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**POLITICS & GOVERNMENT**


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in 1987 just advertising Jell-O. Compared to such outlays, the amount spent on political advertising "seems like a bargain."

- *Voting in presidential elections is declining.* True, voter participation did fall steadily between 1960 and 1980. In 1960, 62.8 percent of eligible Americans voted for president; by 1980, only 52.6 percent did. But the 1980 rate was not precedent-setting; only 52 percent of eligible Americans voted in the Roosevelt-Hoover election of 1932, and 51 percent voted in the Truman-Dewey battle of 1948.

In 1984, 53.1 percent of Americans voted for president, a slight rise over 1980. The authors predict that because the U.S. electorate is aging, and older Americans tend to vote more often than younger ones, the percentage will increase this November. But nonvoting Americans probably avoid the polls more out of laziness than alienation; 41 percent of those questioned in a 1983 ABC News/Harvard survey said they had not registered to vote because they "just hadn't gotten around to it."

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**FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE**


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### *The Guard's Role*

"The National Guard: Whose Guard Anyway?"  
by Maj. Samuel J. Newland, in *Parameters*  
(June 1988), U.S. Army War College, Carlisle  
Barracks, Pa. 17013.

In recent years, several governors, objecting to Reagan foreign policy, have barred National Guard units in their states (including Minnesota and Maine) from joining U.S. training exercises held in Latin America. In an August 1987 decision, a U.S. District Court ruled that the governors had no power to block these units from holding or joining maneuvers overseas.

But the debate over the National Guard, notes Maj. Newland, an analyst at the Army's Strategic Studies Institute, is not new. In fact, the discussion is almost as old as the United States.

The Constitution's framers could not decide whether the new nation should have a unified army or if each state should have its own defense force. The Militia Act of 1792 required that all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 45 perform military service—in units controlled by the states. During the War of 1812, the governors of Connecticut and Massachusetts barred their militias from entering combat.

After the war, state militia units withered; they were largely replaced by volunteer forces. By the 1880s, the militias had become known as the "National Guard" and were recognized as the U.S. Army's reserve forces.

The passage of the Dick Act in 1903 allowed the federal government to subsidize National Guard units and give them regular Army advisers. Further reforms enabled the president to draft National Guard regiments into the Army in time of war and send them overseas; 17 divisions in World War I were composed of these soldiers.

Since the 1970s, overseas training for National Guardsmen has be-

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come routine; in Fiscal Year 1987, for example, 31,059 Guardsmen trained in 35 nations, including West Germany, England, and South Korea. Moreover, each of four regular divisions in the Army currently is allotted a "round-out brigade" from the National Guard that would bring the division to full combat strength in time of war; Newland predicts that more such arrangements will follow as congressional budget cuts further reduce the Army's personnel.

Gubernatorial efforts to inhibit the training of National Guard units, Newland contends, are unwise, because of the vital role such units could play in any overseas conflict. Governors, he suggests, should "find other avenues to air their foreign policy differences with the president."

### *A Pacific Century?*

"The Myth or Reality of the Pacific Century" by Christopher Coker, in *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 1988), MIT Press, 55 Hayward St., Cambridge, Mass. 02142.

In 1898, during the U.S. conquest of the Philippines in the Spanish-American War, Theodore Roosevelt noted that America's future as a world power lay not with Europe, but with East Asia: "The Pacific era, destined to be the greatest of all, is just at its dawn."

During the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev each alerted their respective countrymen to the need for increased national presence in the Pacific. But such sentiments, argues Coker, a lecturer at the London School of Economics, do not mean that the locus of military and economic power will shift from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The idea of a "Pacific century," he contends, is "a peculiarly American obsession" and it is not shared by Asian nations.

If these nations (including Japan and China) fused their economies, they would constitute the world's largest trading bloc; in 1984, these countries accounted for 40 percent (\$700 billion) of the world's exports, compared to 33 percent (\$277 billion) from the European Community. But Asia's nations compete fiercely against one another; there is little chance that they will join against the West or the Soviet Union. Even the region's strongest powers, China and Japan, show little sign of moving toward economic cooperation.

Moreover, the odds that the Asians will forge a *military* bloc as powerful as NATO are even lower. Unlike Europe, where the West unites against the threat of Soviet aggression, there is "no common adversary" in Asia. Non-Communist Southeast Asian nations, for example, fear Vietnam's large and experienced army; Vietnam fears China's. Although the Kremlin's Pacific Fleet is now the largest single Soviet naval force, Coker believes that the Japanese would rather act as negotiators between the superpowers than rearm for self-protection.

Coker predicts that the 21st century will be one in which global power will be shared among the United States, Western Europe, Japan, and the Soviet Union. In various ways, these four will compete as fiercely in the Atlantic as in the Pacific. The vision of Asia as *the* future arena of international rivalry, he observes, is a vision held "by many in the United States but surprisingly few on the western rim of the Pacific Ocean."