

(Not printed at Government expense)

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 78th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Deferment of Fathers From the Draft

EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

October 1, 1943

The Senate resumed the consideration of the bill (S. 763) exempting certain married men who have children from liability under the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended.

Mr. WHEELER. Mr. President, first of all let me say that the only reason for introducing my resolution at the outset was the fact that in February of last year, when the question arose with reference to drafting fathers, I introduced a bill to prevent the drafting of fathers. After that time I frankly stated that what I wanted was to have an investigation by the various departments of the Government of the question of deferring the fathers of the country until such time as the various departments themselves, realizing what the situation was, could investigate the manpower problem and take draft dodgers and slackers out of industry and out of the Government bureaus and put them into the Army, where they belong. Nothing was done about it.

The other day the senior Senator from Illinois [Mr. LUCAS]—I am sorry he is not now present—made the statement that I was wrong in my views before Pearl Harbor, and that I am wrong now.

I am willing to let history determine whether I was right in the statements which I made. I am willing to let history decide whether I was right when I said that we should defer the fathers of this country because so many men in industry have been deferred. They are deferred for two reasons. Fortunately, some labor unions are opposed to the deferment of young unmarried men in industry and the induction of the fathers of the country; but some labor organizations have worked hand-in-glove with industrial leaders in hoarding labor, be-

cause the more men who are on the pay roll the more dues will go into the treasuries of the labor organizations. I am glad to see that some of the labor unions are beginning to realize what it means to the labor unions themselves if they pursue the policy of hoarding labor, particularly young single men, when boys are dying on the battlefields all over the world.

Let me call attention to General Hershey's appeal last night. General Hershey is finally saying exactly what I have said on the floor of the Senate. It is an admission that I was right. I read from an article in the New York Times of October 1. The headline is, "Hershey appeals in deferment cut. Fears breakdown of public morale unless employers release single men."

I have stood on the floor of the Senate and said that when we draft fathers and let single men hide behind draft deferments in industry and in the Government service, we break down the morale of the people of the United States and the war effort as nothing else under the sun could do. Why is it that I am receiving letters from members of draft boards from one end of the country to the other, saying that they are resigning from the draft boards? Why is it that they are saying that they are going to quit entirely? Some of them are saying that they defy the Government to take them. It is because of the fact that they know that in their particular communities, from one end of the country to the other, the morale of the people is breaking down when they see what is going on right under their noses.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ELLENDER in the chair). Does the Senator from Montana yield to the Senator from Kansas?

Mr. WHEELER. I yield.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I should like to say to the Senator from Montana that I am in complete sympathy with his objective and what he seeks to ac-