MOBILIZATION

AND now, as so many, many times before, mobilization has come. An actual mobilization for many (the third in 21 years or less for a major portion of the Guards- men and others involved); a status of augmented strength and intensified training for many others, filling just short of mobilization. (And regardless of the play on words—that technically and legally, those in the latter group weren’t "alerted," regardless of the fact that the Army had been overhauled to whatever implication that mobilization was in the offing for them, the press and other authorities seemed to think that they’d be next to go if a bad situation in Berlin turned really foul).

A number of lessons were highlighted by the pattern of actions and words:

1.—The Nation could think its lucky stars that the senseless drive to downgrade the National Guard and other Reserve Forces had been successfully resisted. The very existence of organized, functioning units as well as a mass of individual "illiterals," would materially shorten the lead-time between mobilization and operational readiness.

2.—The Army Guard and the Air Guard were depended upon for the bulk of the combat forces required. The air Guard was the Air Force’s only source for the additional fighter aircraft that would be needed to cover another Berlin airlift or support ground action, for a major portion of the transport craft and for the associated tactical reconnaissance and tactical control.

In either the actual order of the designation of priority units for a possible second phase of the mobilization, the Guard was pegged out for the vast majority of the Combat Armor: these Infantry and one Armored Division, two Corps Artillery. Head- quarters and field artillery, both elements and the associated combat support-type units that are needed to round-out a Corps or Field Army. True, but—

these were "the men behind the man behind the gun"—in a bewildering variety of Administrative and Technical Service Units, each with a necessary mission and function.

The fact remained that Khrushchev was more likely to be impressed by supersonic aircraft, missiles, artillery, tanks, and bayonets than by Adjutant General Postal Units and Civil Affairs Companies. The "mix" of unit types chosen to train to defend against the Army Guard and the Army Reserve, the Air Guard and the Air Reserve, should complement rather than compete with each other.

3.—Reaction and response to the mobilization and to the piling of priority units for a stepped-up training pace was heartening but not surprising to those who are thoroughly familiar with the Guard system, pride and spirit. There was no fluff-up, no hysteria, no "Remember the Maine!" fervor; there was a healthy, adult ac-

ceptance of the fact that this was what Guardsmen had joined and trained for.

Yes, there were problems in the wake of mobilization and a quasi-"alert," there always have been and there inevitably will always be. For those who actually got their orders, at least they could make firm plans.

For the rest—those on priority lists, as well as the Missouri Guard of Guardsmen and others who thus far haven’t tapped for anything—the big problem was of uncertainty. One young officer’s comments spoke for all of them: "I just wish it were all over. Then I could get Shabbat off. That’s the way thousands are, it does present problems in personal planning. As the man said: ‘Cold War is Hell.’ ‘Should the recent graduate look hard for a job or play it by ear?’ Will anyone hire him, knowing he might be snatched away? If he’s in line for a job promotion, will he get it—or the man at the next desk who ‘safes’? Should be go ahead with his wedding plans—or risk a cooling-off of order during a ‘wait-and-see’ period?"

Militarily, the Guardsmen still waiting for orders that might or might not come were confronted with demands for even greater time, effort, and dedication. It was manada-
tory for some: for those on the top priority list, one multiple drill month over and above the normal pat-
tern—one more Saturday or Sunday lost from a fishing trip, a picnic with wife and kids, or performing long-deferred household chores. A thorough awareness of the ominous World situation and the tap on the shoulder that might come, could no doubt seriously obstruct or unusually be reflected in stepped-up training within other units.

It would take actual "alert" to impel conscious Unit Commanders to demand and enforce taste performance: better drill attendance, more painstaking lessons planning; more attention to detail, more rigorous equipment maintenance, and so forth.

The Guard would do its part—mobilized, or just wait-
ing. It is hoped that other, more responsible parties would do as well. As the National Guard’s Ass’t President, Maj Gen Morehead could say in its presentation to the American Legion’s National Security Commission last month: "We should be mindful that in the program to strengthen the Active Forces, we should not neglect those Reserve Forces not ordered to active duty. It is im-

pensable that we not permit the dropping-off of the necessary skills: orientation-knowledge and training efficiency of the Reserve Forces not called."

Those who go in this first increment can take pride in being chosen. Those who stand by will be ready to join them if the need arises. The Guard Historically has been America’s first-line Reserve Force. It is today.

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DEAR GUARDSMEN: To those who read Bruce Jacoby’s "Heroes of the Guard" piece in our August issue about Lt Lee Bonsview, Commandant of the National Guard, this sequel may have special interest.

While the article was being readied for publication, we received a query to the effect that the Medal of Honor winner’s widow, Mrs Margaret Har-
tell of Doherty, Cony, had heard that an air field in Japan or Korea had been named in her husband’s name; could we find out anything about it?

We made some phone calls to the Pentagon, and wrote to other possible contacts. Some proved fruitless; others produced unanticipated information. We haven’t yet found an air field named for Lt Harrell, but we have found that a "Hartwell Avenue Chute" at Ft Sill, Okla. and a, letter about, and a photo (see cut) of a bronze plaque identifying the Commanding General’s Mess at Eighth Army Hq in Korea as "Hartwell House," have come from Eighth Army through Army Channels.

—AGC

Our Cover: October 1, 1963, is M-Day for many thousands of Army Guards-
men and Air Guardsmen, and (to coin a term not in the book) “T” Day (for ‘in-
tensified training’ for tens of thousands more. In the spirit of the times, our cover shows A/S A S Straughan on guard at hangar of Virginia’s 14th Tactical Fighter Squadron, ordered into active service with the 14th in September as a crew of “Bearcats” of Minnesota’s 1st Battle Group, 136th Infantry, fires a “Scorpion’s” 80 mm anti-tank gun. (Photos by VAANG and Capt Bob Lund, Army Advisor with the 196th).

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