

Wing and Group Commanders:

FOREST PATROL-- Conferences were held this week between CAP headquarters staff and representatives of Federal agencies interested in the protection of forest areas. Considerable interest was expressed in the potential service of the Patrol. Already some of the units have made plans for cooperation with State forestry departments and some have undertaken special training and assembly of equipment.

In any missions which may be taken along these lines, it is planned that the Patrol will work closely with State authorities as well as with Federal agencies such as the Forest Service and the National Park Service. During the war, it is feared that sabotage efforts in the timber areas may become a problem in the dry seasons. Major fires, if not at once checked, call for the temporary mobilization of large numbers of men whose work on other wartime duties would be interrupted.

Within the forest areas are power plants, pipe lines, and other strategic facilities which must be protected against fire. By constant vigilance from the air in the danger areas, fires may be detected at once. Ground forces can be summoned or men and supplies can be dropped by parachute for prompt action before the fires have a chance to take hold.

UNIFORMS--It is realized that CAP units are anxious to get a clear-cut answer as to uniforms so they can turn out in smart military array for drills and exercises. The major problem has been the blouses which are the most expensive item. Now that warm weather is coming on, blouses will not be important since the units will line up in shirts and can wear leather jackets when they go aloft. The items authorized in GM-9, Feb. 13, and GM-18, April 3, call for khaki shirts with shoulder straps and khaki trousers. The members can wear regulation Army garments listed in these directives, with CAP rather than Army insignia, buttons, and braid so that CAP members cannot be mistaken for Army officers.

DISASTER RELIEF--When the recent cyclone struck Lacon, Ill., the Civil Air Patrol immediately volunteered its services. The Illinois Wing called the American Legion, Red Cross, and Physicians Exchange offering to fly medical personnel and supplies to the scene of the disaster. Entrances to the city were blocked by debris so that quick aid was a job for airmen. Fortunately the main street was not damaged so that sources of first aid, such as drug stores and doctors' offices were functioning. But a supply of sulfanilamide and sutures was needed and the Patrol rushed it through.

According to a report from Harold S. Land, Executive Officer of the Wing, plans are being made to keep Red Cross supplies on hand to drop by parachute in event of another disaster in Central Illinois.

The Georgia Wing also has set up a disaster relief squad, according to Commander Winship Nunnally. It will be composed of two general surgeons, one orthopedic surgeon, and one physician together with a number of trained nurses. The nurses are being given special training and are selected for their fitness to treat burns, shock, and the kind of wounds which result from bombing. They are being trained to give blood transfusions.

CAP MESSAGES FLOWN BY PIGEONS--The Alabama Wing of the Civil Air Patrol has conducted a highly successful test of the use of carrier pigeons to bring back messages from CAP planes on scouting missions. Here is the story as told by Miles Denham in the Birmingham AGE-HERALD:

"Report immediately for undisclosed mission."

"That terse order telephoned at 3 a.m. Sunday routed 35 members of Squadron 461-2, Civil Air Patrol, out of bed and sent them on their first flight training mission as an air patrol unit.

"Members called from their homes in various parts of the city assembled at operations headquarters at Central Park Airport and received instructions to locate an unidentified plane reported to be based and operating in a stated area. Three flights were dispatched on the mission.

"Less than two hours later, Cathryn Stamp, observer for Flight Two and the only girl in the squadron, spotted the craft concealed in a small field and partly concealed by a tarpaulin.

"And 35 minutes after the discovery, 'Big Shot', a large blue male carrier pigeon, fluttered into communications headquarters atop the Birmingham Age-Herald-News Building with news of the finding. 'Big Shot', who is one of the Age-Herald-News prize pigeons trained by Ray Norman, had a new experience. He was released from an airplane more than 1,000 feet in the air with news of the discovery. He performed like a veteran, flying an unerring course to his home loft and covering 30 miles in approximately 35 minutes

"From communications headquarters, word of the discovery was telephoned to the operations base and three more planes were dispatched to investigate and hold the suspicious plane for proper authorities."

It turned out that the plane belonged to Squadron Commander G. I. Alley, Jr., who had concealed it for purposes of the mission. But when the members turned out, they didn't know whether it was a real or practice assignment.

Several other birds were used in the exercise. For years the newspaper has used them to fly news and pictures. By the slowing down of a plane to a stall, they can be released in the air, with due caution to prevent their being struck by struts or tail assembly. RAF bombers take pigeons along as a matter of regular routine. There may be many circumstances in future CAP missions where radios must be silent and carrier pigeons can be of crucial importance.

On the same day, the Birmingham Squadron located a theoretical company of soldiers. Messages from the ground, held aloft on two poles, were picked up by aircraft by use of a training hook.

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICER-- Lieut. Kendall K. Hoyt is now on duty at Cap Headquarters as Intelligence Officer. On reinstatement to his Army reserve status, he has been ordered to active duty as an officer of the Army Air Forces assigned here. For the past several weeks he has been serving with CAP on a volunteer basis. In civilian life, Lieut. Hoyt was Manager of the National Aeronautic Association. When the original OCD committee was set up last summer to draft plans for the organization of the Civil Air Patrol, he served as secretary of the first meeting of the committee and campaigned for months through the N A A Newsletter for the formation of state Civil Air Defense units which gave many areas a head start in mobilizing units later merged with the CAP. Lieut. Hoyt has recently prepared a directive for the guidance of CAP unit Intelligence Officers.