

ADDRESS BY SENATOR MORGAN
TO THE 18TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION

WINSTON-SALEM HYATT HOUSE

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THE FUTURE OF THE GUARD

1. Current status

- a. North Carolina Guard in good shape
 - (1) Military tradition of the South
 - (2) Leadership
- b. Other state Guard not in good shape
 - (1) Residue of Vietnam
 - (2) Lack of Military tradition
 - (3) Less sense of history and responsibility
 - (4) Recruiting problems
 - (5) Retention problems
 - (6) Quality problems
 - (7) Training difficulties

2. Pentagon response

- a. Failure to admit the problem
 - (1) Competing interests
 - (2) Institutional "can do" attitude

3. Congressional response

- a. Late recognition of "Total Force" implications
- b. Political unpopularity of hard decisions
- c. Guard and Reserve costs are manpower costs
- d. Pentagon response frustrating Congressional desires

4. Future of the Guard

- a. Salvation in integration with active force
- b. Public understanding is building
- c. Congressional support in response
- d. Pentagon reorganization to stress Guard and Reserve
- e. Public and Guard support the key

THE FUTURE OF THE GUARD

CURRENT STATUS

The current status of the National Guard differs by type of unit and by state.

NORTH CAROLINA GUARD

In North Carolina, the Guard, in general, is in very good shape. I sent my Legislative Counsel for Armed Services, Colonel John Stirk, down to Fort Bragg to take a look at the readiness condition of the North Carolina Army National Guard this summer. He came back and described his findings to me in detail. He confirmed what I thought would be the case. That the North Carolina Army Guard is in a good state of readiness.

I think there are two reasons for this good state of

readiness: The military tradition of the South and the leadership in the North Carolina Guard.

It is still an honorable and respected thing in the South to be a part of the military and we are not ashamed to be patriotic and give of our time and talent to be ready to defend our country. We welcome the military people and experience in our lives and we assume that everyone will do his part.

The other reason for our success here in North Carolina is that we have fine leadership in the Guard. This leadership has been able to cope with the heavy demands of a changing society, a changing role for the Guard and a changing war potential. Of course, this fine leadership is available because of that same military tradition I just mentioned. It has always

been the tradition and pride of the best of our families to prepare themselves for leadership positions in the military.

We haven't forgotten that pride and that obligation.

OTHER STATE GUARDS

Unfortunately, the state Guard in other states and other parts of the country is not in such good shape.

The reasons for this are many. One reason is the residue of Vietnam. That unfortunate war, fought for noble purposes but without popular support, poisoned the well from which we must draw personnel and support for the Guard. This was particularly damaging in those states where their faith in what we were doing was not sustained by the military tradition we have here. Our sense of history and responsibility has

served us well in bearing the burden and responsibility of that war. It has enabled us to come through it with a pride and sense of destiny intact so that we still participate in preparation for defense. Those not blessed with our background contribute most to the severe recruiting problems the Guard faces in many areas. Hand-in-hand with the recruiting problems we are seeing severe retention problems. Even when some Guard units can meet their recruiting and retention goals, they are able to do so only by sacrificing quality in their people. This makes the task of leadership even more difficult than usual, since training requirements are magnified with less competent, less trainable people.

When we talk to Guard leaders from some areas, we are

told that recruiting has become so difficult that they must spend the majority of their time in recruiting efforts. When this is added to the increased amount of time they spend on retention efforts, it accounts for so much of their available time there is little left for training.

This is particularly disturbing because the low quality of the people they are able to attract and retain requires much greater training time than previously. We are told by Guard leaders from some areas that if they have ten training subjects for their people, that by the time they reach the sixth subject they have to start over because the people have forgotten the first three.

PENTAGON RESPONSE

The Pentagon is aware of this situation. The question is, what are they doing about it? I'm afraid the answer either is "not very much," or at least "not enough."

There are several reasons for the inadequate Pentagon response to these problems. One is the expected problem of competing interests. The Department of Defense is charged with providing for the defense needs of the country, within a limited authorization of funds and forces. The pressure is great to channel those resources into the active forces at the expense of the Guard and Reserve. The Pentagon gives lip service to the Total Force concept but not much more. You can tell where the real emphasis and power is in the Defense Department if you take a look at its structure and realize

that the Guard and Reserve are still treated as bothersome appendages and not really given the position and influence they deserve in force structure and resource allocation.

Another reason for inadequate Pentagon response is the result of the "can do" attitude we prize most in the military. They have been given the All-Volunteer Force and have been told to make it work. The evidence is overwhelming that it is failing; yet, the Pentagon cannot admit that, for it sees that failure as its fault. The fault lies not with the Pentagon, of course, but with the idea itself. You cannot treat the military as a job and expect to attract the numbers and quality of people necessary for a modern fighting force. Even with deficiencies in quantity and quality, you cannot do it for

acceptable costs. The evidence is plain for all to see, but the Pentagon cannot admit failure, even though the failure was not for want of trying but for want of proper tools to achieve a false goal.

CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSE

But the Pentagon surely is not the only responsible agency. The Congress must bear some of the responsibility. The Congress also came late to a recognition of the real implications of the "Total Force" and "All-Volunteer Force" concepts. They are now beginning to deal with the hard questions of personnel motivation and management, where previously they had been seduced by the glamor of hardware solutions to every problem.

The Congress has to make decisions on questions like reinstatement of Selective Service registration, as a signal to the youth of America that it owes an obligation in exchange for the benefits of citizenship. This signal will go to the rest of the world that we are a nation ready to mobilize if the need arises. Surely, this signal of our nation's need would be a first step to encourage enlistments.

This session I tried to amend the appropriation bill to provide for just such Selective Service Registration, but not a draft. I failed because too many members were afraid of the political consequences if they supported me. I am sure they misread the mood of the people. I am sure the people will tell them, when they return home to visit or when they fail to be

re-elected, that the people do understand our peril and will support Selective Service Registration when I offer it during the next session of Congress.

The Congress is beginning to understand that the core costs needed for Guard and Reserve are manpower costs. They are beginning to understand that these must be funded if a viable force is to be maintained.

I don't put this forth as an excuse for anything the Congress should do, but we are frustrated by the lack of response in the Pentagon to the obvious failures in the present system. When they recognize what should be done and come forward with positive programs we can support, our task will be much easier.

FUTURE OF THE GUARD

I see the ultimate solution of the Guard and Reserve in integration with the Active Force.

For some time now, we have seen how vital the Air Guard and Reserve units have been as a result of integration into the daily mission of the Active Air Force.

We have seen how our Army Guard and Reserve units have been revitalized when they are integrated fully into an active unit.

Further initiatives are being planned and I believe we should support any efforts along this line.

As Vietnam recedes and as America's spirit is rebuilt, I see an improved public understanding of the role of the Guard. I sense a re-awakening of understanding in the people that not all the nations wish us well and that strength is not an invitation

to war but a necessary framework for peace.

I see Congressional support in response to this signal from the people that they are ready to build a real defense, without waste in scarce dollars, and based on an obligation to defend our great privileges.

I look for a realization by the Pentagon that major changes must be made in its structure and approach to the problem. They will come to see that they must stress Guard and Reserve strength.

Finally, I see the Guard as a leader in demonstrating to the public what a responsible and viable force really should be. You who serve in your communities must convince those around you to provide the support we need to make the hard decisions.

SPENCH BY SENATOR ROBERT MORGAN
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