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TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

THERE several States and Territories are sadly dissapointed that the construction program of the National Guard did not proceed ahead as rapidly as they desired, as evidenced by the fact that the appropriation for FY 1951 under the provisions of the National Defense Facilities Act of 1950, has not yet been received. This may be due to the fact that the provision for the construction of armories and other facilities for the Reserve Components over a period of five years. However, no appropriation was made during FY 1951 because of the Korean emergency. Appropriations for these purposes during Fiscal Years 1950 and 1951 totaled $21,000,000 for armory construction and $11,000,000 for non-armory construction.

As of 28 March 1953, Insofar as can be determined, a total of 92 armories have been constructed or are in process of construction for the Army Reserve. In addition, a number of armories were procured by purchase, five of which represented an investment of $3,001,838, and 49 motor vehicle storage sheds, all totaling $30,701,074.

In contrast, the Army National Guard is proceeding vigorously in the construction of armories and other facilities and we are of the opinion that the situation is worse in respect to the National Guard than it is in respect to the Army Reserve.

The situation with reference to the non-armory construction program is even worse. In the first place, the appropriations of $5,000,000 and $3,000,000 respectively were tied up with the provisions of the National Defense Facilities Act, which required a 25% contribution by the States, to which they declined to agree because it never worked out. The second reason is the fact that Congress authorized the use of $8,000,000 last year so that the $8,000,000 finally was made available by Congress, but the $8,000,000 has not, as yet, been released. Of the $8,000,000 available and released, only $1,000,000 has been obligated.

This condition of affairs was fortuitous before the President's Force Policy Board by the President of the National Guard Association on 30 April 1953. Whether any remedial action will result remains to be seen. There is a grave danger that because of the delays occasioned by endless red tape, evasions of the funding policies and directives, we may lose the $10,000,000 recommended by the Bureau of the Budget for armory construction for the Army National Guard for FY 1954, and it is conceivable that $10,000,000 or more, of the money already appropriated for armory construction could be cancelled because of the seeming inability of the States and Territories to obligate that already has been appropriated. The fact is that the Bureau of the Board recommended only $100,000 for non-armory construction for the Army National Guard for FY 1954, which sum permits no construction.

The matters were considered at length by the Executive Council of the National Guard Association as it was held in Washington 25-26 April, and it was the consensus that no purpose would be served in making further representations to the Department of Defense, and that all pertinent data be submitted to the appropriate committees of the House and Senate with demand for an investigation.

The attitude of the men in charge of the Army National Guard construction program has been all too definitely one of "take it or leave it." It marked out a definite program in the Department of the Air Forces, where the Air National Guard construction program is being carried with vigor and with out effort or representation on our part, and for this we are truly grateful.