

# The President's Page

## THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE ACT OF 1949

ON 13 January, the Honorable Carl Vinson of Georgia, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, introduced a Bill (H.R. 1437) "To authorize the composition of the Army of the United States and the Air Force of the United States, and for other purposes." With the exception of certain language, the Army provisions were satisfactory to the National Guard, and our suggestions for certain changes were accepted quickly by General Bradley and the Committee.

TITLE II, pertaining to the Air Force, was completely unsatisfactory to the National Guard, in that no provision was made for the Air National Guard and therefore the door was opened for Federalization. As a result, National Guard Association representatives headed by Maj. Gen. Milton A. Reckord insisted that the Air National Guard be identified specifically in the Bill, and that the Bill contain other safeguards to the integrity of the Air National Guard. The Committee saw eye-to-eye with our contentions, and rewrote the Bill, with the Air Force's reluctant concurrence.

HIGH officials of the Air Force, and notably the Secretary, Mr. W. Stuart Symington; the Chief of Staff, General Hoyt Vandenberg, and Lt. Gen. Elwood R. Quesada, Coordinator for the Air Force's civilian components, were guilty not only of a breach of faith but of presenting an entirely erroneous picture to the Committee.

IT SHOULD be borne in mind that early in January, Mr. Symington called a conference at which he proposed to appoint an "ad hoc" committee to further study the problems of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, and to withhold presentation of any Federalization legislation pending the action of this committee. On 5 January, he issued a directive completely at variance with this understanding, in that he specified the committee was established for the purpose of studying the problems involved as a preliminary to the drafting of appropriate legislation for consolidation into a single Federal reserve component. After General Reckord had protested the directive was not in accordance with the agreement, Mr. Symington stated that General Reckord was correct, and indicated the directive would be changed. At this writing, it apparently has not been changed.

THE most amazing situation occurred on the morning of 3 February, when Mr. Symington read into the record of the Armed Services Committee a statement that was not only misleading as to facts, but left no doubt where the Air Force stood in the matter of Federalization. He stated that it cost ten times as much to train an Air Guardsman as it did an Air Reservist, and that during this fiscal year \$78,000,000 had been appropriated for 36,000 Air National Guardsmen and \$73,000,000 for 419,000 Air Reservists. The Secretary did not explain that the Air National Guard had completed 95% of its organization and consisted of 12 Wings, 26 Groups and 84 Squadrons, whereas the Air Reserve has only one Division, no wings and 10 units. Neither did he explain that whereas 89% of the Air National Guard attended field training in this fiscal year, only 4% of the Air Reserve participated in field training. Nor did the Secretary inform the Committee that in the appropriation indicated there was included pay for 48 armory drills whereas little or no armory drill has been performed by the Air Reserve. The Secretary charged that National Guard "interests" had "wedged into" the National Security (Unification) Act of 1947 by making it mandatory for the Air Force to deal with the States through the Chief of the National

Guard Bureau. To that charge, the National Guard pleads guilty on all counts, and the action of the Air Force during the past weeks demonstrates the wisdom of so doing.

GENERAL Quesada informed the Committee that the terms "Air National Guard," "Air National Guard of the United States," "Organized Reserve Corps," and others, were very confusing and left him unable to arrive at any conclusions as to exactly what each of us had in mind. We suggest that the General study the Act of June 15, 1933, and the hearings incident thereto, and he should not find it too difficult to understand the terms in question. One of the difficulties encountered by the States and the National Guard in dealing with the U. S. Air Force is the ignorance of the law manifest by so many Air Force personnel—and, we might add, an unwillingness to accept the law as written.

THE action of the Armed Services Committee was most heartening and the National Guard is deeply appreciative of the consideration given to us. It is anticipated that H.R. 1437 will be passed in the House and sent to the Senate, where hearings will be held, at which the National Guard will be represented fully.

### EXTRA-CURRICULAR

JANUARY and February have been busy months for the President of our Association, including, among other things, meetings with the Guard officers of Connecticut on 15 Jan., New York on 17 Jan., South Carolina on 22 Jan., Florida on 23 Jan., and Alabama on 24 Jan. All of these splendid meetings afforded a welcome opportunity to discuss the objectives of the National Guard and its Association.

SCARCELY had the foregoing itinerary been concluded, before hearings on H.R. 1437 were under way before the House Armed Services Committee; and on 1 Feb., the Secretary of the Army's Committee on Civilian Components, headed by the Honorable James F. Byrnes, and of which your President is a member, convened in the Pentagon. Among other things, this Committee is charged with determining the future troop bases of the National Guard and the Organized Reserve Corps. The Committee was in session for a week during February, and made surprising progress. The statesmanlike attitude of its Chairman and of its distinguished civilian and military—Regular, Guard, and Reserve—members, is both heartening and impressive. I predict that the Committee will achieve substantial agreement in a relatively short time and that its work will be highly constructive.

ON 10 Feb., through the courtesy of Lieutenant General Manton S. Eddy, Commandant of the Command and General Staff College, your President will have addressed the students of the Associate Course of that famous institution.

PERHAPS if there could be more committees brought into being such as the Byrnes Committee, and more opportunities afforded such as that presented by General Eddy, there would be an almost total disappearance of differences among the several components, and the blossoming of a new era in inter-service or components relations.

*E. Walsh*

# THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN



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400 Sixth Street, N.W., Washington 1, D. C.  
Phone: District 0341 TWX: WA 208

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### OUR COVER

Floods are an old story in many parts of the United States, and they're an old story to the National Guard. Disaster relief activities constitute a major portion of the Guardsman's peacetime mission. But a new twist has been put to it through the use of the war-inspired "duck"—the amphibious 6x6 truck—for flood rescue and relief purposes, as shown on the cover by Mississippi Guardsmen embarking evacuees for transfer to high ground. It's a Mississippi National Guard photo by Gordon Gring.

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## Dear Guardsmen:

Here we were, right up to the deadline and still ploughing through mountains of copy, when we awoke to the fact that this issue marks the second anniversary of our "Preview Edition." We didn't officially exist at that time. And when more than six people came into our ex-apartment suite on Connecticut Avenue, somebody had to sit in the bathtub—and we're not exaggerating much.

Land sakes, look at us now! We've got a broken-in staff, air conditioned and fluorescent lighted offices, fancy equipment, a growing morgue (reference library, to most of you), a mushrooming circulation. We're read and quoted from the Pentagon to Puerto Rico, and we've established any number of direct-mail friendships with far-off correspondents.

Enough of this reminiscing, and on to a fill-in about one of this month's contributors:

We'd been trying for nearly two years to dig out the story on the National Guard tank outfits that began their run for record before the last Jap bomb had fallen on the Philippines, 7 Dec., 1940. And now, we proudly present the first part of the resulting article, "Bataan Uncensored." Its author, Col. E. B. Miller of Brainerd, Minn., led one of those battalions into action and stayed with it the whole dreary way through imprisonment to liberation.

In 31 years in the Guard, through the Mexican Border Campaign and two world wars, Colonel Miller had been everything from bugler to first sergeant and finally a tank group commander. He shot on Minnesota's rifle team in the famed prewar Camp Perry national matches. Wounded in the First World War and with health impaired by his experiences in Jap prison camps, he is on the Guard's retired list. He has been a civil engineer, and now is in charge of airport engineering for Minnesota. He is a Past State Commander of the American Legion. "Bataan Uncensored" was due out in book form on 24 Feb., to sell for \$4.50, plus 20 for handling and mailing. Orders should be sent to: "Bataan Uncensored," Brainerd, Minn.



Journalism received a compliment recently with the renaming of a ship as "American Reporter." And we take great pride in the distinction of having an airplane christened in honor of our Associate Editor

Ed Hogan. A reformed or backslidden (depending upon your point of view) ex-gravel agitator who decided the Air Guard required less self-propulsion than the infantry, Ed is a self-effacing little guy who bobs up in the most unexpected places: Texas today, South Carolina tomorrow. He "lit" briefly in Georgia not long ago but seems to have left a lasting impression with elements of Maj. Gen. George Finch's 54th Fighter Wing. It took the form of the 104th Radar Calibration Detachment's adoption of the insignia shown in the accompanying cut. Ed says it isn't a good likeness, however. We can vouch for the fact that he has no horns.

*The Staff*

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