

OUR CITIZEN ARMY

By the Reserve Affairs Division

THE preservation of the state is the obligation of every citizen." This is one of the national defense policies as stated in Commonwealth Act No. 1, commonly known as the National Defense Act, as amended. This policy is based on the principle that the "ultimate bulwark of liberty is the readiness of free citizens to sacrifice themselves in the defense of that boon". In incorporating the above-mentioned policy based on the principle as stated, it was the intention and objective of the architects of our national defense, namely General Douglas MacArthur in his capacity as Military Adviser to the late President Quezon, and then Major now President of the United States Dwight D. Eisenhower, to foster national pride and patriotism in the young men by making them participate actively in the process of maintaining national defense through military training and service. Accordingly, young men of a given age were ordered to training.

Under this system which is generally known as Universal Military Training, male citizens who will attain the age of 20 during

the calendar year, must register for military training. Those who were subsequently selected to train are ordered to report to training camps where they are intensively taught the art of warfare by selected officers and soldiers of the regular force. After their graduation they are assigned to units of the reserve force and from then on until they reach the age of fifty, they are members of the reserve force and are subject to call to active duty in times of emergency or war or for refresher training. Since our Army is composed mostly of these reserves with a small standing force forming as its core, our Armed Forces is considered truly a citizen army.

System of Selection For Training

Our country is not rich. It can therefore afford to train only a limited few every year. A system has to be set up therefore in order to select who among the approximately 220,000 young men who attain the age of twenty every year should report for training. This system is as follows:

1. On April 1 to 7 of each year, all young men who attain the age of twenty during the cal-

endar year register for military training with their municipal secretaries or city police chiefs. Exempted from this registration are the members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and those who are abroad. Those who are awaiting trial in civil courts or serving sentence are also temporarily exempted until the termination of their trials or release from confinement. Failure to register is punishable by imprisonment of six months or a fine of P200 or both upon the discretion of the court.

2. On May 15 of each year, the Governor, the fiscal and PC Commander in the province, constituting a board, conducts the drawing of lots to determine who among those in the province who regis-

tered will be selected for training. In the city, the board is composed of the mayor, the fiscal and an officer of the AFP. Those whose names are drawn by lot are now known as draftees.

3. The draftees are ordered to report to Acceptance Boards constituted in the provinces and cities for classification into the following:

Class I — Fit for unlimited service

Class II — Fit for limited service

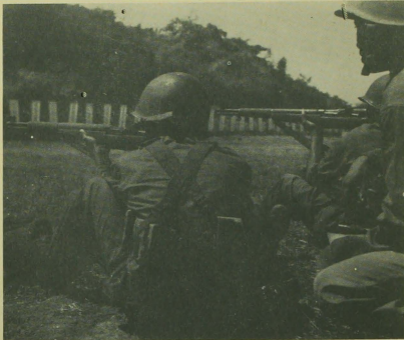
Class III — Deferred for a later date

Class IV — Unfit — exempted.

As much as possible, only those who are classified as fit for unlimited service are finally selected

Qualified 20-year-old male Filipinos undergo military training.





• *Trainees get instructions on how to fire their individual weapon.*

and ordered to report for training.

To train these young men, cadre camps under the supervision of regular officers and soldiers were established in the Military Districts of which there were ten before the war. In view however of their destruction during the war and lack of funds with which to reconstruct them, training is conducted at the Philippine Army Training Command. With the establishment of a Division Training Camp at Laur, Nueva Ecija, the training of trainees received the much needed boost.

ROTC

To supplement the meager output of our training camps, there is established in the colleges and universities Reserve Officers Training Corps under the supervision of the Armed Forces the basic graduates of which are assigned as enlisted non-coms in the Reserve Force. The Advance Course graduates are commissioned as second lieutenants and are also assigned to the reserve force.

Guerrillas

During the Japanese occupation, thousands of young men banded themselves into units

which harassed the enemy and made possible the early liberation of our country. In recognition of their meritorious services, these members of the guerilla units are incorporated into the reserve force. Surely their experience and training acquired will be an asset should our country once more be under the heel of an invader.

Reserve Officers

The number of regular officers in the standing army is not enough to officer the units of the Armed Forces, both in the standing army and the reserve. To provide for these units, therefore, the Armed Forces has to draw from numerous sources its officers. These sources are the following:

1. Graduates of the Advance Course of the ROTC.
2. Regular EM who are graduates of the School for Reserve Commission.
3. Graduates of the Philippine Navy Line School and also those graduates of the School for Merchant Marines of the United States.
4. Graduate of the Philippine Air Force Flying School.
5. Degree Holders and Specialists.
6. Deserving enlisted men of the regular force.

To train these officers, they are called to Annual Active Duty Training in accordance with the provisions of the National Defense

Act. In addition, the Armed Forces has instituted a correspondence course wherein reserve officers in the inactive status are given lessons in certain subjects commensurate with their ranks and intended position to be occupied in the reserve force. Plans are presently being perfected to give these reserve officers more training.

Home Stations

In the course of the administration of the reserves, the Armed Forces are faced with so many problems. One of the biggest problems is how to get in touch with the reservists whose addresses are no longer known because of the mass movement of the population after the last war from the urban areas to the rural areas and vice versa. Although it is a provision of the National Defense Act that reservists, whether they are officers or enlisted men should notify their headquarters of their new addresses, there are certain reasons for the failure of these reservists to register their new addresses. In order to solve this problem, facilitate the administration of the reservists and also make possible their training even while they are in the inactive status, our reserves are presently being reorganized in accordance with what is popularly known as the regional concept. Under this concept, reservists residing within a certain radius are grouped together, constituted into a unit, and given its own headquarters



Weapons used in training include the 57 RR.

to be known as a "Home Station". Reservists residing in a barrio may be formed into a squad. Squads in several barrios adjacent to each other may be formed into a platoon. Several platoons may be formed into companies. It is felt that this project will meet favorable endorsement by our leaders and people. Aside from the fact that this is not a new idea, it is at the same time an implementation of the provisions of the National Defense Act which dictates that the organization for national defense shall follow closely as much as possible the territorial and administrative organization of the country.

The advantages of organizing home stations are the following:

1. It will facilitate mobilization.
2. It will make possible the training of reserve units even

while they are in the inactive status.

3. It will develop in the members of the units the feeling of "belonging" which is essential for the morale of the members. This feeling will be communicated to their families and subsequently to all the members of the community. Members of the community will in turn encourage the members of the local units to strive hard. The spirit of friendly competition between units in barrios, in towns and even in provinces and cities will be developed and the whole country will catch on and becomes national defense conscious.

4. Contact of reservists will not only be facilitated but it will also be constant. Information affecting their status can be communicated to them through the home stations.