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A HISTORY OF COMPANY C
156TH SIGNAL BATTALION (COMBAT AREA)
MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
IN THE BERLIN CRISIS 1961-62

by

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A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

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A HISTORY OF COMPANY C
156TH SIGNAL BATTALION (COMBAT AREA)
MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
IN THE BERLIN CRISIS 1961-62

Warren J. Lawrence, M. A.
Western Michigan University, 1971

The 1961 mobilization of United States Military Reserve Components for the Berlin Crisis had several unique aspects. One perspective of examining the mobilization is to view it through the successes and problems of one of the individual company-size units called to service. The unit discussed here is Company C, 156th Signal Battalion (CA), Michigan Army National Guard, located in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

The paper begins with a brief history of Company C from its conception in 1859 to the Berlin Crisis Mobilization in 1961. The mobilization itself and what happened to Company C during 1961 and 1962 is covered in a topical fashion. Such concerns as the initial alert, movement to Fort Benning, training, status of equipment, morale, "fillers", demobilization and the after effects are seen from the perspectives of the individual Guardsmen in the unit.

In 1961 President Kennedy mobilized the Reserve Components "...to prevent a war...". Company C, 156th Signal Battalion (CA), Michigan Army National Guard successfully met the problems and challenges of that unusual call-to-arms.

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PREFACE

The Berlin Crisis mobilization of 1961 was one of the most unusual call-to-colors in American history. The one thing that made this call-up so different was that for the first time, a large portion of our nation's reserve force was mobilized for Federal service without facing an enemy on the field of battle. In Executive Order 10957, President Kennedy authorized the Secretary of Defense to call-up not more than 250,000 ready Reservists. The President told the American people that these men were called "...to prevent a war, not to fight a war". The Berlin Crisis ended without a war. By this simple test one might term the mobilization a complete success. However, when dealing with the complex areas of foreign relations, national politics and the lives of 113,254 individual reservists, simple tests and evaluations fall short of supplying the whole answer. The purpose of this paper is to view the Berlin Crisis through the mobilization of one of the 441 company and organizational size units called to service. The unit discussed here is Company C 156th Signal Battalion (CA), Michigan National Guard located in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Company C was only a leaf in the forest, yet the old Russian saying is true, "Without a leaf there would be no forest". It was the mobilization
of these many individual reserve organizations that put the Berlin Crisis in a different perspective; different when compared to any other East-West post World War II crisis.

In the first chapter of this paper, the reader will find some general remarks concerning the National Guard as an institution and also a brief accounting of Company C's history from 1859 to 1961. The major part of this thesis will concern itself with "how" the company was mobilized; what happened to the unit and its members during its ten months of service; and the impact of the Berlin Crisis mobilization on the Defense Department's concept of reserve forces. Some attention will be given to the larger issue of the nature of the crisis itself and its effect on the general mobilization. This work will not endeavor to explore the political aspects of the mobilization. There were great political implications on every level of government, but the subject is too large to examine here. References made to the political scene shall be done in a superficial way--just as they appeared in the newspapers which were read by the mobilized reservists.

It should be noted here that I was a member of Company C during the unit's mobilization. At the time of this writing, I am approaching eighteen years of military service. All this time (except for three years in the Regular Army) was spent with Company C in an active duty or active reserve status.
It might be said that this paper will deal with the Berlin Crisis mobilization as seen through the eyes of those who were not the directors but rather the participants. When the history books, yet to be written, dismiss the whole Berlin Crisis episode in a cold sentence or two, this paper will remain to be recorded proof that real men participated and made sacrifices.

It would be impossible to thank all those who helped me in the writing of this thesis. The roster of Company C found in Appendix I would serve as a good starting place. However, there are three people who deserve a special thank you for their assistance: Professor Alan S. Brown, my faculty advisor; First Sergeant Marine S. Damvelt, a twenty year member of the National Guard; and my wife, Jacqueline. Each played a decisive role in encouraging, criticizing and prodding to help me bring this extended project to a successful conclusion.
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CHAPTER I
BACKGROUND: THE NATIONAL GUARD AS AN INSTITUTION
AND
A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMPANY C 1859-1961

Company C 156th Signal Battalion is a Michigan National Guard organization and as a National Guard unit it is part of what has been called our nation's most

...unique, complex and at times unfathomable defense institution when viewed from the outside. It was Colonel Frederick G. Todd, Curator of the Military Museum at West Point, who said that no one could ever really understand the National Guard and its membership without having been a Guardsman. ¹

This statement is probably a bit dramatic but it does contain some truth. Virtually everyone in the United States has heard of the National Guard and most people have known a relative or a neighbor who has served in its ranks. But few could accurately define the Guard's purpose, authority or method of operation.

If the reader of this document falls into the majority category of persons unfamiliar with the workings of the Guard, a few basic remarks are necessary concerning the organization's origins and operation. Without this understanding much of what is discussed in this paper may seem unrealistic when compared with other types of military organizations.

One of the most important characteristics of any military organization is its tradition. A unit's tradition is one thing a commander may use to motivate a positive attitude on the part of his troops for accomplishing the unit's mission. Tradition, properly instilled in the individual soldier, places an obligation upon him to do well because of the responsibility to uphold what his predecessors began. It might be said that the glories of the past, (bad experiences tend to be forgotten) are made into a sacred spirit that cannot be allowed to be dishonored. On May 9, 1846, at Resaca de La Palma, Texas, an American officer led his troops into combat with the battle cry of, "Remember Your Regiment!" Since some New England Guard units are able to trace their origin back to 1628, it is obvious that many Guard units have similar experiences.

In the colonial period British authorities had no intention of providing standby garrisons for the protection of the colonies. Thus, it was that in the early period of our history the formation of militia units was begun. The militia concept was not new even at that early date. Basically, the militia formed a loose citizen-military organization, which could be called to duty for an emergency. The militia could fight as an independent unit or could be used to augment the active forces. The plan had its limitations, but the advantages and pragmatism far outweighed any weaknesses. Just the factor of economics made the concept a good idea. If there was no emergency or threat there was
virtually no cost. The men were responsible for furnishing their own weapons, equipment and uniforms (the latter two items were virtually nonexistent in the early days). The only cost in time of peace was the unit's annual "Muster Day" mobilization to enlist new members, update the organization's roster and do a little drilling for the town folk. Obviously, these men were not as well trained as the active army, but they did provide a quick, semi-organized manpower resource. During the mobilizations for the Indian campaigns and colonial wars militia units performed from brilliant to catastrophic in accordance with leadership, state of training, geography and term of enlistment.¹

Colonial militia men formed the bulk of America's first army. It was a group of about seventy militia men who lined up at the north end of the Lexington Common to wait for Major John Pitcairn's six companies of Redcoats in 1775, and there were ranks of militia men who witnessed General Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown in 1781. Regardless of the glories and disasters in which the Revolutionary

¹Leadership and state of training affect all military units. However, early militia units often had the added military weakness of geographic limitation. Many times the terms of enlistment would restrict the citizen soldier to fight with the boundaries of a given colony or community. Also, often when a militia unit was mobilized it was not for the duration of the emergency but rather for some unusually short time such as 30-90 days. It was not uncommon to see militia units demobilized and returned home when they were needed the most.
militia men participated, the concept of citizen soldiers became a part of the new nation and the principle was to be preserved.

Many of the colonists who lived on the eastern seaboard had a great dislike for large standing professional armies as evidenced by their grievances in the Declaration of Independence. But most would have agreed with General Washington when he told the First Continental Congress: "...every citizen who enjoys the protection of a free government owes not only a portion of his property but even his personal services to the defense of it..."2

The desire to continue the militia system in the new states, subject to the call and overall control of the federal government was expressed by the authors of the United States Constitution in Article I, Section 8 and in the Second Amendment.

To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions;
To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively, the appointment of officers, and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by congress;3

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1 The Declaration of Independence makes five direct indictments of "standing armies...in times of peace."

2 "Two Centuries of Service," Officer's Call, Department of the Army Pamphlet 360-305, May 21, 1968, p. 2.

Second Amendment:

A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.\footnote{U. S., Constitution, Amendment II.}

In the early years of the Republic, militia units formed the nation's only reserve force. Although Congress had retained the authority for their control, etc. the new Federal lawmakers had relatively little to do with militia training, organization, or equipment. By default, and by the Militia Act of 1792,\footnote{The Militia Act of 1792 turned supervision of the Militia over to the states. It did require that local commanders maintain rosters of eligible male citizens (18-45 years of age). The Militia Act was the chief document to govern the militia for over 100 years.} these activities were closely controlled by either the states or individual communities. In the late 1700's and the first portion of the 19th Century there was little uniformity in the militia's operation, or for that matter, appearance. In the eastern states, to be a member of the militia tended to be an important status symbol. Some units--generally in the more populated areas--were elaborately uniformed, usually at their own expense. The further West one proceeded in the early days the more the social and glory aspects of the militia wore away in favor of the more practical aspects. The western states generally viewed the militia solely for their organizational protection.
The militia concept of the post-Revolutionary War period saw little change until the Spanish-American War. During that period of time the nation maintained a minimal standing army; sometimes less than one thousand men. When quick manpower was required by either an individual state or the federal government, the first move by the governor, president or congress was to mobilize the loosely organized militia.

It was under these conditions that Company C, 156th Signal Battalion (CA) was born.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMPANY C 1859-1961

Company C was first organized in the Village of Kalamazoo in June of 1859. The new unit, under the elected command of Captain John Dudgen was named the "Kalamazoo Light Guard". Even though some people in the 1850's saw the Rebellion in the offing, it still was not generally popular to be a part of the Michigan militia during that decade. In the late 1840's the Michigan Legislature had abolished an annual tax of twenty-five cents for the support of the volunteer militia. The 1835 Michigan Constitution Section 4, Chapter 10 carried a clause stating "...and money which shall be paid by persons as an equivalent for exemption from military duty, shall be applied to the support of said (township) libraries."
Adjutant General Schwarz in his Annual Report of 1848 stated that until the Constitution was thus amended, the present volunteer system had to be considered a failure. It is clear today how critical the major events were in the 1850's in leading our nation to Civil War. But apparently most members of the Michigan Legislature did not see any urgency, and they were generally indifferent to the status of the militia throughout most of that decade.

In 1859 the Michigan Legislature finally condescended to appropriate $3,000 for the support of a State Military Board and it also required the militia to mobilize for an annual four day encampment. (The first encampment was not held until 1860). These minute improvements did little to prepare the State's militia for the impending conflict:

The militia was ridiculed by both the legislators and public, blocked in its efforts to gain more appropriations and denied recognition as an efficient and necessary part of state government. In the period immediately preceding the Civil War, the entire available force consisted of 38 companies poorly equipped and armed, with a strength of 1,241 officers and men.¹

Even though the militia conditions in the State were unfavorable, there were enough citizens in the village who wanted a unit and the Kalamazoo Light Guard was born. The infant organization graduated from its first militia muster to combat in the short space of two years.

News of the outbreak of the Civil War probably reached Kalamazoo by telegraph shortly after it had begun on April 15, 1861. President

Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to restore the Union. An informal meeting of leading village citizens was held in J. W. Bruce's office the same day. A committee of ten men was appointed to hold a public meeting at Fireman's Hall the next day. After a decade of apathy toward the militia, the "war spirit" suddenly burst forth.

The next day, before a large crowd at Fireman's Hall, without realizing it the committee set out to make Kalamazoo part of the Civil War. The crowd was unanimous that the rebellion had to be suppressed and by arms if necessary. With very little direction from the state or federal government, the village moved to prepare their militia unit for war.

By the close of the day not only had the "Kalamazoo Light Guard" been brought to full strength, but also a second company had been recruited: "Kalamazoo Number 2". Following the local mobilization came a period of drilling while waiting to receive the governor's orders. On the morning of April 30, with much fanfare, the two companies made their way from separate parts of the village to the railroad station.

The Kalamazoo Telegraph recorded the emotions of the day:

Speeches were made by Hon. H. G. Wells, Col. Curtenius, Hon. C. E Stuart, Rev. E. Taylor, all eloquent and appropriate. And now came the last and most touching scenes. Three cars had been left for the conveyance of the volunteers, and the way

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1Willis F. Dunbar, Kalamazoo and How It Grew (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1959), pp. 90-91.
being opened, the companies at once marched into them. At the same time a rush was made by the crowd to be as near the track as possible, and as the noble fellows ascended the platform their hands were grasped by those outstretched on every side, and the words, 'good-bye', 'God bless you', and kindred adieus and exclamations were uttered in every key of modulation. The platforms and windows of the cars were besieged for the last look, the last word. Mothers were there whose only sons were just stepping from that verge which might remove them forever from their gaze. Sisters sobbed a last farewell, wives tore themselves from their husbands, and brothers and friends with trembling lips and hearts stirred with deep emotions, bade a sad farewell. The waiting was not long. The western train arriving, cut short the final farewell, and the train moved off. Shout upon shout arose from the crowd, and was participated in by the volunteers. Amid the noise of artillery, the shouts of the people, the swinging of hats, and the waving of handkerchiefs, the first Kalamazoo volunteers departed.¹

Upon their arrival at Detroit the men were told they must volunteer for three years rather than the three months mentioned in Lincoln's call. The two companies became part of the Second Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment. The Kalamazoo Light Guard was given the line of battle designation of "Company I" and the Kalamazoo Number 2 became "Company K".²

On May 25, 1861 the new Regiment was officially mustered into Federal Service. Eleven days later it left the State not to return again as an organization until August 1865. During that long absence Kalamazoo militia men, with their volunteer comrades, amassed a fine record.


The Regiment's first engagement was at Blackburn's Ford, Virginia, July 18, 1861 and their last engagement was at the capture of Petersburg, Virginia, April 3, 1865. The Regiment recorded forty-three official engagements. Many of these meetings with the Confederates bear names still well remembered today: 1st and 2nd Bull Run, Malvern Hill, Fredericksburg, Seige of Vicksburg, Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, the Crater and some of the men were at Appomattox Court House when Lee surrendered.

The 2nd Michigan, composed mostly of state militia units appears to have been one of the finest regiments to leave the state. Perhaps the most harrowing experience for the Kalamazoo men came at Jackson, Mississippi on July 13, 1863. At 5 A.M. the 2nd Michigan formed skirmishers with the rest of the 2nd brigade outside the city. At 7 A.M. the order came down the line "Forward: double-quick!" Away went the 2nd Michigan--or at least part of it. Three companies (C, F and H) evidently did not get the word to move out. The other regiments in the brigade quickly retreated to the original position.

In his official report of the action the Regimental Commander, Colonel Humphrey stated:

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1The Regiment was sound but there appears to have been a conflict within Company I itself. Captain Dewhite May, after the Battle of Bull Run, resigned from the 2nd Michigan. He went on to another regiment, rose to the rank of General and before his life closed, became Lt. Governor of the State of Michigan.
...the men at once advanced with a cheer, drove in the enemy's skirmishers through their camps and into their reserves, strongly posted in a deep ravine, charged and broke the reserve and drove it up out of the ravine into its main support, drawn up in a line of battle on the top of the south bank of the ravine, charged under a hot fire of musketry and artillery up the steep bank against the main body, broke this line, and drove the enemy within his works. We waited for our support to come up, but on sending for it were surprised to find we had none. ¹

Two days later in an "order" congratulating the officers and men who participated in the engagement, the Regimental Commander went on to express the belief that, "This achievement you may well claim as among the most brilliant of the war."²

On July 28, 1865, at Delaney House, D. C. the 2nd Michigan Volunteer Infantry was mustered out of service. The Regiment, less 321 "Officers and Men who fell under the flag in defense of the Union", returned to the state on August 1 of that year.³ With the federal mission accomplished, committees began reorganizing the militia units again.

During the 1870's there were various militia designation changes made in the state in order to give more uniformity to the militia organizations. It was during this period that the Kalamazoo unit was given the line of battle designation of "Company C". And now, almost one hundred years later, regardless of the organizational suffix, Company C, for Kalamazooans is synonymous with "militia" or National Guard.

¹op. cit., p. 196.
²ibid.
³loc. cit., p. 748-49.
The second federal mobilization for the Kalamazoo soldiers followed closely on the heels of the sinking of the battleship Maine. On April 20, 1898 a joint resolution from the United States Congress authorized:

...that the President of the United States be, and hereby is, directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval force of the United States, and to call into the actual service of the United States, the militia of the several states... ¹

On April 25 Congress declared war on Spain and on April 26 Company C, 32nd Michigan Volunteer Infantry was mobilized. The company was recruited to double its size (132 officers and enlisted men). Nationally, there was a high rejection rate on induction physicals, and Company C was no exception. Captain Joseph Nolan was declared unfit for service and Joseph B. Westnedge, later Company C's most famous soldier, was given command of the unit.

In the six months of federal service, the 32nd Infantry Regiment shared the fate of many volunteer regiments. The regiment was formed at Island Lake, Michigan for its original training. In June it was railed to Ybor City, a suburb of Tampa, for further training. In July the unit was preparing to load a transport for Cuba when their orders for embarkation were canceled. The reason given to the men was that the regiment was equipped with "Black Powder" instead of the new smokeless powder, but the actual reason was that the transport had been in an accident and was deemed unsafe. As was the case with many of the

militia regiments the trip to Florida was the main event of the war.

On November 1, Company C returned to Kalamazoo. The returning "boys of 98" could not boast of desperate battles with the Spanish, but they told stories of fever, rotten beef, wearing winter uniforms in the tropics and logistic chaos.¹

In 1903 the Congress passed the Dick Act, which had a great impact on Company C and all other militia units in the United States. The bill and its amendments "nationalized" the militia. Under terms of the act the organized militia was renamed the National Guard after Lafayette's famous "Garde Nationale" Regiment which was organized to defend Paris during the French Revolution. The name change symbolized the terms of the act.

The Guard was organized along army lines and provisions were made for federal weapons and equipment. Also, twenty-four training sessions per year plus a summer encampment were required for all units. Federal instruction and inspection were authorized and provisions were made which elevated the status of Guard officers to equality with their federal counterparts.²

¹Letter from Fred A. Appeldorn, to Commanding Officer, Company C 156 Signal Battalion (CA), May 14, 1963.

²Historical and Pictorial Review National Guard of the State of Michigan 1940, op. cit., p. xxviii.
In the years from the passage of the Dick Act until 1916 Company C was involved in two state mobilizations. On September 2, 1912 the Kalamazoo unit, along with National Guard companies from Jackson and Ann Arbor, put down a riot at Jackson Prison.

The other state mobilization in this period came with the Copper Strike in 1913. The 16,000 strikers had closed down the copper mines and a tense situation was created when the community took sides in the resultant strife. When local authorities appealed to Governor Ferris for assistance he responded by mobilizing the complete State Guard. Company C's tour of duty was from 24 July to 1 November 1913. During the Guard's stay in the Copper Country, there was no loss of life and negligible property damage for any of the state's citizens. The National Guard was so praised by the press for its role in preventing certain catastrophe that its status in Michigan society soared. The following year the ranks increased by over 400 new men.¹

On June 3, 1916 the National Defense Act was passed in order to provide for stronger federal control of the National Guard. Fifteen days later the Guard was mobilized under provisions of that act. The purpose of the mobilization was defense along the Mexican Border. For Kalamazoo soldiers, as well as the rest of Michigan's troops, the affair was relatively uneventful. The majority of the time was spent in

guarding key installations in the El Paso area. However, the training time proved valuable for the major test ahead.

During the border incident, Michigan had three Infantry Regiments, the 31st, 32nd and 33rd. (Kalamazoo's Company C was a part of the 32nd.) Early in 1917 the 31st and 32nd were sent home to demobilize. Demobilization orders for the 32nd were changed, and the unit was kept on active duty to protect construction at Fort Custer and other key Michigan installations.¹

The increasing probability of American combat involvement in Europe was on everyone's mind. Many of the Kalamazoo Guardsmen did not return to work after the border demobilization. Instead, they simply waited for the impending federal mobilization. In the course of a given day men stopped at the Armory to learn if there was any news.²

On July 15, 1917 the Kalamazoo Guardsmen received the call to make the world safe for Democracy. On September 22, 1917 the federalized Michigan and Wisconsin National Guard were reorganized in accordance with the "Tables of Organization, 1917". The result was the formulation of one of America's finest combat units, the 32nd

¹Historical and Pictorial Review National Guard of the State of Michigan 1940, op. cit., p. xvv.
Infantry Division. The companies from southwestern Michigan were formed into the 126th Infantry Regiment, commanded by C Company's Spanish-American War Commander, Colonel Joseph B. Westnedge.

The 32nd Infantry Division was brilliant! Regardless of where it was placed, regardless of its mission, it never failed. The French, most of whom questioned the value of the untried Americans, soon referred to the Division as "Les Terribles". The 32nd Division left home without an insignia--when the men returned in 1919 on their left shoulder was the "Red Arrow". Whenever the Division's numerals appeared on a battle map, next to the numbers was drawn a red arrow piercing the enemy line.

The 126th Infantry Regiment, with local companies, formed a team that was unsurpassed in excellence. Colonel Westnedge and the Regiment were synonymous. During World War I most National Guard regimental, brigade and division commanders were transferred to staff positions as the Army felt they did not have the command experience for sustained leadership of a large organization, but Colonel Westnedge was not replaced. He led the 126th Infantry from its activation until the Armistice. The words of testimony whether written by General Pershing or by the lowest ranking private speak of his courage and competence. He led every attack--even though General Hann (Regular Army) continually told him that the Division could not afford his loss. 1

A French General saw Colonel Joe's Regiment in action and exclaimed what was to become the unit's motto. He said that the Regiment had: "Courage Sans Peur" (Courage Without Fear).

Colonel Westnedge died fifteen days after the Armistice of illness brought on by gas burns:

It was only through accident that his death became known to the Regiment. It struck the Regiment like a thunder clap. In every orderly room or billet, in officers mess' or mess line, the words in sorrowful tones could be heard, 'Colonel Joe is dead...' His memory may some day be commemorated in some form by his fellow citizens, but no monument will ever surpass the wave of sublime sorrow that in this moment engulfed the Regiment. ¹

The spirit of the Regiment was the spirit of this Kalamazooan who would have become a professional soldier but his mother had asked him not to. This spirit can be seen in Father Patrick R. Dunigan's 126th Regimental Chaplain tribute:

He had been sick during the final days of the decisive battle and officers who knew him longest watched his strength break; felt the pain as he staggered from weakness. The Regimental Surgeon had urged him to go back for rest and treatment. In the stress of battle 'Carry on' to the last ounce of endurance was the order. The Colonel who had never used the privileges of his rank, remained with his men. On foot, on the field, in the fight, he shared the privations and dangers of the enlisted men. When blankets were scarce he slept cold, when food was difficult to get he ate last and least. He knew the enemy position by personal observation before ordering an advance. 'Where's your Colonel?' asked a general officer inspecting the line one dark day in the Argonne. 'Up ahead.' 'Where's his headquarters?' 'Up ahead,' repeated the soldier.

¹ibid.
Always ahead where the cutting edge of the 32nd Division bit deepest into the enemy resistance he led the attack.  

In May 1919, Company C came home. On the Company guidon could be placed four silver bands: Aisne-Marne, Oise-Aisne, Meuse-Argonne and Alsace. The cost to the Company for the four silver bands: forty-three killed in action; two died of wounds; two died of disease; seventy-nine wounded (eleven twice); two shell shocked and one prisoner.

Between the two World Wars things were uneventful for Company C. The only real break in the drill and encampment routine was state mobilization for the "Flint sit-down strike" in 1937. The unit was called to state service on January 12. After a month of guarding General Motors plants the unit returned home on February 16.  

During the 1930's the world watched as Hitler's power increased and his intentions became clearer. On August 12, 1940, a joint resolution of both houses of Congress called for federalizing the National Guard for twelve consecutive months. As the phased mobilization began the ninety officers and men from Company C were mobilized at the Water Street Armory on October 15, 1940. On October 23 the Company marched to the depot to begin the longest year of their lives.

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2Department of the Army, Lineage and Honors, 156th Signal Battalion (CA), 1964.

3Historical and Pictorial Review National Guard of the State of Michigan 1940, op. cit., p. xxv.
The first American Army units ordered overseas after Pearl Harbor were three National Guard Divisions: the 32nd, 34th and 37th. Early in 1942 the main elements of the Red Arrow were at Ft. Devens, Massachusetts, getting ready for shipment to the European Theater. Shipment orders were countermanded, however, and the 32nd was ordered to report to the West Coast no later than April 15 for embarkation to the Pacific Theater of operation. On March 25 the Division was ready for deployment.¹

The Kalamazoo Guardsmen who served in World War I wrote a good account in the military annals. Those who left the city as part of the Red Arrow for the 2nd Great War wrote the most extensive and costly division history of any American army unit in any armed conflict. However, fewer men returned home to tell about it.

The 32nd Infantry Division was the first U. S. Division to fight an offensive action against the Japanese in the South Pacific and on the day the war ended in 1945, it was still actively engaged in combat. In May 1942 the Division had arrived in Australia for extensive training in preparation for its use as General MacArthur's spearhead division.

By September the 32nd was ready to be the first American division to start the "rock road" journey to Japan. The Australians had been

¹This change in orders was not an Army "snafu". When General MacArthur, who was familiar with the 32nd in WWI, was given command of the Pacific Theater he insisted on using the Michigan and Wisconsin militia men for his spearhead division.
holding Port Moresby, New Guinea, against a heavy Japanese onslaught. The toehold at Port Moresby was needed for the impending arrival of American troops. On September 13, 1942, General MacArthur announced to his staff that the Port Moresby situation was critical and that if the 32nd did not arrive immediately, the Australian units might "...be behind barbed wire".¹ (The Red Arrow was preparing to depart by ship, a process which would have taken two weeks).

Major General George C. Kenney, Commander of the 5th Air Force, announced that his airplanes did not know the difference between 180 pounds of freight and 180 pounds of infantryman. At day break on the morning of September 15, the first units of the 126th Infantry Regiment began to load aboard air transports at Amberly Field for flight to New Guinea. The 32nd was the first American division to be flown into combat!

This was just the beginning of many "firsts" for the division. In the course of the war, the Red Arrow participated in four major Pacific campaigns: Papaian, New Guinea, Southern Philippines, and Luzon. Kalamazoo infantry men were buried at Buno-Sananando, Saidor, Aitope, Biak, Morotai, Leyte and Luzon.

At the battle of Buna Mission, New Guinea, the first allied ground force victory in the Pacific, Company C lost twenty-five men killed and

seventy-seven men wounded. Thomas B. Kean who served with the
Company at Buna wrote:

The nearest thing to a jungle any of us from Company C had ever seen was perhaps the woods surrounding Milham Park. Is it any wonder any of us survived! Hell no, it was a miracle...  

And yet, it was the militia men in the Red Arrow who were credited with "writing the book on jungle fighting" for the U. S. Army.

Of all the divisions under General MacArthur's command, the Red Arrow spent more combat time (654 days); earned the most Distinguished Unit Citations (14);\(^2\) won the most Medals of Honor (11); and paid the highest price in killed and wounded, 7,268.\(^3\)

The Berlin Crisis began in 1961--but Company C had been preparing for it for 102 years.

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\(^2\)1st Battalion 126th Infantry which included Company C received a Distinguished Unit Citation, op. cit., p. 279.

\(^3\)During the Civil War, World War I, World War II and Korean War, National Guard units have more extensive combat records than regular army units. The main reason for this phenomenon is that the vacancies in mobilized guard organizations are quickly filled and the units went to combat. Often the personnel in regular army organizations are used to form the skeleton cadre for "new" military organizations must train for an extensive period before being committed to battle.
CHAPTER II
MOBILIZATION AND PREPARATION FOR MOVEMENT

The purpose of this paper is to relate what happened to one company size mobilized National Guard unit during the Berlin Crisis. The actual Crisis was very complex, and involved much more than Soviet-American policy toward the old German capital. Even though it is not practical to cover in detail the total international confrontation in this paper, it is necessary to give some background data on the Berlin Crisis so that the reader can place the American mobilization into its proper perspective. In 1961 there were three separate pressures being exerted on the two major governments involved in the Berlin Crisis. First, the Kennedy administration was suffering heavy criticism for America's role in the abortive Cuban Bay of Pigs Invasion. Secondly, the United States had just sent the first American "advisors" into South Vietnam. Finally, the first major, open, Sino-Soviet split was in progress. All three of these conditions seemed to force the Russian and the American governments into taking decisive steps in the area of the "German problem".

The 1961 international crisis over the old German capital had its beginnings with the surrender of Nazi Germany. The Western Armies had control over most of the German nation, but the portion conquered
by the Red Army contained Berlin. One of the agreements reached by the four major victorious powers was to divide greater Berlin into four separate occupation sectors and form an inter-allied governing authority (the Kommandature) to be responsible for the city's administration.

The Soviets found this joint operation unsatisfactory from the beginning. The very nature of the "Free World Island" well within the Iron Curtain proved to be a continual thorn to Soviet national interests. The effort to tie all the "new" communist countries to mother Russia was impaired by the continual leakage of East Germans through the capital city. Any East German was allowed access to any portion of Berlin. Should any East German citizen wish to defect to West Germany, all he needed to do was to go to the Allied occupied portion of the capital and request political asylum. After being accepted by the Bonn Government (usually a formality) the fleeing Easterner could be flown out of Berlin to West Germany. The drain on East Germany in professionals and skilled workers was hampering the Russian plans for fitting East Germany into the total Soviet economic, military and political operation.¹

¹Even though the West Germans welcomed their Eastern brothers, the Bonn Government was concerned with the population shift. Because of the heavy departure of "key" citizens from East Germany their positions were being filled by Soviet doctors, engineers, etc. The West German Government felt that this would seriously hamper any future reuniting of the "two" Germanies. Peace Treaty, Key to a Genuine Peace, (Frankfort: Druck and Verlags, 1961), p. 6.
Throughout the forties and fifties the Soviet government did many things to encourage the Western powers to leave Berlin. The "encouragement" included such things as the 1948 Berlin Blockade, sporadic harassment of the air lanes, voluminous bureaucratic red tape, periodic military and political threats.

Seventeen years of friction finally came to a head in the summer of 1961. On June 10 of that year Tass published Soviet Premier Krushchev's aide memoire on Berlin. The eight-point document restated past Soviet intentions to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany and transform Berlin into a "free city". On June 21 the Premier placed the document in the form of an ultimatum by stating that the Western Powers had until the end of the year to negotiate the change of status.

President Kennedy drew the counter line for the American position by stating in a television speech on June 28:

In Berlin, . . . he [Krushchev] intends to bring to an end, through a stroke of the pen, first, our legal rights to be in West Berlin and, secondly, our ability to make good on our commitment to the two million free people of that city. That we cannot permit. ¹

From that point the Crisis began to build fast. The Soviet government hiked its military budget, suspended scheduled troop cuts, and began to take a much more forceful posture in relations with the West.

However, the one action most noted by Westerners was the erection of the "wall of shame"...the Berlin Wall! This crude structure separating the two Berlins was tangible evidence of the seriousness of the conflict.

On July 25 President Kennedy sent a message to Congress in which he reflected on our military situation and asked for a long-term program to increase our military strength to meet international obligations. "Our primary purpose is neither propaganda nor provocation—but preparation."\(^1\)

The following day, the President sent Congress a draft resolution requesting authority to order 250,000 ready reservists to active duty for one year.

The talks of "call-up" did not spread the high degree of concern in the Kalamazoo Guard unit, as it did with many reserve organizations. In 1959 there had been a great reshuffling of the nation's reserve forces. Company C dropped its one hundred-year-old infantry role and became a part of the brand new 156th Signal Battalion (Combat Area). Not only Company C but the whole battalion was created from non-signal units:

HQ Company (Detroit): formerly mixture of Artillery, Infantry and Bandsmen.

A Company (Detroit): formerly mixture of Artillery, Infantry and Bandsmen.

B Company (Adrian): formerly Company B 126th Infantry Regiment.

C Company (Kalamazoo): formerly Company C 126th Infantry Regiment.

D Company (Monroe): formerly Tank Company 125th Infantry Regiment.\(^1\)

To build technical skills such as those required by the Signal Corps generally takes a great deal longer than building basic combat infantry skills. The battalion was only two years old with less than a half dozen qualified signal officers. If the purpose of an anticipated mobilization was to add immediately to the combat effectiveness of the armed services, it did not seem logical that the 156th Signal Battalion (CA) would be called to service. On July 11, 1961, the Pentagon published a list of units alerted for possible mobilization. Logic prevailed, the 156th Signal Battalion (CA) was not on the list. The only Michigan Guard unit alerted was the 127th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, Michigan Air National Guard.\(^2\)

Early Saturday morning, on July 8, 1961, the Kalamazoo unit joined the battalion convoy and proceeded toward its annual summer encampment at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. One of the reasons that the battalion was training in Wisconsin, rather than the customary Michigan Guard training site at Camp Grayling, was to enable the battalion to participate in a large 5th Army Signal Exercise: "Operation Wig Wag IV".

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\(^1\)Department of the Army, Lineage and Honors, 156th Signal Battalion (CA), 1962.

Twenty-nine signal units participated in the exercise, but it was the "new" 156th Signal Battalion (CA) that made the Army Times:

Major Albert Henricks, deputy director of Exercise Wig Wag called this largest signal operation attempted since the Korean campaign to be 'an exceptional success, even more than we had anticipated.' Major Henricks, Chief of Training Division, Signal Section, Fifth Army, praised members of the 156th Signal Battalion and Army Guard unit from Michigan.

The group made up of five companies moved its complete communications network from one position to another and had full operation in a record of five hours. Only two years ago this unit was made up of Artillery and Infantry companies and the men had little or no Signal experience. The unit's time, said Major Henricks, tops any record set by Regular Army signal units.¹

On Friday morning, July 21, 1961, as the battalion was loading equipment to leave for home the next day, Company C had an unexpected visitor. The 5th Army Colonel who had been evaluating the battalion during the exercise stopped at the orderly room to see the company officers. He talked about the battalion's success in Operation Wig Wag. Then, he said that in addition to rating the battalion high, he had just stopped to say that he had rated Company C the highest in the battalion.

The officers thanked him. He said that the thanks were not necessary as the unit received what it deserved. He went on to say:

¹"Wig Wag Called Successful", Army Times, July 29, 1961, p. 4.
"Don't be too happy, I've probably rated you all into the mobilization."

Then everyone laughed. ¹

On August 25, 1961, the Pentagon began to notify commanders of mobilized units. The headlines in the August 26 Kalamazoo Gazette told the story: "NATIONAL GUARD HERE CALLED UP". The lead article went on to state:

... 123 affected by surprise order. Members of Kalamazoo's history-laden 'C Company' have just over a month from today to prepare the move from the Water Street Armory to the red earth of Georgia where they'll become full time soldiers. Without having received prior alert orders, the local Michigan National Guard company got its call to federal service Friday when the Defense Department, in the biggest mobilization since the Korean War, ordered 76,000 reservists to active duty. ²

Lt. Gordon E. Wallace, Company C's Commanding Officer, had been the first person in Kalamazoo to receive word on the 25th. He was in a meeting at the Brunswick Corporation where he was employed as Inspection Supervisor. The secretary interrupted the meeting to tell him that there was an emergency phone call. Lt. Wallace left the room and took the call from Major Frederick Scott II, the battalion commander. Lt. Wallace returned to the room and informed the group of waiting men that the strong position he had held in the discussion a few minutes before could be disregarded—he was going to the Army. ³ Virtually all of the members of the Company were equally surprised.

¹Interview with Gordon E. Wallace, former Company C Commander, February 18, 1970.

²Kalamazoo Gazette, August 26, 1961, p.1.

³Interview with Gordon E. Wallace, former Company C Commander, November 12, 1969.
Late that afternoon the officers and key NCO's met at the Armory to discuss what had to be accomplished. The only immediate requirement was to inform all the members of the unit that they must be prepared to go on active duty effective the 1st of October. Also, the unit commander had to find some volunteers (one officer and five enlisted men) to go on active duty immediately to assist the full-time Guard personnel (First Sergeant Marine S. Damvelt) prepare the unit for movement. The Officer was to be appointed "Class A Agent" (handle the financial aspects of the mobilization) and the enlisted men were to handle the myriad of paperwork required to process the Company for federal service. Those who volunteered for immediate duty (the first starting 28 August) were 1st Lt. Warren J. Lawrence, Sgt. William R. Sage, Sp4 Carl C. Gasta II, Sp4 Neil R. Merlo, Sp4 John C. McLaughlin, Jr., Sp4 Thomas J. Ghysels.¹

In the Fifth Army General Order No. 60 dated 1 September 1961 (and the subsequent State of Michigan Military Establishment General Order 50 dated 22 September 1961, see Appendix II) very little was spelled out. The mobilized units were to: (1) mobilize at their home station 1 October; (2) move to their mobilization station (Fort Gordon, Georgia) no later than 15 October; (3) process the unit according to Army Regulation 135-300 and; (4) "For security reasons, no totals or

¹Letter Order No. 1465 Headquarters, VI United States Army Corps, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indianapolis, Indiana, September 13, 1961.
strengths of units alerted will be made public." (The August 26 Kalamazoo Gazette had not only stated "123 men affected by surprise order..." it went on to list the names and rank of every man in the unit.)

Some of the things that had to be accomplished during September 1961 were: (1) requisitioning eighty-five different kinds of forms used by the Regular Army; (2) request for security clearances for certain personnel; (3) promote all eligible enlisted men prior to 1 October;¹ (4) request "filler personnel" (Company C was at "full-reduced strength"--the Company was allowed to hold a strength of 71% of its 172 officers and men full strength figure. When the unit was mobilized it requested forty-nine additional men); (5) review requests for release from active duty;² (6) insure that the men received a mobilization physical; (7) and

¹This promotion policy was a sore issue with some 5th Army officers. The Guard's logic was that if a man was eligible for promotion (qualified in his job, had enough time in his recent grade and was holding an appropriate position in the unit) he should be promoted before he went on active duty to help him reduce the financial loss. Some 5th Army officers reasoned that if the man had not been promoted prior to the alert order, then he should not be promoted because he is suddenly going on active duty. Most guard units promoted all eligible men prior to October 1. The decision turned out to be a sound one. The day the unit was mobilized every man's date-of-rank reverted to the October 1 mobilization day, which meant that no Guardsman could be promoted for months.

²Four men did not accompany the unit to active duty. One for medical reasons, one because he was enrolled in the Michigan Military Academy and two because of extreme hardship. The most interesting hardship case involved two men in the unit who were business partners and had just committed themselves to a sizeable loan and construction project. The Adjutant General indicated one of them could stay home. They were both the same age, both married, both had the same number of children and each said the other should stay home. Lt. Wallace flipped a coin; one went, one stayed.
respond to numerous requests from higher headquarters asking for reports such as roster of men requiring identification tags, list of dependents requiring I. D. cards, etc.

On Saturday evening, September 16, a Farewell Party was held for the members of Company C and their relatives and friends. The affair was arranged by Herbert Seeger, a retired Regular Army Master Sergeant who had once been Company C's 5th Army Advisor; Colonel Leo Joe Crum, local attorney and Judge Advocate General for the State of Michigan and former Company C mess sergeant; Captain John M. Hauck, former Company C Company Commander; CWO Vern E. Trudell, former administrative assistant for Company C; and Mr. Paul Jones, Commander from the United Veterans Council.

The guests began arriving at 8 p.m. and at 8:30 p.m. a brief program was held. Vice-Mayor Paul E. Morrison was the main speaker. His remarks were built around the history of the unit and Company C's contribution to the community. He talked about how "...Colonel Joe Westnedge and the boys had met the challenge..." He stated a study of the units record caused "...a deep sense of humility...we are proud of Company C...you new members have a record to uphold...and you will." (See Appendix III.)

At the conclusion of the speakers, CWO Vern E. Trudell, who had been Master of Ceremonies, led the American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps in fifteen minutes of drill and music. An acoustical engineer had
once surveyed the Armory for a drop ceiling. He said that it was the only building in which his instruments measured worse acoustics than Yankee Stadium.\(^1\) As the Drum and Bugle Corps moved back and forth across the drill floor, the echoing sound was deafening. If the Water Street Armory held ghosts, they were there that night. Yet, the blaring music played by an intent group who "had been there" had its effect. When the march music finished and the group received a goodly applause, there was an air of melancholic relief when someone said: "Let's dance" and the Maynard Burgess Orchestra (provided free by the Kalamazoo Federation of Musicians) began to play a softer piece.

Refreshments flowed and there was a smorgasbord provided by the Ladies Auxiliary American Legion Post #36. In the mimeographed program that was given out that night there was written a "thank you" to all the organizations and individuals who had made the event possible. The thank you notice concluded:

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\ldots their \text{ realization of community interest can only further instill in the men of Company C the added responsibility that comes with an awareness that our unit will be representing the Citizens of Greater Kalamazoo.}^2
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\(^1\)Interview with Robert J. Worline, former member of Company C, November 27, 1969.

Colonel Crum headed a campaign to solicit donations for the Unit Fund from local businesses and individuals. He wrote letters in which he explained the status of the unit and its mobilization. He went on to add:

I checked with Lt. Wallace with regard to his unit fund and found that it was reduced to less than $10. As you know from past experience, the unit fund is an official fund used for the sole benefit of the enlisted men of the company, to purchase the extras which the government does not furnish, such as, ping pong tables, day room furnishings, magazines and the small comforts enjoyed by the men themselves during their long weekends away from homes and families. Many of us are making a small contribution...  

The effort netted over $300 plus a Gibson guitar and a portable television from Sears, Roebuck & Co.

Early in September 1961, representatives from Battalion Headquarters were flown to Fort Gordon, Georgia to examine the physical facilities. Much to their amazement they found that the proposed area for the battalion was in deplorable condition. The buildings were of the old tile construction and had not been used for a number of years. In the interlude the structures had deteriorated greatly. Most members of the battalion had been pleased with the assignment at Fort Gordon because it was the Southeastern Signal School. However, Major Scott could not deem the quarters acceptable, but the post was already

1Letter from Colonel Joe Crum, Judge Advocate General of the State of Michigan, Kalamazoo, Michigan, September 16, 1961.
bulging with the military build-up and there was no other place to put the battalion. 1

Requests were made to Fifth Army for a new mobilization station. On September 19, the Assistant Adjutant General of the State of Michigan sent a letter to the Commanding General, Fort Gordon, Georgia. A portion of the letter stated:

In accordance with reference indicated in paragraph 1, above, the mobilization station for the 156th Signal Battalion (CA) (AR) has been changed from Fort Gordon, Georgia to Fort Benning, Georgia, therefore, it is requested that individuals as listed in reference paragraph 2, above, be returned to their parent unit at Fort Benning, Georgia, upon completion of their training. 2

On October 1 Company C reported for active duty at their home station, the National Guard Armory, 162 E. Water Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan. The unit was scheduled to leave Kalamazoo on October 12 which left a great deal to be accomplished in a relatively short time. President Kennedy had pushed physical fitness. As a result, the first thing to be done was to begin a physical training program. To accomplish this, each morning the Company moved to the parking lot across the street and went through the "Army Daily Dozen". The Kalamazoo Gazette photographer, Jerry Campbell, who had come down to photograph the first day's activities could not resist taking pictures of the

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1 Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Fred M. Scott II, former 156th Signal Battalion (CA) Commander, July 12, 1967.

Company from the rear. The picture appeared in the afternoon paper, captioned "The Call Was To 'Active Duty'". The next day in an editorial, the paper stated:

The Page 1 picture in Monday's Gazette showing members of Kalamazoo's Company C doing physical exercises on the Shoppers Parking Lot immediately brought a question to mind: Could we do them ourselves?

Particularly challenging was the routine known as "Bottoms up". In the seclusion of our home Monday night, we tried it. The result? No comment.

But the pictures, aptly captioned "The Call Was To 'Active Duty'", serve as a sharp reminder that members of Company C, along with their counterparts from all over the nation, are going to camp as representatives of the entire community. They typify the military "bench strength" upon which our way of life depends for so much of its security.  

Someone at the local paper thought the photos were clever enough to put on the wire service. One of the newspapers that published them was the Detroit Free Press. When Company C arrived at Fort Benning, and for many days after, whenever a man from the unit would meet someone from one of the sister Companies in the battalion, there would be some comment concerning the rear-view photos.

In addition to the physical training program the men in the unit spent their time packing and loading equipment on flat cars, receiving orientation on their rights and obligations and continually signing the numerous forms required for federal service. During the preparation

\[\text{Kalamazoo Gazette, October 2, 1961, p. 4.}\]
for movement Fifth Army sent regular representatives to inspect the progress and offer any needed assistance.

As the Columbus Day-departure date approached, the unit more than met all its required deadlines.
CHAPTER III
MOVEMENT AND INITIAL ORIENTATION

The first contingent of Company C to leave for Fort Benning was the unit's equipment and accompanying detail. During the first days of mobilization, the Company's trucks--loaded with signal gear--were in turn loaded on flat cars on the New York Central siding. On October 5 a special battalion equipment train was assembled for departure to the mobilization station. Each of the other four companies provided two guards and Company C provided the Officer In Charge, 2nd Lt. Robert J. Worline and the Non-Commissioned Officer-In-Charge, Sgt. William R. Sage.

To insure the men a comfortable trip, the railroad provided a "clean-rider" car. The clean-rider was an old (1920's) coach with half the seats removed. The car contained a coal stove for heat and cooking. One thing the clean-rider was not--and that was clean! The seats, walls, floors and ceiling had not been cleaned in years. Not only was the car's condition poor when the Company C guards climbed aboard in Kalamazoo, but its condition deteriorated as the train moved along. The railroad had joined the equipment train with a regular freight train. The civilian component was closest to the engine and contained several open cars loaded with graphite. When the train moved
the dust enshrouded the equipment and guards from the 156th Signal Battalion. ¹

The majority of the men (81) were to depart by troop train on October 12. In addition to the main body going by rail, two members left early on an advanced party traveling by private vehicle, four stayed back as the rear detachment and the remainder went by private cars. The original plan called for the unit's main body to leave during daylight hours on October 12. The United Veterans Council made plans to see that Company C would get a suitable send-off. However, when the official schedule of departure for the unit was announced, time was 4:03 A.M. The United Veterans Council sent their "regrets" that they were forced to cancel the planned parade because of the early hour.

During the morning of October 11 the final packing was accomplished. The Company was allowed one baggage car. It was packed with the Orderly Room records and material from the supply room. The remainder of the car was filled with the individual duffle bags.

In preparation for the unit's absence, the Quartermaster General of Michigan appointed a new Armory Board of Control of Kalamazoo citizens to be responsible for the security of State property and operation of the Armory. The new Board consisted of President, Colonel Leo J. Crum (State Judge Advocate); Dispersing Officer, Captain John

¹Interview with Robert J. Worline, former member Company C, November 27, 1969.

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M. Hauck (former Company C Commander); and Recorder, Arthur Fitzgerald (WWI member of the unit). 1

On the morning of October 11 there was an unannounced visit by a State Auditor. He had come to inventory the State property for the new Board. He said that they had originally planned to wait until the unit moved out so they could hold the audit without so much confusion. However, someone in Lansing had remembered in the 1940 mobilization the units left with all the State property they thought would help them. After all, they were only going to be gone a year. Some of the property was never recovered. At the conclusion of the inventory a State mimeograph machine and a long-carriage typewriter were found to be packed away in the baggage car. Everyone agreed that it must have been an oversight--probably the same kind that happened in 1940. 2

On October 9, 1961, Company C published a "Troop Rail Movement SOP". In addition to listing the individuals who would ride in which coaches and miscellaneous procedures, the document stated:

Troops will report in prescribed uniform at 0230 Hrs., 12 Oct 61 at the Armory on Water Street. First formation will be at 0245 Hrs., 12 Oct 61 on the Armory Drill floor; Roll will be taken at this time, Anyone absent from this call will be considered AWOL.

1 Kalamazoo Gazette, September 4, 1961, p. 10

2 Interview with First Sergeant Marine S. Damvelt, member of Company C, November 29, 1969.
At 0330 Hrs., 12 Oct 61, Troops will march under arms to Railroad Station for Rail movement to Detroit. There will be two March Units in this movement; March Unit No. 1 Lt. Wallace, No. 2 Lt. Rodarmer.

Upon arrival at the Railroad Station you must maintain your position in the Company Formation. Your relatives will be permitted to intermingle until actual appearance of the train. 1

At 2:45 A.M. First Sergeant Damvelt blew the formation whistle. The troops were in summer uniforms, khakis without ties, helmet liners, boots, pistol belts, light combat packs and individual weapons. The Company was formed in two platoons of three ranks each. When Sergeant Damvelt finished the roll he turned the unit over to Lt. Wallace. Lt. Wallace gave the unit a facing movement and then marched them out. The three columns moved through the crowded but silent Armory lobby, and when they reached the center of Water Street made a "column left".

The city was deserted. The silence was broken by the measured tread of marching feet and an occasional command. The sight of the unit swaying in unison through the empty streets was mystic. For over one hundred years men from Company C had marched off to blaring bands and cheering crowds and waving flags. On the morning of October 12, 1961, there was only the tread of boots through deserted streets and a single guidon fluttering in the early morning breeze.

1"Company C, 156th Signal Battalion (CA), Troop Rail Movement SOP," 9 October 1961. (Mimeographed.)
At the railroad station the troops were halted and given "rest". Soon the relatives, friends and a handful of veterans who had been in the Armory lobby began to appear. The "rested" ranks expanded to allow those last conversations, assurances and embraces. Shortly before 4 A.M. from the west was heard the soft unrelenting moan of a whistle. It was a sound that had spanned the decades. The whistle must have welled up those same emotions in the men and their loved ones as the "whistle" had done in 1861, 1898, 1912, 1913, 1916, 1917, 1937 and 1940. As the whistle grew louder a blazing headlight appeared down the track and then a shaking of the earth as the train rolled in. By the time the engineer could first see the Company it was back in its two platoons, of three ranks, standing at attention. Major Arthur Bush, Company C's Commander during much of WW II (until he was severely wounded at Buna Mission) wished Lt. Wallace luck. He said that he hoped the young Company Commander would bring home more Company C men than returned from WW II.¹

The two platoons filed into their respective coaches. At 4:30 A.M., with silent waves and smiles from hazy windows, the whistle sounded again and Company C moved away from the New York Central Depot. The red light on the last coach faded, and Company C began a new page

¹Interview with Gordon E. Wallace, former Company C Commander, September 10, 1968.
in her unit history. The afternoon Gazette carried the following editorial:

Nearly 100 Kalamazoo men undertook a special mission in behalf of their neighbors today.

In the quiet pre-dawn darkness, with few save relatives on hand to watch and say "goodbye," they boarded a train on the first stage of a journey that will take them to Ft. Benning, Ga. They are members of Company C, 156th Signal Battalion, Michigan National Guard, called to active duty because of the Berlin crisis and other threats of Communist imperialism against the security of the Free World.

There was little fanfare in connection with the departure as the Guardsmen reported at the Water Street Armory and marched to the station. Tentative plans of the Kalamazoo County United Veterans Council for a farewell parade for the camp-bound soldiers had been called off because of the early morning entrainment time.

But they left with the best wishes of the entire community, the fervent hope of all that they may have to go no farther than Benning, that when their probable year of active duty is past, the international tensions will have eased enough to permit their return to home and normal civilian activities.

The community will miss them. It is grateful for their contribution to the national security.  

Company C rendezvoused with the rest of the battalion at Detroit. There the Kalamazoo men detrained, had breakfast in the Detroit railroad station and boarded the special battalion train. The original plan had called for the train to arrive at Fort Benning at 4 P.M. on October 13. The best laid plans of Armies and railroads some times go awry. As Major Scott reported:

We arrived in Ft. Benning at 2145 hours, 13 October 1961, approximately six hours after our ETA. The L&N Railroad

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1 Kalamazoo Gazette, October 12, 1961, p. 4.
had a derailment on the track ahead of our train causing a re-routing through Louisville. This caused some confusion with the welcoming committee but by Sunday we had been properly welcomed. ¹

There was an official welcome on Sunday. Major General Ben Harold, the Post Commander, came to express his pleasure at having the battalion on post. In his remarks he pressed for the "One Army Concept". He told the battalion that at Fort Benning there were no E. R.'s, (Army Reservists) N. G.'s, (National Guardsmen) or U. S.'s (Draftees). "We are all Regular Army". A welcoming cake was cut and a mutual attitude of cooperation was begun. ²

Fort Benning is the Army's Infantry School. As such, the "main post" is one of the finest in the world. Among its facilities are beautiful, permanent buildings with air conditioned classrooms. Large swimming pools dot the tree-covered landscape. The post had a magnificent officers club with four separate annexes and the NCO club was a virtual night club. The main PX was like a large department store. A golf course, tennis courts and other recreational areas were all within walking distance--if one was billeted on "main post".

The 156th Signal Battalion (and most of the other mobilized reserve units) were not on main post, however, but were quartered at "Harmony Church". The Harmony Church area was located eight miles from the


²Interview with Gordon E. Wallace, former Company C Commander, November 7, 1969.
main post down Cusseta Road. The regular army personnel soon referred to the mobilized militia units as "the Cusseta Road National Guardsmen". Harmony Church was composed of the "temporary", wooded, two-story barracks and single-story combination orderly and supply rooms; it was the type of construction so common during World War II. The area had not quartered troops on a "permanent" basis since the Korean War, and the physical facilities showed it.

The leaking faucets, broken windows and unhung doors could be (and were) repaired by Post Engineers. But the most depressing thing (which was never corrected) was the interior of the barracks themselves. During the Korean War the buildings had been painted. The following ten years of heat, cold and humidity had caused the paint to flake and peel. If anyone slammed the door, a veritable snow storm of dead paint would fall. One of the first items of business was to literally scrape every joist, rafter and wall. But the authorities on main post felt to expend money for paint (there would not have been any labor lost) was too chancy. No one knew how long the mobilized units would be on post.

The physical conditions of Harmony Church (and the attitude toward improving them) raised the first doubts as to the real "need" for having the mobilized reservists.
CHAPTER IV
TRAINING MISSION AND LACK OF EQUIPMENT

The mission of an Army Area Signal Company (CA) is to:
"Install, maintain and operate one army area signal center". ¹

The main element required to accomplish this mission is a message
center operation. The message center can pass all forms of military
communications traffic. Most of the communication is done by tele-
type so that units can have "hard copy" but the operation does have
a voice, C.W. (code) and motor messenger capability. To tie the
company's message center to other message centers found in the
army area, the company lays cable, uses FM, AM and multi-channel
VHF radios; multi-channel carrier equipment, switching and patching
gear and, of course, teletypes themselves. To put all this equipment
into an operational status, and to maintain that operation, requires
individual technical skills and collective talent.

In training for its mission during reserve status the unit had used
mostly World War II equipment. Enlisted men who joined the company
and were sent to their six months active duty were trained on modern
signal gear. When they returned to Kalamazoo they had to be retrained

¹"Table of Organization and Equipment 11-87E" (Department of
on the older equipment. The battalion commander and his Regular Army advisors continually requested new equipment. The response was always the same: the equipment was "on the way--soon". Further, the battalion did not need to worry. In the event of mobilization there was signal gear stored in strategic locations in both the continental United States and overseas.

During the early phase of the mobilization battalion training concentrated on basic infantry requirements. But military and civilian inspectors were continually arriving to check the battalion's equipment needs. Many of these inspectors were from signal depots and each had the same story: the stored gear was not at their installation. By the first of the year it was apparent that the army did not have equipment for the forty-two mobilized signal units.¹ (The implications of this revelation will be discussed in Chapter VI.)

The Company's initial attitude toward the early infantry training was enthusiastic. The activities were generally reviewed in the class-


²When the equipment shortage came to light, various members of the Kennedy Administration placed the blame on the Eisenhower Administration. The reasoning was that following the Armistice in Korea, the Army had been trimmed drastically and a disproportionate portion of the regular army was combat arms (infantry, artillery and armor). The costly non combat branches (such as signal) had been deactivated and/or placed in reserve status. The expensive modern technical equipment was never manufactured. The phrase "fiscal responsibility" was used a great deal.
room and then items discussed were practiced in the field. Shortly after the mobilization the Department of Defense announced:

(Reservists---In Depth)
(Washington)---Army Reservists called to active duty in the Berlin crisis are expected to be combat ready in four months---half the time required to train such units in the Korean War.

The army cited new training methods and the improved readiness of the reservists thanks to their increased civilian preparations. The service said training time had been shortened by eliminating some drills, ceremonies and formal inspections.

In addition, new equipment has helped speed the training schedule. For example, helicopters now are used for many tasks formerly assigned to trucks, jeeps and personnel carriers.

The Army said in a statement that despite the shortened training period, its men will be given rigorous training with special attention to their physical fitness. 1

The company spent many hours in the field going through the practical applications phase of what the men were learning in the classroom. One of the most real "sham" battles was conducted one evening in early November. The unit had been reviewing the infantry platoon in the offense. Lt. Wallace was in charge of the total operation and Lt. Worline was responsible for setting up an ambush. The other company officers worked with the remainder of the unit which had been broken down into two infantry platoons.

Lt. Worline spent a day preparing his small group of men and the ambush situation at the training site. He procured a gasoline operated

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machine gun. This training device was about four times the size of a normal machine gun. The device was operated by an automobile battery, and had an ominous spark plug which protruded out of the top of the weapon. When operated it issued a tremendous staccato report and flashing fire from the barrel. In addition to this instrument, Lt. Worline had procured blank ammunition, magnesium flares and M 80 explosives as artillery simulators.

The offensive group made their appropriate reconnaissance of the area in the afternoon. As Lt. Worline prepared to leave with his aggressors he mentioned to First Sergeant Damvelt that he wished he could have procured some tear gas so that he could give the Company a real surprise. Sergeant Damvelt went into the supply room and returned with three small tear gas grenades and a large (gallon size) tear gas cannister. (These munitions had been in the basement of the Armory in Kalamazoo.)

There was a question whether or not to use "gas" as the training area had not been cleared for its use. However, the training benefit was too great to pass up the opportunity. The activity began as planned. When the leading edge of the offensive platoon was about 100 yards from the ambush area, the enemy force commenced firing with their "super gun". The next few minutes were filled with a confusion of combat noises, lights and flares. As the platoon moved in for the "kill", Lt. Worline issued orders to dispense the gas. The hand grenades came
hurtling through the darkness and the men donned their masks. The small striker attached to the aged one gallon cannister disintegrated without lighting the device but Sergeant Damvelt took his ever-present cigar and lit the cannister.

The evening was calm and the moisture hung in the air. The conditions for gas were perfect. The smoky material filled the air and formed an ever-thickening cloud which covered the training area. Tear gas is classified as a "non persistent" gas and normally dissipates quickly. But that night the gas refused to break up. The problem ended and the gas stayed.

The men were loaded in the waiting trucks. The first truck was slowly led out of the area by a man walking with a flashlight. Everyone had a gas mask on except two medics who were attached for the problem but had not brought their masks with them. They wheezed and cried profusely as their jeep was led out of the area.

A soft breeze finally started the gassy material moving. However, the cloud refused to dissipate. It rolled softly into the neighboring valley where the battalion motor pool was located. The guards in the motor pool were not carrying gas masks so they also suffered from the exercise. It was only then that the breeze picked up and the cloud disappeared. Everyone agreed it had been a realistic exercise.¹

¹Interview with Robert J. Worline, former member Company C, November 3, 1969.
In the middle of November the Kalamazoo Gazette sent reporter Roger Kullenberg to Fort Benning to cover the early training. Mr. Kullenberg had covered Company C's activities for a number of years. In a portion of his report to his readers he wrote:

The Kalamazoo and area men are showing a solid interest in acquiring their military skills. For example, a class in fortifications conducted by Lt. Robert Worline of Kalamazoo, claimed a fatigue-clad audience which would have done credit to a college lecture hall.

Yes, the boys still learn to dig fox holes in this era of nuclear arms. Although providing signal communications is Company C's primary combat mission, its secondary task is fighting as infantry. The Kalamazooans are becoming well acquainted with the coarse red clay which is a trademark of Fort Benning.

The unit was required to complete an Army Training Test before it was classified as Combat Ready. The test was scheduled for mid-February, 1962. Most of the lower ranking enlisted men were qualified signal men by virtue of their six months training. However, only one of the officers and a handful of the noncommissioned officers were signal qualified. The rest were still officially infantry men. During November through the first of February all the remaining officers (except Lt. Wallace) and most of the key noncommissioned officers were sent to various signal schools at Fort Gordon, Georgia.

Following the holidays, the battalion began to spend a great deal of time in the field in preparation for the all-important Army Training Test. To keep the all-important test in everyone's mind, Sp4 Carl Ghasta

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1Kalamazoo Gazette, November 19, 1961, p. 37.
(a Company C man working in battalion training section) hung a huge banner outside the barracks that stated "Pass the ATT or Bust". 1

The troops were primed to do well on the tests. On a given day each company moved to the field to set up their own signal center. Everything would be done by the book--tactically. Continuous combat conditions would be simulated, and the units would be under intermittent attack from the ground and the air. Each Company had an evaluator assigned who rated every aspect of the unit. The battalion received young infantry second lieutenants who were in charge of the evaluation. By the end of the first day of the three day exercise all five company commanders were upset.

Company C had moved out in what appeared to be flawless fashion. As the thirty-vehicle convoy rumbled down the road, it received an air attack. The vehicles peeled off alternately to the right and left and the men dismounted and dispersed into the wooded countryside. When the plane left, the "all-clear" was sounded and the men returned to their vehicles and proceeded to their bivouac area. The quartering party had the area cleared and things were well prepared. Lt. Wallace was more than pleased with the way things were progressing. A light perimeter security was put out and the men began to install their signal

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1 Interview with First Sergeant Marine S. Dammelt, member of Company C, November 16, 1969.
equipment. After an hour or so, Lt. Wallace asked the evaluator what he thought of the progress. "Not worth a damn", was the reply. "Look at those guys messing around with that signal gear when they haven't even finished digging foxholes."¹

Before the day was over all the evaluators were called back to main post for an orientation of the mission of a signal unit. From there on things progressed smoothly. The Kalamazoo Gazette reported the results:

Members of Kalamazoo's Company C are now combat ready soldiers.

First Lt. Gordon E. Wallace, company Commander, told the Gazette Saturday night that the unit had passed its Army training test with "either a low superior or high excellence" mark.

Wallace was elated over the unit's performance in the field. The men really put out, the officer remarked. Wallace said he granted a blanket three-day pass to the company as a reward for its performance.

Tests were conducted in two major phases--technical and tactical. Preliminary indications are that the unit received a "94" in the tactical and "88" in the technical Wallace said. The technical phase had to do with the unit's proficiency in the use of its signal equipment. The tactical part involved combat operations. The company has a secondary mission to fight as infantry.²

During the ATT a Third Army Deputy Signal Officer came to inspect the battalion. When he arrived at Company C's area, he asked

¹Interview with Gordon E. Wallace, former Company C Commander, November 16, 1969.

to see the VHF radio positions. Lt. Wallace took him to where the VHF vans were located. Sergeant Robert Weston escorted him into the first van. The Major looked at the radios and said, "What's that?" Sergeant Weston told him that it was a "Track 8 VHF radio" (AN/TRC 8). The inspector said he had never seen nor heard of a "track 8 radio". He shook his head and said he had seen enough and left.¹ (The AN/TRC 8 was a very limited production, WW II VHF radio.)

After the ATT, Third Army decided to do something dramatic to allow the battalion to train on modern signal equipment.² The plan was to send half the battalion at a time to train at Fort Gordon on modern signal gear.

Early in March A and B Companies left for their three week stint at Fort Gordon. On March 23 Company C and D moved out to take their turn with the modern gear. The Company C convoy did not even stop at main post but went directly out to "L Site", which was thirteen miles into the wilderness. Shortly after arriving at the site, Company C had an important visitor: Brigadier General Richard Meyers, the


²Congressmen were beginning to receive complaints from reservists about the mobilization. One of the chief complaints was how important could the reservists be when there was not any modern equipment for them to train with? This will be covered in more detail in Chapters VI and VIII.
Fort Gordon Post Commander. Speaking to the company officers, he told them that signal men were required to do two jobs: to be technicians and to be infantrymen. If signal men must do two jobs, then they should live twice as good. He said that Company C had the use of any post facility to help in preparing a suitable cantonment area in the field. The company worked on the area for two days. The result was a beautiful "canvas city" of about twenty squad tents. The tents formed a "U" around a sawdust covered volleyball court. Each man had his own bunk, clothes rack and duck-board to keep his bare feet clean. One tent was turned into a theater, the mess hall was issued extra rations and most uncommon of all, the men erected a portable shower unit which the Post Commander had personally designed.

At 1800 hours a bus came to pick up any man who wanted to go to main post. (The General said that the men would get dusty riding in trucks.) However, the field accommodations were so complete and morale so high, that very few men would give up the torrid volleyball tournament or the combat films in the theater to bus to main post.

The most important part of the Fort Gordon adventure was that for the first time the men had the "promised" equipment. Their morale was high. Lt. Wallace inspected the quarters each morning, and the tent that won the award the most times during the three week period received a case of beer, courtesy of the Company Commander.
The personnel from the 711th Signal Battalion assisted the training program. The 711th soldiers continually remarked about the enthusiasm and competence of the Company C men, and the operation ran so smoothly that the Regular Army began to use the site as a show place. ¹ Officers from the Southeastern Signal School were trucked out the thirteen miles to view the installation. "... 1st Lt. Gordon E. Wallace... stated... the way the men have taken to the task has been one of the most gratifying experiences of this mobilization."²

It was a letdown for the unit to return to Fort Benning. The Crisis in Berlin seemed less serious and the men were becoming homesick. Officials at Fort Benning combatted this situation with a competitive program for the nineteen mobilized units. The program covered every aspect of the units' activities and the competition extended through late spring into early summer. When the results were in, a South Carolina unit was declared the winner but Company C was only a fraction of a point behind; and the Kalamazoo unit did win the "S 1 Award" for the best administration of any mobilized unit on the post.

¹ "Local Guard Unit Completes Special Training at Fort Gordon, Georgia", Company C 156th Signal Battalion Press Release, April 14, 1962.

² ibid.
When the competition ended the men began preparing to return home. The remaining days were spent in closing out the post so that the unit could return home for demobilization. As the days waned, the first of the newly manufactured signal gear began to trickle in.
CHAPTER V
FILLING THE RANKS

In President Kennedy's inaugural address he told Americans:
"Ask not what your country can do for you but ask what you can do
for your country." The mobilized National Guard and Reservists were
constantly reminded of this statement through Defense Department
posters which appeared in day rooms, orderly rooms and mess halls.
The need for this reminder stemmed mainly from the manner used
to select additional men to fill the vacant ranks of the mobilized units.

Virtually all military units in reserve status are kept below their
authorized combat strength. In the early 1960's units were organized
at anywhere from 50-90% of their authorized Table of Organization
strength. The percentage factor was based on the "priority" of the
unit as seen by the Defense Department. (It has already been mentioned
in this paper that Company C was at 71% of its authorized strength.)
The logic for this reduced-strength factor is one of economics. A
reserve unit must first fill all the key positions (cadre slots). Next,
the lower ranking slots are filled within the remaining authorized
percentage. Then, when the unit is mobilized, the unfilled positions
are filled with men from other sources.

The order which mobilized Company C stated that all recruiting
would be suspended immediately. (See Appendix II.) The reason for
this decision was to insure that the vacant ranks would be filled
by M. O. S. (Military Occupational Specialty) qualified soldiers.
Also, it prevented men from enlisting into the Regular Army who
perhaps could not qualify under normal circumstances. ¹

After notification was received by the unit, the first order of
business was to establish the unit's strength as of the time of the
notification. On the day that the Company received the call, there
was a letter in the mail which contained orders assigning Lt. Kenneth
W. Rodarmer to the unit. Lt. Rodarmer had been in the Guard and
the Army in the 1950's. He had left the Guard because of the demands
on his time while working and attending Western Michigan University.
In 1961 he had decided to again join the Guard.

On the afternoon of August 25, 1961, Sergeant Damvelt called
Lt. Rodarmer. He said, "I've got two things to tell you: first, I
got your orders, you're back in Company C; second, we've been
mobilized!"²

¹An example of this would be a man who had spent three or four
years in the active service and decided not to reenlist. After being
out of the military for a few years, perhaps, he changed his mind and
decided he would like to make a career of the active service. If he
had over four dependents he could not reenlist after an extended break
in service. However, he could enlist in an Army Reserve or National
Guard unit. If that unit was mobilized he could then reenlist to stay on
active duty. When it was announced that Company C was being mobilized
Sergeant Damvelt estimates that he received at least fifty inquiries from
men who fell in this category.

²Interview with Kenneth W. Rodarmer, former member Company C,
October 19, 1969.
After establishing the unit's strength at the time of the mobilization notification, the second move for National Guard units was to see if there were any officers or enlisted men assigned to the unit who were currently in the Inactive National Guard.¹

First Lt. Theodore S. Barnum had been in the Inactive National Guard since 1959. For all practical purposes he had virtually forgotten about the fact that he was subject to mobilization. Early in September 1961 notice was received in Kalamazoo to notify Lt. Barnum that he would be mobilized with the unit on 1 October. One of the men already on active duty at the Armory telephoned him at Gobles Elementary where he was both Principal and part-time teacher. He asked him if he knew that the Company had been mobilized. Lt. Barnum said that he was aware of that fact. Then he was told that he was still in the Inactive Guard and that he was to report for active duty on 1 October. Lt. Barnum, without any show of emotion, said, "All right, is there anything else?" Those in the Armory orderly room were amazed at Lt. Barnum's coolness. While they were discussing it,

¹The Inactive National Guard is an administrative move designed for placing a man in "limbo". For example, if a man without a military obligation had a job conflict and would be out of the state for six months, yet would like to return to the unit upon his return, he could be temporarily placed in the Inactive National Guard. While in that status he would not draw pay or time for promotion or retirement. However, if the unit was mobilized for federal duty persons so assigned were subject to federal service.
the phone rang. It was Barnum. His first comment was, "What did you say? I am being mobilized??" Because Company C already had a full compliment of officers, Lt. Barnum was assigned to Company D 156th Signal Battalion.

At the time the Company was alerted in August of 1961 the unit had an assigned strength of 124 officers and enlisted men. (See Appendix I) To bring the unit to full authorized strength of 172 would require 48 additional enlisted men. Lt. Wallace first assured himself that all the key positions were filled and then in early September the request went out for 48 lower ranking (specialist 4th class the highest pay grade)\(^2\) enlisted men by M.O.S. requirements. (The Company had been at full reduced strength so that these M.O.S. needs were across the board requiring a few men for each section.

The unit had only been at Fort Benning a few days when the fillers began to arrive from all parts of the United States. On the 18th of October the first car arrived and the last trickled in during mid-November.

Virtually all of the fillers who arrived were of the rank and M.O.S that the units had requested. Not only were most of these men "qualified"

\(^1\)Author's recollection.

\(^2\)Company C was the only unit in the battalion that did not order any "filler" noncommissioned officers. The logic behind this was to keep the unit operating in an accustomed fashion. Also, there was probably an effort to protect the later slots for "N. G.'s".
on paper but they were also qualified in face--i.e. they were good signal men. The only glaring exception that Sergeant Damvelt could recall was a man by the name of Chapman who was one of the first to arrive. He reported in and asked what he would be expected to do as he was a straight-leg infantry soldier. Even his orders testified that his Military Occupational Specialty was a rifleman. Upon investigation (all the way to the Department of the Army) it was discovered that there was another "Chapman" in the Reserve pool with the same identical first name and middle initial who was a signalman.

The men who had been called as fillers for the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve units came from the "Reserve Pool". During the 1950's and the first part of the 1960's all men had an eight year military obligation. The obligation could be satisfied many ways such as six months active duty and seven and a half years in the active reserve or three years regular army and five years in the standby reserve pool, etc.

As the fillers began to report into the unit it soon became clear that their call to active duty was indiscriminate as far as term of service went. Instead of pulling men from the pool who had put in the minimum time of active duty and had the longest time remaining on their "pool" obligation, many of the men reporting in were former three year RA's with as little as six months remaining on their total eight year obligation.
The official logic for this was to give the reserve units the most qualified people available. In following this policy, the Defense Department called the men who were older, more likely to be married, have the most children, be the most settled in the community, have the most debts and find the return to active duty the most difficult. Especially difficult because the "enemy" could not be found on the field of battle but only the editorial page of the local paper.

As the new men reported, Lt. Wallace and Sergeant Damvelt interviewed them but the rank and M. O. S. the man held determined his position in the unit. Even though the efforts to make the new men welcome to the unit were somewhat superficial, they did develop more than superficial loyalty to the unit. The majority of the complaints to Congress concerning the mobilization began to reach the Capitol in the early part of 1962. By this time it began to appear as though there would not be an armed conflict with the Soviets. The largest number of the complaints came from filler personnel who not only questioned that their services were needed, but also began to feel that their individual call to arms was not an equitable choice on the part of the Pentagon. They did not have any historic unit or hometown loyalty to uphold. With Company C the situation was slightly different. Fillers assigned to the Kalamazoo unit made far less complaints than any unit mobilized from the State of Michigan. ¹

¹Interview with Major General Clarence C. Schnipke, Adjutant General of Michigan, April 15, 1969.
To answer the main questions being asked by mobilized reservists, the Department of the Army published and distributed 130,000 copies of a pamphlet entitled, "Why Me?". The type of questions the pamphlet endeavored to answer were as follows:

Why was the buildup necessary?
Has the Army been expanded just to meet the Berlin Crisis?
What has the call-up accomplished?
Instead of calling up Army National Guard and Reserve units, why not expand the active army by bigger draft calls?
What determined the choice of units ordered to active duty?
Why were men called who were not assigned to units?
Why were men called as fillers who had enlisted for only six months active duty under the reserve forces act?
Why were men called as fillers who had two or more years of previous active duty?
Some men in paid drill status who had only six months active duty were not called--why?
If the reserve component units were needed, why were they not sent overseas?
What was the basis for exemption from the call-up?
Why have men been called who were eligible for deferment or exemption?
Why have recent draft calls been smaller than those at the start of the build-up?
Why so much emphasis on training?
How can I best serve? (See Appendix IV).

When the announcement of the publication was made public the Kalamazoo Gazette editorialized:

The Army is now distributing 130,000 pamphlets to National Guard and Reserve members called to active duty, explaining what they should have know before they got their orders...

Most of the questions and complaints undoubtedly came from the so-called "six-month men", who chose to take a half-year of active duty and then a period of years in Reserve units rather than a longer active period, and assumed that was the extent of their obligation.

Those called could take a good deal of satisfaction in the thought they, not the others, were best qualified for the mission
which President Kennedy had described as "to prevent a war, not to fight a war," which the booklet amplifies as "to demonstrate our determination to resist Communist aggression in any part of the world."

Raw draftees couldn't do that. Nor could second-rate units. ¹

Even though the best efforts were made to have the filler personnel become a part of the unit and many fast friendships evolved between men who had come from Kalamazoo and those men who had been shipped in, there was always a little feeling between the "fillers" and the "N. G.'s". Usually the feeling took the form of good-natured chiding. Whenever an N. G. complained, a standard filler response was "Don't bitch, you asked to be here!" To which the Guardsmen would explain that he had volunteered for the guard but not necessarily for the mobilization. If a filler complained too excessively he was considered a "cry baby" who could not take it. ²

Most of Company C's National Guardsmen questioned the motivation of filler personnel. Of those Kalamazoo guardsmen surveyed, 63% felt that the fillers were not as interested as guardsmen in the success of Company C; 27% thought that fillers and guardsmen were equal in feelings for the unit's accomplishment. (See Appendix V).

¹It is interesting to note the Kalamazoo paper's incorrect judgment: "most of the questions and complaints undoubtedly came from the so-called 'six-month men'..." In truth most of the complaints came from filler personnel who were not "six-month men" but were mostly men who had already put from two to three years on active duty.

In a feature editorial in the January 1962 issue of *The National Guardsman*, the author stated:

The individual "filler" is and from time immemorial has been a lost soul. This fact of military life is well known to anyone who personally has been through or exposed to the product of, a "repple depple." (Replacement depot)...

Unfortunately, out of some 150,000 Guardsmen and other reservists ordered to active duty in response to the Communist threat, a mere handful had griped. And their complaints—seized upon eagerly and stimulated avidly by a few headline-seekers—had been exaggerated, magnified, publicized and treated with an importance far, far beyond their real weight.

It was a source of embarrassment, deep annoyance and hot resentment for tens of thousands of Guardsmen, for the gripers were identified with major National Guard units. Unpublicized in the first blasts was the fact that these were newcomers—not Guardsmen.\(^1\)

In the same issue of that magazine, Major General William H. Harrison, Jr., the President of the National Guard Association of the United States, stated:

It is evident that most complaints are coming from individual reservists called up and used as "fillers" to bring organized units to full strength. These complaints, in some instances, are from men who already have served on extended active duty and resent a second call-up when so many of their friends and neighbors have performed to military service.\(^2\)

As 1962 wore on, it appeared that there were corrective efforts being made to right some of the errors in various aspects of the mobilization and on March 5 seven Senators spoke to this effect. These


\(^2\)loc. cit., p. 9.
congressional pronouncements were placed in a single volume and distributed to the mobilized reservists.¹

One of the most interesting efforts made by the Department of Defense to show the Army's reserve components why they were mobilized was called Operation Look See II. The purpose of the operation was to take fifty, selected National Guard and Army Reserve senior noncommissioned officers to Europe and give them an eye witness account of the Berlin Crisis and our nation's military posture there. The man selected to represent the nineteen mobilized units at Fort Benning was Company C's First Sergeant Marine S. Damvelt. The competitive interview to select a representative was conducted by a board of field grade, Regular Army officers. In addition to military knowledge, a man was quizzed on his understanding of current events, ability to present information, etc. On February 17 Sergeant Damvelt flew to Europe.²

He returned with first hand knowledge, an abundance of printed material, a 16mm film furnished by the Department of the Army and many of his own 35mm slides. Sergeant Damvelt spoke to all the various reserve units on post, appeared on television and was quoted

¹"Concerning Your National Guard on Active Duty," National Guard Pamphlet, 62-388-20m, 1962.

in the local papers: "The situation along the East German frontier is tense, but the capabilities of the combat readiness of the Seventh Army are such that I feel confident of our ability to meet any emergency."¹

Another effort to show the mobilized troops that they were not forgotten by the home folks was to send to the reserve units selected groups from their home towns. In February the Michigan National Guard flew a contingent of mayors to Fort Benning. Lt. Governor T. John Lesinski led the distinguished group. After the initial welcoming by the Army, the mayors were quick to find their home town units. Paul E. Morrison, Kalamazoo's mayor, spent all the time he could with Company C. The unit was in the field and the weather was cold but he made sure he shook everyone's hand and gave them each personal news from home. After his three-day visit the mayor returned home to report "Co. C Spirit High". This was a nice morale boost for the guardsmen but, of course, the mayor's visit was not a home town tie for the fillers.²

Even though the assimilation of the filler personnel was perhaps the greatest problem connected with the mobilization, that is not to say

¹The Bayonet, (Fort Benning), March 9, 1962, p. 1.

that they were all "complainers". The majority of them did their job as best they could. Annually, Company C presents an award to the outstanding enlisted man of the year. The selection is usually made by a vote of the unit section sergeants and company officers. The man selected for the award during the Berlin Crisis was Specialist 4 C. James Ward from Wayne, Michigan--a filler. The Kalamazoo Gazette stated "Outsider Honored." ¹

¹Kalamazoo Gazette, May 7, 1962, p. 15.
CHAPTER VI
MORALE

Most military experts agree that the most important single characteristic of a military unit is its state of morale. Good morale can assist an organization in compensating for all types of shortcomings in equipment or training. During the period of the mobilization the outstanding characteristic of Company C was its excellent morale.

In the questionnaire referred to earlier in this work, the question was asked: "What do you feel was the greatest strength of Company C during the unit’s mobilization?" (See Appendix V). Of the sixty-five men who responded, the feeling was unanimous: The quality of men in the unit and their morale was Company C’s greatest strength. Some random comments were: "The belief that we as guardsmen could surpass any requirement imparted upon us by the Army." "Its personnel [Company C] and the positive attitude which each of these individuals carried...", "The morale was 100%." "When our outfit was told to do something...we did it." "I think it was the unity of the Company, (except in the case of the fillers)." "Hometown cohesiveness."

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"The ability to take things in stride." "...work together and get things done." "...the willingness...to stay on top." "...esprit de corps among most of the men." "...ability to improvise and get things done." "The ability of the Company as a whole to adapt to the situation at hand and accomplish a job with the material available."

Many persons answering the survey attributed the "ability" of the men to the educational level of the unit. Generally, reserve units have a higher educational level than Regular Army units because of the nature of the reserve enlistment. Many of the men who enlist in reserve components do so to gain time to further their education. However, Company C had an exceptionally high rate of college graduates and college students. Sergeant Damvelt recalled that the Company Training Section had to send a monthly Troop Information and Education report to higher headquarters. One of the items on the report requested information concerning the educational level of the unit. After the report reached Main Post Headquarters, invariably there would be a phone call, "You made a mistake on your T. I. and E. Report. According to this, practically every man in your unit is either a college graduate or a college student." Sergeant Damvelt or the training NCO then explained that his figures were accurate.

1Interview with First Sergeant Marine S. Damvelt, member of Company C, November 24, 1969.
It is especially to the credit of the officers and men of Company C that they were able to maintain such an outstanding spirit when there were many things in the mobilization that worked against good morale. It is easy for a military unit to produce esprit de corps during a mobilization if the nation is receiving an obvious threat; especially a threat that brings out the power of nationalism. However, only at the very beginning (summer of 1961) did the Berlin Crisis ever suggest that type of force. The Crisis soon seemed to assume a more subtle aspect; one that was more political than military.

Other factors than injured the morale of many Army Reserve and National Guard units were: (1) Lack of equipment; (See Appendix V). (2) Poor method of selecting filler personnel (See Chapter V); (3) The army's policy on revising "date-of-rank" for the men in mobilized units; (4) The Army plan of leaving mobilized units to strengthen the Continental Army Command and sending Regular Army unit's overseas¹; (5) The feeling that many army policies were discriminating toward mobilized reservists. (i.e. troops housed in the worst barracks, low priority for off-post housing, etc.) In spite of the many factors working against good morale, Company C seemed to be able to take everything in stride.

¹Many of the Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, and Navy Reserve personnel and units were sent overseas.
In addition to the educational level of the men, another key factor which repeatedly appeared in interviews was the "home-town" aspect of the Guard. The ties to Kalamazoo were so close that literally nothing could happen in the unit that Kalamazoo was not aware of by the end of the day. Many times an incident would happen in the Company and a man would find out about it that night when he spoke long distance to his wife! Also assisting in keeping the home town tie strong was the official visit to the Company by Mayor Paul Morrison.

By February 1962 the search for a demobilization date preoccupied everyone's mind. A good rumor was the "straight skinny". If someone asked if it was a latrine rumor, the response was "Yes, but this came from the third stool on the right." (meaning it was a fact). These rumors were not like those formed in other mobilizations. Company C's Berlin Crisis rumors were not taken seriously. They were for the most part a form of entertainment. A good story would go something like this: Hey, I got the straight skinny on going home. When a suitable crowd (two or more) was listening the speaker would continue, "I was over getting a haircut; well, there was a Sp4 medic from main post, see, he works in Martin Army (Hospital) and he said that he was wheeling a Colonel out of surgery and as this Colonel was coming out of the anesthetic he muttered something about ending Harmony Church garbage service in April. They sure wouldn't keep us here without garbage service, would they?" ¹

¹Interview with Robert J. Worline, former member Company C. November 20, 1969.
(It is interesting to note that when Sergeant Damvelt was selected to go to Germany few thought it was true—just another rumor.)

The questionnaire referred to earlier in this paper asked former Company C men to relate humorous incidents from their term of service. Some of them are as follows:

Sergeant William Thompson recalled the time that their field cable platoon was given the responsibility of building four-hole field latrines. The job was masterful and the finished product was painted O. D. Three of the holes had modern, smooth toilet seats (which were liberated from an abandoned barracks). The holes were carefully labeled "Officers", "NCO's", and "EM". The fourth hole was a jagged-cut affair with no plush seat and at the top was painted the word "Fillers".

Lt. Robert Worline mentioned some of the names the men were known by which either obviously (or subtly) fit some characteristic of the man. Reverend, Sky King (a sergeant who had a civilian pilot's license), Straight Arrow, Half-Track (one of the fillers who had a game leg), Moose, Rummy, Pappy, Yard Bird, etc., unlike regular Army units all these names were in common use and in most cases were the results of long-standing friendships.

Sergeant Gatis Samsons remembered the Sergeant of the Main Post Guard was dubbed "Chief Goat Herder", because of the many goats that were kept in the post ammunition dump. (Pulling post guard
involved an entire Company at a time.) Company C "pulled it" on the 25th of May, 1962. The unit received a special commendation from the Post Adjutant for the superior appearance and superior proficiency of the men.¹

The list of humorous things could involve a book in itself. The unit had two professional comedians and several good amateurs. Lt. Wallace stated it would not be possible to mention humor in Company C during the Berlin Crisis without mentioning the name of the late Chief Warrant Officer Robert Velten. Mr. Velten was a decorated WW II combat infantry man who served as Message Center Chief for Company C. He had an unusual sense of humor and just the trace of a stutter which always came at the punch line. Once when asked how long he had been in the military he said, "I don't want to say it's been a long time, but I was the mess sergeant at the 1-1-1-1-last supper!"

When Company C was first mobilized, before it left Kalamazoo, the unit was visited by Major General Jonathan O. Seaman, Sixth Corps Commander. General Seaman was warm, personable and interested in every aspect of the unit's call to service. During lunch the General noticed the Green Christmas Tree Patch on Mr. Velten's right shoulder. (A man may wear on his right shoulder the unit designation of an organization he spent at least ninety days with in combat.) The General said,

¹Letter from Captain James C. Murphy, Adjutant, 1st Infantry Brigade, Fort Benning, May 26, 1962.
Ah, Mr. Velten, I see you were with the 91st in WW II.
Let's see, if I remember, the 91st landed in Italy at etc.,
moved etc., etc.
You know, my wife and I just returned from Italy and we
toured all through that area--beautiful country--just
beautiful.
Y-Y-Y-Yes sir! I'd like to see it again---s-s-s-standing
up!

Even though the obstacles were great, the quality of the men
found in Company C, each of whom believed in himself, his home
town and his ability to laugh, all worked together to make the Company
one of the best in the mobilization.
CHAPTER VII
MOVEMENT HOME AND DEMOBILIZATION

By January 1962, it was apparent the critical aspects of the Berlin Crisis was fading fast. During the second week of January U. S. Ambassador Llewellyn E. Thompson, Jr. and Andrei A. Gromyko met in a two and a half hour meeting in Moscow to discuss the Berlin situation. The easing international attitude toward the crisis can be seen in Newsweek's Diplomatic Correspondent Edward Weintal's coverage of the meeting:

...Gromyko never rejected Thompson's arguments on the need for free access, and U. S. officials now believe the Russians are willing to discuss several aspects of the Berlin problem that previously were taboo. The first meeting ended with Gromyko saying: 'We still have a lot of things to discuss. I shall be pleased to see you again any time.' Thompson is expected to resume the talks this week.

Not only are the Soviets being cordial to Thompson, whom they respect as a skilled and seasoned negotiator, but they have named one of their ablest envoys to carry on the Washington end of the dialogue. Former U. N. Under Secretary Anatoly F. Dobrynin, due to arrive this month to replace Ambassador Mikhail A. Menshikov, is one of the few Soviet diplomats who know, understand, and like Americans. His appointment, says one top U. S. expert on Russia, may mean a shift to serious negotiations.

If the Soviet mood on Berlin is indeed changing, it coincides with a parallel change in Washington. President Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk are anxious to reach a settlement on Berlin.¹

It is interesting to note that in that same issue of Newsweek there was another article dealing with the expansion of the regular army. The writer stated that President Kennedy had approved a plan to build two more R. A. divisions "...clearing the way for early release of the called up reservists and National Guardsmen". ¹

The first official indication of releasing the reserve components came in February 1962:

President Kennedy, at his press conference last week, said no precise date can be announced yet for release of National Guardsmen and reservists recalled to active duty involuntarily. However, the remarks of the Commander-in-Chief indicated releases should begin at least by August when the first of the two new active Army divisions is expected to be combat-ready.

A reporter's question on the matter and the President's response were as follows:

Q--In the light of the apparent easing of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, particularly with respect to Berlin, can you say with any precision now when the military reservists might be released?

A--No. The crisis continues and the reservists...the need for the reservists continues until there is an easing of the crisis, or until we've been able to replace them with other men. ²

By March 21, 1962 the news began to look good for an August return home date:

Defense Department officials are reported considering August 25 for starting demobilization of more than 155,000 National Guardsmen and reservists now on cold war active duty.


²Army Times, February 24, 1962, p. 3.
According to this thinking—and it still is tentative—most of the reservists would be mustered out within the following month, informed sources said. ¹

As already stated (Chapter IV) after the prospect of going home became more likely, a greater emphasis was placed on training. This intensified training at Fort Gordon and Fort Benning carried on until June.

LOCAL GUARD KEEPING BUSY

Kalamazoo's most widely traveled military unit is looking forward to its next trip—home.

Members of Company C, 156th Signal Battalion, have returned to Ft. Benning, Ga., after undergoing three weeks of concentrated Signal training in the woods, of Ft. Gordon, Ga. President Kennedy has announced that, National Guard and Army Reserve units called to active duty last year will be released in August...

When will the men be home?
'The people at home know as much about that as we do,' Wallace said. ²

In June a complete demobilization listing entitled "Release of Army National Guard Units on Active Duty" was distributed to the mobilized units. The document stated that the 156th Signal Battalion would begin movement home on August 5. The latter part of June and the month of July was devoted to "out processing" and packing of equipment. Each man had to have his records up-dated and take a physical. Much of the equipment the battalion was using had to be returned to the Regular Army. The rest of the battalion gear had to be loaded on flat


²Kalamazoo Gazette, April 26, 1962, p. 37.
cars for movement back to Michigan. The training schedule included a great deal of time for organized athletics and it was soon evident that the pressure was off. Usually the morning was devoted to work and the afternoon to volleyball, football, swimming and "movie matinee".

Prior to the leaving of the advanced parties the battalion had two types of farewell parties. The first were the individual company parties. The unit funds were sizeable and this was the last time all the troops would be together. Each company held its own party in its mess hall. On the night the company parties were held the battalion area echoed with song and laughter. The Berlin Crisis started with an emergency but would end with a song.

The other type of party was the battalion's officer's party. Not only were the 156th officers and their spouses invited to the special function at the giant main post officer's club but the Regular Army officers who supported the battalion were invited, too. Usually such parties start with a sedate cocktail hour (a sociable drink or two) in a side room and then the group would retire to the main club for an evening of dining and dancing.

The social hour started calmly enough but there was a feeling of celebration in the air that seemed to make people more sociable and far more thirsty than usual. The 156th Signal Battalion enlisted men's choir sang some melodic melodies which then evolved into a sing-along. One of the junior officers on battalion staff began to dance with a bouquet of flowers. The victorian concept of "Officers and Gentlemen" seemed to
slip away and soldierly camaraderie took hold. The "One Army Concept" became a reality as the "RA's" and "NG's" became a single organization.¹

From somewhere a mimeographed song sheet appeared. To the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean", the joint voices rolled out:

Oh Regulars are happy in peace time
Our Freedom they're proud to preserve
But just let them get into trouble
They call on the G--D-- reserves
Call out, Call out... (See Appendix VI).

It was interesting how many of the RA's had been NG's, assigned as advisors to NG's or just like NG's. (It turned out that the 1st Brigade Commander himself had started as a Guardsman.) For days afterward the Regulars commented that the Guard really knew how to execute a party!²

On June 14, 1962, Third Army Headquarters published a basic order for all mobilized units in the Army area:

By direction of the President the units listed in Inclosure I, and members thereof, are RELEASED FROM ACTIVE DUTY.

¹Interview with Gordon E. Wallace, former Company C Commander, November 7, 1969.

²Interview with Gordon E. Wallace, former Company C Commander, November 7, 1969.
Effective date: 2400 hrs. on the actual release date shown in Inclosure I. Units revert to Reserve Component at home station as of 0001 hrs. of the following day. 1

The "Inclosures" later published stated that the 156th Signal Battalion would be released the 9th of August 1962.

The unit's equipment, which had been loaded on railroad flat cars, left for Michigan on July 18, 1962. The train had three guards from Company C. The following day an eight man advance party left for Kalamazoo via private vehicle.2

With the equipment gone, the remainder of the Company at Fort Benning had little to do but bide their time until the 5th of August when they could depart for Kalamazoo. In the remaining days a Brigade review was held and a few other ceremonial events took place.

On August 5, 1962 the men of the 156th Signal Battalion (CA) left Fort Benning for Michigan. Unlike the mobilization trip with its military troop trains heading ominously to appointed places, the return home was in private vehicles and civilian clothes. The Company C soldiers were ordered to report at the Armory at 1000 hours August 8 for first

1"General Orders 147," Headquarters, Third United States Army, Fort McPherson, Georgia, 14 June 1962.

formation. The Kalamazoo Gazette announced, "Michigan Johnnies Come Marching Home":

...On Thursday, (August 9, 1962) mustering out ceremonies will be held for the biggest contingent--the 500 members of the Michigan National Guard's 156th Combat Signal Battalion. (The public is invited to attend festivities at the Kalamazoo Armory on Water Street for Company C. The Kalamazoo unit, which left Ft. Benning, Ga., Sunday after a 10-month tour, will meet Thursday at 10 a.m.)

The Army and the National Guard Bureau had worked out demobilization kits to help local officials give their units a suitable welcome home ceremony. The kits included proclamations, spot announcements for radio and TV and newspaper material. None of this "canned" material was used in the Kalamazoo demobilization. Colonel Leo J. Crum, Captain John Hauck and the advanced party personnel worked out the farewell ceremonies in conjunction with the Adjutant General's representative, Major Stabler from Lansing.

The State had a contingent of military dignitaries who were flown from place to place on August 9. The group included Major General Ronald McDonald the Adjutant General of Michigan; the newly promoted Colonel Fred N. Scott III, 156th Signal Battalion Commander and Colonel Clarence C. Schnipke, Assistant Adjutant General, Army. The dignitaries stopped at Kalamazoo at 10 a.m., Adrian at noon and Monroe at

__________________________
1Kalamazoo Gazette, August 6, 1962, p. 3.

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2 p.m. (the Detroit units were "officially" demobilized on August 16, Citizen Soldier-Sailor Day.)

On August 8 the Kalamazoo editorial page carried a warm tribute to the unit:

Tomorrow morning Kalamazoo's Company C, 156th Signal Battalion, will be mustered out of federal service at ceremonies in its home armory.

Every citizen of this community should be present, in spirit if not in person.

Every citizen should be proud of these citizen-soldiers, inheritors of a century-old tradition of service in peace and in war in the nation’s defense.

Their service the past year has been something less than glamourous. They have not been in immediate danger. They have not, in this period, heard the shot fired in anger.

Let not their service be down-graded on that account. Many were separated from their families. Many made financial sacrifices.

...Our armed forces have been dubbed our "power for peace."

That was the mission of Company C and the other reserve units and individual reservists called up last year when the Berlin Crisis looked as though it might turn into a nasty situation.

Did the addition of their military muscle avert a war? We'll never know, for sure. What doesn't happen is one of the imponderables of this world.

It is what does happen that is important. Peace was saved, and it took power to save it. Our Company C provided a part of that power.

We are proud of Company C. It is one of the best. The honors it earned in recent months are especially notable because they were won in a time when citizen-soldiers must often have felt themselves forgotten by their countrymen, bored with the routine leading to no clearly defined objective of ultimate battle, standing guard as part of America's "power for peace."
Next to the Editorial in the "Voice of the People" was a glowing tribute from Company C's former Commander Captain John M. Hauck.

BE PROUD OF COMPANY C FOR OUTSTANDING RECORD
To the Editor:

Do you want a bit of "proud" today?
Be proud then that this community was represented these past ten months by Company C, 156th Signal Battalion, as a part of the 100,000 man reserve "call-up" of last fall. Be doubly proud that their performance was so outstanding.
The sacrifice made by the individual members of Company C was no more or less than that made by hundred of thousands of Americans in the past. We can realistically anticipate future crisis and sacrifice...

From the beginning to the end of their tour, Company C performed with the precision and efficiency of a top-rated, comparable Regular Army unit. Their chow was superior, their administration excellent. They topped the other units of the battalion and many Regular outfits in their all-important Army training tests. They were rated a very close second best of all 19 Reserve units on active duty at Ft. Benning, Georgia... Thus, another page is written in the over one hundred year history of Kalamazoo's Company C. Be a little proud today!

The locally prepared program was well organized. On August 3, 1962, Captain John M. Hauck sent out a letter of invitation to many of the city's leading dignitaries. The letter stated that the recipient was "...cordially invited to witness the Demobilization from Federal Service of Company "C" 156th Signal Battalion (CA)..."2

At 10 a.m. August 9, 1962 the Company stood at attention in starched, khaki uniforms. They formed in four ranks facing the main door of the

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1 ibid.

2 Letter from Captain John M. Hauck, "Invitation to Demobilization Ceremonies", August 8, 1962. (Mimeographed.)
Armory. A color guard of Regular Marines presented the colors.

Lt. Wallace commanded "Persons to be decorated front and center." General McDonald presented Army Commendation Medals to 1st Lt. Warren J. Lawrence, Sergeant John M. Shehigan and Sp4 James S. Beasley; ten year Reserve medals to First Sergeant Marine S. Damvelt, Master Sergeant Ralph David and Sergeant Robert C. Weston; Third Army Certificates of Achievement to Sergeant William Antisdale, Sergeant Ronald Cox and Sp4 Richard Delore.  

The Company then moved to chairs in front of the stage and a relatively brief program followed. Captain John Hauck acted as the Master of Ceremonies. The main speaker was Vice Mayor C. H. Mullen. In the first part of his speech the Vice Mayor gave a chronology of what happened to the unit since it was mobilized. Next he listed some of the unit's achievements; he concluded:

The fires which you built in the fox-holes to keep warm those nights were only a few of the great problems which you surmounted. Each one of you experienced some form of personal hardship. For many it was the second call-up since 1940. Some had to sell your cars, your homes or businesses. Some had to leave their families behind. Incomes were cut drastically in many cases. Quite a few had to drop out of school. There are no small sacrifices when you yourself are involved in them, and I'm sure that there were times when you felt no one remembered you but the bill collectors! But Kalamazoo had not forgotten, and these sacrifices which you made will forever be a tribute to you.

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1Kalamazoo Gazette, August 9, 1962, p. 1.

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Now you are back. We are happy for you and Kalamazoo today wears its heart on its sleeve as it bursts with pride. Good luck to each of you as you again take your place among us. Finally, from the City Commission and all of our citizens, to each of you, our profound thanks and commendation for the outstanding manner in which you accomplished this vital mission in the preservation of peace. We Salute You!! (See Appendix VII.)

Major General Ronald D. McDonald made a few brief remarks concerning "...preventing a war"; announced that each man would receive a "Berlin Crisis National Emergency Service Commendation" signed by the Governor and surprised everyone by stating that "tomorrow" Lt. Wallace would be "Captain Wallace".

The program listed several other speakers--Colonel Clarence C. Schnipke, Colonel Leo J. Crum, Major William H. Fitzgerald, Commander Robert H. Redinger, most of whom simply said "welcome home" in a sentence or two and sat down. 1st Lt. Wallace was so choked up he could barely thank the men of the unit for their support.

Captain Hauck brought the program to a close and there was a sound round of applause. Then Company C's membership with chatting relatives and friends made their way to the refreshment table which the American Legion Auxiliary had prepared. The visitors and the soldiers holding paper plates laden with food drifted to the tables displaying photos, trophies and documents from the call up. Somehow Captain Wallace soon had on a set of "railroad tracks" and everyone laughed.

The ceremony had been brief, complete, and military--morale was high--the Berlin Crisis was over--Company C was home!
CHAPTER VIII
AFTERMATH

When trying to evaluate the 1961 mobilization from an international perspective the process is simply one of conjecture. If one assumes the Soviet threat was as grave as it was painted in American newspapers, then certainly a mobilization of reserve forces was necessary. As was stated earlier in this work, President Kennedy said that he had called the reservists to "...prevent-not fight a war". If, in fact, that was the situation and the call to arms did prevent a war, then the mobilization must be termed a success.

However, if in reality the Soviet threat was a bluff, with no intention on the part of the Russians to "back-it-up", then the whole "Crisis" might be termed a giant hoax! The world will probably never know for certain, (and at this writing, some eight years later, the "world" could probably care less).

The surveyed members of Company C were asked: "At the time President Kennedy mobilized reservists in 1961, did you feel that it was a necessary action in support of the nation's foreign policy?"
Yes--62% No--38% "Today, after eight years of reflection, do you feel that the mobilization was instrumental in '...preventing a war'?"
Yes--54% No--46% (See Appendix V).
When examining the mobilization from the national scene, one can find many more concrete results. On April 16, 1962, the House of Representatives Subcommittee Number 3 of the Committee on Armed Services, opened the Military Reserve Posture Hearings. Representative F. Edward Hebert headed the subcommittee. He was charged by chairman Carl Vinson to:

In accordance with authority previously vested in me by the full Committee on Armed Services, I am hereby delegating to Subcommittee No. 3, with you as chairman, the responsibility for conducting a comprehensive inquiry into the defense posture of the Reserve components of our Armed Forces. The scope of your inquiry shall include, but not be limited to, the following pertinent considerations:

(a) Review of alleged deficiencies resulting from the recent limited mobilization of the Reserve components.

(b) National defense requirements for a Reserve component program.

(c) Present and future costs of the Reserve component program.

(d) Ability of the Reserve components to fulfill mobilization requirements.

(e) Review of the application of the statutory Reserve military obligation on individuals who have completed 2 or more years of active duty.

In view of the importance of this inquiry, I would urge that you attempt to complete subcommittee action for report to the full committee prior to the conclusion of this session of the Congress.¹

The hearings composed 1187 pages of testimony. The results of this testimony were summed up by Representative Hebert:

Briefly, these hearings demonstrated very clearly that our Reserve Forces were both inadequately trained and inadequately manned. In addition, the hearings demonstrated that these Reserve units were very poorly equipped which contributed directly to their inability to meet their mobilization readiness requirements. 1

The most important piece of legislation to result from these hearings was "The Reserve Bill of Rights" Public Law 90-168. The Reserve Bill of Rights corrected many of the errors found in the mobilization (i.e. how fillers would be mobilized, re-employment protection, modern equipment priority for U. S. reserve forces over foreign armies, etc.) In addition to this piece of legislation, the Department of the Army completely revised the mobilization manual.

The major unsuccessful effort to grow out of these hearings was the effort to merge the Army Reserve components. In essence this plan called for making one reserve organization out of the National Guard and the Army Reserve. Secretary of Defense McNamara originally planned to have the National Guard merged into the Army Reserve. This, he hoped, would eliminate the state ties. However, not only did this violate the Constitution but it also affronted the National Guard Bureau (sometimes called America's most powerful lobby) and the fifty state governors. The approach was then made in the other direction, to merge the Army Reserve into the National Guard. However, the powerful

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1 Letter from Hon. F. Edward Hebert, Chairman Subcommittee No. 2, Committee on Armed Forces, U. S. House of Representatives, August 9, 1968.
Reserve Officers Association led a successful fight to prevent it.

Regardless how valid the arguments for "merger" might have been, the dual Army Reserve Components system was too much a part of our military tradition to change.

General Schnipke, currently Adjutant General for Michigan, thought that the mobilization would have worked smoothly if it had not been for the myriad of changes that took place during the actual mobilization itself. He said from the time that the alert order for the 156th Signal Battalion was received, a continuous stream of changes followed. He felt that even though the mobilization procedures had been totally revamped in the 1960's that if there were a mobilization today, undoubtedly there would be more changes.¹

Another direct result of the mobilization experience was a vast reorganization of reserve forces in 1968. The major emphasis of this reorganization was to eliminate many of the "skeleton" (50 percent) divisions and consolidate into fewer divisions of higher strength. This was a major decision as it meant the "retiring" of very famous units like the 32nd Red Arrow Division. Veterans across the nation rose up in defense of their units but mobilization requirements outweighed sentiment.

What happened to Company C as a result of the mobilization? All the men who left with Company C returned home safely on August 10, 1962

¹Interview with Major General Clarence C. Schnipke, Adjutant General of Michigan, February 18, 1969.
(except for the six men who decided to reenlist in the Regular Army).

During their absence from civilian life 65% of the men surveyed reported that they had made a financial sacrifice. The average was a $5,300 loss for the ten months of service. (See Appendix V).

However, there were bonds of friendship built during the mobilization that have lasted. Ninety-two percent of the surveyed members report that they still have business and/or social contacts with their comrades. One can only speculate on the number of automobiles sold, insurance contracts made, partnerships formed, real estate deals consummated, etc. as a direct result of Berlin Crisis friendships.

Everyone who served in the Berlin Crisis who had a six year military obligation had their obligation reduced to five years. As a result of this, Company C lost several men on E.T.S. (Enlisted Term of Service) after the demobilization ceremonies. The strength of the unit at midnight August 10, 1962, was seventy enlisted men and five officers.¹ When the unit returned to reserve status one of the first orders of business was an active recruiting program to build the Company back to full strength.

The Company had to regear itself to a traditional militia service as it had done so many times before. But this is the cycle for which National Guard units were designed--it is the cycle in which they operate.

President Kennedy had asked the members of Company C to mobilize to prevent a war--and as they had done on numerous past occasions, the Company mobilized with all the attendant personal sacrifice it entailed. They were fulfilling the historic tradition of the National Guard--to be ready when called by their country. To ask whether their mobilization had really prevented a war is not necessarily the basic question--more to the point is the question of whether Company C performed its allotted task in the manner expected. To this the foregoing record indicates an affirmative answer.
APPENDIX I

ROSTER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN WHO WERE MEMBERS OF COMPANY C 156TH SIGNAL BATTALION (CA) DURING THE BERLIN CRISIS

Commanding Officer

1st Lt. Gordon E. Wallace

Company Officers

1st Lt. Roland P. Burgess
1st Lt. Warren J. Lawrence
1st Lt. Kenneth W. Rodarmer
2nd Lt. Robert J. Worline
CWO W2 Robert L. Velten

Company First Sergeant

Marine S. Damvelt

Sergeant First Class - E7

Sherman L. Baty
Ralph R. Davis
Gay H. Smith

Staff Sergeant - E6

Joseph C. Bryant, Jr.
Charles R. Gardiner
Paul M. Gilbert
Gatis Samsons
John M. Shehigian
Charles L. Wells

Sergeant - E5

Joseph F. Conn
Paul J. Flickenstein
Charles A. Fortner

Donald E. McNees
Jack H. Prentice
Terrence L. Pride

93

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Robert R. Graichen  
Willie B. Granville  
Harold J. Gravenstuk  
Ivars Grivens  
Daniel C. Hollis  
John H. Jensen  
Daniel Latenschleger  
Arthur J. Pursel  
Ronald W. Rake  
William R. Sage  
Jacob Smit  
Robert J. Swift  
William Thompson  
Robert L. Weston  

Specialist - E4

William S. Antisdale  
Jim S. Beasley  
Richard Buttery  
Charles E. Chase  
James J. Connors  
Harold W. Cornhill  
Ronald M. Cox  
Gardiner K. Crittenden  
John T. Cronley  
Donald F. Crower  
Colbert G. Deal  
Jerry De Bruyn  
Paul Den Hartigh  
Paul D. Evans  
Carl C. Gasta II  
Thomas J. Ghysels  
Jay J. Hassing  
Donald B. Hillman  
Edwin D. Hoeksema  
John A. Keyser  
John Klooster  
Fred Knox  
Bernard R. Kuiper  
Larry E. Lamphear  
Columbus Lipsey  
John C. McLoughlin, Jr.  
Neil R. Merlo  
Jack Nederhoed  
Floyd Raterink  
Harold G. Reno  
Frederick M. Roberts  
Robert W. Ross, Sr.  
Thomas Q. Senne  
Lawrence E. Shoemaker  
Bobby J. Simpson  
Gary W. Spainhour  
Richard R. Stoudt  
Robert J. Szostek  
William C. Terry  
Martin E. Tompkins  
Max R. Tompkins  
Richard T. Tupper  
Norman L. Vogt  
James E. Welch  
Phillip White  
James F. Will  
Harley L. Wiseley  
Carlton E. Wood, Jr.

Private First Class - E3

Carl E. Carpenter  
George R. Corsiglia  
Charles L. Ehlers  
William L. Garzelloni  
James F. Helmer  
Frank E. Hodge  
Charles Randall  
John E. Rich  
Richard N. Roschek  
Donald K. Ruimveld  
Richard W. Schreiber  
Joel M. Shepherd, Jr.
APPENDIX II
State of Michigan
MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT
Lansing 1

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 50 22 September 1961

ORDER TO ACTIVE DUTY
156th Signal Battalion (Combat Area) (AR)
Michigan Army National Guard

1. Announcement is made of the order to active duty of the 156th Signal Battalion (Combat Area) (AR) Michigan Army National Guard, effective 1 October 1961, in accordance with General Order Nr 60 (corrected copy), Headquarters Fifth United States Army, dated 1 September 1961, subject: "Order to Active Duty", which is cited in part for information and necessary action:

By direction of the President and pursuant to authority contained in Public Law 87-117, the units and members thereof of the 156th Signal Battalion (Combat Area) (AR) Michigan Army National Guard are ordered to active duty at home station 0100, 1 October 1961, for a period of 12 (twelve) consecutive months unless sooner relieved.

Units will arrive at mobilization stations as directed no later than 15 October 1961.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNITS</th>
<th>HOME STATION</th>
<th>MOBILIZATION STATION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>156th Signal Battalion (Combat Area) (AR)</td>
<td>Detroit, Michigan</td>
<td>Fort Benning, Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headquarters and Headquarters Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company A</td>
<td>Detroit, Michigan</td>
<td>Fort Benning, Georgia</td>
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<td>Adrian, Michigan</td>
<td>Fort Benning, Georgia</td>
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<td>Company C</td>
<td>Kalamazoo, Michigan</td>
<td>Fort Benning, Georgia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Company D</td>
<td>Monroe, Michigan</td>
<td>Fort Benning, Georgia</td>
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</tbody>
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Recruiting for these units prior to entry on active duty is suspended.

Units are ordered to active duty in their current organization status. Any required reorganization of TOE or TD will be accomplished after arrival at mobilization or duty station.

2. This order will be read to all units concerned and members thereof upon receipt.

By Order of The Governor:

RONALD D McDONALD
Major General
The Adjutant General of Michigan

Official: SEAL

RONALD D McDONALD
Major General
The Adjutant General of Michigan

DISTRIBUTION: A & D
APPENDIX III
ADDRESS BEFORE COMPANY C
Delivered by Kalamazoo Mayor Paul E. Morrison
at the Company C Farewell Party September 16, 1961

I am indeed glad to be one who is privileged to stand here this
evening and pay tribute to Company "C" the 126th Infantry at this
party being given in their honor----

I have been doing a little research work on the past history of
this very famous Company "C"---It seems they rank just about the
highest one could imagine---since 1861 I find nothing but glowing
accounts that take in events from the Battle of Bull Run where many
a weary commander of other units would make urgent request such
as--Quick send me a Regiment--NO--Send me a Michigan Regiment--
or--Put a Michigan Regiment on guard to-night---I want to get some
sleep----Ladies and gentlemen I know of no finer tribute of utter
CONFIDENCE than a request like that from some other "outfit"---Yes
I used the word OUTFIT---for I too am a former service man. This
is why I found it very interesting to note in the history of Company "C"
that they too participated in the Mexican affair with Pancho Villa---You
see I served with the 14th United States Calvary on the Mexican Border
in 1917 & 1918--and I know a little bit about it.

I must laughingly admit something here to you good people--It
seems that somebody over at the Gazette has been snooping around a
bit and they actually believe I may be the youngest Veteran of the First World War, in the State of Michigan—this is all because I enlisted when I was 16 years of age—though I freely admit I told the recruiting officer I was 18—and he believed me as I was nearly six feet tall at the time—my wife says I've shrunk since then she does believe...

But back to Company "C"—ever ready for State Emergencies—she was called up again for service in the Spanish-American War of 1898 and it was here they dropped their former VOLUNTEER Designation and assumed the Title of Company "C" 32nd Infantry Regiment 1st Brigade—again came quieter times when State requirements were their only obligation—but the next call to the colors came in 1916—then it was to help apprehend Pancho Villa—and one year later—1917—the War to make the world safe for democracy.

It was in this conflict they became Immortal—Colonel Joe Westnedge and the boys met the great Challenge—we all know their record—then another period of relative quiet—and then PEARL HARBOR—and in World War II—Company "C" 126th Infantry 32nd Division spent more days in combat than did any other division in the U. S. Forces—and I'll pause here for some applause for this record if you please. . . .

THANK YOU.
NOW the New Title—we speak now of Company "$C\$" 126th Infantry redesignated to the 156th Signal Battalion on March 15th 1959.

Kalamazoo is proud of Company "$C\$"—did you ever notice little things? Like their help in our Parades—the Firing Squads for Public affairs and Veterans affairs—Their help when we have the Soap Box Derby—Their traffic control on National Holidays—Their escorts for Mothers during "MARCH OF DIMES"—Their help to the Sheriff and Police—and I refer to the Penny Singleton Case. Their help during the Iron Mountain Incidents 1910—the Flint Riots 1939—the Jackson Prison Riot 1911.

Yes men—when we reflect and study your record a deep sense of humility overcomes us—We are proud of Company "$C\$" and you newer members have a record to uphold—and you will.

To you Military men—I repeat the Sixth General Order—and know it will mean much to you as you reflect upon it—

To receive, Obey, and pass on to the sentry who relieves me—all orders from the Commanding Officer—Officer of the day—Officers and non-commissioned Officers—OF THE GUARD ONLY—This then has become your HERITAGE MEN—you have received your Sixth General order from the officers—of the guard only—and I do mean—the many brave officers of the past attached to this famous Company "$C\$"—

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So to-night---I bring to you the warm heartfelt good wishes of your city and its expression of Love for you men---It becomes my great privilege to be the bearer of these words of GRATITUDE to you from our people of this city---Our thoughts will be with you wherever you are--remember that---------and our prayers we know will be heard for your well being and providential care.

Now I'm going to return you to your party and the program--with an OLD CALVARY YELL----RIDE EM COWBOY--AND GIVE A HEADACHE.

Company "C" I salute you for all of Kalamazoo....
APPENDIX IV

This pamphlet discusses questions most frequently asked by Army National Guardsmen and Reservists called to active Army service since October, 1961. It tells why they have been called and the vital contribution they are making to national security.

WHY ME?
Headquarters, Department of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.

WHY WAS THE BUILD-UP NECESSARY?

Increasingly hostile behavior by the Sino-Soviet bloc made it necessary to build up U. S. military strength immediately to demonstrate our determination to resist Communist aggression against any part of the Free World.

Soviet threats to liquidate Allied rights in Berlin called for urgent development of combat-ready forces for deployment to Europe, if required.

Increasing tension elsewhere called for the development of sufficient strategic reserve forces to cope with simultaneous outbreak of limited wars in widely separated points.

President Kennedy gave these reasons at a press conference on 29 November 1961:

"The reason why we called these men is that there is a direct clash of interest in a major area which is Berlin and West Germany. There also is increased tension in Viet Nam..."

"Therefore, we believe calling these men up and their willingness to serve increased the chance of maintaining the peace... The United States is the strongest power and the leader of the free world and as such we must have the power to make our commitments good..."

"We call them in to prevent a war, not to fight a war. If our efforts to hold a peace should fail, they would be used in a more direct way."

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"Their function today is to indicate that the United States is serious about its commitments; that it means to meet its commitments. It wants to negotiate a peaceful settlement, if it can, but it does not propose to surrender."

Secretary of the Army Elvis J. Stahr, Jr. put it this way:

"The requirement for an immediate increase in the combat strength of the Army could only be met by calling up trained National Guardsmen and Reservists. Larger draft calls would not provide the needed strength in time..."

"...Should we be successful in our aim to preserve freedom without war, it will be because those who threaten freedom can see that our intention to stand firm is backed by the military ability to do so."

"Should we be compelled to fight to preserve freedom, this call to the colors places our country in a far stronger position to meet that challenge too."

HAS THE ARMY BEEN EXPANDED JUST TO MEET THE BERLIN CRISIS?

No. Although world attention has been centered on Berlin for months, there are other major trouble spots--and many more potential trouble spots.

In the words of President Kennedy:

"The immediate threat to free men is in West Berlin. But that isolated outpost is not an isolated problem. The threat is world-wide. Our effort must be equally wide and strong, and not be obsessed by a single manufactured crisis. We face a challenge in Berlin, but there is also, for example, a challenge in Southeast Asia...in our own hemisphere...and wherever else the freedom of human beings is at stake."

Powerful Army forces--fully trained and instantly ready for deployment--are a strong deterrent to Communist aggression. But insufficient Army forces, unable to deploy rapidly, are a weak deterrent at best.

In the summer of 1961, the Army did not have sufficient forces to meet its world-wide commitments. As a result of the call-up of Reserve forces, the increase in the draft, the conversion of three training divisions to combat-ready forces, and the strengthening of our forces in Europe, the U. S. Army today is in a much better position to meet its world-wide obligations.
WHAT HAS THE CALL-UP ACCOMPLISHED?

It has stimulated action by many of our Allies to strengthen their military forces.

It has demonstrated to Communist leaders that we are determined to fight, if necessary, to preserve the rights of free men.

It has helped Berlin to stand intact as an outpost of freedom.

It has increased markedly the ability of the United States to deter the Sino-Soviet bloc from using force to expand its territory and influence.

INSTEAD OF CALLING UP ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE UNITS, WHY NOT EXPAND THE ACTIVE ARMY BY BIGGER DRAFT CALLS?

The Army is being expanded by larger draft calls. However, draftees are untrained men with no military background at all. It will be months before they are trained as individual infantrymen, artillerymen, tankers, radar operators, ordnance mechanics, and other kinds of military specialists. Once they are trained as individual soldiers, more time is required to weld them into effective fighting units.

Army National Guardsmen and Reservists already possess the skills needed by combat and support units. They are assigned to, or have served in, such units. These men do not have to be taught basic military skills. They are ready to perform their missions shortly after joining a unit.

Raw recruits are no answer to Communist aggression today. Trained Reservists and National Guardsmen are.

The situation called for trained individuals and units now. We could not wait months for draftees to be given individual and unit training.

WHAT DETERMINED THE CHOICE OF UNITS ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY?

The first consideration was: What was needed most, should fighting break out, in Europe or elsewhere?
The answer was two divisions--one armored, one infantry--units to support them, and units to replace those sent overseas to reinforce Seventh Army.

The second consideration was: Which units were best qualified?

The answer was found in the state of training of the units, their strength, their readiness, and their geographical location.

Within a few days, some units were performing vital missions as they replaced units sent to Europe.

The two divisions and their supporting units began intensive training and have added much to the capabilities of the Army as a whole.

These forces are tailored to meet specific requirements. Every recalled supporting unit is needed to back up divisions in combat--to enable these divisions to fight for prolonged periods as self-contained forces--to survive in the battle area--to win.

WHY WERE MEN CALLED WHO WERE NOT ASSIGNED TO UNITS?

Very few Army National Guard and Reserve units were at full strength. When called to duty, these units had to be filled with trained individuals as soon as possible. The active Army, which was also being expanded, had no reservoir of trained personnel to fill these units. The only immediately available source of trained personnel was the Ready Reserve Reinforcement Pool.

This required recall of some 40,000 individuals who had not been receiving drill pay, but who did have an unfilled military obligation under the law.

WHY WERE MEN CALLED AS FILLERS WHO HAD ENLISTED FOR ONLY SIX MONTHS ACTIVE DUTY FOR TRAINING UNDER THE RESERVE FORCES ACT (RFA)?

Fair play. After serving 6 months, these men are obligated for an additional period of from 3 to 5½ years in the Ready Reserve.

Highest priority in the call-up was given to those Reservists with the least previous active duty so long as requirements for specific skills and grades could be met.
WHY WERE MEN CALLED AS FILLERS WHO HAD TWO OR MORE YEARS PREVIOUS ACTIVE DUTY?

The six-month RFA reinforcements were not qualified to fill many of the positions in the recalled units which required advanced military skills and experience. Hence, men with two or more years previous active duty had to be called from the reinforcement pool to provide needed skills and experience in time.

SOME MEN IN PAID DRILL STATUS WHO HAD ONLY SIX MONTHS ACTIVE DUTY WERE NOT CALLED--WHY?

Six-month men who are in a paid drill status are members of Reserve Component units. The provisions of current law prohibit the ordering to active duty as individuals those persons who are serving as members of Reserve Component units.

IF THE RESERVE COMPONENT UNITS WERE NEEDED, WHY WERE THEY NOT SENT OVERSEAS?

Some 40% of the Army is already overseas.

Many of the recalled units have replaced active Army units sent to Europe to reinforce the Seventh Army.

The critical need was to establish a powerful strategic reserve in the United States, capable of immediate deployment overseas when and as needed. The Communist threat is world-wide. We must be ready to operate anywhere in the world with whatever forces are required to protect the Free World.

A soldier in a strategic reserve unit in the United States may be needed in combat just as soon as a soldier stationed overseas.

WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR EXEMPTION FROM CALL-UP?

A member of the Army National Guard or Reserve pursuing graduate studies on a full-time basis in a field of primary interest to the Army may be deferred.

A member whose entry on active duty will result in extreme personal or community hardship may also be deferred.
No individual can qualify for deferment on a personal or community hardship basis unless he can establish that his call to active duty will create problems very much more severe than those which will be created by the call to active duty of any other National Guardsman or Reservist.

To keep the Ready Reserve truly ready, personnel in units are screened annually to eliminate those who qualify for exemption from active duty. It is up to the individual to justify his eligibility for exemption.

**WHY HAVE MEN BEEN CALLED WHO WERE ELIGIBLE FOR DEFERMENT OR EXEMPTION?**

Immediately prior to and during the call-up, more than 18,000 men requested delay, deferment, or exemption. More than one-third of these requests were granted.

The call-ups were based on records available to the various Corps headquarters—and these records were based on information supplied by the individual Reservist himself.

In many cases, Reservists did not report critical information about changes in their personal situation which would have caused them to be removed from the ready list. Special action is being taken to review these newly reported cases. But, at the time, the Army had to operate on the basis that Ready Reserves were indeed ready.

In some cases, administrative errors were made. These are being corrected.

**WHY HAVE RECENT DRAFT CALLS BEEN SMALLER THAN THOSE AT THE START OF THE BUILD-UP?**

Initial draft calls were large in order to bring the active Army to its higher authorized strength rapidly. The requirements of this expansion are approaching fulfillment. Also, the enlistment and reenlistment rates have increased. When voluntary enlistments go up, draft calls go down.

**WHY SO MUCH EMPHASIS ON TRAINING?**

The lives of American soldiers, even the fate of our nation, may depend on how well they fight. They must be in the best physical condition in order to withstand the rigors of life on the battlefield. They must
be proficient in the use of their weapons. They must know how to combine fire and maneuver in order to destroy a ruthless and well-trained enemy. The supply of necessities to them must be steady and unfailing. Second best do not survive in battle.

HOW CAN I BEST SERVE?

The Army Chief of Staff, General George H. Decker, recently stated that every soldier has three hard tasks to perform:

"You must discipline yourself to carry out your orders, no matter how difficult they may be. Second, you must learn and perfect your military skills; know your weapons; and know your job. Last, and equally important, train yourself into top physical condition; work wholeheartedly at all the physical training and add more on your own."

Follow this solid advice and you will be able to say truthfully: I served my country to the best of my ability.

ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU--ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY. --President John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address, 1961.
APPENDIX V

The following is a portion of a survey sent to seventy-two Company C Berlin Crisis Veterans. Approximately 65% of the former members responded to this survey.

Circle the answer you feel best expresses your feelings about the question.

1. Were you M. O. S. [Military Occupation Specialty] qualified for your TO&E [Table of Organization and Equipment] position in the unit at the time of mobilization?
   
   Yes 63%   No 27%

2. Did you feel competent in your M. O. S.?
   
   Yes 78%   No 22%

3. At the time President Kennedy mobilized reservists in 1961, did you feel that it was a necessary action in support of the nation's foreign policy?
   
   Yes 62%   No 28%

4. Today, after eight years of reflection, do you feel that the mobilization was instrumental in "...preventing a war"? (Check one)
   
   54% The mobilization was instrumental in preventing armed conflict in Europe.

   46% The mobilization probably had no bearing on the fact that there was no armed conflict in Europe at the time.

5. Considering the complexity and vast size of the mobilization, did you feel that generally the Regular Army personnel endeavored to treat mobilized Reservist and National Guard units on an equal par with RA units?
   
   Yes 54%   No 46%
6. Generally speaking, how would you rate the "fillers" attitude toward Company C's success during the mobilization?

- 0% More positive than guardsmen
- 63% Less positive than guardsmen
- 27% Equal to guardsmen

7. Disregarding the unit's barracks at Fort Benning and the lack of modern signal equipment, how would you rate the performance of Company C during the Berlin Crisis?

Outstanding 51% Good 41% Fair 8% Poor -

8. From your perspective in the battalion, and again considering the physical facilities and equipment shortage, how would you rate the performance of the 156th Signal Battalion during the Berlin Crisis?

Outstanding 19% Good 54% Fair 24% Poor 3%

9. Over eight years have passed since the call-up. Do you find that you still have any business or social contacts with any members or former members of the unit?

Yes 92% No 8%

10. Approximately how many years of service did you have at the time of the 1961 mobilization?

- 4.4% years [average]

11. If you feel that you lost money during the ten months of active duty, approximately how much do you estimate you lost?

- $5,300 [average loss of the 65% who felt they lost money]
Here's to those in the Regular Army
They have such a wonderful plan
They call out the G--D--- Reservists
Whenever the s--t hits the fan

CHORUS

Call Out Call Out
Call Out the G--D--- Reserves
Call Out the G--D--- Reserves

Oh Regulars are happy in peace time
Our freedoms they're proud to preserve
But just let them get into trouble
They call out the G--D--- Reserves

CHORUS

They truly love overseas stations
In Europe they're anxious to serve
But if it's Saigon or Korea
They call out the G--D--- Reserves

CHORUS

Fort Benning is filled with instructors
With Medals and badges galore
They're surely our best combat leaders
Except when the country's at war.

CHORUS

At Campbell they're trained and they're ready
They're tough and their muscles are hard
But if there's gonna be shooting
They call out the National Guard

CHORUS
Fort Bragg is delightfully pleasant
Each soldier has the time of his life
He's glad to take his turn in Korea
If he could just take his girl or his wife

CHORUS

God bless the REGULAR ARMY
It's truly a life to admire
But if there's gonna be fightin
Then now is the time to retire
APPENDIX VII

Remarks of Vice-Mayor C. H. Mullen on behalf of the City Commission and the people of Kalamazoo at the Demobilization Ceremony of Co. C, 156th Signal Battalion held at the Armory, Kalamazoo, Michigan, August 9, 1962.

WELCOME HOME COMPANY C

Officers and men of Company C of the 156th Signal Battalion:

Something over 10 months ago, your Company was the only National Guard Unit in the entire State of Michigan called to active duty to help prevent a war. The fact that Premier Khruschev's "deadline" over Berlin came and went without a major incident is blazing testimony not only to our overall military strength but to the effectiveness of you men and the other 66,000 National Guardsmen as well.

It is difficult for us today to recapture the emotions and tensions of last Fall, when the threat of war was a desperate reality. It seems clear, however, that we were confronted with the gravest crisis since Korea.

At that time as you went on active duty, Mayor Morrison proudly but sadly bade you farewell to face an uncertain future. Today it is my thrilling privilege to welcome you back home to the arms of your family, to your jobs and to your grateful community. You are not professional soldiers but citizen soldiers; you are a cross-section of all of us.

The challenge which you 112 enlisted men, 5 officers and 1 warrant officer faced was an unusual one, because you were not an ordinary National Guard Unit. Your record of one hundred plus years, with its strength, honors and glories through many battles and hardships in several wars had already marked you as an outstanding unit. But you did not falter, nor did you fail your rich heritage.

Every one of our citizens should know of the marvelous record which you made and that you again excelled. Let me mention for them - not for you, because you already know them - just a few of the reasons why "C" Company was without question the top Company in the 156th Signal Battalion:

1. In the field, Company C outscored the other four companies in the all important Army training test with a score of 90.2%
2. You won the Brigade S-1 (Administration plaque) contest, which meant that in garrison Company C was not only the best in the Battalion but the best reserve company in the whole 1st Infantry Brigade.

3. The 156th was singled out by the Post Commandant for appreciation for a fine job done on a two months training mission at Fort Gordon, Georgia.

4. Three of the men in your unit won Army commendation medals and three others won Army certificates.

These are only a few of your achievements, but they mark you well. On the lighter side, while you did not receive individual medals, you should have for enjoying the pleasant Georgia nights of 70° above zero in the field, protected only by summer sleeping bags.

The fires which you built in the fox-holes to keep warm those nights were only a few of the great problems which you surmounted. Each one of you experienced some form of personal hardship. For many it was the second call-up since 1940. Some had to sell your cars, your homes or businesses. Some had to leave their families behind. Incomes were cut drastically in many cases. Quite a few had to drop out of school. There are no small sacrifices when you yourself are involved in them, and I'm sure that there were times when you felt no one remembered you but the bill collectors! But Kalamazoo had not forgotten, and these sacrifices which you made will forever be a tribute to you.

Now you are back. We are so happy for you and Kalamazoo today wears its heart on its sleeve as it bursts with pride. Good luck to each of you as you again take your place among us. Finally, from the City Commission and all of our citizens, to each of you, our profound thanks and commendation for the outstanding manner in which you accomplished this vital mission in the preservation of peace. We Salute You!! And, since these remarks are in the nature of a proclamation, copies are available for each of you.

C. H. MULLEN, Vice-Mayor
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