

'Man On Street' Solidly Approves War Declaration

President Roosevelt and congress received the unqualified approval of the "man on the street" in St. Louis today as the declaration of war was heralded from news stands and radio stations.

The only difference of opinion found by Star-Times reporters lay between those St. Louisans who thought the President should have gone on to ask for war against Germany and Italy, as well as Japan, and those who thought that was not necessary because "it is certain to come soon or later."

In downtown restaurants and taverns, people paused to listen to the dramatic broadcast from Washington. Work was at a standstill for those minutes in many office buildings and stores. Pedestrians crowded around newsboys to obtain the latest "extras" and along the streets groups could be seen collected about radio-equipped automobiles.

Little Excitement.

The excitement was not as great as it might have been perhaps, for everyone expressed the inevitability of the situation and appeared to be actually more interested in developments from the actual scenes of conflict.

A large crowd gathered at the Old Federal Building, Eighth and Olive streets, where the broadcast was amplified from the Little White House, headquarters for the sale of defense savings bonds and stamps.

The faces of both men and women were solemn and tight-lipped. There was no cheering.

"Of course, we're not cheering," said Mrs. Catherine Ditmeyer, a housewife and mother, of 2332 Montgomery street. "It's a terrible thing."

"But we are in the right. Everyone approves of what Mr. Roosevelt and Congress have done."

Out at the small arms ammunition plant, the amplifying system was utilized to carry the President's message to more than 9,000 construction and 1,000 office workers. The former stood silently, some with bowed heads, as Roosevelt's voice boomed across the grounds.

At Weldon Spring.

At the Weldon Spring TNT plant, the 600 office workers ceased all activity during the speech. Not serviced with an amplifying system, construction workers continued their tasks.

Practically the entire office force of the New Federal Building, Twelfth boulevard and Market street, stopped work as employees gathered around radios on every floor.

Most impressive sight was in the ninth-floor Navy recruiting office which was crowded with applicants, some with their mothers. All sat quietly to listen. Even when applause came over the air, there still was silence in the room.

Judge Kimbrough Stone, of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, had several visitors in his offices to hear the President. When the speech was concluded, Judge Stone said, "That was a masterly statement, concise and conclusive."

At a downtown restaurant everyone came to rigid attention when the strains of the National Anthem were heard. At the end of the number one man cursed softly. "I've got a boy on a destroyer out there," he said and turned away.

A woman wept quietly into a handkerchief when the President said, "Very many American lives have been lost."