Dear Pa: –

Here it is:

I hope the student will have time to read & Clarke about it.

The important
thing to do:
  a job must be
done —
  no matter who
  does it — give him
  the tools.
  
        Franklino
  April 25, 1941    La Guardia
April 25, 1941

Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

Since our talk the other day I have conferred with eight or nine of my colleagues from the various cities. We had quite a group at Ottawa and had plenty of time to discuss it there and on the way home. I find that the general agreement among the Mayors is that there is a great need for a strong Federal Department to coordinate activities, and not only coordinate but to initiate and to get things going. They tell me that in many of the cities they are still waiting instructions and orders and help. Where anything has been started it has caused confusion, conflict of jurisdiction and resulting bitterness.

Now, Mr. President, as I see it, what is needed is something more than just another Board, Bureau, Commission, Committee or Volunteer Firemen's Association. God knows, you have enough of them now. Please bear in mind that up to this war, and never in our history, has the civilian population been exposed to attack. The new technique of war has created the necessity for developing a new technique of civilian defense. It is not just community singing, sweater knitting and basket weaving that is needed. True, these are all good. We must be realistic. What is needed is to create a home defense among the civilian population, to be trained to meet any possibility of an air or naval attack in any of our cities.

I recall your pointing out that if they got as far as New York, surely they would try to get to Schenectady. It is not an easy matter to educate, train and prepare cities to meet a situation where bombs explode in their midst, destroying buildings, with hundreds killed and thousands injured. That is the job ahead of us. What does it require?
Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt 2 April 25, 1941.

It requires:

1. A Central Authority
2. Decentralization of organizations
3. Proper training for
   a - Air Wardens
   b - Auxiliary Fire Force
   c - Debris Crews
   d - Emergency Repair Crews for utilities such as gas, water, electrical, conduits, mains
   e - Trained first-aid personnel who have been
doctrined to get out and give aid to the wounded
4. Proper coordination of hospitals, the establishment of
   first aid stations, the removal of the dead, the care
   of the children, and the maintenance before and after
   of the public health.

When a city is exposed to attack, it impairs every one
of its utilities, creates the necessity of burying the dead, and causes
shortage of food. At such a time nothing is more important than the
public health. There can be no question of a fraction of a second lost
as to just the place of every individual, as to what and when and how to act.

To be specific, I have come to the conclusion that all
of this cannot be accomplished by another board. It must be a department,
and may I say in all frankness, the department must be created by statute
with a secretary at its head, having the statutory rank of a cabinet post.
It should have authority to exercise the proper control necessary for the
operation and administration of an executive department. Work on the
preparation of a bill should commence at once.

It should provide for the following:

1. The creation of a Department, and at its head
   a Secretary, together with such assistant secretaries
   as may be necessary, and a regional director for each
   Army Corps Area, to be appointed by the Secretary
   with the approval of the President. If you still deem
   it necessary, provision should be made that if the
   Secretary or any of the officials are elected or appointed
   officials of a state or a subdivision thereof, and receive
a salary for such services, they shall be qualified to hold the office but draw no salary from the federal government.

2: Appointment of necessary personnel, the transfer of needed personnel and equipment from other agencies of government.

3: A direction to the Selective Service Administrator for the submission to the Department of such men as are otherwise qualified for military service but who are exempt by reason of dependents or minor physical defects. Authority must be provided to draft these men into local home defense service. The Department should have the power to administer the oath of service and to provide, during any time of an emergency, for their training at home at such hours and on such days as not to interfere with their occupations or working time duties. These men should receive either a dollar a month or a dollar a year, the latter being preferable. I need not point out the necessity of this in such a vast undertaking as the home defense of cities, as well as the need of it for the morale and self respect of the men themselves. Authority to prescribe arm-bands, caps, even uniforms should be contained in the law.

4: Power to recruit, farm, train and service women auxiliaries, such as first aid, air wardens, emergency kitchens, community supplies, care of children, clerical and technical help, and the many, many activities that women are exceptionally fitted to carry out and which to date have been entirely overlooked. Authority to prescribe uniform insignia, ranks for such auxiliaries should also be provided. This is important.

5: The creation of a Home Defense Board created by this Department, consisting of a senior general officer from the Army and one from the Navy, to be designated by the President, with the Secretary as Chairman. The functions of such a board are self-evident.

In this connection, I want to call your attention to Paragraph 5 of the proposed order, to what I believe must be a stenographic error, where the head of the Department is made Secretary of an Advisory Board. This civilian board should be purely advisory, with the Secretary as its chairman.
Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt
April 25, 1941

6: Transfer to this new Department of powers not only to coordinate public health agencies of the Federal government but also to coordinate all public health agencies of the states and municipalities. For the sake of public health, the protection and control during an emergency of everything outside of army reservations, cantonments or naval bases is most important.

To be perfectly clear, because of its importance, this would mean the transfer to this new Department, under your present powers of reorganization or otherwise, of all federal civilian health agencies and the coordination of all other health agencies for the purpose herein indicated. I do not see how in the event of an emergency, and I mean by that, where lives are exposed, with the terrible aftermath, the health agencies can be separated from this Department.

7: An immediate survey by the Secretary of necessary fire fighting equipment, shelter requirements and other equipment and material necessary for home defense. An estimate should be submitted immediately to Congress for the acquisition of such equipment and material.

8: Authority by the new Department to prepare and to distribute books, pamphlets, and posters, and to give lectures, as well as to hold meetings and conduct other means of education for the people at large. Ample provision should be made for this purpose. As you stress, in addition to the physical protection of the home defense work, there is a great job to be done for the morale of the people of the country. This can be accomplished by the Department through the medium of education.

These suggestions come after a great deal of thought long before you suggested it. It also comes after consultation with mayors throughout the country, with public officials, with men of the uniformed service. It does not come from anyone who is seeking anything but from one who wants to be helpful. If you approve the plan generally I shall be very glad to cooperate and help in drawing up the bill.

With kind personal regards, and always at your command, I am

Faithfully yours,

[Signature]

Mayor.
Respectfully forwarded to the President:

[Signature]

E.M.W.
TH E WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 19, 1941

MEMORANDUM FOR
MAYOR LaGUARDIA

To speak to me about at
your convenience.

F. D. R.

Enclosures

Confidential memorandum from Brig. Gen'l. 
Frank T. Hines, Administrator of Veterans' 
Affairs, 5/5/41, with attached memorandum 
giving a brief outline of an organizational 
set-up of Central Advisory Council of Home 
Defense. Copies of these papers have been 
retained for our files.
Each State has its own Committee of the American Legion at headquarters or state capitals, in which the State Commander is a member. I find that the National Commander is prepared to rally the

Committee on the President

May 5, 1941

PSF Office of Foreign Service
I am taking the liberty of attaching hereto a brief outline of an organisational set-up which I believe will accomplish the purpose. I will be glad to assist in any way that you may desire.

FRANK T. HINES
Administrator.
The Central Advisory Council to the President

4. Recommendations from the State Councils to the President

The President is to act on the recommendation of the National Home Defense Council formed by the President and the leaders of the State Councils, in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

3. The Governor's powers under the Act are to be exercised by the President, with the advice and consent of the National Home Defense Council.

2. The Act must be proclaimed by the President, and the National Home Defense Council to be made up of the policy of the National Home Defense Council to be made up of the

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12. The President's powers under the Act are to be exercised by the President, with the advice and consent of the National Home Defense Council.
MEMORANDUM TO

THE PRESIDENT

My dear Mr. President:

Every psychologist, psychoanalyst, and psychiatrist ought to be shot five years after they have practiced. If I continue much longer talking to these people, I will be "nuts" too.

What do you think of this plan? After all, the decision must be made by you.

Could you allocate a few minutes when I could present what I believe is the sum total, after having sifted out the good, bad, and indifferent, and crazy plans? In the evening, if convenient. A real program for the morale, information, and if you please, propaganda. A few friends such as Harry, Sherwood, Ann, or anyone else that you may want, and I could present my views, could be kicked around, torn to pieces, and out of it, we ought to be able to clarify the situation and come to a definite final conclusion.

I think this is far better than even calling a few people together because then we have as many different ideas as we have people in the room.

P.S.

The Mayor is coming Washington:
7:00 pm tonight
Returning to Washington:
Tuesday morning