



LET'S CONSULT-AND NOT CONFLICT

PROBLEMS which have engaged the attention of the proper branches of the Bureau for days and weeks, studied from the National Guard viewpoint, and in connection with the data on file in the Bureau, and not available elsewhere, meet summary adverse action on the part of the War Department, because of the recommendation of officers of the War Department General Staff who have had no opportunity to acquaint themselves with all the facts, and who, too frequently, are not members of the ("Section 5") Committee . . . I cannot but express the belief that the members of the General Staff (that is, the Regular Army personnel), are not, as a rule, as fully conversant with National Guard problems as to make their judgment alone upon them desirable or to the best interest of the Service, either State or Federal."

Except for changing "War Department" to "Department of Army," that statement could have been made today. It was made 2 Dec 1924 by Maj Gen George C Rickards of Pennsylvania, first National Guardsman to head the Militia Bureau—what now is the National Guard Bureau.

Now let's turn to a statement made on 7 June 1962 to the Hebert Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee by Maj Gen James F Cantwell, Chief of Staff of New Jersey and Chairman of the combined Army Guard and Army Reserve "Section 5" Committees. He had been summoned to testify relative to the plan to "realign" eight Divisions, roughly 900 units, and 58,000 officers and men out of the Army's Reserve Forces:

". . . too often they (the Committees) are placed in the position of having policies or regulations affecting the Reserve Components, proposed by the Department of Army, presented to them for approval—without having had the opportunity to participate in their initiation or drafting. In effect, this results in the Committees having to take one of two courses of action: either to rubber-stamp the proposal, or to nonconcur with it.

"In order that the Section 5 Committees may give direction and guidance to the development of basic policies, Department of Army staff action should permit them to participate in the initiation and drafting as well as the final review of policies and regulations affecting the Reserve Components—as it is intended by Congress and required by Section 3033, Title 10, U.S.C."

Consulted on the "finalized" original concept of the "re-alignment" but ignored in the development of changes which drastically reduced strength and units, the Committees submitted recommendations of their own, last Feb, which also were ignored, as was a follow-up letter last April, asking in effect: what happened?

The snub forced the Committees into the unusual action of formally reproaching the individual or individuals

"upstairs" who had given them the silent treatment; they sent up a formal Resolution stating in part:

"Revision of the current Troop Basis for Reserve Components has not been referred to these Committees for detailed recommendations or comment, although this revision is of major importance in the determination of the Reserve Forces structure; . . . Therefore, these Committees hereby respectfully invite attention of the Secretary of the Army to the need for carrying out the true intent and spirit of the law which created them and prescribed their functions."

THE remarks of Gens Rickards and Cantwell, nearly four decades apart, reveal a basic cause of periodic conflict. At the root lies an unshakable reluctance of professional planners (or those who must rely on their advice) to let "amateurs" work with them to point out pitfalls and try, as a team, to arrive at an agreed objective.

And there's a contributing factor: constant turnover among Pentagon planners. This never was better-illustrated than in the development of the current and controversial Reserve Forces program. Hebert Subcommittee testimony revealed that there had been three Chiefs of the Mobilization Plans Division in about two years. The incumbent conceded that "there is undoubtedly some validity" in Rep Otis G Pike's remark that "perhaps one of the reasons that we run into these conflicts and ups-and-downs and what-have-you is that we have different people all the time responsible for coming up with these plans."

NOW, it's true that the "Section 5" brush-off is only one of many angles to this hassle over major Reserve Forces reorganization. Furthermore, there's good reason to feel that in this instance, at least, the real pressure is coming down on the Army from Defense Secretary McNamara.

Be that as it may: one thread runs through all the flaps that have occurred within the experience of the oldest living Guardsman: unwillingness to let Guardsmen share in the development of plans which affect them.

Long ago, at the Guard's urging, sensible steps were taken to alleviate the problem: establishment of the "Section 5" Committees, assignment of Guard officers to key staff sections, and designation of a Guardsman to head the National Guard Bureau.

But they can do no good if the people they're to advise ignore their advice. Only if the civilian and military heads of the Services will bring the Guard into their planning in whole-hearted obedience to both the letter and the spirit of the law, will there be an end to demoralizing, wasteful—and needless—open quarrels, and emergence of a more solidly-rooted structure for the defense of our Nation. ♦

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Publication Office

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EDITORIAL

Let's Consult—And Not Conflict Inside Front Cover

DEAR GUARDSMEN: Less than five years ago, the Editors, whose jaded eyes have been exposed to hundreds of cartoon offerings, lit up when a bundle arrived from a new source. Of 11 cartoons offered hesitantly by a young unknown, name of James P Cullen, every one clicked, and, eventually, was published in these pages. This was exceptional, particularly since Jim, a Signal Corps civilian employe, stated with genuine modesty and some bashful hesitancy that he was a raw amateur who'd never tried to sell his stuff.



"Gentlemen, it's either cut the National Guard or give up wall-to-wall carpeting!"

Over the years, Jim has been sending us a steady stream. Rate of acceptance has been abnormally high, for Cullen had a good, clean "style," a perceptive wit, the knack of conveying the feel of a situation, and a keen knowledge of what was currently topical; he didn't fall back on timeworn gags. (The cartoon reprinted here is as timely today as upon first publication in April 1958).

The Editors were shocked and grieved just a couple of days ago to learn that a heart attack had chopped-off this promising talent at age 35.

For some time we'll be drawing from our stockpile of accepted but still-unpublished Cullen cartoons. We hope you enjoy them, too. —AGC