
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

**Series 2: “ You have nothing to fear but fear itself:” FDR
and the New Deal**

File No. 1375

1941 July 21

**Message to Congress re
Extension of Selective Service Act**

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

7/21/41

Attached was used
by the President when
he made the radio
records for the broadcast
of his message to the
Congress today

J.F.

THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS BEFORE QUOTING THE
MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS FOR RECORDING

Because I feel that the Message sent to the Congress
today should be made available to as many of our citizens
as possible, I am reading the Message myself for ~~the~~ *the information*
~~benefit of~~ ^{of} the people of America:

" (QUOTE MESSAGE) "

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Last year the Congress of the United States recognizing the gravity of the world situation held that common prudence required that American defense, at that time relatively very weak, be strengthened in its two aspects. The first called for the production of munitions of all kinds. The second called for the training and service of personnel. The Selective Training and Service Act authorized the annual induction into military service of a maximum of 900,000 men for this training and service, of whom 600,000 are now in the army. The Congress also authorized the induction into service of the National Guard, the Reserve officers, and other reserve components of the Army of the United States.

In the absence of further action by the Congress, all of those involved must be released from active service on the expiration of twelve months. This means that beginning this Autumn about two-thirds of the Army of the United States will begin a demobilization.

The action taken last year was appropriate to the international situation at that time. It took into consideration the small size and the undeveloped state of our armed forces. The National Guard, which then formed the bulk of these forces, had to be seasoned; its technical training

and general efficiency greatly improved. The ranks of the National Guard and the Regular Army had to be brought to full strength; and, in addition, the army required for its tremendous expansion the services of approximately 50,000 reserve officers.

In effect, two steps were taken for the security of the nation. First, the Selective Service Act initiated annual military training as a prime duty of citizenship. Second, the organization and training of field armies was begun -- training in team-work -- company by company, battalion by battalion, regiment by regiment, and division by division. The objective was to have ready at short notice an organized and integrated personnel of over 1,000,000 men.

I need scarcely emphasize the fact that if and when an organized and integrated company, battalion, regiment or division is compelled to send two-thirds of its members home, those who return to civil life, if called to the colors later on, would have to go through a new period of organization and integration before the new unit to which they were assigned could be depended on for service. The risks and the weaknesses caused by dissolving a trained army in times of national peril were pointed out by George Washington over and over again in his Messages to the Continental Congress.

It is, therefore, obvious that if two-thirds of our present army return to civilian life, it will be almost a year before the effective army strength again reaches one million men.

Today it is imperative that I should officially report to the Congress what the Congress undoubtedly knows: that the international situation is not less grave but is far more grave than it was a year ago. It is so grave, in my opinion, and in the opinion of all who are conversant with the facts, that the army should be maintained in effective strength and without diminution of its effective numbers in a complete state of readiness. Small as it is in comparison with other armies, it should not suffer any form of disorganization or disintegration.

Therefore, we would be taking a grave national risk unless the Congress were to make it possible for us to maintain our present full effective strength and during the coming year give training to as many additional Americans as we can, when immediate readiness for service becomes more and more a vital precautionary measure, the elimination of approximately two-thirds of our trained soldiers, and about three-fourths of the total officer personnel, would be a tragic error.

Occasional individuals, basing their opinions on unsupported evidence or on no evidence at all, may with honest intent assert that the United States need fear no attack on its own territory or on the other nations of this Hemisphere by aggressors from without.

Nevertheless, it is the well-nigh unanimous opinion of those who are daily cognizant, as military and naval officers and as government servants in the field of international relations, that schemes and plans of aggressor nations against American security are so evident that the United States and the rest of the Americas are definitely imperiled in their national interests. That is why reluctantly, and only after a careful weighing of all facts and all events, I recently proclaimed that an unlimited national emergency exists.

It is not surprising that millions of patriotic Americans find it difficult in the pursuit of their daily occupations and in the normal lives of their families to give constant thought to the implications of happenings many thousands of miles away. It is hard for most of us to bring such events into focus with our own readily accepted and normal democratic ways of living.

That is why I must refer again to the sequence of conquests — German conquests or attacks — which have continued uninterruptedly throughout several years — all the way from the coup against Austria to the present campaign against Russia.

Every move up and down and across Europe, and into Asia, and into Africa has been conducted according to a time schedule, utilizing in every case an overwhelming superiority

not only in material but in trained men as well. Each campaign has been based on a preliminary assurance of safety or non-aggression to the intended victim. Each campaign has been based on dissuading fear and gaining time until the German Government was fully ready to throw treaties and pacts to the winds and simultaneously to launch an attack in overwhelming force.

Each elimination of a victim has brought the issue of Nazi domination closer to this hemisphere, while month by month their intrigues of propaganda and conspiracy have sought to weaken every link in the community of interests that should bind the Americas into a great western family.

I do not think that any branch of the Government of the United States will be willing to let America risk the fate which has destroyed the independence of other nations.

We Americans cannot afford to speculate with the security of America.

Furthermore, we have a definite responsibility to every country in the Western Hemisphere -- to aid each and every one of them against attack from without the Hemisphere. I do not believe that any branch of the American Government would desire today to abrogate our Pan-American pacts or to discard a policy which we have maintained for nearly a century and a quarter.

If we do not reverse this historic policy, then it is our duty to maintain it. To weaken our army at this particular time would be, in my judgment, an act of bad faith toward our neighbors.

I realize that personal sacrifices are involved in extending the period of service for selectees, the National Guard and other reserve components of our army. I believe that provision now can and will be made in such an extension to relieve individual cases of undue hardship, and also to relieve older men who should, in justice, be allowed to resume their civilian occupations as quickly as their services can be spared.

Nevertheless, I am confident that the men now in the ranks of the Army realize far better than does the general public, the disastrous effect which would result from permitting the present army, only now approaching an acceptable state of efficiency, to melt away and set us back at least six months while new units are being reconstituted from the bottom up and from the top down with new drafts of officers and men.

The legislation of last year provided definitely that if national danger later existed, the one year period of training could be extended by action of the Congress.

I do not believe that the danger to American safety is less than it was one year ago when, so far as the army was concerned, the United States was in a woefully weak position. I do not believe that the danger to our national safety is only about the same as it was a year ago.

I do believe - I know - that the danger today is infinitely greater. I do believe - I know - that in all truth we are in the midst of a national emergency.

I am not asking the Congress for specific language in a specific bill. But I can say frankly that I hope the Congress will acknowledge this national emergency either for a specific period or until revocation by the Congress or the President.

The objective is, of course, the all important issue. It is to authorize continuance in service of selectees, National Guard and reserve components of the army and the retired personnel of the Regular Army, with the understanding that, should the exigencies of the situation permit, early return to civil pursuits will follow in due course.

Because of the swiftness of modern events, I think the Congress should also remove the restrictions in regard to the numbers of selectees inducted each year for training and service.

And in order to reduce individual hardships to a minimum, I urge that the Congress provide that employers be asked to continue to keep jobs open for their employees who have been held in the army. For my part I will direct ~~the~~ the return to civil life of officers and men whose retention on active duty would impose undue hardship and that selectees and enlisted men of the National Guard, who have reached the age of twenty-eight, be transferred from active service to a reserve component as rapidly as possible.

At great cost to the nation, and at increasing dislocation of private buying, we are accepting the material burdens necessary for our security. In such matters we accept the fact of a crisis in our history.

It is true that in modern war men without machines are of little value. It is equally true that machines without men are of no value at all. Let us consolidate the whole of our defense -- the whole of our preparation against attack by those enemies of democracy who are the enemies of all that we hold dear.

One final word: time counts. Within two months disintegration, which would follow failure to take Congressional action, will commence in the armies of the United States.

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Time counts. The responsibility rests solely with the
Congress.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
July 21, 1941.

FIRST DRAFT

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Last year the Congress of the United States recognized^{ing} the gravity of the world situation ^{held} ~~and~~ that common prudence required that American defense, at that time relatively very weak, be strengthened in its two aspects. The first ~~related~~ ^{called} ~~for~~ the production of munitions of all kinds. The second ^{called} ~~related to~~ the training and service of personnel. The Selective Training and Service Act authorized the annual induction into military service of 900,000 men for this training and service.

The Congress also authorized the induction into service of the National Guard, the Reserve officers, and other reserve components of the Army of the United States.

^{In the absence of further action by the Congress}
~~Under the various provisions of these measures,~~ all of those involved must be released from active service on the expiration of twelve months. This means that beginning this Autumn about two-thirds of the Army of the United States will ^{demobilization} ~~begin a homeward march.~~ ^a

The action taken last year was appropriate to the international situation at that time, ~~and~~ ^{It} took into consideration the ^{small} ~~size~~ and the undeveloped state of our armed forces. The National Guard, which then formed the bulk of these forces, had to be seasoned; its technical training and

general efficiency greatly improved. The ranks of the National Guard and the Regular Army had to be brought to full strength; and, in addition, the army required for its tremendous expansion the services of approximately 50,000 reserve officers.

In effect, two steps were taken for the security of the nation. First, the Selective Service Act initiated ~~the~~ annual military training as a ^{primary} duty of citizenship. Second, ~~was~~ a trained army was created -- trained in teamwork -- company by company, battalion by battalion, regiment by regiment, and division by division. The objective was to have ready at short notice organized and integrated personnel of over one million men.

I need scarcely emphasize the fact that if and when an organized and integrated company, battalion, regiment or division is compelled to send two-thirds of its members home, those who return to civil life would, if called to the colors later on, have to go through ^{a new} ~~another~~ period of organization and integration before the new unit to which they were assigned could be called efficient and ready for service. (A)

It is, therefore, obvious that if two-thirds of our

present army return^{again} to civilian life, it will take another year before the effective army strength ^{again} reaches one million men, ~~again~~.

Today it is imperative that I should officially report to the Congress what the Congress undoubtedly knows: ^{is} That the international situation is not less grave but ^A far more grave than it was a year ago. It is so grave, in my opinion, and in the opinion of all who are conversant with the facts, that the army should be maintained in effective strength and without diminution of its effective numbers, ~~and its effective training~~ in a complete state of readiness. ~~and~~ Therefore, *it should not* ~~without having to~~ suffer any form of disorganization or disintegration. Compared with the effective armies of several other nations, our army is far smaller than theirs.

Therefore, we would be taking a grave national risk unless the Congress were to make it possible for us to maintain our present full effective strength and during the coming year give training to at least 900,000 additional Americans. When immediate readiness for service becomes more and more a vital precautionary measure, the elimination of approximately two-thirds of our trained soldiers, and

about three-fourths of the total officer personnel, would be a tragic error.

Occasional individuals, basing their opinions on unsupported evidence or on no evidence at all, may ^{with honest intent} ~~honestly~~ assert that the United States need fear no attack on its own territories ^{by} or on the other nations of this Hemisphere by aggressors from without. ⁴ ~~On the other side,~~ *Nevertheless* it is the well-nigh unanimous opinion of those who are daily cognizant, as military and naval officers and as government servants in the field of international relations, that schemes and plans of aggressor nations against American security are so evident that the United States and the rest of the Americas are *definitely* imperiled in their national interests. That is why reluctantly, and only after a careful weighing of all facts and all events, ~~that~~ I recently proclaimed that a full national emergency exists.

~~It is true that~~ ³ It is not surprising that millions of patriotic Americans find it difficult in the pursuit of their daily occupations and in the normal lives of their families to give constant thought ^{The implications of} to happenings many thousands of miles away. It is hard for most of us to bring such events into focus with our own readily accepted ^{and normal} democratic ways of living.

That is why I must refer again to the sequence of conquests -- German conquests ^{or attacks} -- which have continued uninterrupted throughout several years -- all the way from the coup against Austria to the present campaign against Russia.

Every move up and down and across Europe, and into Asia, and into Africa has been conducted according to a time schedule, utilizing in every case an overwhelming superiority not only in materiel but in ^{trained} men as well. Each campaign has been based on a preliminary assurance of safety or non-aggression to the ^{intended} ~~assured~~ victim. Each campaign has been based on disarming fear and gaining time until the German Government was ^{fully} ready to throw ~~off~~ treaties and pacts to the winds and simultaneously to launch an attack in overwhelming force.

I do not think that any branch of the Government of the United States ^{will be willing to let America} ~~can~~ risk the fate which has destroyed the independence of other nations.

We Americans cannot afford to speculate with the security of America.

Furthermore, we have a responsibility to every country in the Western Hemisphere -- to aid each and every one of them against attack from without the Hemisphere. I do not believe that any branch of the American Government would desire today to abrogate our Pan-American pacts or to discard a ~~responsibility~~ ^{policy} which we have maintained for nearly a century and a quarter.

If we do not reverse ~~our~~ ^{this} historic policy, ^{then} it is ~~then~~ [^] our duty to maintain it. To weaken our army at this particular time would be, in my judgment, an act of bad faith toward our neighbors.

I realize that personal sacrifices are involved in extending the period of service for selectees ^{the National Guard,} and other reserve components of our army. I believe that provision should be made in such an extension to relieve individual cases of undue hardship, and also to relieve older men who should, in justice, be allowed to resume their civilian occupations.

Nevertheless, I am confident that the men now in the ranks of the army realize, even better than does the general public, the disastrous effect which would result from permitting the present army, now approaching an acceptable state of efficiency, to melt away and set us back at least six months while new units are being reconstituted from the bottom up.

and from the top down with new drafts of officers and men.

The legislation of last year provided definitely that if national danger ^{later} ~~then~~ existed, the one year period of training could be extended by action of the Congress.

I do not believe that the danger to American safety is less than it was one year ago when, so far as the army was concerned, the United States was in a woefully weak position.

I do not believe that the danger to our national safety is ^{only} about the same as it was a year ago. ^H I do believe that the danger today is infinitely greater. I do believe that in all truth we are in the midst of a national emergency.

I am not asking the Congress for specific language ^{in a specific bill}

^But I can say frankly that I hope the Congress will acknowledge this national emergency either for a specific period or until revocation by the Congress or the President.

The objective is, of course, ^{the} all important ^{issue} It is to authorize continuance in service of selectees ^{National Guard} and reserve components of the army and the retired personnel of the Regular Army, with the understanding ^{that,} should the exigencies of the situation permit, ~~these~~ early return to civil pursuits will follow in due course. ^H Because of the swiftness of modern events, I think the Congress should also remove the

restrictions in regard to the numbers of selectees inducted each year for training and service. ^① And, in order to reduce individual hardships to a minimum, I suggest:

(a) That employers be asked to continue to keep jobs open for their employees who have gone into the army.

(b) ~~To allow~~ ^{That} the return to civil life of officers and men whose retention on active duty would impose undue hardship ^{be allowed.}

(c) That selectees and enlisted men of the National Guard, who have reached the age of twenty-eight, ~~should~~ be transferred from active service to a reserve component.

At my request the War Department is taking steps to accomplish these purposes today, but if the Congress grants the authority I can direct an even broader application of this policy.

At great cost to the nation, and at increasing dislocation of private buying, we are accepting the material burdens necessary for our security. In such matters we accept the fact of a crisis in our history.

It is true that in modern war men without machines are of little value. It is equally true that machines without men are of no value at all. Let us consolidate the whole of our defense, ^{the whole of our preparation against attack} by ^{those} ~~the~~ enemies of democracy ^{who are} ~~the~~ the enemies of all that we hold dear.

One final word: Time counts. Within two months ~~the~~ ^{would} ~~the~~ disintegration, which ~~would~~ follow ~~the~~ failure to take Congressional action, will commence in the armies of the United States. Time counts. The responsibility rests solely with the Congress.

Second Draft

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Last year the Congress of the United States recognizing the gravity of the world situation held that common prudence required that American defense, at that time relatively very weak, be strengthened in its two aspects. The first called for the production of munitions of all kinds. The second called for the training and service of personnel. The Selective Training and Service Act authorized the annual induction into military service of 900,000 men for this training and service. The Congress also authorized the induction into service of the National Guard, the Reserve officers, and other reserve components of the Army of the United States.

In the absence of further action by the Congress, all of those involved must be released from active service on the expiration of twelve months. This means that beginning this Autumn about two-thirds of the Army of the United States will begin a demobilization.

The action taken last year was appropriate to the international situation at that time. It took into consideration the small size and the undeveloped state of our armed forces. The National Guard, which then formed the bulk of these forces, had to be seasoned; its technical training

and general efficiency greatly improved. The ranks of the National Guard and the Regular Army had to be brought to full strength; and, in addition, the army required for its tremendous expansion the services of approximately 80,000 reserve officers.

In effect, two steps were taken for the security of the nation. First, the Selective Service Act initiated annual military training as a prime duty of citizenship. Second, a trained army was created -- trained in teamwork -- company by company, battalion by battalion, regiment by regiment, and division by division. The objective was to have ready at short notice organized and integrated personnel of over one million men.

I need scarcely emphasize the fact that if and when an organized and integrated company, battalion, regiment or division is compelled to send two-thirds of its members home, those who return to civil life would, if called to the colors later on, have to go through a new period of organization and integration before the new unit to which they were assigned could be called efficient and ready for service. The risks and the weaknesses caused by dissolving a trained army in times of national peril were pointed out by George Washington over and over again in his Messages to the Continental Congress.

It is, therefore, obvious that if two-thirds of our present army return to civilian life, it will take another year before the effective army strength again reaches one million men.

Today it is imperative that I should officially report to the Congress what the Congress undoubtedly knows: that the international situation is not less grave but is far more grave than it was a year ago. It is so grave, in my opinion, and in the opinion of all who are conversant with the facts, that the army should be maintained in effective strength and without diminution of its effective numbers in a complete state of readiness. Therefore, it should not suffer any form of disorganization or disintegration. Compared with the effective armies of several other nations, our army is far smaller than theirs.

Therefore, we would be taking a grave national risk unless the Congress were to make it possible for us to maintain our present full effective strength and during the coming year give training to at least 900,000 additional Americans. When immediate readiness for service becomes more and more a vital precautionary measure, the elimination of approximately two-thirds of our trained soldiers, and about three-fourths of the total officer personnel, would be a tragic error.

Occasional individuals, basing their opinions on unsupported evidence or on no evidence at all, may with honest intent assert that the United States need fear no attack on its own territory or on the other nations of this Hemisphere by aggressors from without.

Nevertheless, it is the well-nigh unanimous opinion of those who are daily cognizant, as military and naval officers and as government servants in the field of international relations, that schemes and plans of aggressor nations against American security are so evident that the United States and the rest of the Americas are definitely imperiled in their national interests. That is why reluctantly, and only after a careful weighing of all facts and all events, I recently proclaimed that a full national emergency exists.

It is not surprising that millions of patriotic Americans find it difficult in the pursuit of their daily occupations and in the normal lives of their families to give constant thought to the implications of happenings many thousands of miles away. It is hard for most of us to bring such events into focus with our own readily accepted and normal democratic ways of living.

That is why I must refer again to the sequence of conquests -- German conquests or attacks -- which have continued uninterruptedly throughout several years -- all the way from the coup against Austria to the present campaign against Russia.

Every move up and down and across Europe, and into Asia, and into Africa has been conducted according to a time schedule, utilizing in every case an overwhelming superiority not only in materiel but in trained men as well. Each campaign has been based on a preliminary assurance of safety or non-aggression to the intended victim. Each campaign has been based on disarming fear and gaining time until the German Government was fully ready to throw treaties and pacts to the winds and simultaneously to launch an attack in overwhelming force.

I do not think that any branch of the Government of the United States will be willing to let America risk the fate which has destroyed the independence of other nations.

We Americans cannot afford to speculate with the security of America.

Furthermore, we have a responsibility to every country in the Western Hemisphere -- to aid each and every one of them against attack from without the Hemisphere. I do not believe that any branch of the American Government would desire today to abrogate our Pan-American pacts or to discard a policy which we have maintained for nearly a century and a quarter.

If we do not reverse this historic policy, then it is our duty to maintain it. To weaken our army at this particular time would be, in my judgment, an act of bad faith toward our neighbors.

I realize that personal sacrifices are involved in extending the period of service for selectees, the National Guard and other reserve components of our army. I believe that provision should be made in such an extension to relieve individual cases of undue hardship, and also to relieve older men who should, in justice, be allowed to resume their civilian occupations.

Nevertheless, I am confident that the men now in the ranks of the army realize, even better than does the general public, the disastrous effect which would result from permitting the present army, now approaching an acceptable state of efficiency, to melt away and set us back at least six months

while new units are being reconstituted from the bottom up and from the top down with new drafts of officers and men.

The legislation of last year provided definitely that if national danger later existed, the one year period of training could be extended by action of the Congress.

I do not believe that the danger to American safety is less than it was one year ago when, so far as the army was concerned, the United States was in a woefully weak position. I do not believe that the danger to our national safety is only about the same as it was a year ago.

I do believe that the danger today is infinitely greater. I do believe that in all truth we are in the midst of a national emergency.

I am not asking the Congress for specific language in a specific bill. But I can say frankly that I hope the Congress will acknowledge this national emergency either for a specific period or until revocation by the Congress or the President.

The objective is, of course, the all important issue. It is to authorize continuance in service of selectees, National Guard and reserve components of the army and the retired personnel of the Regular Army, with the understanding

that, should the exigencies of the situation permit, early return to civil pursuits will follow in due course.

Because of the swiftness of modern events, I think the Congress should also remove the restrictions in regard to the numbers of selectees inducted each year for training and service.

And, in order to reduce individual hardships to a minimum, I suggest: (a) That employers be asked to continue to keep jobs open for their employees who have gone into the army. (b) That the return to civil life of officers and men whose retention on active duty would impose undue hardship be allowed. (c) That selectees and enlisted men of the National Guard, who have reached the age of twenty-eight, be transferred from active service to a reserve component. At my request the War Department is taking steps to accomplish these purposes today, but if the Congress grants the authority I can direct an even broader application of this policy.

At great cost to the nation, and at increasing dislocation of private buying, we are accepting the material burdens necessary for our security. In such matters we accept the fact of a crisis in our history.

It is true that in modern war men without machines are of little value. It is equally true that machines without men are of no value at all. Let us consolidate the whole of our defense -- the whole of our preparation against attack by those enemies of democracy who are the enemies of all that we hold dear.

One final word: time counts. Within two months disintegration, which would follow failure to take Congressional action, will commence in the armies of the United States. Time counts. The responsibility rests solely with the Congress.

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The Congress also authorized the induction into service of the National Guard, the Reserve officers, and other reserve components of the Army of the United States.

Under the various provisions of these measures, all of those involved must be released from active service on the expiration of twelve months. This means that beginning this Autumn about two-thirds of the Army of the United States will begin a homeward march.

The action taken last year was appropriate to the international situation at that time, and it took into consideration the size and the undeveloped state of our army forces. The National Guard, which then formed the bulk of these forces, had to be seasoned; its technical training and

general efficiency greatly improved. The ranks of the National Guard and the Regular Army had to be brought to full strength; and in addition, the army required for its tremendous expansion the services of approximately 80,000 reserve officers.

In effect, two steps were taken for the security of the nation. First, the Selective Service Act initiated the annual military training as a duty of citizenship. Second, ~~the~~ a trained army was created -- trained in teamwork -- company by company, battalion by battalion, regiment by regiment, and division by division. The objective was to have ready at short notice organized and integrated personnel of over one million men.

I need scarcely emphasize the fact that if and when an organized and integrated company, battalion, regiment or division is compelled to send two-thirds of its members home, those who return to civil life would, if called to the colors later on, have to go through another period of organization and integration before the new unit to which they were assigned could be called efficient and ready for service.

It is, therefore, obvious that if two-thirds of our

present army returns to civilian life, it will take another year before the effective army strength reaches one million men again.

Today it is imperative that I should officially report to the Congress what the Congress undoubtedly knows: That the international situation is not less grave but far more grave than it was a year ago. It is so grave, in my opinion, and in the opinion of all who are conversant with the facts, that the army should be maintained in effective strength and without diminution of its effective numbers and its effective training in a complete state of readiness and, therefore, without having to suffer any form of disorganization or disintegration. Compared with the effective armies of several other nations, our army is far smaller than theirs.

Therefore, we would be taking a grave national risk unless the Congress were to make it possible for us to maintain our present full effective strength and during the coming year give training to at least 900,000 additional Americans. When immediate readiness for service becomes more and more a vital precautionary measure, the elimination of approximately two-thirds of our trained soldiers, and

about three-fourths of the total officer personnel would be a tragic error.

Occasional individuals, basing their opinions on unsupported evidence or on no evidence at all, may honestly assert that the United States need fear no attack on its own territories or on the other nations of this Hemisphere by aggressors from without. On the other side, it is the well nigh unanimous opinion of those who are daily cognizant as military and naval officers and as government servants in the field of international relations, that schemes and plans of aggressor nations against American security are so evident that the United States and the rest of the Americas are imperiled in their national interests. That is why reluctantly, and only after a careful weighing of all facts and all events, that I recently proclaimed that a full national emergency exists.

It is true that it is not surprising that millions of patriotic Americans find it difficult in the pursuit of their daily occupations and in the normal lives of their families to give constant thought to happenings many thousands of miles away. It is hard for most of us to bring such events into focus with our own readily accepted democratic ways of living.

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I do not think that any branch of the Government of the United States has to risk the fate which has destroyed the independence of other nations.

We Americans cannot afford to speculate with the security of America.

Furthermore, we have a responsibility to every country in the Western Hemisphere -- to aid each and every one of them against attack from without the Hemisphere. I do not believe that any branch of the American Government would desire today to abrogate our Pan-American pacts or to discard a responsibility which we have maintained for nearly a century and a quarter.

If we do not reverse our historic policy, it is then our duty to maintain it. To weaken our army at this particular time would be, in my judgment, an act of bad faith toward our neighbors.

I realize that personal sacrifices are involved in extending the period of service for selectees and other reserve components of our army. I believe that provision should be made in such an extension to relieve individual cases of undue hardship, and also to relieve older men who should, in justice, be allowed to resume their civilian occupations.

Nevertheless, I am confident that the men now in the ranks of the army realize, even better than does the general public, the disastrous effect which would result from permitting the present army, now approaching an acceptable state of efficiency, to melt away and set us back at least six months while new units are being reconstituted from the bottom up

and from the top down with new drafts of officers and men.

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I do not believe that the danger to American safety is less than it was one year ago when, so far as the army was concerned, the United States was in a woefully weak position. I do not believe that the danger to our national safety is about the same as it was a year ago. I do believe that the danger today is infinitely greater. I do believe that in all truth we are in the midst of a national emergency.

I am not asking the Congress for specific language, but I can say frankly that I hope the Congress will acknowledge this national emergency either for a specific period or until revocation by the Congress or the President.

The objective is, of course, all important. It is to authorize continuance in service of selectees and reserve components of the army and the retired personnel of the Regular Army, with the understanding that, should the exigencies of the situation permit, that early return to civil pursuits will follow in due course. Because of the swiftness of modern events, I think the Congress should also remove the

restrictions in regard to the numbers of selectees inducted each year for training and service. And, in order to reduce individual hardships to a minimum, I suggest:

- (a) That employers be asked to continue to keep jobs open for their employees who have gone into the army.
- (b) To allow the return to civil life of officers and men whose retention on active duty would impose undue hardship.
- (c) That selectees and enlisted men of the National Guard, who have reached the age of twenty-eight, should be transferred from active service to a reserve component.

At my request the War Department is taking steps to accomplish these purposes today, but if the Congress grants the authority I can direct an even broader application of this policy.

At great costs to the nation, and at increasing dislocation of private buying, we are accepting the material burdens necessary for our security. In such matters we accept the fact of a crisis in our history.

It is true that in modern war men without machines are of little value. It is equally true that machines without men are of no value at all. Let us consolidate the whole of our defense, the whole of our preparation against attack by the enemies of democracy, by the enemies of all that we hold dear.

One final word. Time counts. Within two months the disintegration, which will follow a failure to take Congressional action, will commence in the armies of the United States. Time counts. The responsibility rests solely with the Congress.

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Last year the Congress of the United States recognizing the gravity of the world situation held that common prudence required that American defense, at that time relatively very weak, be strengthened in its two aspects. The first called for the production of munitions of all kinds. The second called for the training and service of personnel. The Selective Training and Service Act authorized the annual induction into military service of 900,000 men for this training and service. The Congress also authorized the induction into service of the National Guard, the Reserve officers, and other reserve components of the Army of the United States.

A maximum of 600,000 men are now in the army.

In the absence of further action by the Congress, all of those involved must be released from active service on the expiration of twelve months. This means that beginning this Autumn about two-thirds of the Army of the United States will begin a demobilization.

The action taken last year was appropriate to the international situation at that time. It took into consideration the small size and the undeveloped state of our armed forces. The National Guard, which then formed the bulk of these forces, had to be seasoned; its technical training

and general efficiency greatly improved. The ranks of the National Guard and the Regular Army had to be brought to full strength; and, in addition, the army required for its tremendous expansion the services of approximately 50,000 reserve officers.

In effect, two steps were taken for the security of the nation. First, the Selective Service Act initiated annual military training as a prime duty of citizenship. Second

ff *7* *(A)*
The organization and training of field armies was begun --
trained in team-work -- company by company, battalion by battalion,
regiment by regiment, and division by division. The objective was
to have ready at short notice an organized and integrated personnel
of over 1,000,000 men.

division by division. The objective was to have ready at short
notice organized and integrated personnel of over one million
men.

I need scarcely emphasize the fact that if and when an
organized and integrated company, battalion, regiment or
division is compelled to send two-thirds of its members home,
those who return to civil life ~~would~~, if called to the colors
later on, *would* have to go through a new period of organization and
integration before the new unit to which they were assigned
could be ~~called efficient and ready~~ *dependen on* for service. The risks
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over and over again in his Messages to the Continental Congress.

and general efficiency greatly improved. The ranks of the National Guard and the Regular Army had to be brought to full strength; and, in addition, the army required for its tremendous expansion the services of approximately 50,000 reserve officers.

In effect, two steps were taken for the security of the nation. First, the Selective Service Act initiated annual military training as a prime duty of citizenship. Second, ^(A) ~~the~~ trained army was created -- trained in teamwork -- company by company, battalion by battalion, regiment by regiment, and division by division. The objective was to have ready at short notice organized and integrated personnel of over one million men.

I need scarcely emphasize the fact that if and when an organized and integrated company, battalion, regiment or division is compelled to send two-thirds of its members home, those who return to civil life ~~would~~, if called to the colors later on, ^{hounded} have to go through a new period of organization and integration before the new unit to which they were assigned ^{dependent on} could be ~~called efficient and ready~~ for service. The risks and the weaknesses caused by dissolving a trained army in times of national peril were pointed out by George Washington over and over again in his Messages to the Continental Congress.

It is, therefore, obvious that if two-thirds of our present army return to civilian life, it will ~~take another~~ ^{be almost a} year before the effective army strength again reaches one million men.

Today it is imperative that I should officially report to the Congress what the Congress undoubtedly knows: that the international situation is not less grave but is far more grave than it was a year ago. It is so grave, in my opinion, and in the opinion of all who are conversant with the facts, that the army should be maintained in effective strength and without diminution of its effective numbers in a complete state of readiness. ~~Therefore,~~ ^{small as it is in comparison with other armies} it should not suffer any form of disorganization or disintegration. ~~Compared with the effective armies of several other nations, our army is far smaller than theirs.~~

Therefore, we would be taking a grave national risk unless the Congress were to make it possible for us to maintain our present full effective strength and during the coming year give training to ^{As many} ~~at least 500,000~~ ^{As we plan} additional Americans. When immediate readiness for service becomes more and more a vital precautionary measure, the elimination of approximately two-thirds of our trained soldiers, and about three-fourths of the total officer personnel, would be a tragic error.

Occasional individuals, basing their opinions on unsupported evidence or on no evidence at all, may with honest intent assert that the United States need fear no attack on its own territory or on the other nations of this Hemisphere by aggressors from without.

Nevertheless, it is the well-nigh unanimous opinion of those who are daily cognizant, as military and naval officers and as government servants in the field of international relations, that schemes and plans of aggressor nations against American security are so evident that the United States and the rest of the Americas are definitely imperiled in their national interests. That is why reluctantly, and only after a careful weighing of all facts and all events, I recently proclaimed that ^{an untrusting} ~~a full~~ national emergency exists.

It is not surprising that millions of patriotic Americans find it difficult in the pursuit of their daily occupations and in the normal lives of their families to give constant thought to the implications of happenings many thousands of miles away. It is hard for most of us to bring such events into focus with our own readily accepted and normal democratic ways of living.

That is why I must refer again to the sequence of conquests -- German conquests or attacks -- which have continued uninterruptedly throughout several years -- all the way from the coup against Austria to the present campaign against Russia.

Every move up and down and across Europe, and into Asia, and into Africa has been conducted according to a time schedule, utilizing in every case an overwhelming superiority not only in materiel but in trained men as well. Each campaign has been based on a preliminary assurance of safety or non-aggression to the intended victim. Each campaign has been based on disarming fear and gaining time until the German Government was fully ready to throw treaties and pacts to the winds and simultaneously to launch an attack in overwhelming force. *FRB*

B → Each elimination of a victim has brought the issue of Nazi domination closer to this hemisphere, while month by month their intrigues of propaganda and conspiracy have sought to weaken every link in the community of interests that should bind the Americas into a great western family.

fate which has destroyed the independence of other nations.

We Americans cannot afford to speculate with the security of America.

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I do not think that any branch of the Government of the United States will be willing to let America risk the fate which has destroyed the independence of other nations.

We Americans cannot afford to speculate with the security of America.

definite

Furthermore, we have a responsibility to every country in the Western Hemisphere -- to aid each and every one of them against attack from without the Hemisphere. I do not believe that any branch of the American Government would desire today to abrogate our Pan-American pacts or to discard a policy which we have maintained for nearly a century and a quarter.

If we do not reverse this historic policy, then it is our duty to maintain it. To weaken our army at this particular time would be, in my judgment, an act of bad faith toward our neighbors.

I realize that personal sacrifices are involved in extending the period of service for selectees, the National Guard and other reserve components of our army. I believe that provision ^{you can and will} ~~should~~ be made in such an extension to relieve individual cases of undue hardship, and also to relieve older men who should, in justice, be allowed to resume their civilian occupations *as quickly as their services can be spared*

Nevertheless, I am confident that the men now in the ranks of the army realize, ^{far} ~~more~~ better than does the general public, the disastrous effect which would result from permitting the present army, ^{only} ~~now~~ approaching an acceptable state of efficiency, to melt away and set us back at least six months

while new units are being reconstituted from the bottom up and from the top down with new drafts of officers and men.

The legislation of last year provided definitely that if national danger later existed, the one year period of training could be extended by action of the Congress.

I do not believe that the danger to American safety is less than it was one year ago when, so far as the army was concerned, the United States was in a woefully weak position. I do not believe that the danger to our national safety is only about the same as it was a year ago.

— I think —
I do believe that the danger today is infinitely *1* *— I think —* greater. I do believe that in all truth we are in the midst *1* of a national emergency.

I am not asking the Congress for specific language in a specific bill. But I can say frankly that I hope the Congress will acknowledge this national emergency either for a specific period or until revocation by the Congress or the President.

The objective is, of course, the all important issue. It is to authorize continuance in service of selectees, National Guard and reserve components of the army and the retired personnel of the Regular Army, with the understanding

that, should the exigencies of the situation permit, early return to civil pursuits will follow in due course.

Because of the swiftness of modern events, I think the Congress should also remove the restrictions in regard to the numbers of selectees inducted each year for training and service.

And, in order to reduce individual hardships to a minimum, I ^{propose} ~~suggest~~ ^{that} ~~(a)~~ That employers be asked to continue to keep jobs open for their employees who have ^{been held in} ~~gone into~~ the army. ^{For my part I will direct} ~~(b)~~ ~~the~~ the return to civil life of officers and men whose retention on active duty would impose undue hardship ^{and} ~~be allowed.~~ ^(c) That selectees and enlisted men of the National Guard, who have reached the age of twenty-eight, be transferred from active service to a reserve component, ^{45% possibly impossible} ~~At my~~ ~~request the War Department is taking steps to accomplish~~ ~~these purposes today, but if the Congress grants the authority~~ ~~I can direct an even broader application of this policy.~~

At great cost to the nation, and at increasing dislocation of private buying, we are accepting the material burdens necessary for our security. In such matters we accept the fact of a crisis in our history.

It is true that in modern war men without machines are of little value. It is equally true that machines without men are of no value at all. Let us consolidate the whole of our defense -- the whole of our preparation against attack by those enemies of democracy who are the enemies of all that we hold dear.

One final word: time counts. Within two months disintegration, which would follow failure to take Congressional action, will commence in the armies of the United States. Time counts. The responsibility rests solely with the Congress.

To the Congress of the United States:

Last year the Congress, recognising the gravity of the situation, enacted the Selective Training and Service Act, which authorized the annual induction into military service of 900,000 for a training and service period. The Congress also authorized the induction into service of the National Guard, the Reserve officers, and other reserve components of the Army of the United States. Under the various provisions of these measures, those involved must be released from active service upon the expiration of a period of twelve months, and their employment is limited to the Western Hemisphere and to our overseas possessions.

These provisions of law were appropriate to the international situation at that time, as well as to the undeveloped state of our army. The National Guard which formed the bulk of the armed forces had to be seasoned and its technical training and general efficiency greatly improved. The ranks of both the National Guard and the Regular Army required large drafts of men to bring them to full strength, and in addition, the Regular Army required for its tremendous expansion the services of approximately 50,000 reserve officers.

To provide the additional soldiers for the ranks in an

orderly and scientific manner, and to initiate the annual military training as a duty of citizenship, the Selective Service Act was made the law of the land. In other words, two steps were taken for the security of the nation, the existing military forces were to be quickly brought to full strength and ~~increasing~~^{expanding} organizations supplied, and at the same time a five-year test was to be made of a system for annual military training of the young men of the nation, under the provisions of the Selective Service Act.

Today, it is imperative that I should report to the Congress that the international situation is so grave, in my opinion, that our Army should be maintained, so far as is possible at this time, in a state of complete readiness for whatever service may be required of it for the security of the Nation. The present legal limitations, on the contrary, would progressively eliminate approximately two-thirds of the seasoned soldiers we have been training since last fall and winter, and about three-fourths of the total officer personnel. Such a procedure at this critical juncture, when immediate readiness for service of the Army becomes more and more a vital precautionary measure, would, I am convinced, be a tragic error.

My military advisers report to me that, in their opinion, the situation is so grave, and the schemes and plans against our security

are so evident, that the unlimited emergency I recently declared for the civil functions of the Government should be supplemented without delay with a declaration by Congress that the national interests are imperiled and a national emergency exists.

It appears unnecessary for me to refer again to the sequence of German conquests which have continued uninterruptedly from Austria to the present campaign against Russia. All has been conducted according to a time schedule, utilizing in each instance an overwhelming superiority in men and in material. Each campaign has been based on the anticipated of the countries concerned failure to realize the duplicity of the German Government and its complete disregard of treaties and pacts which have been deliberately planned to gain the time necessary for the launching of an overwhelming force against the country concerned. We must not ^{risk their fate} ~~follow their example~~. We cannot speculate with the security of this nation. Furthermore, we have, in effect, a responsibility in every country in the Western Hemisphere. They ~~stand ready to separate with us~~ and I feel sure that they ^{would completely} ~~immediately~~ ^{omit determined action on our part.}

misunderstand the weakening of our army at this particular time.

I realize the personal sacrifices involved in an extension of the period of service for the selectees and other reserve components of the Army. Nevertheless I cannot longer postpone the recommendation for this vitally essential step to assure the security of our Nation. I am confident that the men now in the ranks of the Army realize better than does the general public the disastrous effect which would result from permitting the present army, now just approaching an acceptable state of efficiency, to melt away, and set us back at least six months while units are being reconstituted with new drafts of officers and men and new units are being organized to replace those released. Therefore, I am requesting the Congress to enact legislation that will remove the restrictions from the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 and Public Resolution No. 96, 76th Congress. Specifically, the desired legislation ~~should~~ should -

Authorize the continuance in active service of the selectees and the reserve components of the Army, and all retired personnel of the Regular Army, with the understanding that should the exigencies of the situation permit, their early return to civil pursuits will follow in the numbers practicable.

It should remove the restrictions as to limitations of numbers in regard to the selectees inducted each year for training and service.

It should remove the restrictions as to the place of employment of all components of the Army.

In order to reduce to a minimum the individual hardships ~~which necessarily will be~~ caused by legislation extending Federal service beyond twelve months, I suggest the following ~~provisions~~ for your consideration:

A provision to insure an extension, where necessary, of the application of the civil rights guaranteed by the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 and Public Resolution No. 96, 76th Congress.

A provision to insure that officers of the reserve components may be relieved from active service, under such conditions as Congress may prescribe, without prejudice, if their continued retention on active duty would impose an undue hardship on them or their dependents.

A provision to insure that selectees and enlisted men of the National Guard who have reached the age of twenty-eight years, should be transferred from active service to a reserve component

as rapidly as practicable.

with the advice of the Selective Service System,

At the present time the War Department, at my direction, is taking

steps to relieve from active duty those selectees and those enlisted men of the National Guard whose ~~whose~~ retention in the service would cause an undue hardship. If the Congress grants the authority sought by me, I shall be able to direct a much broader application of this policy.

Finally, I submit these recommendations and suggestions for your consideration with the solemn statement that we are facing a crisis in our history. We have accepted the huge financial burdens necessary for our security, we have taken a long step towards the preparation of our man power to defend our interests. The time has come, I earnestly submit, to consolidate our position and stand firm and fully prepared before the enemies of democracy, the enemies of all we hold dear, with a solid front of military and naval power, backed by a determined and resourceful people.