

The President's Report

Achievements mark Momentous year

(As prepared for delivery to the 97th General Conference of the National Guard Association of the U.S., Seattle, Wash., Sept. 22, 1975)

NINETEEN seventy-five has been a busy and eventful year for the Association. In some ways, it can even be described as a momentous year.

Challenges arose that penetrated to the very heart of what the National Guard is, and what it is to become. Issues surfaced that kept the Association continuously involved in actions and reactions of major importance to the Guard. There were an endless array of studies and proposals, many of them productive and worthwhile but some of them counter-productive, in our view.

As we developed our responses, and conveyed our views to the responsible agencies and officials, we made extensive efforts to keep Guardsmen in the states informed on what was taking place. We tried to keep a constant flow of information going out via THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN, the Washington Letter, the NGAUS Press Service, and countless fact sheets, letters and phone calls.

We turned frequently to Guard leaders in the states to support us in the actions we were taking. I want to say, right at the outset, that most states responded magnificently. It quickly became apparent that you were reading and digesting the information we were distributing, and that you were talking and writing knowledgeably on matters of critical importance to the Guard. You prepared well-reasoned expressions of your views for public officials and for the Association. In brief, Guardsmen in most states gave us prompt, effective support, and that enabled us to attain many of our objectives.

The Association's goals

An annual report permits the leader of an organization to review specific events in the context of how they contributed to accomplishment of overall goals. Let me dwell for a moment on our Association goals — our broad, long-range goals as opposed to short-term tactical objectives.

This Association exists for a single, over-riding purpose — to promote the national security of the United States. Our organization has been dedicated to that purpose for as long as we have existed — 97 years. I believe, as I'm sure you do, that the protection of this country must always be the motivating force behind all our actions.

In support of that fundamental purpose, we are committed to supporting and improving the National Guard. Our goal is to insure that Guard units, Army and Air, are fully and continuously ready to play their traditional, first-line defense role.

We also are dedicated to maintaining the Guard's traditional state orientation. Peacetime command and control of the Guard is vested in the states by the U.S. Constitution and by law, and we intend for it to remain that way. The Guard has always been the readiest and most responsive of the reserve components. It is strong and capable *because* of state control, not in spite of it.

Readiness is our business

In today's terms, when we talk of the Guard's national defense responsibilities we are talking about readiness — readiness to

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The spirit of the militia may have flickered after Bunker Hill, but George Washington soon got his camp at Cambridge, Mass., organized and began training his young army. By October 1775, he was able to show a fairly well-organized camp to a congressional committee headed by Benjamin Franklin. For more about Franklin and other characters of the Revolution, see page 2.

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