

MARCH 16, 1945: p. 16

Washington OP

Draft Increases. Selective Service will have to draft 100,000 men in March, Secretary of War Stimson announced at a press conference. This represents an increase of 20,000 over the monthly quotas for January and February and a rise of 40,000 over December. The tempo of action both in Europe and the Pacific has "increased radically in intensity," Secretary Stimson commented in explaining the Army's increased demands. "The Germans are very evidently not going to accept the inevitable without a fight to the finish, and the war against the Japanese has moved ahead of schedule."

Reporters asked the secretary if it were not true that the Army is already overstrength considering its ceiling of 7,700,000. He said this was correct, but that not all of the men in the Army are effective, that 450,000 are sick or wounded in Army hospitals and that another 85,000 have to be counted as ineffective while they are "moving in and out in the so-called pipe line for the maintenance of the rotation policy."

In addition to the Army's increased demands, more men are needed in certain critical war industries, Secretary Stimson reported. By mid-year, 300,000 more workers will be required in plants making heavy ammo, heavy guns, trucks, heavy-duty tires and cotton duck, and 200,000 more will be necessary for war-supporting fields such as public utilities, construction trades and transportation lines. Still another 200,000 war workers must be found to furnish the war production which is needed to arm some additional French divisions.

Older men must fill the needs of industry, it was indicated. Secretary Stimson made it clear that "substantially all" physically qualified men under 30 will have to get into the armed forces this year no matter how important their present jobs.

—YANK Washington Bureau