have been participants. The 104th Fighter Wing from Massachuettes was

deployed to Aviano Air Base, Italy from 8 August 1995 to 14 October 1995 to participate in operation Deny Flight/Deliberate Force.

Deliberate Force was a response by NATO forces against the Serbs, after the Serbs launched a mortar attack on Sarajevo that killed 37 people. Seven countries participated in the strikes, and the 104th pilots found themselves flying bombing missions with the Turkish, British, and Spanish pilots.

On a purely volunteer basis the unit was able to rotate personnel every 15 to 18 days in order to support the cause of bringing peace to the war-torn region of the former republic of Yugoslavia. A total of 509 Guard men and women and 12 A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft were deployed to Aviano.[40]

Colonel David Cherry, 104th Fighter Wing Commander states:

> *"The benefits of working together for years as a team really paid off. In addition to having trained to the same standards as our active duty counterparts, our people were able to integrate into effective teams, even during rotations. This was crucial during combat operations and reflects the advantages of a stable organization. When you know how people are going to react to different situations, that saves a lot of time and a lot of repetition."*[41]

Operation Deny Flight/Deliberate Force was truly another example where the Air Guard was on the front lines showing power projection while exhibiting their forward presence.[42]

The theater airlift forces take pride in their missions and see results that are highly competitive with their active duty counterparts. Last July, within five days of receiving the tasking to build a support package for Operation Support Hope in

Africa, the 188th Airlift Wing, of the Tennessee Air National Guard went into action. This C-130 unit acted as the lead unit and formed a provisional squadron consisting of 158 personnel and six aircraft from four other states. Within hours after arrival the unit was ready to fly their first flight out of Mombassa, Kenya, some 8,500 miles from Tennessee. Brigadier General Guy Tallent, wing commander, called it a monstrous undertaking, but a true example of the character of the Air National Guard.[43]

During the 30-day mission, the unit flew relief operations to various African states. The provisional squadron flew more than 444 sorties, accumulated some 951 hours of flying time and delivered more than 2,300 tons of food, fuel, support and water purification equipment. They also provided more than 1,544 passengers safe transportation to their destinations within the theater of operations.[44]

The six aircraft accumulated more than 247,000 miles during their 30 days deployment. The Air National Guard provisional squadron consisted of personnel from the 118th Airlift Wing, Tennessee; the 136th Airlift Wing, Texas; and the 139th Airlift Group, Missouri. These professionals know what "Global Reach" is all about and are able to effectively handle challenges that come their way.[45]

With the end of the cold war our nation came to grips with a new definition of national security. New threats from multinational non-state actors began appearing on the scene. The fight against narcotics is a key concern for the US in the

Western Hemisphere. The Guard's air defense units are playing a key role in the equation to help thwart drug traffic.[46]

The Guard's air defense units are presently involved in Southcom's Operation Coronet Nighthawk. The units perform this mission on a rotational basis at Howard AFB, Panama. This mission has been exclusively an Air Guard mission since 1990. This forward presence and ability to project power is one piece of the puzzle necessary to stem the drug flow from Latin America. Air National Guard pilots involved with Coronet Nighthawk have been responsible for more than 100 intercepts, resulting in the seizure of tons of illegal drugs, mostly cocaine.[47]

In the area of psychological operations, the state of Pennsylvania is home to the famed 193rd Special Operations Group (SOG). This Harrisburg, PA, unit is the only psychological operations unit within the Air Force. They possess the capability to transmit radio or television signals from their aircraft in support of military operations anywhere in the world.[48]

The 193rd has earned the title of the most deployed unit in the Air Force, being tasked with as many as 10 deployments a year. Along with normal training missions, exercises and overseas deployments in support of NATO and Asian commitments, the 193rd has been called upon to perform its psyops mission in support of US combat operations. The unit has seen action in Urgent Fury (Grenada), Operation Just Cause (Panama), and Desert Shield/Desert Storm. In Desert Shield the 193rd was the first

unit to the theater.[49]

In July 1994 the 193rd was called into the middle of the Haitian problem to assist in stopping the mass migration from the country. The unit's focus was the broadcast of messages pertaining to democracy and illegal migration to the US. Their efforts were productive as the Coast Guard reported the number of boats taking to the seas decreased significantly. The voice of the quiet professionals from the 193rd has become an integral part of our strategy of "Global Reach and Global Power".[50]

FORCE STRUCTURE FOR SUPPORT FORCES

The Air Force relies heavily on the Guard's Engineering and Installation units. They account for 81% of the total force structure.[51] These units are highly skilled and support the forward presence strategy by their worldwide training missions.

In July 1995, 250 guardsmen from six units convened in Europe to participate in Empire Endeavor 95. This was the largest Air Guard deployment of its kind. The exercise combined 57 real-world communications projects with wartime readiness training missions.[52]

The guardsmen completed projects in the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Turkey, and Germany. The projects included installing radio antenna towers, and upgrading underground phone lines with fiber optics and copper cables. Many of the traditional guardsmen were civilian communication specialists who brought their diverse knowledge and skills to the job. This diversity produced a strong team in support of the

mission.[53]

Another valuable asset to the Air Force is the Guard's Combat Communications units. The Air Force would not be able to maintain its current operations tempo without the support of the Air National Guard's Combat Communications units. The Guard currently provides 79% of the Air Force deployable communications capability.[54]

ANG Combat Communications are of strategic importance to our national security objectives as was witnessed in Haiti in OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY. The 251st Combat Communications Group (CCG), Ohio Air National Guard, managed communications equipment in support of this operation. They effectively integrated personnel from 25 different combat communications units from across the US to provide secure voice and data transmissions for the multiservice task force in the region. Despite the tremendous heat and humidity, the 251st was able to get all systems up and provide terminals with round the clock coverage. This technical support was invaluable to the joint force commander.[55]

PART III - THE FUTURE OF THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Since the end of the "Cold War", the US defense strategy continues to evolve to meet the new security challenges. Due to the changing security requirements, the activities of the Air National Guard will be significantly different than those of today. The Air National Guard will aggresively pursue new mission opportunities. Some of these opportunities will take the

Guard into the areas of space and unmanned aerial vehicles.

It is safe to assume that the Air National Guard of the 21st century will be involved in most of the Air Force mission areas. The integration of roles and missions will be so complete that only the smallest contingency may be executed without the Air Guard forces.

The mission priorities of the future will be changing. Continental air defense, general purpose fighters, combat communications, theater air control, and dedicated manned reconnaissance may see a reduced role. In support of the two Major Regional Contingencies (MRC's), the need for aerial tankers and airlift will be desperately needed.

Along with an interest in space missions, the Guard will be looking into the development and employment of unmanned aerial vehicles. It is certainly probable that the Air Force of the 21st century may see bombers that will not carry bombs and may not even carry pilots. Those with a human in the cockpit may be steered by the brain waves of a computer instead of the traditional hands on wheel. Secretary of the Air Force, Sheila Widnall chartered an advisory group that predicts that it may not be too far down the road where robot planes could roam the world with laser weapons to destroy ground and air targets.[56]

As the nation looks to the Air Guard for more dependency, it is imperative that the Guard adjust to the realities of the 21st century. In addition to seeking new missions, it will become a top priority to maintain a high level of readiness and training.

The Director of the Air National Guard, MG Donald Sheppard, emphasizes that the Air Guard's future lies in Cyberguard.[57] This involves the inter-connection of all guard units on the computer network. This will provide the Air Guard capabilities to transmit voice, data, graphics and video transmissions. All of these communication initiatives will allow the Air Guard to provide quick and useful information to the field so as to be better prepared to project power and provide global presence.[58]

CONCLUSIONS

We have seen the evolution of the Air National Guard and how it has effectively integrated into the "Total Force Concept". The Air National Guard has been involved in every crisis this nation has endured and will be waiting in the wings to take on any new threats and challenges.

A unique characteristic of the Air Guard has been its "Spirit of Volunteerism" in carrying out its duties. This spirit is the very heart of the citizen-militia concept and has been in existence since our nations inception. The Air Guard will continue to promote this spirit and be ready to support our national security objectives of forward presence and power projection.

Without a doubt, we will see the roles and missions of the Air National Guard expanded. The lack of any clear strategic threats and pressing domestic problems are driving the defense budget in a downward spiral. The combination of economic operational efficiency while still being able to maintain a high

degree of competency will mandate the nation move toward greater reliance on the Air National Guard.

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