

SELECTIVE SERVICE--PRESENT AND FUTURE

5 January 1949

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GENERAL VANAMAN: The reward for outstanding work is usually more work and more responsibility. General Hershey planned the Selective Service System so well that during the emergency, World War II, he was made its director. He directed it so well that in December of 1946, the very next day after he was retired, he was recalled to active duty and made director of the reactivated system. Outstanding work--more work, more responsibility.

We invite but few people to become annual speakers at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. Every year, however, we invite General Hershey to return to our platform, and every year he contributes more and more to our course. Outstanding work--more work. It is a great pleasure for me to welcome to our platform, General Hershey.

GENERAL HERSHEY: General Vanaman, fellow officers: It is always a privilege to come here, a privilege that grows with the years. The older a man gets the more of a privilege it is to be allowed to talk to someone who may conceivably be thought of as representing today rather than yesterday or, in the case of some of us, the day before yesterday.

I understand that my subject this morning is "Selective Service" of the present and of the future. You would expect an old man to discuss Selective Service of the past, for the case can logically be made that in order to understand the present--and in order to project things into the future--obviously we must understand the past. That is what "age" has always said. This subterfuge, if you will, is used in order to try to find some reasonable ground for talking about something. Such people think they know something. It does not necessarily follow that they do, but they can at least say, "I was there," or, "I saw it," or, "I knew this fellow," or some other thing that seems to justify their claims and makes you think they are experts.

Of course, an expert is anyone who is more than a hundred miles from home. Therefore, it is a little difficult for me to qualify so close to home.

Just the same, in discussing manpower, I want to talk a little about the past, with some remarks on the present because we are in the unfortunate position that we always get into--and we probably try to live by it--of creating a situation that requires

a great deal of astuteness for its solution. If you ever get into a position that anybody can work his way out of, you are not going to last very long. No doubt many of you gentlemen came from services where you held your trade secrets fairly close. They were rather easily understandable and attainable and learnable; but if you had said that, the reason for your existence would very soon have vanished. We all have to hang on to the things on which we think we have a monopoly.

Selective Service, strangely enough, is a child that has come down through our age and our civilization. It can be traced to a time when, perhaps in England or a more remote civilization, everybody had to turn out when danger and war became an actuality. A great many times people in the United States have said that in peacetime we have never had compulsion, either for training or for service. Those people read enough of American history so that they did not know what they were talking about; they failed to read the complete story. Before we became a nation, about 616 laws compelling service or training--many times both--had been passed in the Colonies. I am not here to talk on national service, but you will find that most of the Colonies had laws compelling a man to bring his shovel and pile dirt up for entrenchments, even though he was not taken into the Armed Forces. Work was required; work will always be required, training will always be required, and service will always be required when the question "What shall I do to be saved?" is the main question of the day. It is only as we reach what we think is comparative safety that we begin to argue about whether education is clashing with training or a dozen and one other things. When we are right up against the question of how we shall live, we never have very much difficulty justifying either training or service.

We had different ways of trying to make everybody serve in the Revolution and in the War of 1812--incidentally not very successful ways. We called them in "today" because the Britishers were about us, and we let them go back "tomorrow" because the Britishers had gone away. We did not learn very much by that. Even the history of the last four or five years indicates that we mobilize millions of men at a time when danger is upon us, and then we turn them loose the day we think the fighting part of the war is over. We permit our capacity to make people serve lapse. Then we re-establish authority but we don't use it. Our behavior is not too much different from what it was during the time of the Revolution and the War of 1812. As soon as the enemy turns his back--we don't wait until he marches away--so long as he is starting in the other direction, then it is time for us to go on with business as usual. That is one of the things that we must take into consideration in any sort of planning. That is the kind of people we are. We are money players. We like to play on the day of the game. We don't like to practice; that is monotonous.

We made a mess of getting men into the forces in the War Between the States. So long as we are on the Potomac, even though on the north side, I shall refrain from alluding to it as the Civil War. On both sides during that war we proved, if it needed to be proved again, that we could bungle the job of getting men into the Armed Forces.

Fortunately, in World War I, in trying to get people into the service, we listened to a man in dire distress--or at least after he had been in distress--the Assistant Provost Marshal General in the State of Illinois. We took to heart many of the things he said, and probably no one was a prophet of the future more than the Assistant Provost Marshal General in the State of Illinois. So, by and large, we had a reasonably successful method, in World War I, of getting the number of people needed, when we needed them and where we needed them. Unfortunately for the planners, the war didn't last long enough to find out all the things that were wrong with the things we were doing.

A great many times we succeed in something we do, and then we forget. That is one of the reasons why some nations probably have had many advantages in being thrashed. When one is thrashed, he looks into the causes for the thrashing. When he wins, he pays very little attention. So long as we are well, no one can get us to do much about our health. When we get sick, we would like to have at our disposal all the doctors in the country and a few nurses in order to recover our health. And that is about the way we are with peace. When we have peace, we won't do anything to keep it. When we lose it, we want to throw everything we have in our efforts to get peace back as quickly as we can. Then we promptly forget everything we did in order to get it. But, after all, that perhaps makes life more interesting.

Just the same, between World Wars I and II, we had a fair pattern for procuring men in quantity, and in some quality perhaps, for the job ahead of us; and, fortunately, some planning was done by the Armed Forces for the getting of men. I think that whatever success we had was primarily due to planning. I am entirely sold on planning. Outside of the delegation of authority to the lowest level, I consider that planning was mostly responsible for whatever success we had in getting men for the Armed Forces. That has taught me that when we have a war, we do not have time to think; therefore, we are driven to thinking, and to trying to remember a few of the things we thought, before we have our crisis so that we can remember them for use when trouble is upon us. We do not have time to think, to figure, or to plan once the emergency is upon us. So I think we had a reasonably good plan for trying either to encourage some 20 million men to go to the induction or recruiting stations or to actually lead them there during World War II. Whatever failures

we had were not due to the plan generally. We could see those failures coming six to eight months ahead of time, and one of the tragedies of having gone through the planning was to be able to anticipate what was going to happen and still not be able to do anything about avoiding it. Yet that unfortunately was our lot. Anyway, we either encouraged or dragged about 20 million persons to recruiting stations.

One of the things we must remember is that about 5 million of those persons came back, and that is too large a loss. As a battery commander for some 17 years, obviously I didn't want in my unit those who were not good men, men I could not use everywhere; but it was my lot during most of that time to have men whom--if they stayed sober a fair proportion of the month, if they didn't run over the hill because two wives appeared at rather bad times, or for some other reason--we were barely able to hold together as a force. I don't blame anyone for liking to have the very best of manpower, but I must call your attention to the fact that, whether because of faulty blueprinting or because of some of the operations in between, we have quite a varied lot of people in these United States. The Census Bureau said, according to the latest figures I have read, that we have about 148 million people, but not all of them are 18, 19, 20, or 21 years old, with two years of college and perfect physique. They are of all colors and shades. As a matter of fact, some 37 million of them are under 14 years of age. We can write them off as the greatest asset we have for the future and the greatest liability we have for the present.

That statement might be challenged. We have 10 or 12 million people about my age and older. Before we say that the kids are a great liability, we should think about that group a little while. In the group of 10 or 12 million people of my age, we have the greatest amount of experience and knowledge and advice we could possibly have anywhere, but who has time, when survival is before us, to listen to a lot of old men giving advice? We have more advice than we can follow. So there is some question about what can be done with these 10 or 12 million people in my age bracket.

We have 33 or 34 million housewives. We can get many of them into full-time employment of some kind during a war, we can get some of them into part-time employment, but some of them are going to have to give all of their time to these 37 million or so who are under 14 years of age.

The first thing you know, when you talk in terms of mobilizing 13 or 14 million people, you find you are talking about every man between 18 and 31; and then you are assuming that you will get the medical profession to accept 75 percent of them, which we have never come within 12 or 13 percent of doing. That does not mean that every man between 18 and 31, perhaps, has to go, but every time we

defer a man between 18 and 31, we have to take a man older than 31 or under 18 to make up the difference.

So we in manpower, if we must fight for survival, are in the same place as that in respect to many of our other resources. We have a philosophy of abundance, and that abundance does not exist. There is the feeling, "Why should I fool with that man? There are many more where he came from." That isn't so. Somebody has to fool with him. I cannot help but believe, if we are ever challenged again for our existence, that what will count will be our capacity to make up our mind as to what we can do with this mass of people who are pretty hard to use and then have the leadership, the capacity, and the ability to get more out of them than the statisticians say we can. The difference between success and failure will not lie in what we can do with the best. We are already making plans on the basis of what we can do with the best, and we can forecast about what the best can do. There is far more chance of getting something out of the worst.

In World War II, I don't think we were ever actually downscraping the bottom of the barrel. We talked about it a great deal, but we were not scraping the bottom of the barrel in such a year as 1943 when we needed men because the next year we were going to be on the beaches. When we look at the two or three hundred thousand who were discharged because they were over 38 years old, we see that we did not go to the bottom of the barrel. We did not even approach it. And we simply cannot afford to have that sort of leadership in our Armed Forces.

Where do you think those people went when they were discharged? They had to come back home and somebody had to try to use them. And you don't encourage a man to believe he is doing something great for his country by telling him that because of his age, he cannot be used any more anywhere in the Armed Forces. Yet hundreds of thousands were sent home for no reason other than the fact that they were over 38 years of age. And what was the effect on the person 37 years 9 months and 10 days old who had a business and three children when we had to draft him to take the place of the person returning who was just over 38, who had already spent a year and a half training, and on whom we had spent many dollars? The person who was no longer needed had been taken at a time when he obviously was not so necessary for our civilian economy as the fellow we had left behind for a year and a half because of his value to the civilian economy, and then we decided to switch him at a time when we were at about the time of decision.

I am not going to talk of the 3 or 4 hundred thousand men who came back because they had something wrong with them. Some of them did have something wrong, but they had to be used somewhere

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unless they were entirely unusable. It is one thing to be a psychopath, but it is another thing to be a psychoneurotic. Who isn't? It was very difficult to tell the public and to tell a woman, when we were taking her husband away from his grocery store and his three children, that we could not take somebody else who was making \$25,000 a year because he was nervous. Yet that happened, not once but thousands of times. And we had three or four hundred thousand illiterates. I make no plea for illiterates. Some of them are illiterates who cannot read; some of them are illiterates who will not read. Just the same, roaming around our streets, they are a psychological problem with which we have to cope.

It is very important always to have the public supporting a war. I think the public did very well indeed the last time. I think we run risks when we do not tell them more. It is one thing to keep the enemy confused by not letting information out; it is another thing to withhold information because we do not want to risk the chance of a mistake becoming known and to say that what the people don't know doesn't harm them. Our problem always was trying to keep the public informed of what was going on. The people cannot understand why no place can be found in the Armed Forces for a man who is making an adjustment to his everyday life very successfully.

So the Armed Forces have a very real problem of trying to find out how to use the almost unusable, because that may be the difference between defeat and victory.

What are we doing now? We started last spring to get ready to run another Selective Service System, after having spent the summer before liquidating the one we had. We got practice that way, if nothing more. If I were pessimistic, I would say we are going to face liquidation again. If we don't liquidate, how can we organize; and how can we get practice in organization if we don't organize about once every two years? But it is becoming increasingly difficult to tell a local board member who works for nothing that we will fire him one spring and hire him the next summer.

Now, the success of our system depends primarily on the efforts of unpaid people. When we were running at top form in World War II, we had approximately 200,000 people in our organization, and about 180,000 of them worked for nothing. The percentage is even greater at the present time because we have less money.

Obviously there are some things that unpaid people cannot do, and there are many things that they can do better than others. When it comes to making decisions that are tough, the unpaid man is not under the gun to follow anybody's conscience except his own, because he is eating anyway. Say what you will, it is a little

rough on the fellow who is asked to do something--with some implication of what he is supposed to do--to be told that breakfast won't come in if he doesn't do it. Although patriotism is the main reason for our being in the profession to which we belong, it cannot be denied that eating, too, has always been in the back of our minds. So there is an advantage in having men who are bound by nothing except the desire to do something that is right make decisions that are tough.

We can get people to work for nothing whom we cannot hire; that is, we cannot hire them for what we can pay them if we are going to pay them jury rates. And certainly we should never get into the position of paying a man on the basis of the number of people he gets. We would be going back to the old justice and constable of the village--no arrest, no eat!

I think we have found a sound principle, and I have complete confidence that, unless we liquidate too often and try to reorganize too often, we can keep decent, honorable, courageous citizens who are willing to do something. Of course, one of the secrets of that principle is to let them do it and not try to put them up as dummies and tell them what to do. That won't work. Real authority should be delegated to them.

We are now involved in an operation which is very limited and, I think, reasonably necessary. Even if we don't take very many people, we ought to have the encouragement always in the background. It helps recruiting.

Now, what are some of the dangers involved in not recognizing what we are doing and in our thinking that the things we are doing have a significance for the future which they do not have? In the first place, we registered more than 9 million men, counting the ones that had been in the forces. We had the age group between about 18 and 25. It is incidental, but it was a mistake to register the 21's, the 22's, and above, because 90 percent of them had already been in the service and most of the rest of them who had been worth anything had been turned down, except a few in the merchant marine, a few who had been farmers, and others who had escaped in one way or another. By and large, it was a matter of shuffling 5 million cards with the hope of getting 30 or 40 thousand men at best--and that is a lot of shuffling. Not only that--for one reason or another we failed to get these fellows during the war, and we cannot run a business on the basis of trying to correct something that was wrong some other time. We should run our business on the basis of what we want to get done. If we had started in the lower four years' age group, instead of the upper four, I think we would have been much better off. We would not have been hopelessly crushed under an avalanche of cards--five million of them! It cost just as much to

register a veteran 25 years of age, even a fellow who would be 26 the next day, as it did to register a 19-year-old, who was reasonably white meat, so far as getting somebody into the forces was concerned.

In time of mobilization we must have a wide registration. Now we have a narrow one. In time of trouble we must have large inductions. Now we have small ones--or none. And, of course, getting the machinery to whirl at top speed and not taking anybody in is a balancing problem to which I don't know the answer. We cause the public to think that we can run a Selective Service System and not touch anybody, and that is a bad philosophy to teach people.

Don't misunderstand me. I am not questioning the fact that we must have the Selective Service Act. I think, if we are smart, that we will keep the law on the books whether we use it or not, because it is always a healthy encouragement. Not only that--it is a terrible thing for a country of 148 million people, as rich as we are, as prominent as we are, and as powerful as we are, to have to go out and beg people to wear our suits and carry on the responsibility of keeping us alive. I think we ought to keep it on the books, but we must recognize what we are doing.

First, we are registering few, we are calling few, we are deferring practically everybody. We have to know we are doing that; we cannot do it when we are mobilizing 13 or 14 million men. The very mathematics of it indicates that with 13 or 14 million as a goal, it would take about every able-bodied man; and even at the standards you have now, you cannot find 7 million men in the United States who can meet them. Yet you go on now, and rightfully so, with a very, very high standard. Know what you are doing.

People are creatures of habit. When you get people into the spirit of not taking certain individuals, you almost have to shoot three or four before you will get them to drop the standards at a time when you must have people.

Now, I was a Field Artillery man for 30 years--for pay purposes--and one of the things we were taught was to know what we could do, which was quite important. But to know what we could not do was probably even more important, if we wanted to survive.

Our present law is to provide a few men for the forces, and obviously we should not bother more than necessary. We should keep our standards high. We have to defer practically everybody because there are two reasons for deferment. One is that you cannot take them, and the other is that they are needed back home. At the moment, reason number one is all-empowering.

When we get a large call for 5,000 men, as we are going to have for the month of February, we encounter some practical logistical difficulties in distributing the load evenly among 10 million people. In a fair and just manner we pick out 5,000 people out of 10 million, and there isn't any other way to do it. But what is going to be wrong with the fellow you pick? He thinks the woods are full of people. "Why did you pick on me?"

A Congressman called me not so long ago. He is a pretty good sort of fellow. He talks quite long, but many of us have that drawback. He talked about the merchant marine. He asked, "Why are you taking them?" I said, "Because you people over there voted to take them. You told me that under no circumstances would you defer them." He said, "That's my position. I shall never change it. But why don't you first take everybody else who has had less service than they?" Of course, that was a novel approach to the question of deferment: "Give them no deferment, but just don't take them until you take everybody else." That is the approach, and very properly so, of the individual. He thinks, "I am willing to go when it's my time, but this isn't it."

So here we are running a system to get a few people. It's fine. It's necessary. We should have it. But we must understand what we are doing so that proper steps can be taken when we move to the place where we must have men.

Remember, for 18 months we produced 2,000 men an hour on about a 70-hour week. We had 5 million who were rejected; we had more than 10 million eventually inducted and 16 or 18 million initially whom we deferred. That meant we had to change the status of 2.25 million registrants every month.

That is one of the reasons why we must delegate almost complete authority to the operating level. If we have desks here or in a dozen regions or in 48 states over which many decisions have to pass, we are going to be bogged down. We had a national headquarters here that dealt with Congress. It tried to get some money and it passed out the calls, some by changing the regulations from time to time. The states organized and supervised the thing in the first place. They passed on the money--what they didn't take out. Of course, any time you start money through a channel there is always a toll taken at each bridge. They passed on what money they didn't take. They passed on the calls. But neither national headquarters nor any state headquarters ever inducted a man. Yet 11 million men were inducted.

One of the basic things we must do is to tell people to induct and make it possible for them to induct unless somebody stops them. Never have inductions depended on affirmative action from

some headquarters above. We don't have time for that. That is like sending a patrol out and telling each man not to shoot anybody unless he can furnish three pictures of the man he is going to shoot, a description of his location, and a few other things. Obviously that does not work. Of course, people have almost tried that. But we try a great many things in the Armed Forces, you know, in order to canvass all of the possible things that can be done.

Moving into the future, we are going to find that we will need large calls. Regardless of what the doctors, the dentists, the scientists, the farmers, the toolmakers, and a thousand other people say about deferment, if we defer everybody, we will not have anybody in the Armed Forces. We can have them in one place or the other. In fact, a good many will have to be in both places. They will have to make the weapon they are going to use and then eventually run out and grab that weapon and use it--and thereby hang some difficulties. If we keep him insecure in his job, in the first place, he won't work. If we make him too secure, it will take about three Selective Service Systems to bomb him loose when we finally want him to go out to use the weapon. That is akin to deciding that the war is to be won by a certain type shell and then continuing to make that shell even after we no longer use it; because we have people who can make it so well that it would be a shame to stop their production, even if we don't have anything in the world to use it for. I doubt if that will be done, but still I have seen things that approach it.

We will have to use this manpower in both places, and we are going to have to try somehow or other to get the users to keep their necessities down to a bare minimum. I admit that I would prefer to have a couple of wagons right with the battery instead of having them in a pool. I would rather take two and have them in the battery than have the right to use four when somebody else sent them to me. That's the most natural thing in the world. But if each person has his own reserves held out, we won't have anybody anywhere or we will have somebody everywhere. You must understand that there is no great volume of manpower, and there is even less volume of the ideal fellow who is young, smart, and able to do every sort of thing. Who doesn't want that sort of fellow?

I saw at one installation a school where mechanics were being trained. Practically every man there had at least one or two years of college. That was fine. I guess they made good mechanics. The point is that I also knew that there were hundreds of "flatfeet" working around gas stations, but nobody would take them because they couldn't march. They were doing a very fair job where they then were, in the mechanic business, with their flat feet, and I didn't see why we had to have potential officers as mechanics. But it was done. I trust that it was just an isolated case.

We must make up our minds that we are going to use our share of "eight balls." We must make up our minds that in wartime we cannot have a man we can use everywhere. You can thank the Almighty that you can find any place where you can use him. Sending him back to civilian life may mean that he will make something in which you will be killed, for he will have less supervision when he comes back than he would have in the hierarchy we call the Armed Forces. There is a reasonable amount of supervision there. You may be short of manpower, but I never found a time in my service when there weren't many individuals who seemed to have nothing else to do except to tell me what to do. I realize the new Army is different; you have management and all that sort of thing. We didn't have. Just the same, industry will be stripped, and the kind of men they will have as supervisors won't be experts. When this "eight ball" comes back, he won't get to be anything much more or less than an "eight ball" as a result of being discharged.

I was told by one division commander that if the inspectors had been kept out of his division, he could have run his division without difficulty. He said, "But, of course, every time I get into one job one of these birds who don't know very much comes along and says, 'Have you qualified in all the weapons?'" Of course he hadn't qualified; the commander wouldn't trust him with a weapon. He would have killed somebody on his own side. They were quite remote from the enemy at that time. But what happened? He was discharged. Somebody wanted complete interchangeability of parts, that is, human parts.

We cannot have that in the future because there is a shortage of men. Fortunately, you gentlemen can do something about it besides talk. I have gotten to the place where all I can do is talk. As the French said--it is charged to them at least--when a person gets too old to be vicious, he becomes virtuous. So when we get to the place where we no longer can do anything by action, we spend our time talking about it, which is exactly the reason why I am here.

I should like to point out that Selective Service exists for the purpose of getting men into a force, whether it be an emergency or a regular, standing, permanent force, in order to serve, to do a job that has to be done. I want to point out that any military training program--universal, partially universal, or not universal-- is for the purpose of training individuals as a potential reserve to be used in case of emergency. The two things do not have very much to do with each other. I do not believe that training everybody for three, four, six months, or a year is going to increase the number that will enlist. It might very well decrease the number. After all, if you offer a man a half piece of pie when he hasn't had any, he may eat it; but if he has had a couple of pieces, you will have a little trouble selling him some more. So

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there is some doubt as to whether a training program will get anybody to enlist.

Remember, in five years you will not have more than 2 million veterans under 30. They are getting older. Seven hundred thousand of them are passing over the 30 mark every year, and it isn't going to be very long before they are gone. Talking about the fact that we have all these veterans does not give us a reserve, and the assertion that they constitute a reserve is becoming less true each succeeding day. So the time has long since passed when we should have done something about getting some of the boys who have become 21, 20, 19, and 18 during the last three years. Lest you forget it, VJ-day was over three years ago. That means that about 2,100,000 veterans who were not 30 three years ago are 30 now. In five years you will have a couple of million of them left, then try to get those fellows. The best of them are going to be involved in things out of which they cannot be taken, and you probably will think two or three times before you take the ones who are not so involved.

There is the necessity for training people. I am not saying how we are going to do it. What disgusts me not a little--and I suppose I ought to leave it off the record, but probably nobody reads the record anyway--is to read in the papers from very high places that we are going to start a training program when Selective Service is over. That is just like saying that we are going to stop eating meat as soon as we get some potatoes. A training program has a reason for existence, and I think an excellent one, but the Selective Service we are running isn't getting anybody in the reserves very fast. We aren't getting anybody anywhere very fast, as a matter of fact. We took in about 7,800 men in November. We are probably going to get 10,000 or 12,000 men who should have come in before Christmas. They were set up to come in, but we let them stay home for the holidays; and we are getting them after New Year's Day. We will get 10,000 or less in January and 5,000 in February. It is anybody's guess what we will get in March. But even though all of those men complete 21 months and come out, they constitute not even a spoonful. The same day they come out 10 veterans will pass the 30 mark. So we have a need for a training program, and it is long overdue.

I can see three or four situations. If you need people in the forces and you cannot get them by recruiting, you must have some way of getting them. If you need both reserves and men in the forces, you need both Selective Service and some sort of training program. If you don't need anybody in the forces, but you do need reserves, you need a training program. If you get to the place where you need no reserves but need men in the forces, you need a Selective Service. And if you don't need anybody in the forces and you have all you want in the reserves, don't have either one of them.

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But stop the nonsense of saying, "When we get one, we are going to let go of the other." You are not solving the problems and you are not even understanding them when you talk that way. Unfortunately, too many people are talking that way.

COLONEL BAISH: General Hershey is ready for your questions.

QUESTION: General, could your organization be expanded to handle a national service registration to include all the people who could be used in wartime?

GENERAL HERSHEY: My answer to that would be yes. You have made it a little easier by saying "registration." Registration is something in which we have dabbled a great deal. We have done it in several different ways. Some people in my organization do not like any of the ways we have used. Some have their own pet ways.

I think that in a registration for national service, you must be rather careful that you register for what you want and have multiple registrations if necessary. It is all very well to think you can have one great splash and have it over with, but one of the worst things you can do psychologically is to warn people that they must register for something and then not let them hear anything about it for months. That is bad because then they wonder why you had them register in the first place if you didn't want anything. So in your national service I visualize that you are going to have to register perhaps for different things at different times. I think that is healthy, for two reasons. One is that you can follow the registration by action, and the more you can do that the better; and, secondly, if the war is remote, as we hope it will be and as it was the last time, you have a rallying point for something whereby people can be made to feel that they are doing something. I am not so frightened of multiple registrations as some people are.

Obviously I am prejudiced, but I can say that our power to expand is not limited very much. We are much better off in that respect than we were a year ago. A year ago we had to consider that two or three months were involved in organization, no matter what we did. That, at least, is behind us, and expansion is much easier than organizing from the ground up. We have about a thousand officers--Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and National Guard--with whom we have some contact and who are available for our executive positions. All the Services have allocations of officers for this purpose, and we are now engaged in giving them some limited training. We have quite a number of old local-board members who are not doing very much at the present time. We have quite a number of appeal-board people who are sort of marking time. Our capacity to expand is fairly broad. We would be expanding in people who are not needed full time, although we would have to double or triple

our some 5,000 or more paid people if we were to expand. But that is not a difficult matter.

Registration for us is a relatively simple thing because we have gone through quite a lot of it. It is essential, however, that we know whom we want to register and what we want to find out about the registrants. These are two of the difficult things.

QUESTION: General, do you think that in the future we will use more and more women in the Armed Forces? If so, in what capacities or what types of jobs?

GENERAL HERSHEY: I will answer the first half of the question. I don't think there is any question about it, and I don't see insuperable difficulties with respect to the public. The public is coming along. It needs continual prodding on this question of the use of women, but, just the same, I think the public is moving along very well.

What are you going to use them for? I was not the greatest soldier when I belonged to the Army, and it has been eight years that I have been looking through the window. I wouldn't want to testify as to where to use women on the basis of my impressions from looking through the window. I couldn't add anything anyway. There isn't anybody here who doesn't know more than I do about using women in different places. But I have supreme confidence that there are a great many places where they can be used. And having a few--I wouldn't want to be ungallant enough to say "the nuisance part of having a few"--is just as great a problem as having a lot of them. So if you are going to take any, you had better take a swallow instead of a taste.

QUESTION: You spoke of potential officer material being turned into mechanics. It seems that, if you are taking as few people as you are nowadays, college students, regardless of what courses they are taking, should be permitted to keep on so that they might finish and then be better potential officer personnel. That is not democratic, but I wondered what thoughts you had on that.

GENERAL HERSHEY: You have your finger on one of our very desperate problems. In the first place, to assume that a boy's going through college makes him a better officer is probably sound, although there is another side to that. To assume that there is no education except in educational institutions is a little dangerous. And to get into a position where, because a boy has a father who has enough money to send him to school, you load the responsibility of citizenship, even though slight, or somebody else; this has many points of danger in it. Now, you could probably survive that a year; but if we ran a continuous Selective Service taking only 50,000 or 60,000

men a year, that is about the worst position you could ask even your enemy to be put into, because the pressure groups can all say, "What in the world are you taking these people for when you don't need anybody?" I should not like to see the day when American citizenship gets so that it is only the least of us who go out and do things so that somebody else might go to school. And, certainly, if a fellow can stay out to go to college, what about the boy who wants to be a machinist?

I am not so sure that during the war there weren't times when, if we could, we would like to have gotten fellows to climb on top of some of these places we have around steel mills, where all that was needed, in the words of a president of one of the steel companies, was a fellow who was strong and had little enough sense so that he wouldn't run off and do something else. The production of steel depends upon those people. In fact, he offered to trade me, on a very favorable basis, so-called engineers if I could only get him some men who would go out there and work on some of those heavy jobs.

I think, in theory, there is no question that we should not leave people behind so that they may go to school. But have we so little faith in what we teach in survival in the Armed Forces that we are ashamed to say, "This is as important, when the time comes, as what you learn in school"? I am not sure.

I don't want to inflict a yarn on you, but one of the first things, and about the last, that I ever learned to read in German was about a schoolmaster, a sort of literacy inspector, who went through the country asking all the people how long they had gone to school. He came to a river and saw a rather moronic-looking lad start to paddle across the river. He got into the canoe with the boy and said, "Can you read?" The boy said, "No." The schoolmaster then said, "You have missed a quarter of your life because you can't read. Can you write?" "No." "You have missed half of your life because you can't read or write. Can you figure?" "No." "You have missed three-quarters of your life because you can't read, write, or figure." Then the canoe suddenly tipped over, and the boy said, "Kanst du schwimmen?" "Nein." "Well, you have lost all of your life."

If we could be sure that an examination to qualify for a bachelor's, a master's, or a doctor's degree was going to be the test of survival for our citizenry, when that day comes, then, by all means, let them go to school. But if the test is going to come in some other way, that is a different matter. Do you suppose the fellows who settled in the Bay Colony saw any conflict between church and firearms? Sunday was a day kept very holy by those who settled in the old Bay Colony, but they didn't hesitate to shoot an

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Indian on that day if he got to nosing around. Why? Because a person can't keep Sunday holy when he is dead.

QUESTION: One of the manpower recommendations of last year's class at the Industrial College is that there should be a National Service Act. I judge from your answer to a previous question that you do not favor that. I may have missed the point there. What is your view toward a National Service Act?

GENERAL HERSHEY: First of all, I believe that national service is a fair and just manner of carrying on a mobilization. Secondly, I believe we are so infantile in our thinking of even what it means, let alone on how to work it, that I am very much disturbed about our capacity now to write an act. Don't misunderstand me. I would be glad even to see something on the books, but I would hate to see something that looked like some of the "baby" Selective Service Acts we had even as late as 1944. I am not one of those people who are afraid of something that is far from what they want. I think we have to start somewhere.

My experience--I hate to say this--has been that the average person who talked about national service didn't know anything about it. That may sound like an old man who thinks no one else knows anything. Well, I happen to come from Angola, a town of about 3,000 population. I think we have about 3,500 now, but that's neither here nor there. When I say to people, "All right, let's have the act. What shall we do in Angola?" they say, "That's a matter of detail." Whenever I can get anyone who wants national service to tell me something about what is going to happen in Angola, I will go along with it. I get sick and tired of people talking and waving their arms, who, when you ask the, "What will you do here?" say, "We will have to decide that at the time." How are we going to be able to do anything if we don't have any idea what we are going to do?

There are two or three things of which we always have to think. In the first place, it is hard to get legislation unless people think they need it. I don't know how near to being thrashed we have to come before we will be willing to give up certain things.

The next thing you have to do, if you don't go into it gradually, is to think of the period when you are going to start. If you will look at the record, you will find that we inducted 78,000 in February 1944, which was a great deal less than we had been taking for a long time. What is the answer? The answer is that when we switched over from one form of physical examination to another, we pretty nearly stopped the machinery. I am not an industrialist, but I have read many times that plants are shut down because some machinery is being reset.

It is necessary to have general acceptance on how we are going to handle national service and acceptance of what the term means. Does it mean that we are going to make the people who will not do anything do something? That is one thing. Does it mean that no one will do anything unless he is told? That means quite something else.

And we talk about freezing things. That sounds fine--freeze everything, stop everything. How many times have I, as a soldier, gone over to a warehouse and seen about eight men sitting around waiting? I would say, "What are you doing?" They would answer, "Waiting for the sergeant to come back." They were frozen. They were in a position where they were doing exactly what they were told. They were told to go over there and wait.

Unfortunately, whenever we have a war, the one thing we will have to do is get rolling. We will have to make almost revolutionary changes to do it rapidly. The question is, how can we do it rapidly? Certainly, telling a guy, "Don't do anything until you are told," didn't make the tanks in the last war. Keller showed me how at Chrysler a "bird," by putting two pieces of steel together, was able to burn out two gears in the same time it previously took to burn out one. That "bird" wasn't frozen. Of course, if he were, he would have just kept on burning out one gear. Maybe he wouldn't even have been doing that if somebody hadn't started him.

I don't want to be against national service. I am not. I am pleading for understanding, thinking, and doing something, rather than talking about national service as you would about a bottle of medicine. I have known some people very high in government who talked during 1942, 1943, and 1944. They said, "If this doesn't work, we will have to have national service"--just as though they were going to pull down a bottle and take a drink. It was never that simple. It was something that went to the very roots of our national life.

This thing of trying to run everybody else's business when we ourselves don't know what to do bothers me. Of course, I suppose it might be said that because I couldn't think of all the ways to do it, I didn't think anybody else could. I don't think that is quite true. Most of the people I talked with talked about national service. "Let's enact," they said. "How are you going to operate?" I asked. They replied, "Well, of course, that's a matter of detail." It reminds me of the days I was in service. The colonel and the major told me, the battery commander, a great many things that they didn't reduce to the actions I had to take. I am sure colonels and majors have changed since I was a captain.

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I don't know whether that helps you or not, but that is the way I feel.

QUESTION: If it were possible to persuade the Armed Forces to use mechanics as mechanics or cooks as cooks or ditch diggers as ditch diggers instead of mechanics as cooks and so on, would it be feasible to select people on that basis?

GENERAL HERSHEY: I think that, perhaps, something could be done in selection, but I have a speech I must make on that.

I have looked over a great many questionnaires in my time, and I have never found provision for a killer in one. Yet we would need probably 7 million people who can get in the presence of the enemy, a majority of them being able to come out alive whereas the enemy does not. Where are we going to get the fighters? One of the most damnable things in the last war was the fact that some persons thought, when they entered the service, that, having been something in civilian life, they had a right to insist that they work at jobs in which they were skilled. Where are we going to get the killers? Obviously, if a man has a skill and if we know the tactical situation, perhaps we ought to let him work at it; but we cannot have a philosophy of letting everybody do what he did in civilian life. We wouldn't be talking about that if there wasn't a war, and war is a time when people have to stop working at what they worked at in civilian life. It is easier to make a mechanic into a mechanic if he is already a mechanic, but it would be desirable to do that only if he could be spared, if he hasn't also the capacity to go in the presence of the enemy and live whereas the enemy does not. The cutting edge of the blade must have the best material in it, and you won't get it by telling everybody, "It is guaranteed that you can have the job you had as a civilian."

What do we get in the fighter group under that system? We get the guy who is too young to have ever done anything, the guy who has tried everything and failed, or the fellow who is just so dumb that he hasn't even tried anything. That is the difficulty of the philosophy of classifying everyone where he can do his best. And human beings being what they are, they tend to find jobs they are particularly capable of doing but which are not too close to this thing we have called, for want of a better term, the enemy.

Somehow or other we must take the young, the flexible, the people who are fast in the capacity to learn, and I am afraid we are going to have to take some who worked at something else and make fighters out of them. After all, until we get it straightened out differently, we will still need men who will have to be somewhere near the enemy, and they ought to be the persons with the greatest amount of flexibility, the greatest capacity to learn, and the

greatest awareness of their environment, not those who have demonstrated repeatedly that they do not know anything. You can't teach them anything. Period.

QUESTION: General, although during the last war there were certain procedures that could be used to obtain deferment of keymen and specialists in certain lines in business and even in the Military Services, I wonder if there is any method you might have in mind by which this could be done more satisfactorily?

GENERAL HERSHEY: I think I had better say no and then hedge a little.

In the first place, there is no such thing as deferment. Deferment is an individual thing given to John Jones at the time and it means that Bill Smith goes earlier than he either intended to or was supposed to go. That is the thing we must recognize first. There is only one way deferment can be handled satisfactorily, and that is the way we are handling it now, by not having any calls. If we don't have any calls, it is a very simple thing to handle deferments. But unfortunately the type of man we need in industry, the type of man we need for good, productive farming, the type of man we need in education--the type of man we need everywhere--is the type of man we need in the Armed Forces. Therefore, the competition becomes great and there isn't enough to go around, which belies the philosophy of plenty.

Of course, there is always going to be "stupidity" on the part of the person who decides it. There is "stupidity" on the part of some local boards in taking a man before his time. There is "stupidity" on the part of local boards in not taking him. I have heard many times the old story of plants which would have to be locked if someone was taken into the Armed Forces, but few padlocks were sold--not anywhere near the ones supposed to have been needed. Of course, if you can keep down the calls so that you don't take anybody, it is very simple; but somebody has to make that decision.

That decision was made in two ways during the last unpleasantness. First of all, Congress said that the Selective Service System had to decide who was going and who was staying. Well, that was simple. But the Armed Forces came along and helped out. They wanted to run a little deferment system of their own, so we had by far more people in the Reserves uncalled at the end of the war than we had at the beginning. That is rather peculiar. When a Reserve is set up in peacetime, so that during war you can rapidly mobilize, the Reserves are supposed to be mobilized when war starts.

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Of course, each fellow had his own little deferment business running, especially if he was in the procurement business. It is heresy to say that here; but one of the things some observer such as I am might point out is that the fellow who is a competitor for manpower, needed to fight, should not have control of the men of his own competitor. And you can imagine how many of the other agencies of the Government liked to see the Army and the Navy deferring people by the subterfuge of calling them to the Reserve because they wanted to use them somewhere, when the other agencies of the Government had to carry out their part without any deferments. Now there are those men who, when they were inducted, were immediately furloughed and continued on their old jobs; they are now raising the devil because I might be so unkind as to want to induct them because they didn't have three months' service, but sat the war out in the inactive Reserve--which doesn't count at the present time.

I need hold no brief for the capacity of the local board. Personally, I think it is the best system we can have, because if we were to try to centralize the system of deferment, we wouldn't be able to mobilize fast enough. Two thousand men an hour are a lot of men and you just can't have too many people running around sorting them out.

You people in the forces, if I look through the window properly, didn't do so well after you got those men we inducted. You allowed certain people who had the "sick child" attitude to squall, and you gave them all the peppermint candy; and some of the other people who, perhaps, didn't squall or couldn't squall found themselves without peppermint candy. Some of the time you took the peppermint candy and had your mouths so full you couldn't eat it all and had to spit some out. Who would want to eat it then? Who wants to take a man who is a castoff. Not only that, but for the individual, psychologically, it is a rough thing to get headed one way and then find himself going to what he thinks, and has been taught to think, is a rather undignified service; because, in order to maintain interservice rivalry--and I am for it--you must say your service is the best service, your battalion is the best battalion, and your company is the best company.

QUESTION: General, what are we going to do about the conscientious objectors and people with religion who cannot come in?

GENERAL HERSHEY: Volumewise, they don't amount to very much. We had about 50,000 out of 40-some million last time. They make a lot of noise and irritate the public; but, I am not so sure that the irritation of the public did not reach the point where it was helpful. Some of the people do little enough in a war so it gives them some satisfaction to think they are doing more than a conscientious objector is doing.

They were a nuisance for us. However, I don't want to belittle them. But 600 out of the 12,000 we had caused me more trouble probably than the 11 million men we inducted. Unfortunately, in life, the fellow who does what he is supposed to do, without yapping a lot about it, is the fellow who wins the war and keeps the country running. I, personally, am not disturbed about the conscientious objector.

I have a great deal of respect for the great majority of CO's. I have some thoughts about a small minority that I don't care to reduce to language here. Unfortunately, the more they know, the longer they have been to college, the worse they are. That is a hard thing to say, but I think I can prove it. The fellow we had who was cussed was the fellow who belonged to no church. He was an intellectual of some sort--probably a crackpot--but we couldn't get the psychiatrists to turn them all down, because if they kept their mouths shut, they seemed reasonably sane. Those fellows were bedeviled with the idea that they wanted to become martyrs. Of course, my policy always is to try to avoid making them martyrs. I believe that picking them, registering them, and then turning them loose disappoints them no end. The worst thing you can do is to pay very much attention to them, because that is exactly what a lot of them want. You are going to have, in a population of 148 million, a certain number of cussed folks. You always have a few stinkers in your battery, your company, your squadron, or what not, and you want them because you appreciate the rest of them so much more.

If I were a CO, I would worry more about the onset of modern times than I would about anything else. They make a lot of racket, but they are a very small group. Not only that, they are not holding their lines, which any of them who know enough to tell you the truth will admit. They are very much disturbed. They are young men. Out of 12,000 we had in the camps, a thousand applied to go into the Armed Forces later because they got tired of working for nothing and being supported by their churches.

Remember, these camps were run on subscription. I had a bond for \$500,000 from the conscientious-objector group that they would support, feed, clothe, and furnish money for the administration of, by and large, these people. Not only that, when we had them working on the farms, we turned the money into the Treasury. I think we have turned in about a quarter of a million dollars from the labor of these people who worked on farms. We allowed them \$15 or \$20 for soap and towels and what not and the remainder we collected. We had some boys who worked on dairy farms in the Los Angeles area and got about \$250 a month; that went into the Treasury. It wasn't much, but some of these fellows, I think, felt that they were making a contribution.

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Of course, we had the boys in the guinea-pig outfits who floated around for months and drank salt water with different chemicals in it to find out what would happen, and we had the boys who starved themselves for months and months. Some never did recover completely. You must think a couple of times before you challenge these fellows as to whether they have something they believe in. To find anybody in the country who believes in something clear through, even though it may be quite simple and even though you may disagree with the thing he believes in, makes you feel a little better.

They have stinkers just the same as every other organization has. Fortunately we had only about 600 out of 12,000 who caused real trouble, so far as we were concerned. And remember, gentlemen, I didn't have the Articles of War. If a fellow wouldn't make up a bed and I wanted to punish him, all I had to do was go to the district court and get the grand jury to indict him and then try him. That is the way I had to maintain discipline among 12,000 people scattered in some 200 camps. By and large, what is remarkable to me is that we got into trouble in only a few places. With the control we had, you would have trouble even with soldiers, sailors, airmen--and even marines.

Thank you.

COLONEL BAISH: You seem to have satisfied them, General Hershey.

GENERAL VANAMAN: On behalf of the staff and faculty of the Industrial College, I want to thank you for a very definite contribution to our studies. I think that the applause of the student body indicates to you just how they feel about your talk.

(21 February 1949--450)S/reu