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National Guard: Who, what, why

Q. What is the Hawaii National Guard?

A. It is a military force of Island men under Island commanders. Its 29th Brigade is the first line of reserve for the U.S. Army. The Guard's Nike-Hercules missile crews protect the State from air attack. Its Air Guard flies F-102 fighter interceptors that serve a similar function as a State air defense team.

Q. What is the Army Reserve?

A. It is another, but different, back-up force for the U.S. Army.

Q. What is the difference?

A. The National Guard is a military force under Gov. John A. Burns. The Army Reserve is a part of U.S. Army, Hawaii, which does what the Pentagon and others in Washington tell it to do.

Q. Has Burns now lost control over the Guard?

A. No, he still retains control until May 13. That is when the Guard becomes mobilized and becomes a part of the U.S. Army. Then its boss will be President Johnson.

Q. Are there any guardsmen who won't be affected by the call-up?

A. Yes, the 1,500 members of the Air National Guard, and slightly more than 800 guardsmen on Oahu at Nike missile sites and National Guard headquarters and in the band.

Q. Didn't the National Guard and the Army Reserve merge?

A. Former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara wanted to merge

them but Congress wouldn't let him. He felt a merger would bring more efficiency.

Q. Are not Guard generals political generals?

A. That is an old charge but actually they are nominated by the President and approved by Congress. They must have the same qualifications as any other military officer.

Q. Who pays the Guard?

A. Some get their pay from the federal government, some from the State. That's because the Guard has two missions.

Q. How is that?

A. The federal mission is to support the Armed Forces. The State mission includes quelling riots and assisting the Governor in the event of a natural disaster, such as a seismic wave.

Q. Some guardsmen wear uniforms and are at Ft. Ruger all day; others work elsewhere all week as civilians. How come?

A. Those in uniform represent their respective branch of the Armed Services yet are paid at regular State civil service rates. These uniformed members are State employees. Those not in uniform are not.

Q. Is the man in uniform then the same as the Regular Army soldier stationed at Ft. Shafter?

A. No. The man at Ft. Shafter is on a different pay scale and gets certain fringe benefits such as the PX, commissary, Tripler, the government pays for moving his family, retirement benefits and so forth.

Q. What happens when a guardsman goes on active duty on May 13?

A. Then he is the same as the soldier at Ft. Shafter, getting the same pay if the same rank and he can go to the PX.

Q. Does the guardsman need to drill much?

A. He goes to 48 drills a year, usually on Saturday

and Sunday though he can go home at the end of the day. In the summer he goes to a two-week camp.

Q. What does he do at these drills?

A. He may go to the rifle range inside Diamond Head, or study guerrilla warfare techniques or clean his rifle.

Q. Can he spend the time playing basketball in the armory?

A. No, he can play basketball during off-duty hours if he wants to.

Q. What does he get paid for when he drills?

A. He gets the equivalent of one day of Army pay for a one-day drill.

Q. Are drill periods like an eight-hour day in civilian life?

A. No, most drill days run closer to 12 hours a day.

Q. Does the Guard in Hawaii get involved in race riots?

A. It never has, but it is called out once in a while for a disturbance of some sort, usually at the prison.

Q. What else does it do?

A. It plays a major role in maintaining law and order for the Governor whenever there is a natural disaster. If Hilo's waterfront were shattered by a wave again, the Guard would help police prevent looting.

Q. How old is the Guard in Hawaii?

A. 75 years old.

Q. Has it ever gone to war?

A. In World War II many guardsmen volunteered with Regular Army outfits, many became the heart of the 100th Battalion. In other states whole Guard divisions marched off to war. That didn't happen in Hawaii.

Q. I thought guardsmen stay home and fight?

A. It has more or less been that way since the earliest days of the nation when each state had its own militiamen. But sometimes these men have crossed borders to fight.

Call will strain labor force on Neighbor Isles

The call-up of Hawaii Army National Guardsmen and Army reservists May 13 will affect 1.3 per cent of the State's civilian labor force.

The proportionate effect will be more severe on the Neighbor Islands than on Oahu.

Military sources today said about 3,217 guardsmen and 635 reservists will be called to active duty.

Hawaii's civilian labor force totals about 291,720, according to latest available reports.

Here is the breakdown by islands:

Oahu — 1,978 guardsmen and 518 reservists, total of 2,496 — 1.06 per cent of labor force.

Hawaii — 717 guardsmen and 117 reservists, total of 834 — 3.33 per cent of labor force.

Maui — 303 guardsmen — 1.92 per cent of labor force.

Kauai — 172 guardsmen — 1.38 per cent of labor force.

Lanai-Molokai — 47 guardsmen — 1.82 per cent of labor force.