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President
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Your Man in Washington

NATIONAL Guard officers recently have been reminded that it's time to renew their memberships in the National Guard Association of the United States, and this offers an opportunity to review the purposes which your membership dollars serve.

First, the dollars you pay in dues give you a voice at the policy-making level of Government on matters that affect the Guard. Your views, backed by your experience with part-time military forces, filter upward through both command and Association channels to emerge as formal National Guard "positions." The officers and full-time NGAUS staff convey those views—your views—to the appropriate decision-making officials in Congress, the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies.

Over the years, this effort has produced results of incalculable importance for the National Guard as an arm of National defense, and for individual Guardsmen. Its influence has been important, frequently decisive, in obtaining virtually every asset the Guard enjoys today—modern new armories and other facilities; retirement pay; greater equity in pay, promotions and fringe benefits; vastly increased Federal support in training and equipment, and an endless array of other improvements.

In fact, it was an earlier generation of Guardsmen, speaking collectively through NGAUS, who won legal recognition of the Guard as a first line adjunct to the Army and Air Force, and this was the keystone around which we have built the modern National Guard.

A current case in point is the Technician retirement plan through which we seek full Federal career and retirement status for nearly 40,000 fulltime Guardsmen. It has taken nearly 10 years of intensive effort to bring this eminently worthwhile proposal to the point where its passage by Congress appears imminent. During that period, literally thousands of hours have been expended in developing a retirement program which will meet the needs of the Technicians, then steering it through the countless committees, agencies and offices whose approval must be obtained before it can be enacted. Frustrations and setbacks now appear to have been surmounted.

What needs to be recognized today is not that it has taken so long—that frequently is the way in Washington—but that without your collective effort, focused through NGAUS, the plan still would be no more than a dream.

Nor is this all that your membership dollars buy. Through "THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN," and innumerable news letters, memoranda and reports, we maintain a constant flow of information to you and your leaders on developments which will affect the Guard, its units and its members.

In addition, through our public relations activities, we seek to build an understanding of the ARNG and ANG, their accomplishments, capabilities and problems, with the National press. Guard activities in most cases are reported with greater depth and accuracy today than ever before. NGAUS, working closely with the States and with the National Guard Bureau, has played a key role in developing this closer rapport with the press.

We also devote a segment of our time and energy to helping you do your public relations job. In recent years, this has taken the form of sample speeches and press releases, suggested community relations activities, an annual Information Officers' workshop, books on the National Guard, and many other forms of assistance. Recently, we enlarged our staff and expanded our activities to provide such additional services to the States as an NGAUS Press Service and Washington Letter.

Finally, we are making your membership dollars pay *direct* dividends through such innovations as life insurance (and salary insurance for Technicians), and a low-cost travel program which will be initiated in 1969 with a National Guard "Holiday in Europe" tour.

All these things, and many more, have grown out of the dollars you invest each year in dues, and out of the time and thought you devote to the affairs of your man in Washington—NGAUS! ♦

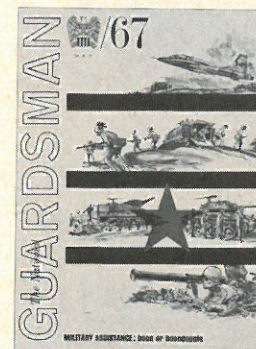


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