



Major General William E. Ingram (Ret.), President, NGAUS

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### WORLD WAR II: LOOKING BACK AND AHEAD

For the thousands of World War II veterans who participated, the D-Day 40th anniversary pilgrimage conducted in June was especially poignant and meaningful. I say this in part because I was privileged to participate with a group of National Guardsmen, revisiting the National Guard Monument on Omaha Beach on the spot where the 29th Infantry Division stormed ashore on the first invasion wave on June 6, 1944.

Our modest but meaningful ceremony at Vierville Sur Mer, France, coupled with our participation in the Army's Omaha Beach National Cemetery ceremony, at which President Reagan spoke, only reinforced our appreciation of the sacrifices made by the nearly 10,000 dead buried there in the cause of freedom, both ours and our European allies.

Looking back on this year's events and those of 40 years ago is particularly appropriate this month as we look forward to our own National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) General Conference scheduled to convene only two months from now. Our theme, "Success in Battle to Defend U.S. Goals and Interests," is designed to look back at these World War II sacrifices while at the same time looking forward to what is needed to make sure we aren't required to pay those prices again. To make sure of that, we will address the question of combat readiness and defense preparedness. Speakers will be asked to describe how we can improve our posture to deter war and, if that fails, to prevail in combat if required.

The preparations for D-Day and the concluding months of World War II 40 years ago are a good benchmark to measure how we are doing and where we are headed. It also is a timely subject just one month before the national elections, when the state of our national defense is certain to be a political issue.

This reflection on the second phase of the Total Force Policy is appropriate 40 years after World War II because of some of our experiences in that war, particularly the experiences of the many National

Guard units that fought in Europe. Forty years ago, we had nine Guard divisions in combat in France and Italy. Yet it is worth recalling that this was the final phase of the war, which probably lasted longer than it might have otherwise because of the woeful state of U.S. defenses in the late 1930s due in large part to the political popularity of isolationism in those times.

World War II lasted six years from Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939 until V-J Day in 1945. However, the chances of a war lasting six years in the last quarter of this century are not great, even less than the chances of our mounting the major invasion of such a war five years after its start. We must conclude, therefore, that there never has been greater urgency in attaining combat readiness for Army and Air Guard units than now. We know Air National Guard units are scheduled to deploy overseas in a matter of a few days. A large portion of the Army National Guard is scheduled to be overseas in less than 60 days after mobilization decision-day. Such a schedule allows for very little additional training, which means we must be combat effective now, not relying on months or years of non-existent time to get ready.

Of course, several factors mitigated against such a schedule in the 1940s. We did not enter the war until December 1941, more than two years after it had started and after France had fallen and Great Britain had barely hung on through the Battle of Britain. Here in the United States, we were beginning to try to catch up from our lack of attention to national defense during the 1920s and 1930s, when the state of the U.S. Army had fallen to a very low level—reflected, too, in the state of the National Guard in those years.

Things are better today, but we remain short of too many critical items of equipment that would make a division or other combat formation fully combat ready considering the level of training of the personnel. The Air Guard is "equipped" in the sense that it has deployable aircraft on hand in units. However, its squadrons'

PAA (primary aircraft authorized) frequently are established at lower levels than otherwise identical units in the active Air Force. And continued emphasis must be put on modernization of the Air Guard so it isn't flying obsolete aircraft in the 1990s.

\* \* \*

Many of the senior leaders of the Air Force and Army who participated in D-Day or World War II have recently retired. One good example is Lieutenant General David Grange, who commanded the Sixth U.S. Army in the western United States before serving as chairman of the D-Day commemoration committee. However, another such leader remains very much on the scene, and he is doubtless the quintessential example of a man who went through the 1940 National Guard mobilization, training, World War II combat and then the remainder of a most successful military career. I refer to General John W. Vessey, Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Vessey enlisted in the Minnesota National Guard in 1939, and was mobilized with his unit in 1941. He continued to serve with the 34th Infantry Division (Minnesota and Iowa) throughout the war and its service in North Africa and Italy. If anyone should, Vessey knows what it means to mobilize and train in the austere military circumstances of World War II's beginning, and what it took then and should take now to send a Guard unit into combat.

It is this theme that we will be asking our speakers to address October 12-14 in New York City. We also will be considering resolutions submitted by individuals and by the states seeking to attain and sustain our posture in the near and more distant future as a part of the Total Force.

I am looking forward to presiding over this General Conference, and I hope you—the NGAUS members—will make plans now if you haven't already to attend our Big Apple '84 extravaganza, which should be fun and rewarding, too.

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### Features

#### 9 29th DIVISION "BLUE AND GRAY" IS BACK

Department of Defense and Army leaders announced the reactivation of the 29th Infantry Division, Maryland and Virginia, as the Army Guard's 10th division, to be configured as a new "light" division.

#### 13 LEADERSHIP: TWO VIEWS

The seeking of power has negative connotations with many Americans. However, the author argues that for a military leader to be effective, he must seek and appropriately use power to accomplish the mission.

#### 20 NODAK'S HAPPY HOOLIGANS

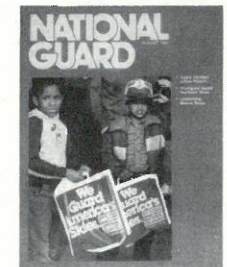
The Happy Hooligans of the North Dakota Air National Guard have built a national reputation within the Total Air Force for excellence as they patrol the northern skies.

#### 24 ESGR DIRECTOR SPEAKS OUT

Dick E. Ellis, executive director of the National Committee for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, is interviewed on topics ranging from reemployment rights to employer relations to family problems affecting Guardsmen.

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COVER: Carrying their Air Guard mementos, two tikes rush from one display to another during the 113th Tactical Fighter Wing, District of Columbia Air National Guard's open house. Photo, Captain Jean Marie Brawders. Design, Johnson Design Group.

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