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The National Guard Citizen-Soldier. The Linkage between Responsible National Security Policy and the Will of the People.

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Abstract : A DOD special task force stated. Because of the shrinking military population, fewer people have direct contact with military service members. The significant decline in military experience of the American public and legislative members poses the risk of having an all volunteer force isolated from the general population. or worse, alienated. Historically,

the reserve component has played a significant role in assuring a better understanding of the need for military forces and developing support for military members within the states and communities. This finding of the task force capsulizes perfectly the need to maintain a high percentage of the US military force in the Guard and Reserve. The reliance on the Guard follows a long-term tradition in the United States for the use of an individual who is both citizen and soldier with loyalties and close associations with both roles. Tradition and the Constitution serve to guard the individual rights of Americans, and the citizen-soldier fulfills that protection. He has both direct and indirect influences on his elected officials, which gives him and his community a stake and position in policy decision making. Former Secretary Laird said recently in evaluating the success of total force policy, 'it has been the personal commitment of every citizen-soldier that has turned the Total Force concept into what it has become today, the foundation of America's security posture.' The role of the Guard and Reserve forces in two twentieth century wars demonstrates their value in ensuring the public trust when US forces are used abroad. The result of the absence of the reserve component in the Vietnam War and its necessity in the Persian Gulf War is a clear message for the future.

Descriptors : *NATIONAL GUARD , *POLICIES , *NATIONAL SECURITY , *PUBLIC OPINION , MILITARY FORCES(UNITED STATES) , MILITARY RESERVES , WARFARE , RISK , DECISION MAKING , COMMUNITIES , PERSIAN GULF , ARMY PERSONNEL , TASK FORCES , POPULATION , MESSAGE PROCESSING , SPECIAL FORCES , VIETNAM , ALL VOLUNTEER.

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