

RADIO STATION, WSM

MARCH 19, 1944

Good Morning, Friends:

The pinch on the nation's manpower has forced a decision here between more young men in the army or more young men in our various war plants. With the exception of only a few highly important plants, such as those building heavy bombing planes, the decision has been to take the young men out of industry and into the army. War Production Chief Donald Nelson told this to the heads of some of our large steel ~~ix~~ plants who protested that this would mean a lowering of production. National Selective Service Director, General Hershey said all he could offer was sympathy. The background of the decision is that in many categories we now have sufficient equipment to supply amply our armed forces and only replacements will be needed. This is not true, however, of some materiel, such as planes and new inventions.

During the week, both the House and the Senate accepted the report of the conferees representing the House and the Senate on the soldiers vote bill and thereby sent the bill to the President's desk. The bill is very complicated and even members of the conference committee disagreed as to what it meant and what it would do. It, in fact, leaves the question of voting by members of the armed services to the 48 states. A good many members of both the House and the Senate contended that it was more complicated and, therefore, fewer soldiers and sailors could actually vote under this bill than under the present law. President Roosevelt said that *this* ~~ix~~ would be the test which he would apply to it in determining whether

he would sign or veto the bill. Immediately upon its final passage, the President sent telegrams to each of the 48 state governors inquiring of them how it would affect absentee voting by soldiers and sailors from their respective states. It is generally thought here that upon their replies rests the President's decision to sign or veto the bill.

On the heels of the Allied success in destroying Cassino, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, taking notice of the criticism of the Italian campaign, declared during the week that all of the broad strategic purposes of the allies in Italy have been achieved. There has been much criticism here of the Italian campaign not only as to the slowness of its progress but many have questioned the advisability of invading Italy at all, pointing out that it could not be decisive and that by going there the Allies have incurred<sup>a</sup> lot of responsibility for feeding and governing the disconsolate Italian people. Secretary Stimson listed the objectives and achievements in the Italian campaign as:

1. Opening of the Mediterranean to allied shipping; (2) knocking Italy out of the war as Axis partner; (3) seizure of airbases in Southern Italy; (4) allied control of a large part of the Adriatic; (5) indirect help to Russia's winter campaign by pinning down 19 German divisions on the Italian front; and (6) inflicting casualties on the German forces substantially in excess of allied losses.

The tension between the United States and Ireland has grown even more tense because of Ireland's refusal to dispel from her land the diplomatic

representatives of both Germany and Japan who, by being in Ireland, are in a position quite advantageous to them and quite disadvantageous to us in that they can spy upon our preparations for launching the second front.

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St. Patrick's Day  
speech