

The President's Page

THE CIVILIAN COMPONENTS POLICY BOARD

WHEN we consider the vital role the citizen-soldier plays in the scheme of national security as evidenced by the contents of General George C. Marshall's great State Paper of 24 August 1944, dealing with the considerations incident to the post-war military establishment, it would seem logical and reasonable that decisions, plans and programs in connection with the organization, development and maintenance of the reserve components of the Armed Forces should be determined on the highest defense level and strictly adhered to by all concerned. With the promulgation of the Approved War Department Policies of 13 October 1945, Affecting the National Guard and the Organized Reserve Corps, much time was lost in the implementation of those policies due to the reluctance or disinclination of some to accept the provisions of those policies as approved by the Secretary of War. Vain discussions and contentions were resolved only through the medium of a clarifying directive by the Chief of Staff of the Army. The enactment of the National Security Act of 1947, although a step in the right direction, nevertheless greatly complicated the organization of the Armed Forces and notably the civilian components, and certainly the end is not yet. It was extremely unfortunate, too, that there should have arisen the agitation for the Federalization of the National Guard at a time when the National Guard was acutely engaged in its own reorganization.

THE National Guard has for several years believed that the organization and development of the civilian components could have been enhanced very materially had there been in being a high-level committee charged with the responsibility of making decisions with reference to plans, programs and activities affecting the civilian components. It had in mind the establishment of a committee comparable to that provided in Section 5 of the National Defense Act but which would include representatives of Army, Navy, Air and their reserves, including the National Guard, and which would function directly under the Secretary of Defense. Certainly it has been obvious for some time that such an agency was highly desirable, but unfor-

tunately nothing materialized in this respect. Had there been such an agency established, it is certain that the entire reserve program would be much further advanced and the Guard and the States would have been spared the useless and long-drawn-out deliberations of the Gray Board which served no purpose.

A VERY definite step was taken by the Secretary of Defense to fill this long-felt want when on 13 May 1949, he convened in his office a consultant group composed of representatives of the Regular establishments and the civilian components to consider and advise him in the matter of creating in the Office of the Secretary of Defense a Civilian Components Policy Board which would be charged with the responsibility, generally, of coordinating all policies, plans, programs and activities of the National Military Establishment relating to the civilian components. The group was presented with a proposed directive for this purpose which had been compiled by the Secretary of Defense. The provisions of the directive were generally acceptable to the group and after several hours of discussion they were tentatively approved, based on certain changes which had been recommended and which were accepted by the representative of the Secretary.

THE proposed Board was to consist of 20 members with a civilian Chairman, an Executive Officer and three sections, namely, Army, Navy and Air with six members each. The Department of the Army Section would have two Regular, two Guard and two Reserve officers. The Department of the Navy Section would have one Regular Navy, one Regular Marine, two Naval Reserve and two Marine Reserve officers. The Department of Air Section would have two Regular, two National Guard and two Reserve officers.

THE National Guard representatives on the consultant group felt strongly that the conception of a Civilian Components Policy Board was indeed excellent and would not only fill a want of long standing but would materially enhance the development of the civilian components of the Armed Forces and thus fortify the security of the Nation. Such a board would have the full faith and confidence of the citizen-soldiery of the Nation.

E. Walsh

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Dear Guardsmen;

Jack Bryan, the author of "Bedford Forrest, Backwoods Strategist," is the art director of Shenango Metalcraft Co. in Sharon, Penna. A former Guardsman, Bryan had both Confederate and Union grandpappies. The Southern representative was a member of the 14th Tennessee Infantry, who saw Forrest in action. As a youngster, Bryan's appetite for Forrest was sharpened by tales from "gramps" and it was sharpened even further when he attended CMTC camps in Fort Knox and heard some of the older residents recount the deeds of the great tactician. Bryan was a member of Troop F, 103d Cavalry, Pennsylvania National Guard, from 1933 to 1936. He enlisted in Army Air Forces in 1942 and served three years. The first of his three-part article on Forrest begins this issue and we think you'll agree that it makes interesting reading.



Master Sergeant Hashmark Sixstripes, the harassed hero of John Keasler's fiction piece this month, is, says Keasler, "merely the composite of many fellow noncoms in the Army in which I served for six years, 1939-45—being discharged with the distinction of the only Pfc. ever busted for being an inefficient latrine orderly."

Born in Nashville, Keasler joined the Army "at the ripe old age of 18," and while therein, made the discovery that "an odd tribe of persons misnamed writers made an alleged living while sitting down." He kept that in mind while being exposed to an overseas newspaper while in the Dutch East Indies and the Philippines during WW II and, upon discharge, got a job on a Florida weekly and subsequently shifted to the Tampa *Morning Tribune*, where he writes a daily column, free-lancing on the side. He is contemplating matrimony "immediately upon saving up the required \$2."

The Staff

OUR COVER

The spirit of field training, off with a "bang," is caught in WOJG Ed Felder's well-timed action shot of a 155mm M1 howitzer of the 155th F.A. Bn., Seguin, Texas. Its shining barrel in full recoil, lifting its wheels off the ground, the gun's power is reflected in the tense attitudes and expressions of its citizen-soldier crew.

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