AS WE SEE IT...

THE NATIONAL GUARD is an institution, not of steel, brick, or stone, but of men—hundreds of thousands of them. Millions of men have come into the Guard, stayed a while, and passed out to be replaced by others, during the period in which two stalwart Guardmen have carved extraordinary marks in their Country's annals.

This month mark the passing of the era, in the pending retirement of those two whose careers have run strikingly parallel, Maj Gen Milmore A Reckord, the Adjutant General of Maryland, and Maj Gen James C Dozier, the Adjutant General of South Carolina.

Both started as Infantry Privates—Gen Reckord in the "1st Maryland," in 1901; Gen Dozier in the "1st South Carolina," in 1904. Both put in hitches as Top Kicks. Both had Mexican Border service—Gen Reckord as a Major, Gen Dozier as a 1st Sgt. Both saw frontal combat in the First World War. Gen Reckord as a member of the "Dandy 50" (115 Inf), Gen Dozier as a LT in the 118 Inf of the 30th Old Hickory Inf Div. Both were to come home with honors—Gen Dozier with the highest the nation can bestow: The Congressional Medal of Honor, the Purple Heart, Britain's Military Cross, France's Legion of Honor and Croix de Guerre with Palm, and Italian, Portuguese, and Montenegrin decorations for heroism in combat; General Reckord with the Distinguished Service Medal and the Croix de Guerre, to which service in a later World War was to add two clusters to his DSM, and a second Croix de Guerre with Palm, the Legion of Honor, Britain's Order of the Bath, and the US Bronze Star Medal.

Both were to play important parts in the Guard's difficult reorganization after the First World War. Gen Reckord was in charge of the Army's demobilization, which began in 1920, to be paralleled by an unusual dual status for many years as a "Line" commander, carrying him through World War II service as Division Commander of the 30th Div, and command of the old III Corps Area (later designated the III Service Command), of the European Theater of Operations. Gen Dozier, first appointed as Adjt Gen in 1928, had the unique distinction of being the Nation's only elective Adjt Gen, with what turned out to be virtually automatic reelection every four years from 1928 through 54.

Both have served as President of the National Guard Association of the United States during trying periods, particularly that of depression stress, during which political accolades achieved under their administration meant much to the survival and growth of today's strong Guard.

In a day when the Army was definitely a "showstring" organization—virtually penniless, with no permanent Headquarter Staff capable of following the Army through a half-century of service, individually and together, they helped guide and control the destinies of this First Line of the Nation's Defense, and through both, its indoctrination, instruction, and relaxation, gave the sincere thanks of the members of their proud company.

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DEAR GUARDSMEN: Like the chap who was halfway home before he remembered that he didn't live there anymore, the Guard is about to move this day, and a Pentagon bus will get this issue out of the office and on the way to the next stop in its journey.

Agency W has to expand, so it takes over 10 offices hitherto the domain of Agency X, whereupon Agency X, with half its working force reassigned, shows Agency Z further down the corridor, and Agency Z, in turn, moves around with a vengeance.

All of which leads to the National Guard Bureau's forthcoming shift to a new location—down one floor and down the hall 100-150 feet, its second shift this year.

Last Summer, the newly-created Advanced Research Projects Agency took over about half of NGB's allotted area on the coveted "E" ring. NGB moved down the hall and inward to the "D" and "C" rings, crowding-out the Army Judge Advocate, who found space elsewhere. Now, they're off again!

This time, it's the Joint Chiefs' turn to move, expanding it so evicted Agency W, which in turn squelched-out Agency Z—and somewhere down the line another 45 agencies affected by this one, hope change in NGB and its 370 people.

Ah, well, when they're all settled again, maybe we'll run across some of our old Bureau friends whom we haven't been able to locate since the last move.

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