MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT



WINTER may be a time for hibernation for some of Nature's creatures, but not so for those who toil in Washington in the myriad of causes which are served there. The first six months of the year are the most active for the officers, staff and committees of the National Guard Association of the United States.

One of the first items to which we turn our attention is the Fiscal Year 1965 Defense Budget, which will be released early in January. This must be analyzed to determine its effect on National Guard programs. Thought must be given to testimony to be presented during the year before various committees of the Congress, much of it related to the Budget. The actual preparation of testimony is preceded by months of study and research.

Staff work is already underway for the mid-January meeting of the Executive Council. Standing and Special committees will be meeting in Washington in the months to come. We will be occupied with the development of broader studies and expanded programs in every area of the Association's interest. In these endeavors we depend in large measure on our committees.

These committees play an active role in developing and implementing programs and shaping the positions and viewpoints which become Association policy. The Executive Council and the General Conference, which includes Delegates from every State, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, are influenced by committee actions which normally take the form of recommendations to either the Council or Conference.

Since the committees play such a vital part, every effort is made to assure a broad representation in their composition. Consideration is given to an individual's experience in a particular field. For example, we attempt to have on the Committee on Public Relations officers who in civilian life are in the publishing, public relations, advertising or newspaper business. There are always places on that committee for officers responsible for recruiting and publicity programs for the National Guard in their States.

On all general committees there is both Army and Air representation, and effort is made to assure a geographical spread. In the case of the Army Affairs Committee, membership includes commanders of both Infantry and Armored Divisions, in priority and non-priority status; Brigades and Command Headquarters. Similarly, the Air Affairs Committee members represent Air Defense, Tactical Fighter and Heavy Transport organizations, and ground support units.

For our Finance Committee, we seek Guardsmen with experience in banking and business; to the Legislative Committee, we appoint individuals with some understanding of the legislative processes, who have access to legislators and a special knowledge of the legislative requirements of the National Guard. On our Constitution and By-Laws Committee, we want two or three Guardsmen with legal background.

Every committee member is expected to contribute to the development of committee recommendations or proposals. In addition, committee members are expected to present the viewpoints of the many types of organizations and groups within the Association. The committee system permits a gathering of sentiment from among the membership. They are the collecting agencies for the vast store of knowledge, ideas and opinions that are to be found in our membership.

Proper functioning of our committees assures that the Association's affairs are run as the members desire, and that policy reflects the thinking and attitudes of the majority of our members. Further, committees provide for continuing review of our various activities, as well as being the instruments through which fresh ideas and thought are funneled to the officers and staff.

It is my intention to keep our committees as informed as possible on the day-to-day activities of the Association and to assure closer committee-staff liaison. Thus I hope the committees will play an ever more active role in Association affairs.

JAMES F. CANTWELL Major General NJARNG PRESIDENT, NGAUS THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN
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DEAR GUARDSMEN: Not long ago, we met a Canadian Militia officer and enjoyed a brief chat.

Topic A, to him, was a Civil Defense role. In Canada, he said, that became the Militia's primary mission. Training programs and schedules were switched-around. Strictly military subjects were subordinated for a couple of years. Now that the troops are considered qualified in "CD," they're being permitted to go back to general soldiering. Once more, for example, Artillerymen are getting back into the nearly-forgotten habit of automatically counting-off seconds between flash and sound of gunfire to estimate range.

Topic B was reorganization. Though, like their British forebears, Canadian military units lay great stress on military history, tradition, and unit lineage, that's taken a beating in some organizational upheavals; for instance, disappearance of a unit that claimed to have been the first Allied outfit to set foot on occupied France in WW II.

More recently, we read that there's a plan to trim-back the Canadian Militia from 50,000-some to around 35,000.

We just thought this might have a familiar ring to citizen-soldiers on this side of the Border. —AGC