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Juniors Are Heard, Heeded

HARASSED from above to produce miracles, heckled from below to create some form of military paradise for subordinates, junior officers sometimes find it difficult to equate their whipping-boy existence with repeated avowals from on high that they are the hub around which the National Guard revolves, or that their advice is heard and heeded when decisions are being made.

A Lieutenant or Captain coping with such earth-shaking crises as a dirty field range or caustic inspector or mysteriously-missing radio, for instance, must strain his credulity to reconcile these mundane problems with assurances that he is the mainstay of the Guard, a maker of decisions and leader of men.

Because there is no better way of making our point, we can only repeat what has been said many times before:

- That the relatively minor problems which occupy him today steadily add their bit to the maturity and judgment which a younger officer must acquire as he ascends to higher levels of command.

- That the practical knowledge and advice of junior officers *does* filter upward to influence senior commanders in formulating courses of action.

This is the basis for the continuing services of consultations and meetings at the National Guard Bureau, wherein spokesmen from "the field" are called in to advise the Bureau Chief and his staff on such matters as personnel policy, flying safety and public information.

It likewise provides the framework within which the National Guard Association of the United States conducts its own affairs, through Committees on which membership is rotated periodically among working Guardsmen from every geographical area and every level of command.

If the committees and the various advisory groups seem to be weighted in favor of officers in the more senior grades, it is because they not only can speak from the foundation of their own lengthy service but can best express the collective views of their subordinates. It likewise is advisable, on many occasions, to place Guard officers on these groups whose rank is on a par with that of the officers with whom they will have to deal, in the Pentagon or at other major headquarters.

Nevertheless, the Committees, the study groups and the delegations to our NGAUS General Conferences do contain a substantial number of officers from the lower grades, and their opinions and votes count just as heavily as those of officers senior to them. Most particularly has there been a discernible trend in recent years for both NGB and NGAUS to select junior officers for such assignments on the basis of the specialized knowledge or expertise which they possess.

This system assures that Guard officers at every level will continue to have a voice in the making of policy and in the formulation of programs, and this is all to the good.

It probably is the single greatest source of the Guard's strength and continued vitality, that it doesn't merely listen to the advice and counsel of its junior leaders but actively seeks to put their enthusiasm and innovative spirit and practical knowledge to use through such channels as those described above.

A respected former Chief of the National Guard Bureau once said that the future of the National Guard reposes in its junior officers, for they are the Colonels and Generals of a few years hence.

It is not inappropriate to point out that the future of which he spoke already is taking shape today, in the dynamism of our younger officers, and in the National Guard which they are creating with their energy and dedication and ever-increasing professional competence. ♦



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THE RED CHINESE MILITIA 2

Millions of Chinese have been brought into their Militia, but the question is: how much of it is a bona fide fighting force, and how much primarily a device for stimulating patriotic fervor and propaganda?

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The concept of home-town Guardsmen manning coastal defenses is centuries old. But, from "tube artillery" to NIKE-AJAX and now to NIKE-HERCULES, the current concept of around-the-clock watch in the nation's air defense has brought striking changes in an important element of the National Guard.

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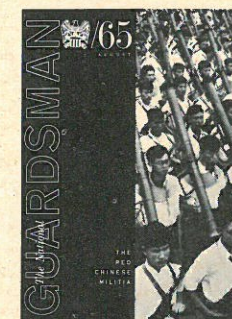
The unique linguists of the Utah National Guard were almost too realistic in their impersonation. Running a make-believe "POW camp," they gave their "prisoners"—fellow Guardsmen—a tough taste of what captivity could be like.

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Unusual program, now 15 years old, brings close-to-home training to staff officers and enlisted specialists of the Guard as well as the Army Reserve.

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Wisconsin Air Guard veteran builds his own airplanes and runs unique aircraft museum as a hobby.



The Chinese Militia has waxed and waned. Whatever its quality, it still numbers in the many millions.

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