



Washington, D. C. RECRUITING SHOWS PHYSICAL DEFICIENCIES

The army campaign for new recruits is showing up all too vividly how the years of depression have left their mark on American youth.

Greatest difficulty in securing recruits is not the reluctance of young men to enlist, but their inability to pass physical examinations.

In peacetime, the armed services get most of their recruits from lower-bracket families. Because of economic conditions it is now the lower-bracket families, with the most children, which lack sufficient nourishment, fresh air and exercise.

This has been a particularly serious drawback to recruiting in the larger cities. During one recent drive to bring the marine corps up to full strength, recruiting officers left the cities and combed the smaller towns in farming communities. There they found a much huskier type of recruit, but many were rejected because of poor teeth.

In the cities, the biggest drawbacks are bad eyesight and underweight.

WAR DOOMS CROP CONTROL?

Henry Wallace's program of crop curtailment and soil conservation is about to face its toughest year. Reason is the certain food shortage in Europe and the demand that American farmers use their surpluses to feed war-torn Europe.

There are two causes for the food shortage. One is the fact that many countries have been too busy fighting to plant sufficient crops, and their fields have been fought over.

Second reason is lack of sufficient merchant shipping. Four countries—Norway, Holland, Denmark, and Belgium—have a total of 10,000,000 gross tons of merchant vessels which are immobilized, so far as supplying the home ports is concerned. Either they are bottled up at home, or they are in foreign ports, unable to reach home.

Vessels which a year ago were carrying U. S. fodder to Denmark, to feed Danish cattle, today are diverted to other trade or riding at anchor. Meantime, the cattle are eating up the existing supplies of fodder. When these are gone, the cattle will have to be killed.

And the killing will be done by the Germans, who will consume the cattle.

This is just one simplified illustration. No such restriction was known in the early days of the World war, because the United States, still neutral, insisted on maintaining its shipping to the neutral countries of Europe. But now its shipping is barred by the neutrality act from belligerent ports and combat zones.

All of this is sure to bring heavy demands on the U. S. farmer, also on congress to appropriate relief money to help Europe's starving populations. And this, in turn, is sure to upset crop control. For it was high food prices during the World war which increased acreage and also sent many farmers heavily into debt to buy new land.

DIPLOMATS MAKE WARS?

John Q. Public thinks the diplomats make the wars—and could stop them.

Argentine Ambassador Espil has a letter saying, "Your country should submit itself to becoming a part of the United States." (No Latin American country is prouder of its independence than Argentina, less likely to become part of the U. S. A.)

Uruguayan Minister Richling gets so many letters he is working overtime to answer them. The tenor is: "You must get rid of the dangerous Germans."

FRENCH FLEET

The White House is not advertising it, but the disposition of the French fleet was one vital point which came up in secret discussion with the French just before their capitulation.

Roosevelt wanted to make sure that the French navy would not fall into Nazi hands. For France's warships could just about tip the balance of naval power and give the Nazis a powerful striking arm in the south Atlantic against Latin America.

The French have two brand-new 26,000-ton battleships, the Strasbourg and the Dunkerque, probably the fastest in the world; also two new 35,000-ton battleships, the Richelieu and the Jean Bart, the latter not quite completed. These, added to the German fleet, would give Hitler 10 battleships against 15 for the United States, all much older and slower.

When you consider that 12 U. S. battleships are kept in the Pacific, with only three in the Atlantic, you get a rough idea of how difficult it would be for this country to defend the Monroe Doctrine if Hitler got the French fleet. Another thing he might get which would add to our Monroe Doctrine problem is the French naval base at Dakar, on the bulge of Africa jutting out toward Brazil.

Note—The United States recently has launched two new war monsters, but it will take several months to complete them.

The New York Yankees are looking closely at the Red Sox and the Indians. Although holding every club in the league dangerous on any given occasion, they naturally expect the strongest resistance from those two teams.

They are concerned with the pitching in Boston and Cleveland. As they see it, they will be aided by a continuance of the ineffectiveness of Old Mose Grove and menaced by the skill of Bob Feller. They even think—at least some of them that I talked to the other day—that these two pitchers, one near the end of the string as a big leaguer and the other just heading into the days of his greatness, may bring about a change in the positions of their two leading rivals.

As Joe McCarthy puts it, Feller is doing for the Indians what Grove used to do for the Red Sox but can do no longer, apparently: step in and halt their skidding with a well-pitched game when the other pitchers are faltering. So far, of course, the Red Sox have managed to do all right without Old Mose in the form he held through last year. But what of the months ahead—the hot months when the strain will be heavier on the other pitchers.

Grove Through at Last?

I asked some of the Yanks if they thought Old Mose was through—that after 15 years of hurling, during which he slipped under the 500 mark only once, and that in his first year out of Baltimore—if the Lonaconing Limited really had lost his stuff. I asked them that, remembering that everybody thought he was through as far back as 1934 when he won only eight games in his first year in Boston.

They remembered that, too—and remembered how he came back with a rush—and what a pitcher he was right up to the end of last season. Only one of them answered.

"I don't know," he said, "but that's what we heard when we were in Boston. The dope we got was that while he might come through with a good game once in a while—might get out there any afternoon



and blow that curve ball of his around the plate and then let go with a fast one now and then just to remind the hitters he still has it—he isn't going to be much real help to the club any more.

"If that's so, those other Boston pitchers had better be hot all season. Check back and you'll find that the 15 games Grove won last year meant the difference between second place and fourth—at least."

The Yanks Admire Them

Incidentally, Grove and Feller, who may in one way or the other have such an effect not only on the fate of their own clubs but on the fate of the Yankees as well, are two of the Yanks' favorite athletes.

Naturally, they like to beat the two Bobs every time they hook up with them. But they admire Grove for his year-in and year-out performances, the courage he showed in beating his way back when everybody had him tagged for the cleaners and the skill with which he has made over his pitching style.

They Don't Like 'Showboats'

They admire Feller not only for the natural stuff he has but for the way he has taken his fame in stride. There are no swelled-heads or show-offs among the Yankees and they freely hand it to the kid from Van Meter for having already touched greatness without making any fuss about it.

The Yanks, I might say, are critical of ball players they call "showboats." Not understanding Dizzy Dean, they took an almost violent dislike to him and got a terrific kick out of his crack-up in the all-star game in Washington in 1937 and the defeat they slapped on him in the World Series of 1938.

But Diz got them on his side after the final game of the 1938 series when he walked into their clubhouse at the Stadium and said he hated to lose but getting beaten by a great ball club took some of the sting out of the defeat.

TRAINING CCC BOYS

It is timid nonsense to propose, by law, "non-combatant" military training for the CCC boys. What is non-combatant military service? It is a contradiction in terms—like talking about a two-legged quadruped or a one-bladed pair of shears.

A man may, as has been suggested, serve in the army as a cook, a truck driver or an oxy-acetylene welder and many such will be needed. But he is a soldier just the same and is not recognized, at international or military law, as a non-combatant.

This is just monkey-business with words.

This column has long opposed drafting CCC boys as such by any device. They are poor. Whatever form of military service we adopt must demand absolutely equal sacrifice regardless of wealth or poverty, race or religion, color or politics.

But giving military training is not requiring military service. In times like these it is a great boon to any boy who may later be called upon, under our democratic form of selective drafting, to do military service.

In the first place, it may save his life or limbs. It is the "half-baked recruit" who is slaughtered like sheep and who, as Kipling sang, "wonders because he is frequent deceased, ere 'e's fit for to serve as a soldier."

In the second place, if our bungling, blundering foreign and defense policies do get us into this bloody mess and require the raising of mass armies, the boy who has had sound military training before conscription starts will have a very great advantage over his fellows in advancement, pay and comforts.

My only boy has had about all the military instruction the army gives to men his age and if I had another son who had none now, I would consider the best thing I could do for him would be to see to it that he got an intensive course in military training as promptly as it could be arranged.

It is true that modern war requires specialists in almost every branch of human effort—but basic military training is necessary in addition to any special civilian skill a boy may have.

General Marshall is reported to have said that the army prefers to give these boys only "non-combatant" training because it is "inconvenient" to give combatant training in CCC camps. I hesitate to disagree with the chief of staff because we are fortunate to have in him at this critical hour one of the best of the world's professional soldiers.

It is even hard for me to believe that he said that because it is wrong to the point of absurdity.

But General Marshall is an official of this administration—and utterly loyal. The whole of administration policy on defense has been politically timid and never frank.

Up to the point of training by battalions, the CCC camps and organization are almost ideal if the army is prepared to furnish enough instructors, and if it isn't so prepared there isn't any use talking about training anybody.

Training now is multiple insurance against harm and danger, to the boy himself, to men later drafted raw from the streets that he may have to lead and train and, above all, to the nation which, if war comes, will find its very existence depending upon the degree of skill, strength and toughness of the men in its armed forces.

CCC boys thus trained will be subject to conscription to exactly the same extent and to no greater degree than any other young men of their age and condition as to health and dependency of others upon them. Let's not hobble ourselves with any such nonsensical legal restrictions.

RECRUITING ERRORS

Part of the war department plans for a major military effort is a whoop-la recruiting drive for volunteers to "bridge the gap of time until the system for compulsory selective service can be created and started working."

Before we got through with it, every boy who preferred to wait for the scientific selective service system would be called a heel and every impulsive youngster who was fifted, kettle-drummed and orated into signing up would be a hero. The process would put a shadow on the former class and not get the best material in the latter.

Modern mechanized war requires careful selection.

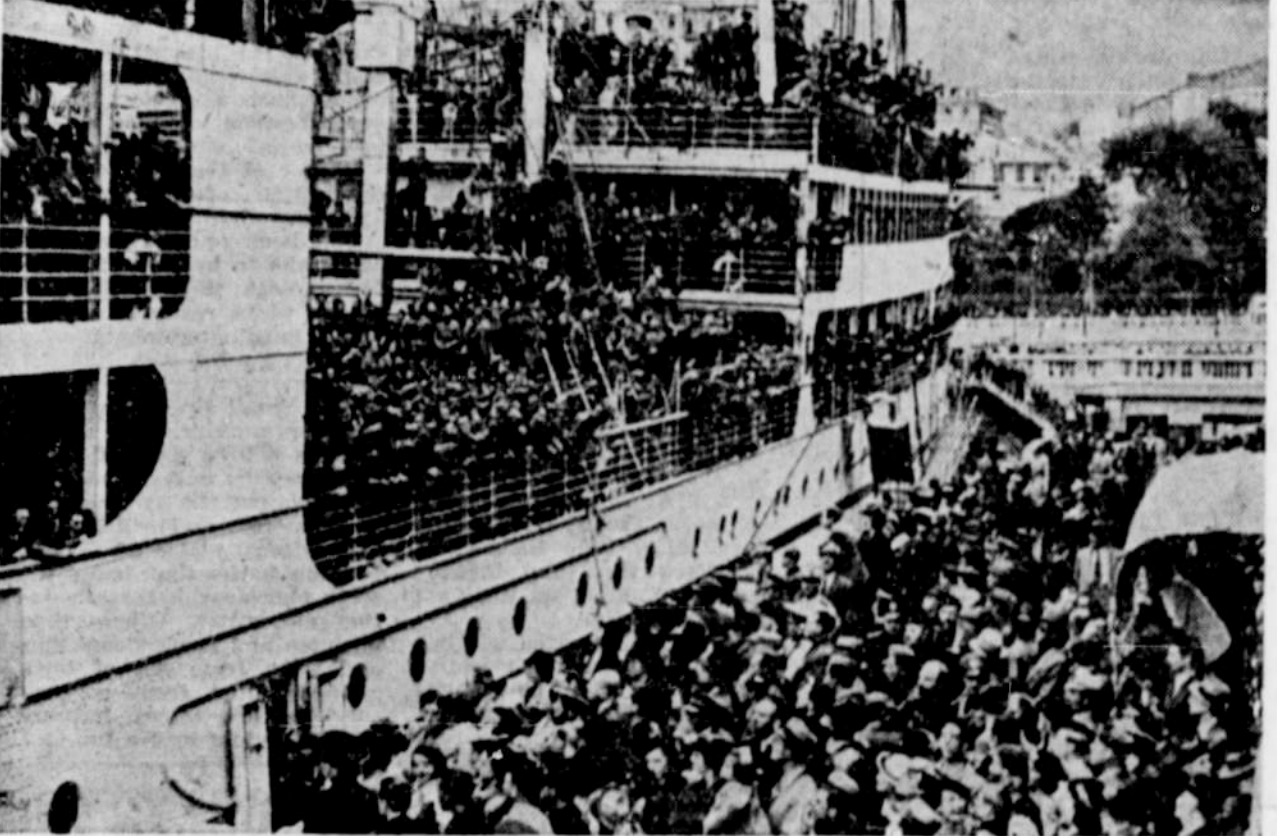
An excellent, if extreme example, of the change is in the German parachute troops. Each man is dropped down strictly on his own behind enemy lines to be a little army in himself. Soldiers in mechanized troops have to be automotive and radio mechanics, expert gunners and drivers and sometimes adept with explosives, gases and defenses against both. They must know far more of the principles of military art than any non-commissioned soldier ever had to know before.

'Miss Liberty' Salutes Refugee Liner



The Statue of Liberty was a welcome sight to the refugees from war-torn Europe who jam one of the decks of the United States liner, Manhattan, as the liner passes the distinguished lady (background) on its way to its New York city pier. The Manhattan brought almost 2,000 passengers from Genoa, Italy.

Whither Bound, Soldier Boys of Italy?



Relatives and friends of those aboard stand silently on the pier as the Italian liner, jampacked with soldiers, leaves Genoa, Italy, for some undisclosed destination. The soldiers might have been shipped to Italian territory in Africa to be used in attacks on French and British territory on the same continent.

'Miss Houston' of the Lone Star State

'The Soul of Italy'



Dimple Causey, selected as "Miss Houston" in a contest of more than 14,000 Texas school children, is here shown at the engine room telegraph of the liner Algonquin, arriving in New York, to take part in a series of events at the World's fair. Miss Causey was scheduled for a mighty busy time.



Recent photo of King Victor Emmanuel of Italy, who, according to an official announcement in Rome, has left for the front to lead his troops. In his declaration of war II Duce referred to him as "the soul of Italy."

The Italian 'Blitzkrieg' Machine Under Way



An Italian motorized division rolls along the streets of Rome in true "blitzkrieg" tempo. Their destination was not disclosed. Motorized troops and guns like these got into the grim business of destruction when II Duce entered the war.

Arrives in U. S.



Mrs. Kermit Roosevelt aboard the U. S. liner President Roosevelt, as it docked in New York, with more than 700 refugees from England aboard. Her husband is a major with the British army.