

AS WE SEE IT . . .



## THE JUNIOR OFFICER

(From remarks by Maj Gen Edgar C Erickson, Chief, National Guard Bureau, at the 326th Anniversary Dinner of the 176 RCT, VaNG)

IT IS the mission of the National Guard to train an M-Day force capable, within a limited time after mobilization, of taking its place in the line alongside the Active Army units. Although this mission may be stated in one brief sentence, it requires that certain aims and objectives be established by the Guard.

You are all aware that the development of a program to produce a stronger Reserve is a matter of top priority in the Department of Defense. President Eisenhower has stated that the legislative action necessary for the building of such a Reserve Force will be one of the first matters of business presented to the new Congress.

You know, of course, that this move towards a stronger Reserve Force will throw added responsibilities and greater demands on the National Guard. It is not economically feasible for this Nation to continue to support the tremendous Regular Military Establishments which are now in being. As we cut back these forces, we must necessarily strengthen our Reserves.

Any move in this direction, of course, will require that the National Guard work even harder to accomplish the training objectives which have been set for us. It is imperative that we maintain a high state of efficiency in every National Guard unit.

There are gathered in this hall tonight a large number of junior officers. It is upon your shoulders that these responsibilities lie heaviest. It is upon you men, who will be the senior officers of the National Guard in the future, that the greatest demands will be made, for it is the junior officer who is closest to the men in the line and to whom we assign the actual task of training our units.

In the final analysis, the man who fires the rifle, the man who pulls the lanyard on an artillery piece, the man who builds the bridge or sets the demolition charge, is the most important man on the team; and we must never lose sight of that fact.

Who, therefore, is of more importance in the training field than the man who supervises the training or who directs the instruction? And that is the important job of the junior officer in the National Guard.

You may look for and expect guidance, of course, at every higher level of command, but it has been my experience that the officer who does not permit himself to become totally dependent on his higher headquarters is the better officer; for we still look in the American Army for initiative. Our success in battle is dependent to an extremely large degree on the ability of our line officers to think for themselves and to make decisions. This is equally true in training.

To achieve the aims and objectives of the National Guard, we are forced to call on our officers for a great deal more time than the required two hours of drill each week and the 15 days for field training.

The backbone of our Army is its non-commissioned officers. It is important that we continue to develop this corps in the National Guard and strive to maintain its high degree of efficiency. This requires that we conduct non-commissioned officer and unit schools.

To keep our battalion, regimental and division staffs alert, we devote a good deal of time each year to staff training. All of these activities are necessary if we are to gain the goals which we have set for ourselves.

This schedule weighs heavily upon a National Guard officer; of this we are aware at all levels.

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## dear guardsmen:

Of the many responsible jobs that help keep the wheels rolling at the National Guard Association's Washington headquarters, not the least important to



the welfare of both Association membership and Guardsmen on active service is that held by Miss Patricia A. Dunn. "Pat" is Secretary to the Association's Legislative Liaison Officer. And she's kept busy preparing for her 'boss,' Col Mark H Galusha, documents that help to frame

legislation in Congress advancing the National Guard's role in the Nation's defense.

"Pat," who's one of those rarities in the Capital—a native-born Washingtonian (and of many generations back, too)—joined the staff in Dec '53, coming from Hawaii where she had served with the US Navy's Intelligence Office, in Honolulu.

Playing the ukelele, of course, is one of her accomplishments. And among her other hobbies is dancing and amateur theatricals. Before going overseas, Patricia had been an active member of the Washington Circle Players, and she hopes to resume soon her play-acting with a Little Theater group. Fond, too, of swimming and sailing, she rides these hobbies at Annapolis, to where she commutes on weekends in Summer from her Mt Rainier, Md, home.

THE STAFF

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## our cover

Accurate gunnery lies at the heart of the Air National Guard's ability to fulfill its part in the air defense of the continental United States in both its "runway alert" and M-Day phases. And so it is that CWO Robert R Hepker, Asst Adjt of Washington State's Hq, 142-Ftr-Intcp Wing, has captured the spirit of the Air Guard's training toward fulfillment of its mission, in his wash drawing inspired by the recent Air Guard Gunnery Meet.