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'It's the separation that I dread... We've never been apart'

Call-up may be hardest on the wives

Here's how three young Hawaii mothers will spend Mother's Day tomorrow:

In Nuanuu Valley, Mrs. Frances Orian will finish sewing sergeant chevrons on her husband's Army uniforms. ("He got promoted just before this happened.")

In Hilo, Mrs. Georgeanna Diego will start moving out of her apartment in Hilo to the home of her husband's parents. ("I wouldn't want to live here alone, with the baby... and the landlord wanted to raise the rent.")

And in Halawa Heights, Mrs. Sonia Ching will leave baby Albert with a sitter and go out to dinner with her husband. ("After he leaves, I'd go back to work... but I'm expecting another baby.")

And the next day all three will be new Army wives. Their husbands are members of the 29th Brigade of the National Guard, ordered to report to Schofield Barracks on Monday to begin active duty.

One of the three soldiers said he expects the unit to go to Vietnam. One said that he honestly hopes it will go there. And one will be separated from his family whether it goes or not.

None of the men is bitter about being called up—but the wives aren't very happy about it.

"They were talking peace, and then this comes," said Mrs. Ching.

"I don't want him to go," said Mrs. Orian.

"It's the separation that I dread," said Mrs. Diego.

"We've never been apart since we were married."

'Had feeling we'd go'

Sgt. Michael Orian, a Honolulu policeman, sat behind the wheel of his unmarked patrol car and talked about the call-up. (He had just finished filling out reports on a little girl—she looked about 12—he had found driving a stolen car.)

"I had the feeling we'd go," he said. "I figure, relax. Enjoy it. Don't fight it. It's better that way."

Mike, a Wahaiwa boy who went to Kahuku High, joined the Guard seven years ago, and just made sergeant with the 497th Artillery. "It's a field job," he said. "I like that. I sort of like Army life, too."

And he likes uniforms, as you can tell from the sharply creased look of his police blues. "Since I was a little guy, police fascinated me," he said. "I started as an undercover man for the vice squad. That was four years ago. Since then, I've walked a beat, worked in dispatch and on the narcotics detail. Now I'm in the motorized division."

Mike said he and his family will not suffer too much financially, "and I get two pay increments automatically, if we stay the full two years. I hope we do two years. We've put in a lot of work, training, and I'd hate to see it all go to waste."

"This is a chance for the Guard to show its colors," Will the brigade go to Vietnam? "I hope so," Mike said. He said he has one brother, a civilian airline worker, in Vietnam now, and another in the Army in Germany. "And my wife has a brother and a cousin in Vietnam."

Mrs. Orian propped up baby Melinda, three months old, and talked over the noise of the television set in the Orian apartment. "They're showing 'Rebecca,'" she said.

"I've seen it about four times already. And I read the book, too."

She is from Des Moines, Iowa, and came to Hawaii on a vacation, and met Mike. Those were the days when he was doing undercover police work—"very interesting times"—and she learned that Mike "always keeps his cool."

"We thought since November or December that something was up with the Guard," she said. "So it came as more of a shock than a surprise. I don't think anyone can say they were pleasantly surprised."

Mike made sergeant only a few days ago, and Frances has been busy sewing the new stripes on his uniforms. She will finish the job by Mother's Day.

Could have stayed behind

In Hilo, Sgt. Nemesio Diego sat on the polished floor of his apartment over a garage on Wainaku Avenue, while baby Namey, nine months old, squirmed in his arms, and said:

"If you've got to go, you've got to go."

The odd thing is that the sergeant didn't really have to go. His six-year hitch in the Guard is up next Wednesday, and he could have stayed behind. He decided to go anyway.

"I would have to be on stand-by for two years, anyway," he said, "and if I stayed home and got called up later I wouldn't be with the boys I know. So I might as well stick it out with my pals."

Nemesio also is newly promoted, to leader of the weapons squad of a platoon in Co. B, 299th Infantry.

The sergeant and his wife will store their furniture—furniture they started saving money for when they were still seniors together at Hilo High—while Nemesio is away on Oahu.

"We went together for three years before we got married," said Georgeanna. "I'll move in with my husband's family. I'll try to save some money, and when Nemesio gets home, we should at least be able to buy a lot for our own home."

Diego said he will actually collect more money on active duty (something on the order of \$395 a month, counting allowances) than he is taking home now as a member of the ground crew in the harvesting department of Mauna Kea Sugar Co.

"We don't owe anything," he said, "except on our 1962 Datsun, and that will be paid off in September."

The sergeant began pulling on his shiny military boots so he and his wife could go outside to pose for photographs. "I don't know how often I'll be able to get home," he said. "I don't know what the pass policy will be, but I'll get home as often as I can."

"I can fly military fare for \$21 round trip from Oahu, and I might get a free military ride once in a while. I've got to get home and see little Namey. I'm afraid he won't know me if I stay away too long."

Will be financial blow

Spec. 4 Ching and his wife played with their boy, Albert, eight months, on the living room rug of her aunt's house on Halawa Heights. From the window, they have a magnificent view of Pearl Harbor and its battleship row.

"We've held off buying our own house," said Allen. "I've just got going good with Aloha Airlines. I was thinking about zoology for a while, but I started getting promoted at Aloha, and when I got on the sales force, I decided to forget zoology."



POLICEMAN AND FAMILY—Honolulu Police Sgt. Michael Orian at the wheel of his patrol car, while at home his wife, Frances, sews on his Army sergeant's chevrons. That's daughter Melinda, 3 months, in the foreground.



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FAMILY GROUP—Nemesio and Georgeanna Diego of Hilo with their energetic son, 9-month-old Nemesio Jr. on the steps of their apartment in Hilo.

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Ching cleaned up his desk at Aloha last week and had a farewell party. He's been at home since, tying up odds and ends.

"This is going to be a real financial blow," he said. "About two-thirds of my income."

He shrugged. "Well, I just have to go. You can't buck the Army."

He took two years of ROTC at both St. Louis High and the University of Hawaii, "but only because it was compulsory. I joined the Guard in January, 1966. I'm in personnel with an artillery support battalion."

"I knew when I joined the 29th that it was a select force, and there was a possibility of a call-up, but I figured it was better than the draft. I just never worried about it."

"It happened awful fast," said Mrs. Ching, who went to Farrington and Honolulu Business College, and worked as a secretary before her marriage.

The wives will wait

And what will the wives do while their husbands are away?

"I'll keep my job at the Sure Save Supermarket," said Mrs. Diego, "and help get the car paid off. Otherwise, I'll just sit and wait."

"I'd like to move to Honolulu, but we can't be sure where the boys are going. And Honolulu is pretty expensive."

"I'll switch to hamburger," said Mrs. Orian. "And sit tight. I won't be going back to Des Moines. That is a nice place to be from . . . not going to."

"I'd go back to work," said Mrs. Ching, "but I'm expecting the baby in a few months. I'll just sit . . . and wait."



POLICEMAN AND FAMILY—Honolulu Police Sgt. Michael Orian at the wheel of his patrol car, while at home his wife, Frances, sews on his Army sergeant's chevrons. That's daughter Melinda, 3 months, in the foreground.



YOUNG AUTO FAN—Allen and Sonia Ching take note of the fact that 8-month-old son Albert has developed an early taste for automobiles.

Mainlanders to augment Isle units

The more than 3,000 Hawaii National Guardsmen and Army Reservists who will be joined later by over 1,000 soldiers from the Mainland. The Mainland troops will fill gaps in the ranks of the 29th Brigade at Schofield Barracks.

Oahu is providing the bulk of the guardsmen and reservists for the call-up, go on active duty Monday from Kauai; and 754 from the Big Island. These figures are tentative. Some men may be emptied of get delays. About 400 reservists will come from the Big Island. Forty-five guardsmen are expected to go on active duty Monday from Molokai; 248 from Maui; 146 land men, he said. The National Guardsmen and the 100th Battalion of the 442nd Infantry will muster at Ft. DeRussy and parade on Kuroda Field at 8:30 a.m. Monday. Then they will go by trucks to their quarters at Schofield.