

January 4, 1945

Hon. A. J. May, M. C.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Jack:-

From time to time it has been a matter of a great deal of concern to me that the draft officials have been consistently turning down men who were able bodied, in good physical condition but not accepted solely because of their inability to read and write; and in some instances I doubt seriously the inability of such rejection to read or write. Rumor has it that there are some people active as to draftees in the matter of pre-induction and pre-examination matters, and teaching them how to avoid the draft, either physically or mentally.

You and I know that there are large numbers of men within the draft age from our portion of the State who may not have the higher education but who are strong as an ox and can hit a squirrel's eye in a tree at a hundred yards or more. We know further, that they are imbued with good common sense and learn rapidly.

The G.I. Bill has provided for the education of soldiers who come out of the Army; and in view of the condition first herein set out, I am suggesting to you that there might be some provision made for the induction of these illiterates and give to them a few months schooling so as to teach them at least to read and write and then put them in the regular Army training camp for their training period. I believe that this suggestion has some merit to it and is worthy of consideration. At your convenience, let me know your reaction to it.

My best personal wishes.

Very truly yours,

Joseph D. Harkins

JDH:mb