



**THE GUARD AGAIN
PASSES THE TEST**

"For Guardsmen on an assignment of this kind, there are no Negroes and Whites, no sides, no issues, no friends and foes. There are only peacemakers and troublemakers. Our job is to prevent violence, and to enforce law and order, with utter and complete impartiality."

THAT'S the way Brig Gen George M. Gelston, the man "on the hot spot" with troops of the Maryland National Guard, expressed the Guard's role at strife-racked Cambridge, Md, last month. There had been violence, and the threat of more, until the Guardsmen arrived. As related in detail elsewhere in this issue, the Guard kept the peace, and won praise for the manner in which it did so.

A long way off, in Alabama, the same was true of the Guardsmen who, first by their Governor under State control, and subsequently by US authorities, in their Federal role, had been instructed to preserve law and order. There had been no violence, and there was none.

Countless times before this, in crises large and small, the Guard had served faithfully and well. Doubtless, it will be called upon to serve again, somewhere, sometime, in a domestic situation where deep-seated controversy has stirred hot blood.

But one deeply significant aspect of the use of citizen-soldiers, which seems to have escaped notice and comment heretofore, again manifested itself in Alabama and in Maryland. That is the use of local units to cope with a local disturbance.

For many years, the principle has been accepted generally that for civil disturbance duty, you call-in troops from outside the troubled community. The reasoning is simple: the citizen-soldier who's called upon to intervene in a controversial situation can not help but have his own strong feelings one way or another; moreover, his own relatives, friends, neighbors may be involved in the dispute. Unlike the Regular, the Guardsman has to live with those people the rest of his life, and bitterness which may have been engendered in the performance of his military duty could have lasting effect upon relationships and livelihood.

That principle was overridden in Oxford, Miss, some months ago, and in Cambridge, Md, more recently, in situations which called for immediate troop intervention and immediate response by home-town Guardsmen.

In a broader sense, it was overridden in recent years in Arkansas, and Tennessee, and Kentucky, and in Mississippi; last month in Alabama. For in those States the roots of the controversy spread much wider, touching sensitively upon the emotions and the instincts of all.

As in previous instances, the ingrained and developed sense of citizenship and military duty were reflected in the Guardsmen's actions. Response to callup was commendably prompt, complete, and unquestioning. Discipline, soldierly conduct and bearing were beyond reproach. Performance of onerous duty was businesslike, serious.

The reasons are easy to find. Who, but a Guardsman,

is better-fitted to know the feelings, the attitude, the temper, of his fellow-citizen from his own locale? Who, but a Guardsman, instilled with the traditions, the pride, the training of a soldier, is better-qualified to apply this amalgam of citizenship and soldierly training to the handling of a difficult situation? The Guardsman isn't just close to the people—he is the people!

THIS IS ECONOMY?

THE looming loss of some 458 fulltime Army and Air Guard Technicians provides a near-classic example of the kind of Governmental "economizing" that disrupts staffs, destroys morale, and saves nothing. In truth, it adds to costs because it results in employe turnover, inefficiency—and eventual refilling of the jobs anyway!

Based on no one knows what kind of fuzzy reasoning, Department of Defense knocked 528 man-years off NGB's bedrock calculations of ARNG Technician needs for FY 1964 to "save" \$5,100,000. As the result, some 308 individuals already have received dismissal notices, effective on or about 1 August. Another 194 were saved only by a last-minute transfer of funds from the already-strained allocation for supplies and repair parts.

On the Air side, more than \$3,000,000 was lopped-off the Technician Budget on grounds that the Air Guard is short some 200 pilots and thus is programmed for fewer total flying hours this year. (The number of Technicians in certain job areas is tied by formula to the number of flying hours scheduled.) This means that some 150 ANG Technicians stand to lose their jobs this year unless DoD revises its decision.

What makes the whole maneuver so pointless is the inevitability that all the jobs will have to be filled again in the very near future, with the resultant cost of locating, training and assimilating new men. DoD itself has decreed an appreciably higher level of readiness for all of the Air Guard and for a very large segment of the Army Guard. The Air Guard already is laboring to make-up its pilot shortage and expects to have the job completed in FY 1965. The Army Guard has been promised greatly increased stocks of equipment for its numerous high priority units, with deliveries scheduled in FY 1964 and 1965. The manning levels of those selfsame priority units likewise have been increased appreciably.

All this provides ample notice that the Technician force will have to be enlarged, not reduced, in the years immediately ahead if the desired level of combat-readiness is to be maintained.

Where is the logic, then, in kicking-out trained, competent, skilled maintenance Technicians today, merely to go through the struggle, starting a few months hence, of finding and training replacements? How can you reconcile enlightened management with personnel policies that periodically erode even that shaky modicum of security which the Guard's Technicians have gained belatedly? And how can you perform such an act in the name of "economy" when its indirect costs almost assuredly will outweigh its nickels-and-dimes savings?

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DEAR GUARDSMEN: Does your Organization—or group of Units—have its own NCO Club? How did you go about organizing it? How long has it been in existence? What good does it do for the Guard? What does it do for its members? Does it perform "good works" for others? Has experience shown any pitfalls in organization or functioning to be avoided? What are they, and how can they be licked? How is the club financed? How is it governed?

We're sure many other Guardsmen would like to profit by your own experience and start their own NCO clubs, or revive those which may have waxed, and then waned. An article based on replies from "the field" would help.

For each of the most thorough, best-expressed articles (in the Editors' opinion) on the subject, THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN will contribute \$10 to the club concerned and another \$10 to the author of the article. You don't have to be a "pro" to write it: just pretend you're talking to someone, and put down all the pertinent thoughts as they occur. Give facts and your own and others' opinions. Up to 1500 words ought to do the trick. To be eligible for cash awards, articles must be in the Editors' hands not later than 1 Sep '63.

If your GUARDSMAN is late in reaching you next month, blame field training schedules. The Editorial Staff's 15-day stint carries us well into August, and we'll have a lot of catching-up to do before going to press with the September issue, so the production schedule's been set back later than usual.

—AGC



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