WASHINGTON REPORT

PARTIAL MOBILIZATION ORDERED: GUARD UNITS WILL BE CALLED!

IF THIS WAS "IT". World War III had started much differently than the way the American public had been conditioned to expect.

The run-back flash and the mushrooming cloud of vapor, material but not visible, contained an A-Bomb or H-Bomb. No.

The crackle of "old-fashioned" small arms fire, the blast of War II-type field artillery and conventional aerial bombs could not be heard, all way from the 25th Inf. Div. in Korea to the 99th Parallel in Washington, D. C.

The shock wave didn't knock Americans off their feet. Maybe four years of participation in the most tremendous of World Wars to date, preceded by two years of conditioning prior to that war and nearly five years of "cold war," had rendered the U. S. to expect far worse.

As the fighting went on in Korea, it became apparent that outnumbered and out-gunned U. S. troops, fighting a brilliant delaying action, would need a vast amount of help. The 24th Inf. Div., rushed from Japan to meet the invading force, bore the brunt of the battle for days. As the buildup of our forces in the battle zone began, the homefront set about gearing for a showdown.

On 19 July, Harry Truman laid the cards on the table for the American people.

On that day, too, the President answered the question every Guardsman had asked since the morning of 25 June when the North Korean Communists invaded South Korea and tipped the scales in favor of war.

The President sent a message to Congress and some 10 hours later delivered a froide chat. He backgrounded the entire situation. In a thinly veiled warning, Mr. Truman served notice on Russia that the free nations of the world had taken the first step in common self-defense. In the face of aggression.

The Nation, he said, must go on a mobilization footing and the Armed Forces must be built up. "I have," he said, "authorized the Secretary of Defense to meet the need by increasing the regular Army by calling into active Federal service as many National Guard units and as many individuals of the Reserve forces of the Army, Navy, and Air Force as may be required."

There it was. He had authorized the call of all, or part, of the Guard. That meant defense officials could call an all-out mobilization for the entire Army and Air National Guard division, squadron, etc.

For the moment, at least, Mr. Truman said, his program will cost approximately 10 billion dollars. Further, it would require increased taxes, credit controls, unlimited authority to expand the Armed Forces, curbs on civilian use of basic materials and stepped-up war production.

Runners began to fly the minute the President said Guard units would be called into service. It was safe to assume that some Army and Air Guard units would be called fairly rapidly but the odds were against a total mobilization. Mr. Truman indicated that when he told both Congress and the people he had obeyed summoning "as many National Guard units" as might be needed.

What would the National Guard be called upon to do? That was one question you could not get answered in the Pentagon (sometimes known to cynical habitués as "The Five-Sided Concrete Castle of Confusion," or as "The Puzzle Palace").

There was reason enough for not being able to get a firm answer, what else would be an alternate plans, for recommended use of the Guard and/or other reserve components and/or drafted personnel. Plans and alternate plans, on every topic under the sun, are being made and scrapped constantly. In the Korean situation, the National Guard Bureau was involved, and the General Staff of the Department of the Army, and the Air Staff, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of the Air Force undoubtedly had their plans, and of course the Secretary of Defense has pretty nearly the final say as THE chief adviser to the President on matters of this kind.

What could the National Guard be called upon to do? The second question could be plucked out from known facts and experience. The most pertinent fact was the speedy enactment of Public Law 808, 81st Congress, which would become more common (if not at all popularly known as the 1950 Draft Act. The Impact of "The Korean Incident" had brought a pronounced change in Congress' in decision over continuing the Selective Service Act of 1948, which required an 24-year-old and was given a very makeshift 15-day extension. Right after the act was signed, the first call for 20,000 draftees went out to local Boards.

It took only a 1" x 5" chunk of type to empower the President to "order into the active military or naval service of the United States for a period of not to exceed twenty-two consecutive months, with or without their consent, all members and units of any and all Reserve components of the Armed Forces of the United States and retired personnel of the Regular Armed Forces." He has that power on 3 July, 1951.