

The President's Page

MONTGOMERY

THE Call for the 71st General Conference of the National Guard Association of the United States at Montgomery, Ala., 24-27 Oct., has been transmitted to the Adjutants General. The number of authorized Delegates has increased from 687, authorized for 1948, to 710 due to the National Guard's all-time high aggregate strength of more than 355,000.

IT is anticipated that a considerable number of other Guard officers and warrant officers also will attend, since any member of the Association is entitled to participate. Indications point to a record attendance. Arrangements have been made to house up to 400 officers at Maxwell Field if necessary. It is advisable that hotel reservations be made at the earliest practicable date, for it will be a case of first come first served. Instructions relating to the handling of reservations have been transmitted to the States.

IT is essential that the States forward to the Washington Office of the Association, as soon as possible, their list of Delegates and others who will attend, copies of resolutions which they desire to have considered, list of assignments to the Conference Committees, and subjects which they wish to be discussed. Resolutions must be submitted at least 30 days in advance of the Conference.

THE Conference will convene at 10 A.M., 24 Oct., in the Civic Auditorium, which will accommodate approximately 4,000 persons, and which is within five minutes' walking distance of the hotels. The Conference will be honored by the presence of a number of Congressional leaders, high State officials, and high officials of the Department of the Army and the Department of Air. The Alabama officers and their ladies will be hosts at a military ball on 25 Oct. We hope to have the Honorable Louis A. Johnson, Secretary of Defense; the Honorable James E. Folsom, Governor of Alabama, and other notables as our guests at the annual banquet, 26 Oct. No reservations will be necessary for the military ball, but banquet tickets must be purchased at time of registration. There will be no admission without a ticket.

THE Conference will be confronted with matters involving decisions of far-reaching importance to the National Guard. In addition to matters of broad, general policy, the Association will be concerned with matters affecting personnel, administration, training and supply. Major General James S. Saliba, the Adjutant General of Alabama, and his Committee on General Arrangements are sparing no efforts to make the Conference outstanding. We held our 57th General Conference at Montgomery in 1937 and now, after a lapse of 12 years, with a world

war intervening, we are indeed happy to return to Montgomery with its charm and wealth of history.

IT is to be hoped that when the Conference gets under way, the officers and warrant officers of the National Guard will be enrolled 100%. A magnificent start has been made. Already Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota are practically 100%. It can be done!

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON RESERVE COMPONENTS

IN May, Chairman Carl Vinson of the House Armed Services Committee, appointed the Special Committee on Reserve Components, with the Honorable Dewey Short as Chairman. This Committee was charged with making a thorough-going survey, investigation and study of the entire reserve component setup. Shortly after this Committee came into being, the Honorable Louis A. Johnson, Secretary of Defense, appointed an Ad Hoc Committee of some 25 members to advise him in connection with the establishment in his office of a high-level group to be known as the Civilian Components Policy Board, which, it now appears, is ready to function.

PENDING the establishment and functioning of the Board, the Special Committee has held no sessions. On 29 July, Mr. Short advised the President of the National Guard Association that the Committee would hold its initial meeting on 17 August. He indicated that the Committee would lay plans for its activities during the next (81st) session of Congress, or during the period between sessions, if circumstances in the Department of Defense should indicate a need therefor. Mr. Short further indicated his opinion that the Committee should withhold action until January in order to afford the Board an opportunity to perform.

THE Chairman also observed that he believes the Board should submit monthly reports to the Special Committee so that, while Congress is not in session, the Committee can keep up to date and move promptly into a full-scale investigation of the civilian components program, if a substantial number of the Committee believe that such action is warranted. The National Guard Association is in complete accord with Mr. Short's views. Periodic reports will do away with the secrecy which all too often has characterized proceedings of past boards and committees which have dealt with matters pertaining to the reserve components.

E. A. Walsh

THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
National Guard Association of the United States
400 Sixth Street, N. W., Washington 1, D. C.
Phone: District 0341 TWX: WA 208

SEPTEMBER, 1949

VOL. 3, No. 9

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Dear Guardsmen;

Clippings of stories concerning National Guard activities find their way to our offices from newspapers in all sections of the United States.

And of course it pleases us when clippings reflect something that originated in THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN. Take our "As We See It" editorial last June. It asked, "Boss, Can You Spare a Man?" and it was a plea for military leave for Guardsmen.

Evidently, some enterprising unit commanders—quite a few of them, judging from the number of clippings we received—passed it on to their hometown newspaper editors. We're flattered that they did so, and delighted that the editors liked the editorial well enough to reproduce it.

For those of you who didn't try this approach it might not be a bad idea to put a copy of the message in the "suspense" file until a month or so before next camp season rolls around, and spring it then.

If it contributes toward getting even one man released from his job long enough to attend camp, it will be worth it.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and if that's true, we've devoted more than 50,000 words—in this issue alone—to telling the story of the National Guard in its 1949 field training.

But the pictures make easier reading than that many words. We hope you like them, even if your own good old Company Able isn't among them.

In selecting the pictures, there's a lot more than meets the eye. For every picture we've used, at least five others have had to be laid aside. We've shuffled, and re-shuffled, through hundreds of photos sent in from all sections of the United States. Some were, photographically, sub-caliber: too fuzzy, underexposed, overexposed, too "posed," and so on. From some States, we got dozens of bee-ootiful shots. We couldn't possibly print even half of the good ones. When you figure that there are more than 5,000 National Guard outfits, and you can't get more than an average of five pictures to a page without shrinking 'em so small that they're not much good, and that we have 32 pages, your arithmetic should show that we have to be pretty choosy.

Some had to be "blown up," some had to be reduced; all had to be "cropped" to different proportions so that they'd fit in a layout like the pieces of a Chinese puzzle. It gave the busy engravers fits to have the lot dropped into their laps right on the deadline, but they "made it," as they always do.

The Boss may have a fit, too, when he sees our engraving bill. But then again, if he likes the layouts well enough, he'll forgive us.

The Staff

OUR COVER

Quadruple .50s on an M-55 mount spit their bullets at a sleeve target (out of camera range) speeding behind a National Guard B-26, as crewmen of Btry. C, 380th AAA AW Bn., DCNG, get in their firing during field training at Camp Pendleton, Va. Photographer Murphy of the Regular Army's 167th Sig. Photo Co. even captured the gunsmoke in his camera lens.

Published monthly by the National Guardsman Publishing Co. Publication Offices: 703 Telegraph Bldg., Harrisburg, Pa. Advertising Sales Representatives: Ortlieb and Dillon, 155 E. 44th St., Rm. 2403, N. Y. 17, N. Y.; Fred Wright Co., 411 Tenth St., St. Louis 1, Mo.; Harold W. Haskett, Rm. 615, 280 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Ill. Correspondence regarding advertising also may be addressed to the Editorial office. Editorial office: Stewart Bldg., 400 Sixth St., N. W., Washington 1, D. C. Entered as second class matter on September 1, 1947, at the post office at Harrisburg, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Domestic subscriptions, \$2.00 per year to members of the National Guard Assn. of the U. S.; \$3.00 per year to non-members (Foreign and Canada \$3.50). Special rates to N. G. units for bulk subscriptions to one address.

11 to 50 subscriptions, \$2.00 per subscription.
51 to 100 subscriptions, \$1.75 per subscription.
101 or more subscriptions, \$1.50 per subscription.
Single copies, 25c.

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