



AS WE SEE IT

VINDICATION

OF the hundreds of thousand of words that flowed from the typewriters of Washington correspondents into the columns of newspapers across the Country in recent weeks, detailing and speculating upon Presidential proposals to strengthen the Nation's defense, two facts stood in clear and sharp relief.

The Army National Guard and the Air National Guard, it was conceded in every quarter, are the most ready of the Reserve Components.

The general agreement that both the concept and the organization for national defense were out of balance and that there was a genuine need for increasing our capacity to wage conventional war.

The admissions were in effect substantiation of a position to which the National Guard Association of the United States adhered through the long years when massive retaliation and downgrading of conventional capabilities were the guiding and popular defense philosophies.

In the support of this balanced force concept and in warning of the dangers of neglecting conventional forces, including the long and determined campaign to reduce the strength of the National Guard, NGAUS spoke clearly and with vigor. Motivated not by selfish interests to maintain a sizeable National Guard as some implied, but by a genuine concern over the deterioration of conventional forces, spokesmen for the Adjutants General and this Association pounded the corridors of the Nation's Capitol, sought and won the support of the Nation's Governors, and carried its argument to the citizens in city and hamlet. Association representatives and senior Guard officers, serving on various Pentagon committees, hammered the argument at every staff level and among the Secretariat.

We yield at this point to the almost irresistible temptation to review the position of this Association as propounded and promulgated since 1958, the year in which the Department of Defense made its first determined effort to reduce the strength of the Army National Guard and the Department of the Army proposed elimination of nearly one-third of the existing Army National Guard units. We cannot truly deny a certain "I told you so" attitude, but we shall try.

In his address to the 80th General Conference of this Association at Atlantic City in September of 1958, Major

General William H Harrison, Jr, Association President, stated the NGAUS position in urging a balanced and flexible defense establishment capable of responding to any type of aggression. He proposed:

"1. That the full industrial and scientific capacity of the United States be exploited in a determined and sustained effort to assure the Country's leadership in the fields of military science.

"2. That in this effort, our existing conventional forces not be neglected, but by reducing our capability to fight a non-nuclear war, we are placing this Country in a position that is both politically and militarily untenable.

"3. That this Country must have depth to its defense force and this can be achieved only by maintaining a strong Reserve Force as backup for its heavily-committed Active Establishment."

NGAUS adhered to its basic policy and fought, ever more determined, for the balanced force concept, even in that period following the visit to this Country of Premier Khrushchev when increasing emphasis on disarmament and peaceful coexistence flourished in the so-called "Spirit of Camp David." In the period that is sometimes now referred to as the complacent years, NGAUS raised its voice time and again, crying out against the neglect of our own conventional forces and warning of the dangers of relying almost wholly on a total war concept.

In a statement in February 1960, the Association President restated this policy:

"The broad policy of your Association is that the United States, in order to assure its security now and forever, must maintain a balanced defense force capable of fighting any type of a war, any place, at any time. This force should support a strategic concept which General Maxwell D. Taylor, retired Chief of Staff of the Army, has described as one of 'flexible response.' Quite simply, this means that we must be prepared for any emergency, and that, in the event of a nuclear attack on this Country, be capable of achieving recovery and retaliating with equally devastating blows. It means further that we must have ground, air, and surface forces in sufficient strength and equipped with modern weapons to wage effectively a conventional type war, either limited or broad in scope."

This is what President Kennedy has called for as the Nation seeks to regain military strength to secure our freedom against the onslaught of Communism. ♦



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNITED STATES

THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN

1 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N. W., WASHINGTON 1, D. C.
PHONE DISTRICT 7-0341

SEPTEMBER, 1961 15-9

Publication Office

★Telegraph Press Bldg.,
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

General offices: 1 Massachusetts Ave., N. W. Washington 1, D. C. Second class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa., and at additional mailing offices.

Domestic subscriptions for home delivery: \$2.00 per year. A year's subscription is included within the annual dues paid by members of the National Guard Association of the United States. Subscriptions to foreign countries \$2.50 per year.

SPECIAL RATES TO NATIONAL GUARD UNITS FOR BULK SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ONE ADDRESS: 20 to 200 subscriptions, \$1.75 per subscription; 201 or more subscriptions, \$1.50 per subscription; SINGLE COPIES, 25c.

★ALL MATERIAL INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION, AND SUBSCRIPTIONS, SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO 1 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.W., WASHINGTON 1, D. C.

THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN welcomes original articles bearing on matters of National defense with special emphasis on Army National Guard and Air National Guard aspects. Payment is made upon publication at a minimum rate of three cents per published word. Manuscripts must be accompanied by return postage, and no responsibility is assumed for their safe handling.

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DEAR GUARDSMEN: Our attention was caught recently by a National Guard Bureau Bulletin item entitled "Aero-Space Ground Equipment, Gravel Deposits from Tires."

We had visions of Buck Rogers types tooling-around rocket-powered vehicles to perform necessary services on manned satellites millions of miles out in space. And we wondered why they'd be concerned about such mundane matters as gravel and tires; deadly cosmic rays and anti-gravity gizmos would seem more in keeping.

But upon further reading and inquiry we found that the item concerned the problem of jet engine-damaging gravel being tracked onto taxiways and parking ramps by the tire treads of "follow-me" jeeps, crash trucks, fuel trucks and the like; that a recommended solution is tire recapping with smooth or wide-angle "V" treads. Furthermore, that in keeping with the Air Force emphasis on its new-found Space mission, the term "Aero-space" is being worked-into all kinds of nomenclature.

Wanta bet the ol' reliable Mess Kit doesn't come up as an "Aero-Space Nourishment Container?" —AGC

OUR COVER: With President Kennedy's sober warning of crisis that, as of now, brings up the probability of mobilization of about half of the Air Guard, and the possibility of at least some of the Army Guard, National attention once again focuses on the No. 1 Reserve Force's capability of serving anywhere on the Globe.

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