

## Does National Security Demand It? \_\_\_\_\_

JOHN M. COSTELLO

AS A BENEFIT flowing from the terrible conflict in which the entire world is at present engaged, the American people should derive a full and complete realization and appreciation of the genuine benefits of American citizenship. The over-running of all the countries of Europe and Asia by the ruthless forces of godless dictatorships should convince every American today that the only way in which we can survive this dreadful period and ultimately achieve the victory over our enemies is in the unified and united cooperative efforts of all the people.

The people of Great Britain learned early in the struggle that their chance of survival depended upon the complete unification of effort on the part of every person in the kingdom. It was no longer merely a question of rights and privileges, but rather of duties and obligations. Only because they recognized the duty of every person to share the burden of defense was

it possible for the British to hold on and, later, to fight back.

*There Are Duties as Well as Rights*

So it must be with us. Too long have we prattled about our rights and privileges as citizens, our freedoms and liberties, the while, we have totally ignored our duties and obligations to preserve and protect those benefits, if we would long retain them.

If we have the right to enjoy freedom, then we have the duty to protect our freedom. If we have the privilege of citizenship, then we have the obligation to preserve that citizenship.

Individually, and alone, man is helpless. For that reason, the family and the state exist, in order that, through cooperative efforts, we could develop the civilization we know today. Nothing will benefit that civilization more in these United States than the establishment, after the war, of a program of universal, nonexempt, military training for our young men. Such a program will provide for our national protection, produce a sense of responsibility and an acceptance of discipline on the part of our youth as well as develop a genuine improvement in the national health.

*A Step Toward World Order*

The establishment of universal military training will be sure notice to all the world that we, in the United States, do not intend that the peace conference following this war shall be but an idle gesture toward

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*John M. Costello, U. S. Congressman from California and member of the House Military Affairs Committee and the House Committee on Postwar Military Policy, favors universal conscription on the grounds that it is essential to national security and that it would greatly benefit American youth. This statement is published through the courtesy of The Town Hall, Inc. Mr. Costello presented his views on the question—"Should We Have Universal Military Training After the War?"—on the April 27 broadcast of America's Town Meeting of the Air. For a complete transcript of the discussion see Town Meeting Bulletin, Vol. 9, No. 51, The Town Hall, Inc., 123 West Forty-third Street, New York 18.*

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the development and maintenance of world order.

On the contrary, we will show that we intend to back up and to maintain the terms of the peace settlement and that we shall be, at all times, so prepared to do.

The mere establishment of peace following the cessation of hostilities will not mean that war will not again inhabit the universe. Twice we have been engaged in world conflict within a generation. Twice we have been inadequately prepared for the struggle.

Following this war we must and will maintain much of the land, sea, and air forces which we have developed for the winning of the conflict. We can maintain our protective forces most economically and provide the required reserve strength most effectively through this means of universal military training.

By calling for service every young man upon reaching the age of 18, we can maintain a force in training of more than a million men at all times. This force, when coupled with the men who will make a career of teaching these trainees and of providing the regular garrisons which will man our defense forces, we can present to the world as our "big stick" to preserve law and order.

### *To Develop Better Citizens*

Within five years we will produce a force of five million men prepared to defend the nation at a moment's call, ready to take their places in battle within three months, rather than three years. No program can so effectively bring to the citizens of this country an awareness of their duties and obligations as citizens.

The sound discipline of military training will produce a most salutary result in our youth who, too often, due to broken homes or inadequate parental supervision, lack all sense of discipline. In each young man will be emphasized the respect for authority, attention to duty, obedience to superiors, and faithful execution of orders. We will, in short, promote a more law-abiding citizenry.

An added benefit to accrue from this program will be the general improvement in the health of our young people. The enforced physical conditioning for all, the organized athletic activities and constant medical attention during the period of a year will enhance the physical well-being of these fortunate young men immeasurably. Moreover, we will greatly strengthen the bulwark of our great republic by promoting the democratic spirit amongst all groups and classes of society.

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