"READINESS": CATCHWORD OR ACTUALITY?

"READINESS" has a nice, catchy ring to it. It implies the ability of a military force to grab weapons, mount up, move out and start shooting at a moment’s notice. Some elements of our Nation’s defense forces fortunately can qualify under that definition. Others—even in the full-time service—can not, for perfectly good and understandable reasons: being in the midst of a reorganization; being left short for individual units to meet special requirements; being short of 100% of the up-to-date weapons and equipment which Table 5-D demands to hold.

We subscribe to maximum readiness without question as the ideal for all elements of the National Guard, Army and Air, just as we do for the Regular Forces. But we sometimes feel a sense of uneasiness, due to the glint facility with which the term all-too-often is being used these days. The distinction between “readiness” as a goal, and as an actuality, is being blurred due to the PEO urge to present the most possible favorable “image” to the American public.

Thus, the objective of “greater readiness” has been emphasized in connection with the Reserve Forces “realign” which the Defense Dept., at this writing, announced as having been completed on 1 May. But the important qualifications which would put true readiness in sharp focus have been neglected.

It is interesting to note a growing awareness of this trend among people with diverse backgrounds—all of them concerned over the danger of lulled complacency. A false sense of security through constant patrolling of a comforting word.

In this issue, the NATIONAL GUARD has converged—purely through coincidence—on a series of articles which deal with this subject. There is the article by Gen Ben Waters which deals in part with conditions without which true readiness can not be achieved. There is the accompanying commentary by Maj Gen William H. Harrison, Jr, NGAUS President, explaining the reasons for the support of some points. There are the comments of Illinois Gov Otto Kerner, expressed in his behalf by Maj Gen John H. Boyd, in connection with proposed Guard appropriations, and reinforced by Gen Harrison’s views. And just before press time, Pentagon press conference was built around a release announcing completion of the current Reserve Forces “realign.” Several newsmen came away with the feeling that it was intended to convey the impression that reorganization now that the Civilian Components now are red-hot, ready-to-go. They didn’t “buy” that slant. They know that though greater readiness may result eventually, there is inevitably an immediate drop right after reorganization. The reason is simple: units and their people, whose missions, equipment, assignments and training are changed, need time to get squared-away in their new roles. The military writers know, too, the nature and effect of manpower shortfalls, and equally important shortages of modern equipment.

They may know that every one of our ROADS Divisions is bolted-together in some of their own doing, to test several vital units. Like go freight anywhere, we’ll do the best we can with what we have. We’ll come as close as we possibly can to personal readiness. But we don’t want Madison Avenue usage of a catchword. And the public into an expectation of a degree of readiness which circumstances beyond the Guard’s control will keep it from achieving for a long time to come.

VISIT TO CONCAR

A LONG with representatives of other Service journals in the Nation’s Capital, the editors of the NATIONAL GUARD spent a day at Ft Monroe, Va, recently as guests at Headquarters, US Continental Army Command, as we listened to the straightforward answers our questions brought from Gen John K. Waters and some of his officers, it struck us that their frank, cooperative, uncom- promising attitude has become so characteristic of ConARC as it deserves special mention.

What Gen Waters and his staff had to say at the recent meeting was less important than the clear indications they gave that ConARC’s policies toward “the troops” would not change. It would listen to suggestions from “the field,” its officers would sit down willingly with troop leaders—Active, National Guard or Reserve—to thrash-out the problems that invariably arise when you’re training a force as large as the US Army.

It was what we read into our one-hour meeting with the new ConARC chief. It was implicit, too, in the simple and obviously sincere answer he gave when asked whether the so-called “One Army” policy would continue to represent ConARC’s approach to Reserve Component matters.

“The One Army policy will be permitted to sit down and be said, but rather than the sloganized “One Army,” he thinks it more possible at that point in time to simply refer to it as “Our Army.”

In the foregoing statement and in his other remarks on Reserve Force components, there was a refreshing lack of affectation and the same willingness to lead a sympathetic ear to Guard-USAR problems that we’ve come to expect from him. He will tell you that the new ConARC has weathered the storm in its first few months, weather decisions are made that vitally affect us. From the days of ConARC’s first Commanding General, Gen William C. Wynn, down through the regiments of Genus Bruce C. Clarke and Herbert G. Powell, to the present, ConARC has been a place where Guard representatives habitually are consulted before policies toward the Guard are shaped; where representatives of all components week with mutual goodwill toward the solution of the problems that affect them all.

To ConARC’s new Commanding General, then, we’ll say in terms equally as sincere and straightforward as his own: "Welcome. We’re looking forward to working with you because the Guard, too, believes it should be “Our Army.”

EDITORIAL

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

MASSACHUSETTS AVE, N.W. WASHINGTON 1, D.C.

June, 1963

17-6

PENNS’ WOODS AND THE CITY OF BROTHERLY LOVE

BECKON GUARDIANS

TRACK MEET: Good for the School, Good for the Guard

"DUCK PLUCKERS" SAVE WILDLIFE

PUERTO RICANS MAKE FRIENDS IN HAITI

FEATURES:

WASHINGTON REPORT

Pentagon Paragraphs

You Ought to Know

Technical & Tactile

O’J’s Column

Pasting the Guard

Letters to the Editor

DEAR GUARDIANS: Pentagon policies change; realignments and reorgani-

zes Guard switch units overnight from Infantry to Signal, Artillery to Engrs, with increasing frequency, modern equipment for training comes to us in dribsbles, if at all. Yet, wishful, the Guard’s potential ability to hold its own on a Atom Age battlefield continues to climb. Much of this is due, of course, to the initiative, ingenuity and dedication of individual Guardsmen, Army and Air, officer and enlisted. It’s due, too, to the willingness of men and women to enter the Army in order to "re-up" their best ideas to other Guardians, frequently through the pages of THE NATIONAL GUARDIAN. To cite just a few of the features that will appear during the Summer months, a selected group of Company Commanders who took them to active duty for the Berlin crisis will swap ideas, in a printed roundtable, on "What to Do Before the M-Day Order Comes"; Delaware Guardians will explain how they stopped Air Attack checked in some valuable tactical training besides, during a one-day drill; and Guardians of Minne-
sota’s 475th Air Defense Battalion will show how Army’s Cold War Guard School in Alaska to train themselves to defend that frigid region. If you’re a non-commissioned officer and are not yet on our subscription list, you’re overlooking a "training aid" that many a fellow Guardian already is tak-

ing advantage of.

OUR COVER: Modernization piled on top of modernization, and change upon change, will become almost a way of life for the Guard as it fits in the increasing tempo by which mid-Twentieth Century military forces must live. It was that underlying theme when the State Adjutants General held their annual conference in Puerto Rico a few weeks ago, and it’s our cover theme for the month. Artist Lou Nolas dramatically illustrates the long way we’ve come from the Minsmen of 1775 to the Globe-ranging, missile-armed Guardians of 1963.