JOHN G. NORRIS IN A NEW AUTHENTIC
BEHIND-THE-NEWS SERIES OF ARTICLES

(See page 7)

DOLLARS
VS
DEFENSE

(See page 8)

OCTOBER, 1957
THE RESERVE PROGRAM

Comment by
Rep. Overton Brooks, Louisiana
Rep. George P. Miller, Maryland
Rep. Paul Cunningham, Iowa
Rep. James P. S. Devereux, Maryland

Senators Strom Thurmond (S.C.)
Past President, Reserve Officers Association

Causing me great concern is the present policy of cutting back the military reserve program.

When national defense is at stake, there is no economy in trying to save a few dollars on our own military programs when we have wasted so much money overseas in so-called economic aid to raise the living standards of foreign countries.

I am as anxious as anybody, and a great deal more anxious than some members of Congress, to take every action possible to bring about more real economy in the Federal Government. But I do not believe it is real economy to reduce our reserve forces. The United States has never been a country that depended on a large standing army to meet its defense needs.

The United States has depended upon its civilian reservists—the reserve forces—to bear the heaviest burden of warfare. In World War II, 98 percent of our fighting forces were either civilians or members of the reserves.

The reserves are particularly valuable because they have the skills and experience both of the civilian and the military man.

I hope that the Defense Department will advise the Congress of its needs so as to be able to maintain our reserve forces at their present level. The appropriation of funds for this purpose is real economy because it has been estimated that four or five reserves can be maintained for the same amount of money it takes to maintain one member of the regular forces.
The Department of Defense has recently announced the necessity for reducing the size of our active forces. Other reductions may follow. It is now, in my opinion, that we must take another look at our Reserve program, for I cannot foresee the international situation allowing us the luxury of reducing our Reserve forces as well.

We have a heavy investment in our Reserve officers, many of whom are combat trained. It would be folly to so reduce the Reserve program as to render it ineffective for any of these officers. We cannot afford to allow Reserve officers to drift away from the Reserve program for lack of interest or incentive.

We are told that we must reduce the size of our active forces in order to save money. Naturally, I want to effect savings for our taxpayers, but I do not want to do so at the expense of the Nation's security. We all know that the cost of maintaining a soldier in the active forces is many times the cost of maintaining the same soldier in the Reserve. Actually, the money spent for the Reserve program is one of our best investments in national security. It is for the foregoing reasons that I have asked the Secretary of Defense to require the military departments to make a thorough and painstaking study of their Reserves so that their findings can be reported to my subcommittee when Congress reconvenes in January.

We must have the Department's recommendations on the future size and roles and missions which we can expect the various Reserve components to assume in the future. In view of the international situation, the need for economy in defense spending, and the changing concepts of warfare, this study is necessary so that the Congress may be informed and, if necessary, enact implementing legislation.

Mr. MILLER of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BROOKS of Louisiana. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. MILLER of Maryland. I want to congratulate and commend the gentleman for a very important and very worthwhile statement, and wish to add my voice to what he is saying. I think he is entirely right and that it is most important that we consider this problem very carefully.

Mr. BROOKS of Louisiana. I thank my friend for his kind remarks.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BROOKS of Louisiana. I yield to the gentleman from Iowa who is a distinguished member of the Committee on Armed Services of the House.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM of Iowa. I thank the gentleman and I also wish to thank him for his splendid remarks and congratulate him for the position he has taken. I trust something will be done along the lines suggested by him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GAVIN], also a member of the Committee on Armed Services and very much interested in what the gentleman from Louisiana has had to say, may have permission to extend his remarks in the Record following those of the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. BROOKS].

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

Mr. DEVEREUX. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BROOKS of Louisiana. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. DEVEREUX. As the gentleman knows, I have been associated with this program for some time. I want to call the attention of the membership, and I think the gentleman is in agreement with me, to one subject when he speaks of reserves. Does he include the National Guard?

Mr. BROOKS of Louisiana. Yes. The National Guard is, of course, a component part of the Reserves.

Mr. DEVEREUX. So that the National Guard people will know that the committee is very much concerned about the apparent change in policy, which I regret very much. I trust we will have a very thorough and detailed report from the Department of Defense in January.

Mr. BROOKS of Louisiana. May I say to the gentleman from Maryland, who has worked hard on this same program, that the whole country is disturbed about the changes being effected. I dare say every Member of Congress is going to hear during vacation about some of these things and some of the comment may not be very palatable to the Members.

Mr. BYRNES of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I am more than pleased to learn from the gentleman of the appropriate action that he and his committee have taken looking into this state of affairs as far as our Reserve components are concerned.

I would say to the gentleman that it has been a matter of continuing concern to me over a long period of years that it would appear that some of our military, the professionals, give lip-service to the need for and the dependence which they place upon the civilian reserve, but do very little about actually implementing that and making a workable force until an emergency arises, when it is too late.

Mr. BROOKS of Louisiana. Yes; and (Continued on page 20)