



National Guard Will Keep Its Spirit of Service Active

Chief of Militia Bureau Gives Recruiting News His Views on Development of the Army of the United States

by MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE COLLINS RICKARDS, Chief of Militia Bureau



There's a saying: "The more things change, the more they are the same." Readers may agree, after they've perused this article from the October 1, 1921, issue of "US Army Recruiting News," which Col Dean Coonley, Adjutant General of the DC National Guard, unearthed recently. With minor changes in proper names, it could have been written today, though it's high onto 40 years old now.

THE preparation for the so-called Disarmament Conference has led to the belief, in many directions, that there no longer exists the necessity for armed forces, and that to continue their organization while discussing the proposition of "disarmament" is inconsistent, a disregard by positive action of the very things we are advocating. And again, it is the general supposition that the world is "war-sick," that the events of the past decade, or less, have awakened the nations to a sincere desire for the destruction of the implements of war and that this coming conference is to bring an era of sublime peace, free from war or strife.

Looking down into the conscience of nations, harking back to their overtures for peace in the past, and their professed desires for the destruction of the engines of war, we cannot camouflage the truth of how easy it has been for some to repudiate the most sacred agreements and to disregard all pacts and covenants. We talk of disarmament, but we do not mean that in its actual sense, for may we as well talk of abolishing our state and municipal safeguards and of destroying our penal institutions; so, instead of disarmament what we really mean to accomplish is the regulation of military forces, and the use of those diabolical munitions and contrivances of war that have been conceived and used without thought of humanity or compassion and which have made the civilized world stand aghast with horror. To regulate and rectify these, no nation will go to any greater extreme than will our own. We have taken the initiative in this most laudable move and it will fall to our lot, yes, be incumbent upon us, to carry this lead to the logical conclusion of all the great problems that must confront the conference of nations during its deliberations. What these conclusions will be no man can at this time tell, but after all has been said and done, none but those fully obsessed with the idea of world peace through the destruction of all munitions of war and the abolishment of military organization can believe that armies and navies will cease to exist or that any nation will abolish its mili-

tary institutions regardless of such desires on the part of some.

MUST PERFECT DEFENSE

The nation which disregards the security and preservation of its own institutions is unworthy of the name, and is as deserving of censure as is the man who shirks his duties to his country, and to withdraw all appearance of national security is but to humiliate its citizens with a sense of inferiority, lessen the patriotic spirit and turn the ensign of that country into a meaningless banner; and so the plans for a conference having for its purpose the regulation of armament and the modes of warfare, should in no way curtail our efforts to perfect a defensive military establishment as is now provided for and toward which we are making such splendid progress.

Our Regular Army, through the sentiment of the people as expressed by Congress can never be more than a nucleus in any great emergency, and yet in peace we must look to it as the parent branch of all our military efforts, for by it and the professional soldier must the great problems be worked out, and whether it be large or small it should be of the highest character, both in citizenship and professional attainments; in short, the ideal which all other components of the Army of the United States may well strive to emulate in all its details.

The Organized Reserves is a most practical undertaking and should have the support of all loyal citizens, for while it can hardly be more than the assignment of officers and men to specified places in the defensive scheme and even though it may not be possible to organize it in detail, each member will eventually have an assigned place in the organization to which he can readily report in an emergency.

THE ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS

The natural and logical component, however, through which we may impart military knowledge and keep alive the desired degree of military spirit is the National Guard—a voluntary force, built upon the same foundation as the Regular Army and similarly organized and equipped; already tried and tested on the bloodiest battlefields of history; a force that has so conducted itself as to establish for its members recognition as soldiers of the highest type, deserving of the greatest honor, and worthy of the explicit confidence of the nation. As the administrative head, so far as the federal government is concerned, of this great com-

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN

1 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N. W., WASHINGTON 1, D. C. PHONE DISTRICT 7-0341

MARCH, 1960

14-3

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Publication Office
★Telegraph Press Bldg.,
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

General offices: 1 Massachusetts Ave., N. W. Washington 1, D. C. Second class postage paid at Harrisburg, Pa., and at additional mailing offices.

Domestic subscriptions for home delivery: \$2.00 per year. A year's subscription is included within the annual dues paid by members of the National Guard Association of the United States. Subscriptions to foreign countries \$2.50 per year.

SPECIAL RATES TO NATIONAL GUARD UNITS FOR BULK SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ONE ADDRESS: 11 to 100 subscriptions, \$1.75 per subscription; 101 to 800 subscriptions, \$1.50 per subscription; 801 or more subscriptions, \$1.25 per subscription; SINGLE COPIES, 25c.

★ALL MATERIAL INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION, AND SUBSCRIPTIONS, SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO 1 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.W., WASHINGTON 1, D. C.

THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN welcomes original articles bearing on matters of National defense with special emphasis on Army National Guard and Air National Guard aspects. Payment is made upon publication at a minimum rate of three cents per published word. Manuscripts must be accompanied by return postage, and no responsibility is assumed for their safe handling.

Prompt notice is requested of change of address, preferably by the return of an address label from the magazine. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR OLD AS WELL AS YOUR NEW ADDRESS.

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MISS FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD	INSIDE BACK COVER

DEAR GUARDSMEN: As most people have heard, there was quite a ruckus between North and South, just under a hundred years ago. Many history-minded organizations and individuals are laying-on plans to mark the Centennial appropriately, in a variety of ways.

For our part, and with a mind to the fact that most of the shooting was done by Militia units—their ranks swollen by volunteers from their own States initially and by Draftees only as the war got hotter—we're laying-on a number of special articles.

Plan is to run a series at intervals during the period 1961-65, each article highlighting a National Guard ancestor unit which performed a distinctly key role in a particular skirmish, battle or campaign, or came up with some kind of off-beat accomplishment.

At this point, we've asked State AGs only for "nominations," with a very brief synopsis of what made the cited unit's action so unusual—no completed feature articles are wanted right now. When we've had a chance to evaluate what appear to be the ten or so most unusual cases, we'll try to line-up special articles based upon them. If you have any story ideas, pass them along to your AG.

—AGC

OUR COVER: Outsiders watching Washington's top brass trying to come to an agreement on just what constitutes an adequate defense for the Nation sometimes get the feeling they're watching that famous Abbott and Costello "Who's On First" skit again. Teaming-up to ask "Just what is the score in this man's ball game?" are Artist Lou Nolan (cover design) and Writer John Gerrity ("Factions and Fractions," Page 2).

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MARCH, 1960

