



AS WE SEE IT

HOW CAN WE DO IT?

NATIONAL Guardsmen can be proud of their performance in the Berlin Crisis. They have proven that pre-mobilization claims of highest mobilization-readiness in the Nation's history are supported by accomplishment. Time between M-Day and full functioning at Army bases hundreds of miles from home, air bases an ocean away, has been measured not in months, but in weeks.

It is evident, however, that in the very highest circles, even higher levels of readiness are expected in light of World tensions that can be expected to last for decades—unless they snap first into all-out war.

Today, we're doing all manner of things that would have been thought impossible 25 years ago. How much more advanced will be our performance 5, 10—25 years from today? Guardsmen are the ones who know best what are our capabilities, as against our limitations. Guardsmen are the ones who should take the lead in hard, constructive, imaginative thinking about *how*—not *whether*—we can pull ourselves up to higher levels of *combat-readiness*.

We've got to weigh basic factors, of course.

First: Strength. Obviously units maintained at 51% to 75% of wartime strength can't be ready to go as quickly as those at 100%.

Second: Equipment. You're not ready until you have your essential tools.

Third: Training. Every man fully-trained in his own job; many ready to advance at least one notch higher; the whole unit trained as a unit.

Now, at high levels, the approach toward solution of the problems gives us serious qualms. First of all, it's tied to money, as though that—rather than National survival—were the end-all and be-all. It seems to be bound to the belief that the richest Nation on Earth, millions upon millions of whose citizens are living in a manner far beyond that to which they had been accustomed, can't afford to support Armed Forces at a level adequate for its defense. Aren't we ready—with our pocketbooks—for some of the sacrifice President Kennedy has called for? This same line of thinking then suggests that the only way to get combat-ready Reserve Forces is to support fewer units than we have now, but at higher strength and equipment levels. It falls for the old fallacy that relatively small but highly-trained forces counter the need for large armies. A Nation that had to scrape its manpower and womanpower barrel in World War II should know better than that!

Be that as it may, might we not do some thinking and planning along these lines:

First, again as always: Strength. Haven't we pretty well established that an active Army National Guard of 400,000 men, 27 Divisions and their supporting forces, is a *minimum*

in a time of continuing tension? Wouldn't the time lag between M-Day and readiness be eliminated or at least drastically cut by a plan such as Gen Harrison's (see "Washington Report," this issue) to have every unit carry in peacetime the number of ready-to-go Inactive National Guard "alumni" it needs for war strength?

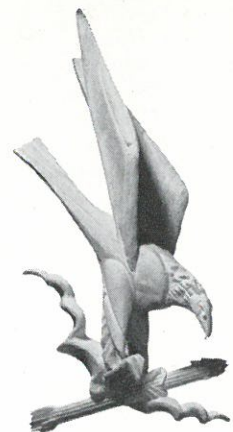
Second: Equipment. *Must* we accept the reasoning that we can't have the units we need because we can't equip them? *Why* can't we? Hasn't the richest Nation on Earth come to a sorry pass if it can't equip a two-Division force without yanking materiel away from others? Has anyone really faced-up to the question whether the American people will pay the tax bill for the tools its fighting forces need? As both taxpayers and ultimate consumers of the goods of war, can't we do our part toward getting this need across to our fellow-citizens and political leaders?

Third: Training. How much larger a chunk of the citizen's time can we squeeze out of him for military training? How much more mileage can we get out of his training hours through ingenuity, imagination, better management, and development of better techniques and more advanced training devices? Can't we take a hard look at some of the developments in the field of public education—things like "teaching machines" that are as far ahead of the blackboard-and-pointer as the F104 is ahead of the "Jenny"? What are the possibilities of closed-circuit television? Application of color, plastics, animation, to put realism and a greater degree of the applicatory phase into extension course lessons? Phonograph and tape recordings? Training films, slide films, for home study? After-hours use of public school and college facilities and equipment?

Impractical? Far-fetched? Cost too much? Maybe. But can't we "brainstorm" these and other ideas that spring to the tops of our heads? Maybe, as brainstorming has a way of doing, it will unearth an occasional gem that makes the mental effort worthwhile.

Finally, can't we do more to mass public opinion into acceptance of the need for the host of measures that are essential to building our defenses? If we're to demand more of the Guardsman's time for training, we're going to have to convince employers of the necessity (and it's going to take an all-out, high-level educational campaign to help swing it). If it's going to cost a lot more bucks, the neighboring taxpayers who see us heading for the Armory must know that we're going there on deadly serious business, and not have any lingering notions that we're heading for a militarized beer joint. *We're* the ones in the best position to do this.

All-in-all, as we said earlier, shouldn't we take the initiative and do some serious thinking and come up with our own solutions to the problem of greater readiness? ♦



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