

Standby duty may keep 29th at home ^{7/16}

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The Army Times, in its July 17 issue, hints that the 29th Brigade will remain at Schofield Barracks and not be sent to Vietnam.

Army officials will not discuss the future of the 29th other than to say its mission remains the same as it was at the time of the May 13 activation — to serve as a strategic reserve for the Pacific.

The nature of training at Schofield has led most Island soldiers to assume they are headed for Vietnam.

Yet rumors crop up from time to time that the 29th is Korea-bound.

A brigade spokesman, however, today denied that the troops are being issued heavy clothing for a cold climate like Korea.

The Army Times, a fairly authoritative source on military matters, says that 40 of the 76 National Guard and Army Reserve units called up last April are training for deployment to Vietnam.

But it says the remaining units will be kept in place to strengthen the strategic reserve both for the Continental U.S. and Hawaii.

Since the 29th's mission right now is to serve as a strategic reserve it is unlikely that it would be shipped to Vietnam to make room here for another unit now training on the Mainland.

At least this is how Army observers here interpret the article.

Once the 29th completes its infantry training, at the end of August, individual members of the outfit could be sent to Vietnam if they possess critical skills the Army needs in the combat zone.

The question of the 29th going to Korea developed because of reports the troops were receiving heavy clothing of the type needed to withstand the rigors of a Korean winter.

But the Army had an explanation for this. A spokesman said many 29th members were issued heavy coats and gloves with fur linings before the brigade was mobilized. This was when they went through basic training on the Mainland.

The training cycle at Schofield has been heavy on equipment and tactics needed in a Vietnam-type environment.