

Viewpoint
Tonight at 9

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War duty seen for reservists

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Sen. Hiram L. Fong, who has been trying to get an explanation why Hawaii must activate a "disproportionate" number of its Army Reservists, said today it was apparent that the more than 4,000 Reservists called to active duty are destined to fight in Vietnam.

Indeed, an explanatory letter from the Defense Department, seems to bear out the

senator's fears. "There seems to be no question now that these troops are going to Vietnam," Fong said.

Fong had on two occasions written to the Pentagon demanding to know why Hawaii "has to assume 45 times its burden."

"This is one of the smallest states being ordered to come up with one of the largest contingencies of Reser-

vists — we exceed New York and the other larger states by three times," he said.

On April 11, it was announced that 24,500 Reservists and National Guardsmen would be activated May 13. The total from Hawaii was 4,416 more than 17 per cent of the total and included the 29th Infantry Brigade.

"I am very angry and I'm going to take this to the floor of the Senate," showing how

unfair the Army is being and has been to Hawaii, the senator said.

The letter which triggered Fong's anger was from Lt. Gen. C. W. G. Rich, chief of Reserve components.

"As stated in my previous reply, the 29th Brigade was one of the selected Reserve force units and therefore would be capable of performing their mission in a minimum of time after being

ordered to active duty," the letter said.

Fong said the phrase "performing their mission in a minimum of time" — indicated distinct plans for the unit.

It was said that some of the 24,500 troops activated would be placed on standby for civil disorders and since there is no threat of such trouble in Hawaii, the only mission conceivable is the

Vietnam war, Fong concluded.

The letter continued: "Moreover the 29th is uniquely qualified to fulfill the requirement for an additional brigade at Schofield Barracks, readily usable for contingencies in the Pacific area."

The only contingencies in the Pacific area, Fong said, was Vietnam. Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford, when

he made the call-up announcement, said that 10,000 of the troops activated would be shipped to Vietnam.

"This is further indication that these boys will have to go to Vietnam," Fong said. The letter went on:

"Mobilization of another brigade to be stationed in Hawaii would involve an overseas movement en route to mobilization stations and might well be erroneously

construed as a reflection on the quality of units from Hawaii.

"Nothing could be further from the truth as these units are held in the highest esteem for their proven capabilities. I regret that my reply cannot be more favorable but I feel the current mobilization plan is in the best

interest of the nation as a whole." Fong said there was little chance the proposed call-up could be avoided although he said he would take to the Senate floor and demand an explanation why Hawaii was ordered to call "an unfair amount of its men" to active duty.

It was also noted that the other brigades called up last month, the 69th Infantry Brigade from Kansas-Missouri, and the 69th Infantry Brigade (mechanized) from Ne-

braska were classified as lacking "substantial quantities of essential equipment."

The classification was made by the Senate military preparedness subcommittee earlier this week. It listed several other units not equipped to fight in Vietnam. Conspicuously absent from the list was the 29th from Hawaii, indicating that the brigade was in top shape as far as number of personnel and the quality of the equipment.

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