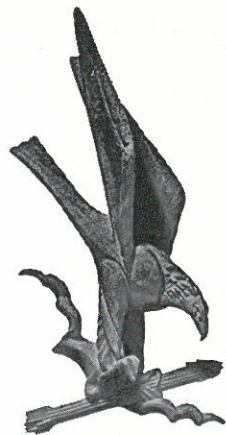


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## AS WE SEE IT



### PRICE OF FREEDOM SOMETIMES HIGH

Jay Brashear, Staff Writer for the Phoenix (Arizona) "Gazette" and a Lieutenant in the Arizona Army National Guard, wrote this tribute to an Arizona Air National Guard pilot who died in an aircraft mishap incident to a routine practice intercept, on a training mission. We publish it, not to honor just one man, but in recognition of the sacrifice that many of his comrades of the Air National Guard—and the Army National Guard, too—have made and will make in their undramatic, little-recognized, day-to-day performance of training duties.—The Editors.

WHILE a bugle sounded the mournful strains of Taps and rifles cracked a salute, the men of the Arizona Air National Guard buried one of their best pilots—Maj. Erich J. Hettlinger.

And it is indeed unfortunate that those Phoenicians who feel that the sound of an occasional sonic boom is too great a price to pay for air defense could not have been present at the funeral.

There they could have seen the price that some must pay in the name of freedom. They could have seen hardened fighter pilots, combat veterans of two wars, weep openly. They could have seen the agony and loneliness etched on Mrs. Hettlinger's face. They could have witnessed the courage and bewilderment felt by his children.

For Major Hettlinger made the supreme sacrifice just as surely as if he had been shot down in an air battle. And his wife and children could not be called upon to make any greater contribution to the welfare of this nation.

They now have, to remind them of a loving husband and father, a set of silver pilot's wings, a picture or two, a few personal effects, and the American flag that was draped over his casket.

Doris Hettlinger, though shuddering with grief, seemed to have a profound understanding of why her husband had to live—and die—by the airplane.

Hettlinger loved to fly. He was a man who had a feeling about airplanes that cannot be explained to those who have never scorched a hole in the sky with a jet fighter.

And yet to Hettlinger, flying was something deeper than an exhilarating experience. He felt that those men who had the gift of talent to fly had a serious obligation to put that talent to use in the defense of freedom.

In a day when patriotism often is regarded as foolish sentiment, Hettlinger was a man who was fiercely patriotic. He often expressed his concern on the fate of a world threatened by communism and openly voiced his love of country.

Those who knew Erich Hettlinger also knew these things about him: He was a leader, but no disciplinarian. He led from respect others felt for him, not from the fear he could create among subordinates. He was a friend to everyone, officer and airman alike. And the rookie pilots Hettlinger had helped felt a particular loss.

He loved his family and was almost boastful about his wife and children. He always had the deepest consideration for the problems and welfare of others.

Even in his last moments alive, Hettlinger displayed his concern for others. When the F-104 fighter that carried him to his death developed engine trouble, the fighter was aimed straight for the heart of the Maryvale residential district. He coolly made a 90 degree turn to line up the fighter with the vacant Salt River bed before he attempted an unsuccessful bail out.

In his final messages to the ground, Hettlinger displayed the same careful professional attitude that marked his career as a pilot. His voice was clear and steady and he relayed information and his decisions to the ground.

So this was a man of the type that Phoenicians have described as "an irresponsible kid who should be spanked" when they hear a sonic boom from a supersonic fighter like the one Hettlinger was flying.

They will hear no more booms from an airplane piloted by Maj. Erich J. Hettlinger. But neither will they feel the loneliness that will tear at the hearts of his wife and children for so many years.

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AS WE SEE IT .....	INSIDE FRONT COVER
OUT OF A CLEAR, BLUE SKY .....	2
WASHINGTON REPORT .....	6
INCIDENTALLY .....	8
TARGET: THE MIND .....	9
HEROES OF THE NATIONAL GUARD .....	12
THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING IN THE AIR FOR THE ANG .....	14
PENTAGON PARAGRAPHS .....	16
SCHOOL BELLS .....	17
A SCHOOL THEY CAN CALL THEIR OWN .....	18
TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL .....	19
THOSE WIDE OPEN SPACES! .....	20
POSTING THE GUARD .....	21
SOUND OFF .....	32
PICTURE GALLERY .....	INSIDE BACK COVER

**DEAR GUARDSMEN:** In the course of any year, literally hundreds of cartoons from both amateurs and professionals cross our desk. Some are good, some are mediocre, some are (though we hate to say it) absolutely horrid.

There are the re-dos of gags that were stale when Washington crossed the Delaware. There is the cartoonist who convulsed his followers when they wore washbasin helmets—and thinks they still do. And there are the eager lads who just plumb can't draw.

So it's a pleasure to tell a success story about a Mt Clemens, Mich, cartoonist who caught our eye nine long years ago. That's when we bought two cartoons from Pete Wyma. We've used a dozen or so others from him at intervals since then—and rejected dozens more.

Just recently we awoke to the fact that a familiar "style" and name has been showing-up daily in the Washington "Evening Star" and, upon inquiry, learn that Pete's brainchild, "Senator Caucus," butt of gentle kidding, has been syndicated by General Features Corp in 75 leading papers, and the list is growing.

What pleases us most that in his reply to our congratulatory note, Pete tells us that "you, sir, bought my first cartoon while I was still attending art school." —AGC

**OUR COVER:** A man's flying along, and all's well with the World, when suddenly, out of a clear, blue sky, Death may strike. That's the thought behind the Air Force's emphasis on flying safety. Lou Nolan has symbolized it pictorially on the front cover; the story's told in words, beginning on the next page.

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