Historical Context

This document is a WD AGO Form 53-55, officially titled "Enlisted Record and Report of Separation - Honorable Discharge." It was issued by the United States War Department to enlisted personnel upon their honorable discharge from the U.S. Army during and immediately following World War II.

This specific record details the military career of Pete Mihalich, providing a comprehensive overview of his service, including his induction, combat deployments, medical immunizations, pay, and decorations.

Historical Context & Terminology:

- **AUS (Army of the United States):** Refers to the conscripted force of the U.S. Army during WWII, distinct from the Regular Army.
- **PTO:** Pacific Theater of Operations.
- **ASR Score (Advanced Service Rating):** A point system instituted by the U.S. Army at the end of WWII to determine the priority for demobilization. Points were awarded for months of service, overseas service, combat awards, and dependents. Pete's score of 90 on September 2, 1945, made him eligible for discharge.
- **Lapel Button Issued:** Refers to the Honorable Service Lapel Button (often called the "Ruptured Duck"), given to veterans to wear on civilian clothes to signify their honorable service.

Details Mentioned

Principal Individual:

- **Name:** Pete Mihalich
- **Role in Document:** Discharged Veteran (Subject of Document)
- **Biographical Details:**
  - **Birth:** May 8, 1914, in Livingston, Illinois.
  - **Residence:** 25 W Penning, Wood River, Illinois (at the time of entry and separation).
  - **Physical Description:** Brown eyes, brown hair, 5'10" tall, 161 lbs.
  - **Demographics:** White, single, U.S. citizen, with 0 dependents.
  - **Civilian Occupation:** Maintenance Man Factory.
  - **Education:** 8 years of grammar school.
  - **Military Service:** Inducted and entered active service on June 18, 1941, in East St. Louis, Illinois. Served as a Heavy Machine Gunner (MOS 605) in Company D, 1st Infantry Regiment. Highest grade held was Private First Class (PFC).

- **Combat History:** Fought in the New Guinea and Luzon campaigns. Wounded in action in Luzon on February 24, 1945.
- **Decorations:** American Defense Service Ribbon, American Theater Ribbon, Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon with 2 Bronze Battle Stars and Bronze Service Arrowhead, Philippine Liberation Ribbon with 1 Bronze Battle Star, 4 Overseas Service Bars, 1 Service Stripe, Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and the Purple Heart Medal.
- **Separation:** Honorably discharged on November 30, 1945, at the Separation Center, Fort Sheridan, Illinois.

Associated Individuals:

- **Name:** Leland E. Rice
- **Role in Document:** Disbursing Officer
- **Title:** Captain, Finance Department (Capt FD)
- **Name:** E. K. Grinager
- **Role in Document:** Personnel Officer
- **Title:** 2nd Lieutenant, Infantry (2nd LT INF)

Key Findings

- Pete Mihalich was born in 1914 in Livingston, Illinois, and worked as a factory maintenance man before the war.
- He was inducted into the U.S. Army in June 1941 and served as a Heavy Machine Gunner in the 1st Infantry Regiment.
- He saw significant combat in the Pacific Theater, specifically in New Guinea and Luzon, and was wounded in action in Luzon on February 24, 1945.
- For his service and injuries, he was awarded multiple decorations, including the Purple Heart.
- He was honorably discharged in November 1945 as part of the post-WWII demobilization effort.