Our election process is as regional as it is national. Each area has three National Guard officers who represent their area’s views and concerns on the NGAUS Executive Council. The area concerns are as different as Connecticut is different from California. The Executive Council members tie the regional issues into our larger national picture, enabling the NGAUS to provide a united representation before Congress.

It is this leadership that gives us national direction before the public and the members of Congress. However, not often considered, is the fact that our leadership also conducts the official in-house business of the National Guard Association of the United States and its two sister organizations, the Historical Society of the Militia and National Guard and the NAUS Insurance Trust. In order for the three organizations to properly represent the views of the membership and continue as viable organizations into the coming century, the daily business must be conducted effectively and efficiently.

That is why I commend to you the article on page 14 of this publication. This Association has three outstanding officers running for the office of president. For the first time in the history of this Association, I suspect, we conducted a “presidential forum” at the invitation of the National Guard Executive Directors Association (NGEDA). The three candidates faced the many state executive and state association presidents and answered a variety of questions, concerns and pending issues facing our organization.

The exchange was a healthy one in that it allowed the state association leadership to voice their concerns about the conduct of business and to examine the issues that face our Association. The three candidates have heard these concerns, and, I hope, will heed the concerns.

In conclusion, I say to you that in the absence of representation, our Association suffers. In the absence of representation, the United States suffers. It is the duty of every officer and every member to participate in the life of our Association. Our Association is not a spectator sport. It is only through their active participation that our Association can continue to represent our interests in the national arena.

The single most important thing that we can do is to vote. We must vote in every election, as well as in the elections for our Association. We must vote for those who will work to represent our interests and our needs. We must vote for those who will work to make our Association strong and effective.

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