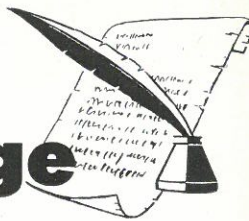


# The President's Page



It is with pleasure that "The President's Page" in this issue is placed at the disposal of the distinguished Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Department of the Army, for an account of his observations resulting from a recent visit to numerous National Guard units, Army and Air, now in the active service of the United States in Europe.

*E. Walsh*

## "COMPLETELY READY"

IT has been my privilege to have had the opportunity of spending two weeks recently with National Guard Army and Air units now stationed in Europe. The trip enabled me to visit with representatives of all echelons from Private and Airman to the highest commanders in the Theater. It enabled me to obtain and pass on to National Guardsmen everywhere an account of the state of organization, training, and morale of our comrades.

During the course of my travels, from 18 April until my return to Washington on 5 May, I was fortunate in being able to visit every type of National Guard unit now in Europe, to confer with commanders and staff members, and obtain a first-hand view of every phase of unit life, in training, in barracks, mess halls, food, clothing, equipment, etc.

General Thomas T. Handy, Commander-in-Chief, European Command, gave me an hour and a half out of a busy schedule to discuss all aspects of the National Guard troops' contribution to the strength of his command. There was opportunity for further discussions with Lt. Gen. Manton S. Eddy, Commanding General, Seventh Army; with Maj. Gen. Withers A. Burress, Commanding General, VII Corps; with Maj. Gen. Dean C. Strother, Commanding General, Twelfth Air Force, and with Maj. Gen. Truman H. Landon, Deputy Commander, USAF, Europe, among others.

Our National Guard troops, Army and Air, are in the finest possible condition. Morale, combat readiness, quarters, equipment and health are of the best. The troops are alert, on their toes, and ready for action at any time, if necessary.

In all of my service, never have I seen troops, in peacetime, so completely ready for instant combat as the troops in Europe. They could move out at a moment's notice—completely ready.

Some time was spent with the 28th Infantry Division,

from Pennsylvania, commanded by Maj. Gen. Daniel B. Strickler, and the 43d Infantry Division, of Connecticut, Rhode Island and Vermont, commanded by Maj. Gen. Kenneth F. Cramer, my immediate predecessor as Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and under whom I had served as Chief of the Army Division of the Bureau.

I felt fortunate, also, in being able to spend some time with the officers and men of the 115th Engineer Combat Group, from Ft. Douglas, Utah; the 148th Transportation Truck Company, from Jamaica, N. Y.; the 211th Medical Battalion, San Antonio, Tex., and the 117th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, from Alabama.

During these various visits we discussed plans for future National Guard organizations, including the current proposal to keep our units in active service for five years while our personnel have the choice of returning to State control at the end of their present tour of duty, in units parallel to those remaining in service. And I am pleased to report that there was general approval of these plans.

It appears that of the National Guard officers on active duty in Europe, approximately 50% will elect to remain on active service at the termination of their present statutory 24-months tours. The majority of enlisted men will elect to come home for discharge, or to serve out their enlistment periods in their State National Guard.

It is most appropriate to remark that the cooperation extended to me by all echelons of the Armed Forces in Europe, to make my trip a success, was wonderful.

What I have seen in Europe gives me great confidence for the future. With the continued support of the American people for our fine troops in Europe and their allies, we need have no fear.

RAYMOND H. FLEMING  
Major General

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## dear guardsmen:

You hardly can avoid noticing that we're making quite a play this month for "Early Bird" memberships in the NGAUS. One of the reasons is that we'd like to spread the clerical load that in the past has virtually drowned our Membership Dept. in a cloudburst of tens of thousands of memberships during and immediately following field training.

Thanks to the kind of cooperation that is vital to any such organization, it looks as though the campaign is paying-off. Illinois—including the officers of its 44th Inf. Div., in active service—has come through with nearly 1,000. Many State AGO's and subordinate units set up their machinery well in advance of the 1 July "Early Bird" deadline. One outstanding example that comes to mind is the illustrated letter from Maj. George W. Henebry, "bucking" for his comrades to make the 426th Inf. the first organization in Wisconsin's 32d Inf. Div. to be 100% paid-up for the New Year. Lt. Col. William W. Spruance dug out the addresses of all Delaware Air National Guard officers coming home from active service, sent them the poop on reorganization plans, along with membership applications, and reminded them that the NGAUS "is your professional society."

Meantime, the earliest of the "Early Birds" had been rolling in, with more than 2,000, representing 28 of the 52 States, Territories, and the District of Columbia, by 9 May, our copy deadline for this issue. We plan a "roundup" of the score for our July issue; better get your membership in pronto if you want your State to show up well.

THE STAFF

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## our cover

The Engineers threw this cable bridge with pierced-steel planking across a Texas stream so that their Infantry comrades in the 47th (Minn.-N.D.) Inf. Div. could harry AGGRESSOR in Exercise LONG HORN. Making the crossing are Pfc. James Uhl, Cpl. James Salvidge and Sgt. Ken Danner. (Army Photo by Cpl. Fred LaMarra).