

A Welcome Pat on the Back

At a time when it apparently is popular to castigate the Military Services, including those of us in the National Guard, it is especially heartening to hear words of support and appreciation. Not long ago, one of our State Commanders-in-Chief spoke of the role of the National Guard with such effectiveness that his message merits sharing with a larger audience.

Governor Arch A. Moore, Jr., of West Virginia, addressed his Guardsmen during a Governor's Day ceremony following an outstanding mounted review. He told them:

"Historically, this Nation has always operated from the fundamental belief that there is a division between the civilian leadership of our Nation and the military leadership. . . . As a representative of the civilian leadership of the State of West Virginia and of this Nation of ours, it gives me a wonderful opportunity to say to those of you who are members of, identified with, and committed to the National Guard, or to any of the Reserve Components of this Nation: no Chief Executive, no Commander-in-Chief of the United States of America or any of his designees can be effective in handling the affairs of this Nation, unless he fully understands and appreciates that there is behind his civilian proclamation the strength of the Military Establishment of this nation.

" . . . The need for, and the absolute requirement of, a well-trained reserve that supplements and complements the civilian requirements is essential. No President can handle the affairs of the Nation without fully being apprised by his military commanders that his Nation is capable of undertaking any commitment that he may make. . . .

"So, I would say to you today that you are a part of a great organization that, for the moment, finds itself carrying out perhaps its own personal commitment rather than the Nation's, but with the full understanding and appreciation that there can well come a time when all that you have to give, and all the effort that you are required to make will be demanded.

"To some this effort may seemingly be referred to as an empty gesture. To some they may feel that you, and others like you throughout the Nation, are playing games. To me as the Commander-in-Chief of the West Virginia National Guard, I want you to know that you have the full confidence of the leadership of the State, and that you have our deep appreciation for the commitment that you have made. I happen to believe that it isn't easy to be a member of the National Guard, because it does, even in times of peace, require an even greater commitment—the separation of one from his family and his efforts to seek to build on his private affairs.

" . . . I simply want to say to the men here that they should understand that they are indeed appreciated for their service to their State and their contingency service to the United States of America."

These words, spoken with a deep feeling of sincerity, have meaning for every Guardsman. It is good to hear them from one of our civilian leaders. ♦



James F. Cantwell
President

National Guard Association
of the United States



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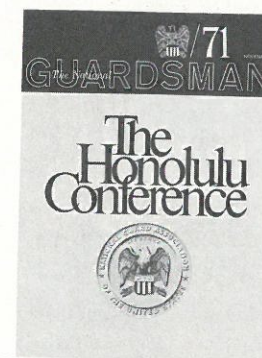
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