



JAMES F. CANTWELL  
President  
National Guard Association  
of the United States

## Annual Report of the President

ONE year ago, Delegates to the 85th General Conference did me the honor of selecting me to serve a three-year term as President of the National Guard Association of the United States. I assumed this high office fully aware that every leader must face-up to the responsibilities of the position he accepts and must be prepared to advance the cause and secure the wellbeing of the organization he leads. He must be concerned for every individual member and for the special interests of segments within the body. Above all, however, he must place the welfare of the whole organization. This philosophy has guided me in the office I am serving.

I am grateful for the confidence expressed in me and find it difficult to adequately convey my appreciation, not alone for the honor bestowed, but for the support of the membership during my first 12 months in office.

We are assembled in this great city 86 years after a group of Militia officers first gathered in Richmond, Virginia, for the purpose of discussing "matters of practical reform which would make the Militia a more effective instrumentality in our system of National defense."

The matters the Delegates to this Conference will consider during the next four days are basically similar to those that held the attention of the commanders of the State Forces at that Richmond meeting. We, today, are consistently working to make the National Guard, Army and Air, "... a more effective instrumentality in our system of National defense."

Although the spirit that sustains the National Guard in this age is that which inspired the conferees at the meeting of 1878, the State military forces of today bear little resemblance to those of that era. The problems that confront us, similar as they may be, are tremendously more complex.

As National Guardsmen, we derive much satisfaction looking back over the decades and recounting the great service that the Militia and the National Guard, both Army and Air, have rendered this Nation in times of war and peace. This tremendous contribution to America's security, commencing as it did before we were a nation, is, understandably, a matter of great pride.

However, the age in which we live, and in which we pursue military careers as civilian soldiers and airmen, is one of rapid and far-reaching change. We are experiencing major adjustments in our way of life. These changes are the results of many factors—scientific and engineering advancements, increases and shifts in population, the march of medical science, more advanced education and continuing industrial revolution—to cite but a few. Our national way of life is influenced by actions that take place in other areas of the World—political, economic, military, and industrial. We are, for example, a great military power, not because we desire to be so, but because we are compelled by situations beyond our control and beyond our borders.

Having succeeded over a period of some millions of years in making the World into a crowded, complicated, high-speed universe, possessing power of self-destruction, we are now moving into outer space. We recall with a certain nostalgia when communications were only as fast and efficient as the Pony Express. We are coming upon

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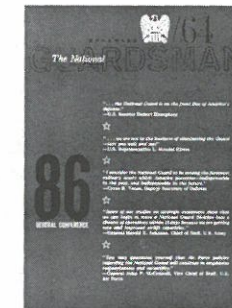
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