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**THE GOVERNOR’S WARNING WORDS**

**APPEALS TO THE PEOPLE TO PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES**

**Asked For and Received Authority to Make a Census of the State of Men Available for Military Service and For Power to Prepare an Inventory Of the Resources Of the Commonwealth in Case of War – His Message Received With a Storm of Applause – Calls Connecticut Arsenal of the Nation.**

Governor Marcus H. Holcomb, before a joint convention of the General Assembly called at his request February 6 asked for the authority of the state to make a census of the men of Connecticut available for military service and for power to prepare an inventory of the physical resources of the state which war would call into requisition. His message, which he read in the hall of the House of Representatives, beneath crowded galleries, brought a storm of applause. The message follows: “The world is face-to-face with the gravest crisis in modern history – if not in the history of all times. A world conflict of titanic proportions is rocking civilization to its foundations, and the laws of the nations wrought on the anvil of experience and rendered sacred by the sanctions of organized society, are being isolated with reckless abandon. Hitherto it has been he official view of our government that the interest of the United States in this crisis is that of a neutral, although profoundly concerned, spectator, and we have not witnessed the immediate approach of the conflagration to our shores: but the swift march of recent events has compelled us to view gravely the immenence of our enforced participation in the mighty conflict. It, therefore, behooves us to reflect seriously and act wisely.

The scheme of government set up by our fathers vests the power of declaring war and making general provision for the national defense in the federal government, but it also imposes upon the several states of the union certain subsidiary obligations of serious moment. As members of the American family each must perform its full part. Both patriotism and common concern prescribe this inexorable duty.

“Aside from the general considerations of love of country and sate responsibility, our state has its own direct and peculiar interest in national defense. It might almost be said that Connecticut is today the arsenal of the nation. If the naval stockade which may shortly be called upon to protect us from attach should be broken through or destroyed by means of a numerous and powerful undersea fleet and a foreign force should reach our shores, among the first blows to fall would be one aimed at the highly organized industries of this state. It would be the purpose of the invading strategist to destroy or control the munition plants of Hartford and march up the Connecticut valley to the Federal Arsenal at Springfield. The great munition plants of Bridgeport, New Haven and eh Naugatuck valley could also be made immediate targets for like attacks.

“In our preparation for this contingency, we should take counsel of the unhappy experience of one of the great nations now at war, which found itself unprepared at the beginning and learned from costly experience that a pre-requisite of the mobilization of men and industry was the collection and classification of information as to the available resources of the country. Modern warfare calls into requisition with feverish intensity the complex agencies of man-power, materials, production, finance and transport, and if this Land of Steady Habits is to serve itself and the nation bravely and efficiently, it must begin early and act promptly.

“In view, of this situation and these considerations, I recommend that power be given to your governor to take a census, classified with a view to their availability for the various activities of war, of the state, together with an inventory of those physical resources of the state which war would call into requisition. If I am granted this authority, may from time to time consult you further as the work progresses, especially if I find that it promises to be expensive. I believe that sufficient information for our immediate needs can be secured at a small expense. Much of it is already in the possession of various state and municipal departments, chambers of commerce and similar civic organizations and can readily be collected and made available and I am confident that volunteers can be secured to do whatever is necessary outside of the clerical work involved.

“I make this recommendation with confidence because of the high traditions to which your honorable bodies are the heirs. Throughout the whole history of the people of Connecticut, whether in colonial times or under the existing federal constitution, this state never has fallen short or been found wanting in the hour of danger. When the news of Lexington was brought over the hills, the towns of the colony answered the call without question or delay, and sent their quotas to the aid of a sister state and the defense of the common cause of our invaded rights. In that other struggle, still vivid in the memory of the thinning ranks of a once great army, Connecticut’s part is thus eloquently described by one of its historians: “The first great martyrs of the war Ellsworth, Winthrop, Ward and Lyon – were of Connecticut stock. A Connecticut general, with, Connecticut regiments, opened the battle of Bull Run and closed it, and a Connecticut regiment was marshalled in front of the farmhouse at Appomattor when Lee surrendered to a soldier of Connecticut blood. A Connecticut flag first displayed the palmetto upon the soil of South Carolina; a Connecticut flag was first unfurled before New Orleans. On the banks of every river of the South and in the battle-smoke of every contested ridge and mountain peak the sons of Connecticut have stood and patiently struggled. In every ransomed state we have a holy acre on which the storm has left its emeraled waves – 3,000 indistinguishable bullocks on lonely lake and stream, in field, and tangled thicket.

“Such has been the steadfast spirit of the sons of Connecticut in every hour of peril. Marching in company with the heroic past let us, in this untoward hour of world agony, face unflinchingly the menacing tide of events.”