

Maj Gen John L. Matthews, President, NGAUS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS

I have received a large number of inquiries both from within the military and from the civilian community regarding the sensitive issue of homosexuals in the military. I provide for them the resolution that was passed last December by the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) Executive Council, which states the NGAUS does not support lifting the ban.

I always end up being asked my personal views as well as those of the Association. In regard to the Association, I find very few people who support lifting the ban and a great many who oppose it. Let me share with you my personal feelings.

The sexual activities of any individual have always, in my background, been a personal and very sensitive matter. Society, over the years, has become much more focused on sex as publications, movies, TV talk shows, etc., have fostered an obsession with it. For many of us in the nation who were raised with healthy doses of Judeo-Christian ethics and who revere the scriptures, this obsession has not been viewed as a positive development.

I, personally having been around more than 60 years, find myself occasionally looking back with fond remembrance to simpler times—to times when the nuclear family (mother, father and children) with all its challenges was the unquestioned norm of society. My upbringing also included some discussion about major events in the history of the world, both from secular history and from biblical history. One of those events was the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, and, thus at an early age, I and, I believe many of my contemporaries, became convinced that homosexuality, as I understood it, was biblically defined as an abomination. Since I had little contact with anyone, so far as I knew, who might be so inclined, the issue did not present itself.

Occasionally, over the years, I have met individuals who appeared to be

The NGAUS Executive Council Resolution Opposing the Lifting of the Ban on Homosexuals in the Military

"Whereas, Homosexuals in the military is a very complicated and emotional issue; now

"Therefore, Be It Resolved, That the National Guard Association of the United States supports the present policy in law and regulation; and

"Be It Further Resolved, That the NGAUS supports the position that the Congress hold hearings to consider all sides of the issue, to fulfill its constitutionally mandated role under Article I, Section 8;:

"To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces."

struggling with strong tendencies toward homosexuality. So, now I find myself, along with many others, faced with the proposition that homosexual behavior is to be legitimized by my government. It is a confusing and unsettling proposition (for me) that on the one hand it is called a criminal act, on another it is called a civil right—or simply an alternative lifestyle.

I see judges, in states that call sodomy a criminal act, issuing orders against discharging homosexuals from the military. I know I don't have a legal mind. However, it is difficult for me to follow the fine line that suggests while the behavior is defined as a criminal act, the announcement that one includes oneself in the body of the people who participate in that behavior, cannot be used to restrict access to such institutions as the military.

The writings that are associated with the founding of the republic are replete with references to the reliance of the founders on Diety. While the republic had, as part of its roots, the determination to avoid a state religion, reliance on providential support was fundamental.

Today, however, to base an argument on a reliance on a Judeo-Christian moral or ethical base is

viewed as heretical. Federal facilities, which must avoid depictions of the nativity at Christmas, must permit gays on a protest in Washington to have access to those same facilities to frolic partially nude in a variety of unique activities.

During the 20th century, we have evolved into a complex society. Many seek stability in this confusing world. Sexual behavior has been analyzed and reanalyzed by talk show hosts, lawyers, behavioral scientists and school boys on the playground. A number of sincere and eloquent speakers call for an end to the ban. I am unable to do so for the reasons I have mentioned, but I certainly support their right to do so. I also deplore the activities of those who use the occasion of this debate to justify acts of violence against those with a different point of view.

In the final analysis, the matter of lifting the ban or leaving it in place will be decided by those who hold the constitutional authority to do so. Once again, we in the military will then have the opportunity to demonstrate our unswerving support for the principle of civilian control.

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Could the future of U.S. forward presence in Europe and even other places around the world rest on the roundout and roundup concepts? According to COL I.J. Zembruski the Guard as a forward presence is logical, simple and cost-effective.

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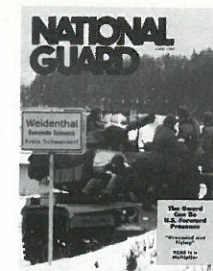
The testing of the Reserve Component Automation System (RCAS) is over and the fielding has begun. Seen as the best solution to connect units across the nation with local area networks, RCAS will move the Army Guard and Army Reserve into the 21st century.

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Lt Gen John B. Conaway, chief of the National Guard Bureau, and MG James Ryan, the adjutant general of Arkansas, renamed the Army Guard Professional Education Center to the LaVern E. Weber Professional Education Center. They honored the man who created the only Army Guard school system.

Tennessee Takes First In Medevac 32

The Tennessee Army Guard accepted the first state-of-the-art UH-60Q "Dustoff" Black Hawk medical helicopter to enter military service. Congresswoman Marilyn Lloyd of Tennessee hailed the event as a credit to the Army Guard and to her Chattanooga unit. It's our quantum leap forward, Lt Gen John Conaway said.



COVER:

The 32d Infantry Brigade (Separate), Wisconsin Army Guard, has spent several annual training periods in Germany practicing its wartime mission. Why not use Guard combat units as U.S. forward presence in Europe to reduce defense costs? WIARNG photo. Design, Johnson Design Group.

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