



# The President's Page

## TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

THE several States and Territories are sadly disappointed and bitterly disillusioned at the inexplicable failure of those responsible to implement the construction programs of the Army National Guard. Since Congress made the first appropriation available in FY 1951 under the provisions of the National Defense Facilities Act of 1950, the Army National Guard has encountered delay after delay, evasions, blocks and endless red tape, and, as a result, is at a loss to know whether there is something mysterious or perhaps even sinister involved.

Just who is responsible is a bit difficult to determine but, as we see it, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Bureau of the Budget and G4 of the Army—with special emphasis concerning G4 and the Reserve Facilities Board—must share the blame.

Perhaps the situation can best be described through the medium of a study in contrasting procedures between the programs of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. For example, in FY 1950, prior to the enactment of the National Defense Facilities Act, Congress appropriated a total of \$35,000,000 for Army National Guard construction and \$15,000,000 for Army Reserve construction.

As a result of an administrative determination by the Comptroller General of the United States, the Army Reserve was authorized to proceed with a \$13,509,974 armory construction program. On the other hand, the Army National Guard was denied authority to proceed with a similar program as the result of a formal communication from the Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on National Defense Appropriations stating it was not the intent of the Congress that any part of the appropriation could be expended for construction of armories, notwithstanding the fact that the language contained in the appropriation bill for the Army National Guard and that in the Army Reserve were identical.

The National Defense Facilities Act authorized expenditure of \$250,000,000 for construction of armories and other facilities for the Reserve Components over a period of five years. However, no appropriation was made during FY 1951 because of the Korean emergency. Appropriations for these purposes during Fiscal Years 1952 and 1953 totalled \$21,000,000 for armory construction and \$11,000,000 for non-armory construction.

As of 28 March 1953, insofar as can be determined, a total of 92 armories have been constructed or are in process of construction for the Army Reserve. In addition, a number of armories were procured by purchase, five of which represented an investment of \$3,081,829, and 49 motor vehicle storage sheds, all totalling \$30,787,974. In contrast, the Army National Guard, notwithstanding intensive efforts on the part of the States, Territories and this Association, has been able to obligate only approximately \$3,000,000 of the \$21,000,000 appropriated. The situation is all the more incomprehensible when we consider the fact that both components operate under identical provisions of law.

No matter what alibis may be forthcoming, the fact remains that while the construction program of the Army Reserve was expedited to the tune of over 30 millions of dollars, the program of the Army National Guard was only expedited, or possibly hamstrung, to the tune of three millions. There should have been no need of bringing this glaring difference to the attention of those in authority since it was self-evident, and particularly where those charged with the administration of reserve affairs was concerned.

The situation with reference to the non-armory construction program is even worse. In the first place, the appropriations of \$5,000,000 and \$3,000,000 respectively were tied up with the provisions of the National Defense Facilities Act, which required a 25% contribution by the States, to which they declined to agree because it never was so intended. Clarifying language was obtained last year so that the \$8,000,000 finally was made available by Congress, but the \$3,000,000 has not, as yet, been cleared. Of the \$8,000,000 available and cleared, only \$1,000,000 has been obligated.

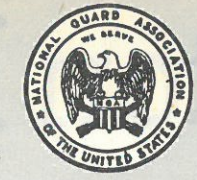
This condition of affairs was laid before the Reserve Forces Policy Board by the President of the National Guard Association on 26 April 1953. Whether any remedial action will result, remains to be seen. There is a grave danger that because of the delays occasioned by endless red tape, evasions and conflicting policies and directives, we may lose the \$10,000,000 recommended by the Bureau of the Budget for armory construction for the Army National Guard for FY 1954, and it is conceivable that \$10,000,000 or more, of the money already appropriated for armory construction could be cancelled because of the seeming inability of the States and Territories to obligate that which already has been appropriated. There is an indication to this effect in the fact that the Bureau of the Budget recommended only \$100,000 for non-armory construction for the Army National Guard for FY 1954, which sum will permit no construction.

These matters were considered at length by the Executive Council of the National Guard Association as its meeting in Washington 25-26 April, and it was the consensus that no purpose would be served in making further representations to the Department of Defense, and that all pertinent data be submitted to the appropriate committees of the House and Senate with a demand for an investigation.

The attitude manifested by certain people in charge of the Army National Guard construction program has been all too definitely one of "take it or leave it." In marked contrast is the situation in the Department of the Air Force, where the Air National Guard construction program has been prosecuted vigorously and without effort or representation on our part, and for this we are truly grateful.



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### dear guardsmen:

Some days, a guy just can't make a dime. We write our copy as carefully as can be. We read it over and over before it goes to the printer. We read and correct the galley proofs; then we read and correct the page proofs.

Comes the finished magazine, and, like the proverbial sore thumb, a boner sticks right out.

A case in point: Last month's "As We See It." Writing about a letter from a young ex-Guardsman, we related that his unit, "when but five years old, won 'Superior' rating at field training." That would have been nice but not extraordinary; the whole significance of the achievement was that the outfit was but five months old when it got its top mark. We knew that when it was written, and booted the whole point of the incident by letting "years" slip in where "months" was intended, and failing to catch it.

Too bad it wasn't a subordinate's fault; we could ream him right royally; but what can the boss do when it's his own blooper?

Don't know what's worse than that, unless it's to miss an identification. For instance, in that very handsome cover photo on our April cover, showing Guardsmen in uniforms covering the span of years from Colonial to modern days, we thought (and said) they were District of Columbia National Guardsman. They were—with one exception. Too late, we found out that third from the left, was one representative from the District's Southern neighbor: a member of the Richmond Light Infantry Blues.

One more thought in passing: it's still not too late to be an "Early Bird." Page 25 of this issue should help you beat the deadline.

#### THE STAFF

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#### our cover

Amid the ruins of tornado-destroyed buildings, at Warner Robins, a Georgia National Guardsman listens at his post for further orders from Headquarters of "Peach State" Guard units called to relief duty in this second tornado disaster in less than two weeks from the blow which levelled large sections of Columbus.