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of the United States

## The Role of NGAUS

THE basic objectives of the National Guard Association of the United States have come down, constant and unchanging, through the years:

—Use all honorable means available to us to strengthen and improve the Army and Air National Guard as modern, effective instruments of National defense.

—Serve the needs and interests of the thousands of National Guard officers whom we list on our membership rolls.

—Represent the collective viewpoint of the National Guard in dealings with the Congress, the Active Military Establishment, the various Government agencies, and National news media.

But if our basic goals remain the same, the elements which make up those goals and the methods by which we attain them, have been vastly altered, particularly in the 20 years since NGAUS started to function in its present, fulltime, professional form.

A "modern, effective instrument of National defense" is not the same thing today as it was 20 years ago, and neither are the elements which will "strengthen and improve" it.

Likewise, the "needs and interests" of our members have changed vastly as has American society itself.

Washington, too, has witnessed an unceasing and all-pervading change since the end of World War II, in the Congress, in the Military Establishment, and in the relative balance of power between segments of the Federal structure. Indeed, nowhere in that whole faceless entity called the "Government" do they do business like they used to a decade, or even half a decade, ago. Decision-making in particular is far more orderly and rational than it ever was before and consequently, it is far less subject to intuitive, "seat of the pants" judgments.

For these reasons, and many more, our Association must take frequent stock of itself, to evaluate its effectiveness in this rapidly-changing milieu, and to make sure that it still possesses the adaptability which is its most priceless asset.

Are we directing our brainpower and energy into the most promising and productive channels? Are our methods of operation keyed to present realities and do they produce results? Are our doctrinal concepts of the role of the National Guard still valid, and our goals still relevant? Should we "think big"—bigger than we have in the past—and expand those of our activities which seem to promise the greatest return? Are there areas which we are neglecting, into which we should project our thoughts and efforts, to the greater benefit of the Guard and Guardsmen?

These are just a few of the questions which we must ask ourselves, if we are to continue to serve successfully as the voice of the National Guard. For that reason, I have appointed a committee of earnest, forward-thinking Army and Air National Guard officers, under the chairmanship of Major General Thomas S. Bishop of Texas, to take a searching look at our Association and all its activities.

It will be the responsibility of the committee to review our past and present, and to recommend programs and courses of action for the future. Its job won't be completed overnight, but when it has been done and a final report turned over to the President, we can expect that report to contain the blueprint by which we can continue to serve the National Guard as successfully in the future as we have in the past. ♦

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