

responsibilities and duties incident to safeguarding the lives and properties of our citizens at home.

I am advised today from Washington that the pending Federal legislation, authorizing the formation of this Guard under the direction of the State, is moving toward final passage. Fortunately, it is expected that the War Department will supply the equipment and uniforms, or both, so that our State will not be subjected to any considerable financial outlay. Of course, it is, also, true that when the National Guard is called into Federal service their State pay is suspended, so that a corresponding saving will result to our State.

Speaking of the induction into Federal service of our National Guard brings to mind the all-important question of conscription and of what we in the State may be called upon or expected to do. We assume that the conscription bill will pass relatively soon and shortly thereafter it will be necessary to give effect to its provisions.

Under the present plan I might advise you that there will be approximately 66 local boards set up in this State. These boards, consisting of three members each, will be unpaid and associated with them will be a paid clerk, a medical officer as well as a government appeal agent. Over these groups will be Boards of Appeal situated in four different sections of the State. Also, there will be Medical Advisory Boards and Registrant Advisory Boards. The purpose of the latter will be to give competent aid and advice to the men affected by the Selective Service Bill.

Just as in the formation of the State Council of Defense, it must be the policy not to allow politics or outside considerations to govern the selection of these officials. If men are to be required to leave their homes and give up their work, and change their entire course of life, for army service they have the right to know that no favoritism has been played. It would be unjust and unworthy of the State's effort to have any other policy govern this selection than one of square dealing, impartiality and a single determination to do that which is best for the Country and the State.

Another important phase of National preparedness with which the State Administration has had to grapple is the matter of adequate highways to handle the tremendous movement of traffic through our State to and from the Federal Government in Washington, and between the many important industrial plants throughout the State. The rapid and orderly movement of troops near the seacoast obviously requires modern roadways. Plans prepared in detail by our State Roads Commission, at the instance of the Public Roads Administration, call for a strategic series of highways covering practically every section of the State, and likely to cost between fifty million and seventy-five million dollars. The matter is now before the Congress in Washington for approval because the funds for such new construction must be supplied from the Federal Treasury.

It is expected, however, that approval will be forthcoming for two reasons; first, because of the great need for such a network of roads as feeders to and from the National Capital, and secondly, because over the period of twenty months during which the present Administration has been in office, we have made a conscientious effort to devote every possible resource to the task of rebuilding our State Roads system, which had been allowed to run down drastically due to diversion of gasoline tax monies over the preceding six years. Now that such diversions have been stopped absolutely—for all time,