

# SARAH PALIN HAS FAILED IN HER PRIMARY ROLE AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD

Brandon Friedman has a critical picture of how the head of Alaska's National Guard flip-flopped on his opinion about Sarah Palin just as she was handing him an extra star. Apparently, her most significant act as Commander-in-Chief of the Alaska National Guard, thus far, is buying off a guy who then went on to shill for her.

But there's actually more to the story—and it shows that, even according to this now-promoted shill, Sarah Palin has failed in the area where he most relies on her help, recruiting new members of the National Guard.

Here's what Campbell had to say in his interview for the September 3 BoGlo story about Palin's role in recruiting:

About 75 percent of the Guard's budget, he said, is the purview of the National Guard Bureau in Washington, which is responsible for ensuring the Guard is prepared to be called up by the president in a time of war. **Her primary role, he said, is in recruiting National Guard volunteers.**

Campbell said he has met with Palin about once a month, but communicates with her by phone and email more frequently. Earlier this week, he noted, she ordered the Air National Guard to fly a planeload of supplies to hurricane victims in the Gulf Coast

"She is very much engaged in what we are

doing and she asks a lot of questions," Campbell said. "Maybe not the most engaged, but definitely engaged.

She is very much involved in ensuring that I am recruiting enough people." [my emphasis]

That is, Sarah Palin's primary role as Commander-in-Chief is ensuring the Alaska National Guard meets its recruiting targets.

But measured on those terms, Palin is a failure. That's because Alaska has the worst recruiting record of all 50 states.

The Alaska National Guard, which Republicans are pointing to as an important national-security credential for vice presidential choice Sarah Palin, has **personnel shortages that make its aviation units the most poorly staffed in the nation.**

Just six months ago, Air Force Maj. Gen. Craig Campbell, the Alaska Guard's top officer, warned in an internal memo that "missions are at risk." The lack of qualified airmen, Campbell said, "has reached a crisis level." [my emphasis]

Now, maybe when Campbell spoke of Palin's great support for recruiting last week, he was describing a big turnaround in the state's paltry recruiting. Except that, even though recruiting has improved of late, it's still the worst in the nation.

According to the National Guard Bureau, the AKANG has the lowest personnel end strength in the nation. At just 84% assigned strength, the AKANG is one of only nine states currently below 90%. You will notice that since the letter was implemented in March of this year, the AKANG has increased from 81%.

And it sounds like it's about to get worse. You see, those boosts in recruiting came about partly by withholding promotions if officers weren't making sufficient effort to recruit new Guardsmen. Yet the men and women in the AKANG just saw Campbell accept a promotion while all of their promotions are being held off because of a claimed "leadership deficiency" in the Guard—and at least one of them is pissed.

Craig Campbell, the Commissioner of DMVA and the Adjutant General of Alaska made a policy that there would be no Alaska Air National Guard promotions to Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel or Chief Master Sergeant without his personal approval.

The intent is to "motivate" these senior leaders to recruit more new people into the ANG. This policy has frozen the advancement of some very deserving individuals who have already earned the right to be promoted. As the Adjutant General, he has the right to institute any plan he wishes. This edict was tolerated by our loyal Guardsmen until the hypocrisy became overwhelming.

Evidently, General Campbell is receiving an unprecedented and undeserved promotion to three-star rank on Sept 7.

[snip]

General Campbell's promotion will be a "state" promotion. He will be a three-star general only while on State business. In a very rank-conscious environment, this distinction will not be lost on the other Flag Officers. He will look the part of a three-star general but will not be regarded as one by the very people he needs to work with and influence.

This promotion will only benefit General Campbell who will trumpet his new rank. It will not help further the cause of

the Alaska National Guard or its loyal  
and now outraged members.

No one can be promoted to the top ranks  
because of perceived leadership  
deficiencies but even with his obvious  
leadership flaws, he has no reluctance  
whatsoever to accept a cosmetic  
promotion.

This is the state of Palin's celebrated tenure  
as Alaska's Commander-in-Chief: the worst record  
in the country on her primary task in the role.