Director of Selective Service
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear General Hershey:

In view of the Japanese surrender, the Army desire to reduce inductions through Selective Service to a figure which will provide only sufficient men to support the forces which will be required for occupational duty and so permit the relief of the long service men overseas to the maximum extent transportation will permit. It is our plan to reduce the Army's strength, starting at once and as expeditiously as practicable. It is estimated that we will arrive at a strength of approximately two and a half million men within the next twelve to eighteen months, and thereafter to continue the decrease in accordance with the situation as it develops. To avoid the retention of men on occupational duty for long periods of time, the Army will require from Selective Service 50,000 men a month in the proportion of 45,000 white and 5,000 colored.

To keep the requirement for military service in the age groups which contain the fewest family men and the fewest industrially skilled experts, the Army will accept hereafter only men below 26 years of age. With this in mind, the presently placed calls for the months of August and September should be reduced from 80,000 to 50,000, and it is requested that you fill them exclusively with personnel under 26 years of age.

Sincerely yours,
HENRY L. STIMSON
Secretary of War.

copy for S/W
Transportation by air and sea should make possible the release from the Army of five to five and a half million men during the next twelve to eighteen months. It is too early to propose definite figures for the occupation forces which will be required in the Pacific twelve months from now or what reduction it may be possible to make in the strength of the Army forces now allotted to occupation duties in Europe. It is apparent, however, that we can release as many men as can be brought home by the means available during the next year.

The present problem, therefore, centers on the readjustment of personnel now in uniform and the induction of new men through Selective Service to permit the earliest possible release from the Army of those men who have long records of dangerous, arduous and faithful service.

Requirements for future induction into the Army will be limited to the lowest age groups which will provide the numbers of men required. Preliminary estimates indicate that the age group under 26 will satisfy this requirement.