



"... we must tighten our ranks, unify our front and strengthen our Association as never before if we are to continue as an effective instrument in behalf of the National Guard."

The President's Report



A condensation of the first report of Maj Gen William H Harrison, Jr, as President, National Guard Association of the United States, to the 80th General Conference, Atlantic City, NJ, 29 Sep 1958.

THE National Guard Association of the United States is a proud organization—proud of its accomplishments in behalf of the National Guard. For over three-quarters of a century we have dedicated ourselves to the promotion of adequate National security and to the improvement of the National Guard as an integral part and within the framework of the common defense. Despite the fact that the membership of this Association represents widely divergent geographical areas and interest; despite the fact that we are a heterogeneous political group, we have successfully, and with exceptional singleness of purpose, unified ourselves for the enhancement of the common good. This has not always been easy. Many events have transpired and circumstances arisen which might have destroyed lesser organizations and men of weaker purpose. Had this come to pass, the National Guard which we represent would have long since been eliminated by those who have continually sought its destruction. I repeat the oft-stated axiomatic expression of our distinguished past President, Major General Ellard A Walsh, that if this Association becomes moribund or ceases to exist, the National Guard will likewise cease to exist.

It is paradoxical that we who seek with honor, loyalty, and personal sacrifice, to prepare ourselves for the common defense must expend our individual and collective time and energies in fighting for the right to fight for our Country. Nevertheless, it has been thus for the greater part of a hundred years and recent events forecast no change in that pattern. Therefore, gentlemen, I charge you that we must tighten our ranks, unify our front and strengthen our Association as never before if we are to continue as an effective instrument in behalf of the National Guard.

The National Guard is proud of its heritage, secure in its historical niche, and unique in its dual State-Federal character. It has achieved its present prominence by hard work and sacrifice. It has proven itself in two World Wars and Korea as a capable and worthy combat force. It stands ready to meet the enemy on the ground or in the air. But, today this record of service and this capability are not enough. We have passed the nuclear threshold and have taken the first bold steps in the age of space. The record of the past 50 years has become prologue. Today, and in the years to come, we must direct our attention to the future, anticipating and preparing for the probable developments in the changing patterns of National defense. We cannot remain static, but must accept the challenge of technological progress. Only in this manner can we expect to maintain the prominent position which we have

attained and earn the right to continue as an integral part of the first line of defense of this Country.

As the Country's largest and most active military reserve, our National security, indeed our very survival demands that we grow ever stronger, never weaker! But, there are those who, consciously and selfishly, would have it differently, and we are compelled, almost continuously it seems, to fight for a status quo, to say nothing of our right to grow and keep pace as the Active Military Establishments move ahead in this highly technological age.

Hardly had we returned to home stations, following adjournment of the 79th General Conference in Louisville, just one year ago, when we learned, not from official sources, but through the military press, that a two-phased plan to reduce the Army National Guard in personnel and units was in the making.

You are all familiar with the proposals of the Department of Defense to reduce the strength of the Army National Guard to 360,000 from its present 400,000, and the plan of the Department of the Army to eliminate more than 1,800 units under the guise of a reorganization.

There is no question that those responsible for planning and implementing our National military policy are faced with a perplexing problem of unbelievable dimensions. Reduced to its simplest form, the problem is to prepare the defense of this Country with such forces and weapons as to be able to meet a devastating nuclear war or, if necessary, to fight a more restricted type of conflict which, if properly handled, could be contained in one geographical area.

It was at this very point that those of us in the National Guard came into conflict with the military policy as it was developing in the Pentagon. The drastic and continuing reduction of our conventional forces, both active and reserve, lessens the capability of our Military Establishment

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JENNIE PARKER	INSIDE BACK COVER

DEAR GUARDSMEN: Every so often, a thin little pamphlet comes into NGAUS Headquarters from an Adjutant General's Office or from an individual who has been in a housecleaning mood. It may be a training publication from '09 or thereabouts. It may be a souvenir booklet of a World War II outfit's 40th annual reunion—complete with photos of "the old outfit." We're delighted to get each one. We only wish we got more like them.

Within a matter of months, we'll be moving into our fine new Memorial Building, and there, we'll have a fine, big library—lots of room. The shelves that are so well-filled in our present limited quarters, will look awfully bare in the greatly expanded space.

In many AGs' offices and unit libraries, in the homes of retired or deceased Guardsmen, we're sure there are books and pamphlets which, to the layman, are as dry as the dust that covers them. But to the military historians and students they're valuable "raw material" for, in the printed word of the past lie lessons for the future.

We're especially anxious to locate the missing-'till-now Proceedings of NGAUS General Conferences prior to 1905, but we're not real choosy—virtually anything pertaining to "the military" will be received with appreciation. THE STAFF.

OUR COVER: A few of the many words spoken at the NGAUS' 80th General Conference, tersely express the deep significance of "spot" developments and trends affecting the National Guard and the Nation. In this instance, we reverse the axiom that "a picture is worth a thousand words."

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