

Guard bias widespread, Board calls for change

*Bias blamed on mission changes,
downsizing and poor communications*

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Racial discrimination have become widespread in the Alaska Army and Air National Guard, according to a state investigation.

On January 19, 1995, Governor Tony Knowles signed an administrative order instructing Adjutant General Jake Lestenkof to name an Alaska National Guard Board of Inquiry to review "the general working atmosphere within the ANG, including policies of those in command," and instructed the board to provide a written report to the Lestenkof which would include recommendations regarding changes in statutes, regulations, disciplinary actions or other administrative policies they feel would be in the best interests of the state and good military order and discipline. A copy of the report would also be delivered

to the governor and legislative leadership.

On May 18, 4 months after that administrative order was signed, the Board of Inquiry presented Lestenkof with that report. The Board, in a letter to the governor, said they "found that under the prior administration (of General Hugh Cox), there were systemic problems in areas including command, communications, promotion of officers, drug testing, waivers of requirements necessary for advancement, discrimination complaints, availability of training, and loss of Alaska Native Guard members. The Board's report contains 28 recommendations to address these systemic problems." These recommendations and a complete analysis of the situations stemming from these allegations will appear in the June 7 edition of *Tundra Times*.

Page 7, please