

In reply address not the signer of this letter, but Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

Refer to No.

Nav-1431-FS

NCL(620)

NAVY DEPARTMENT  
BUREAU OF NAVIGATION  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

January 12, 1942.

My dear President Malott:

It is the hope of the Navy Department that the students of all the Universities and Colleges throughout the country will realize fully the seriousness of the present war and the sacrifice and toil each must make in order to fashion a total victory from it. It is further hoped that the men of the Universities will institute among themselves a regime of self-discipline and conditioning in order to better complete the immediate job at hand and prepare for the greater tasks to come. It is sincerely urged that the college officials and faculty members will support and participate in all such programs.

Today, not tomorrow, the youth of America must undertake the most colossal task and assume the most terrible responsibility of any generation in history. This, our country, must be defended with the last measure of our strength and the last ounce of our wealth. Only in democracy and freedom can mankind exist with faith in the future and confidence in the final fruition of the valiant efforts of the past. It is our way of life, our creed and our hope. Democracy has long protected the rights of individuals and the sacredness of personality. It is now the duty of each individual, in turn, to protect and perpetuate that order which has now been placed under desperate attack and seige by totalitarianism. No one can avoid his part in this task, nor retire from his responsibility of American citizenship.

The Nation has passed through an era of soft living and rampant individualism. Today as a result, there is a tremendous effort being made in all the armed forces of the Nation to correct the result of this long period of wasteful existence. The rejection figures for physical defects released by the Selective Service Commission are staggering. The armed forces are succeeding slowly with the actual training and mental and physical conditioning of their men. While this is being done, other young men of the nation should be taking time by the forelock so that the job will be less weighty for the armed forces when they join the ranks.

The Navy has underway a tremendous program to make the officers and the men of the Fleet hardened and physically fit for the fighting job confronting them. Into every Naval training station pours a cross section of American youth. The Navy trains them with drills, military science and physical exercise. The Secretary of the Navy has directed that every provision should be taken to guarantee that American Naval Officers and Bluejackets be second to none in physical fitness.