

RETURN TO W.C.D. SHOWING ACTION

WAR COLLEGE DIVISION
8750-46
AG 475.1WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTONWCD
F Q C G1 Dec.
OFFICE CHIEF OF STAFF
WAR COLLEGE DIVISION

November 1, 1917.

8750-46
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WAR DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF:

Subject: Field Artillery Materiel.

1. Herewith is a letter (AG 475.1) dated September 13, 1917, from the commanding general, 76th Division, requesting that if practicable, arrangements be made whereby some of the old type field artillery materiel on hand at certain coast defenses be utilized temporarily for instruction purposes at Camp Devens, Ayer, Massachusetts.

2. The Chief of Coast Artillery in his 2d Indorsement, dated October 6, 1917, disapproved of the withdrawal of these guns from the coast defenses for instruction purposes of the National Army.

The Chief of Ordnance, in his 4th Indorsement, dated October 12, 1917, invites attention to a proposed plan of distributing 3.2-inch guns, whereby but 84 of the 304 3.2-inch guns on hand in the various coast defenses would be required.

The Chief of Coast Artillery, in his 6th Indorsement, dated October 23, 1917, approves of the withdrawal of 84 3.2-inch guns from certain stated coast defenses for temporary use, for instruction purposes, with the National Army Divisions.

3. The present approved project for the distribution of field artillery materiel for training purposes (WCD 8750-37; AG 475.1, October 1, 1917), provides for the supply to each National Army division of four 3-inch guns (excepting 2 divisions to which eight 3-inch guns are assigned) and this distribution has recently been completed.

The project referred to also contemplates that "all organizations of the National Guard not now equipped, and of the National Army, not designated for overseas duty within two months, will be equipped on the basis of one gun per battery as a minimum, as soon as materiel therefor becomes available."

In case of the approval of the plan herein recommended, it will be practicable to double, and, in some cases, to triple, the amount of the materiel now supplied to the National Army divisions. In no case, however, will the guns available exceed in number 2/3 gun per battery.

4. Information received from various sources indicates that the instruction of the National Army Field Artillery brigades is being conducted under the most disadvantageous conditions due to the lack of materiel suitable for instruction purposes.

The impracticability of instructing the personnel or of training the animals of these brigades with less than 1 gun per battery available for this purpose is evident, and the necessity of providing more materiel for this purpose, at the earliest date possible, is urgent.

5. Information received from the Ordnance Department indicates that the delivery of new 75 mm. guns now under manufacture in this country, cannot be expected to begin until next spring. Field artillery materiel required for instruction purposes for some months must therefore be secured from other sources.

6. Information secured from the Supply Division of the Ordnance Department (Captain Robbins) indicates that there are on hand at arsenals in the United States approximately two hundred 3-inch caissons, and three hundred limbers, which can be used with 3.2-inch guns for instruction purposes, especially in connection with the training of the horses and the drivers.

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7. By distributing the 84 3.2-inch guns above referred to, as follows:

4 to each of 11 of the 16 National Army divisions,
8 to each of 5 of the 16 National Army divisions,
a total of 12 guns will become available to each of 7 of these divisions, and a total of 8 will become available to each of the remaining 9 divisions. In each case the gun should be supplied with a caisson, and with the gun and the caisson limbers.

8. In connection with the general subject of the securing, at an early date, of additional field artillery materiel for instruction purposes in this country, there is suggested the feasibility of securing from the French Government a number of 75 mm. guns with limbers and caissons, if practicable, which may be worn to such an extent as to render inadvisable their use in actual service but which may be in entirely serviceable condition for instruction purposes.

From inquiry at the office of the Chief of the Embarkation Service (Major Hines) it appears that the shipment of this materiel to this country would result in no inconvenience or delay to that service, but that it would be desirable in order to provide, in part, the ballast required for the transports on their return trips.

9. If approximately 132 of these guns and 64 155 mm. howitzers or guns could be secured, it would enable a total of 18 3.2 in., 3 in., or 75 mm. guns and of 4 155 mm. guns or howitzers per brigade to be placed available for instruction purposes at each of the National Army cantonments.

Other requirements of instruction would probably bring the total number of the 75 mm. guns and of the 155 mm. guns or howitzers desired up to at least 150 and 100, respectively, and it is believed to be desirable that steps be taken to investigate the practicability of securing this materiel from the French Government.

10. Action is recommended as indicated in the memorandum for The Adjutant General of the Army herewith.

11. The Chief of Ordnance (Captain Robbins) has been consulted and concurs.

P D LOCHRIDGE

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egm

Colonel, General Staff,
Acting Chief of War College Division.

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 WCD 8750-46
 AG 475.1

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WAR DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE ARMY:

Subject: Field Artillery materiel.

I. The Secretary of War directs that this communication (AG 475.1), dated September 13, 1917, be returned to the Chief of Ordnance, by endorsement expressed substantially as follows:

1. The temporary withdrawal is authorized of eighty-four 3.2-inch field guns from coast defenses for instruction purposes with the National Army divisions as follows:

From the coast defenses of		
" " "	" Boston	4
" " "	" Narragansett Bay	8
" " "	" Long Island Sound	6
" " "	" Delaware	4
" " "	" Potomac	3
" " "	" Baltimore	8
" " "	" Key West	9
" " "	" Savannah	4
" " "	" Pensacola	4
" " "	" Mobile	4
" " "	" New Orleans	4
" " "	" San Francisco	6
" " "	" Columbia	6
" " "	" Puget Sound	8
	Total	84

2. You will take steps to effect the distribution of these guns, together with the necessary caissons and limbers on hand, and to be issued from arsenals among the 16 National Army divisions.

The necessary harness will be issued as soon as may be practicable without interfering with the equipment of organizations ordered overseas.

This distribution should be made on the basis of 8 guns each to 5 of the divisions now provided with 4 guns each, and of 4 guns each to the remaining 11 divisions.

3. In view of the extreme shortage of materiel available for instruction purposes in this country, you will, without delay, investigate and report upon the practicability of securing at an early date from the French Government approximately 150 75mm. guns and approximately 100 155mm. guns or howitzers unfit for field service but in such condition as to be serviceable for instruction purposes.

II. The Secretary of War further directs that a copy of this action be furnished the Chief of Coast Artillery.

JOHN BIDDLE

mlb

*Major General,
 Acting Chief of Staff*

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