

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SELF PRESERVATION

LESSON 11 SESSION 03

11.9 National defense act.

The national defense act of 1920, amended to include March 4, 1927, provides:

That the Army of the United States shall consist of the Regular Army, the National Guard while in the service of the United States, and the Organized Reserves, including the Officers' Reserve Corps and the Enlisted Reserve Corps.

Except in time of war or similar emergency when the public safety demands it the number of enlisted men in the Regular Army shall not exceed 280,000, including the Philippine Scouts.

The total authorized number of enlisted men, not including the Philippine Scouts, is at present fixed at 125,000.

11.9.1 Regular Army.

The Regular Army consists of approximately 118,000 enlisted men and some 11,500 officers. A large part of this force is used for garrison purposes at home and abroad. Those at home spend about eight months of the year in their own training and in intensive preparation for the work required of them in summer training camps.

The Regular Army also conducts the training of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, the Organized Reserves, and the National Guard. Officers and men of the Regular Army are qualified to impart physical, mental, and moral training of the highest character. The very nature of their work makes them specialists in this field. No business or profession demands stronger character and ability. No group is more carefully disciplined, and nowhere will be found greater loyalty and honor. To train with and serve under the officers and enlisted men of the Regular Army is to be afforded an opportunity for personal betterment which any wide-awake young American should be eager to accept.

11.12.2 National Guard.

The second amendment to the Constitution provides that —

A well-regulated Militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed.

Prior to the national defense act of 1916 it was left to the States to provide an organized militia adequate in numbers, equipment and training to police the State in time of riot or insurrection; it was also to be used by the National Government in time of war with a foreign power. With the addition of a small standing Army the forces thus provided were presumed sufficient for national defense. Under the national defense act of 1920, the National Guard, in time of peace, is under the command of officers appointed by the governor of the State, but their training and administration is supervised by officers of the Regular Army assigned for that purpose. In time of war the National Guard, as a component of the Army of the United States, is immediately called into national service. Together with the Regular Army, it serves as the first line of defense while the reserve forces are being organized and equipped.

An efficient Militia is authorized and contemplated by the Constitution and required by the spirit and safety of free government. — *Madison*.

11.9.2 Organized Reserves.

The Organized Reserves, together with the other components of the Army, form the basis for a complete and immediate mobilization for national defense in any national emergency declared by Congress. Each reserve unit is now organized with its officers and a few enlisted specialists. In time of war these units will assemble at points designated, there to be equipped and trained. Every member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps and all graduates of the citizens' military training camps who have qualified for leadership and have been commissioned would be required to report to his proper station on the designated day.

To expose some men to the perils of the battle field while others are left to reap large gains from the distress of their country is not in harmony with our ideal of equality. — *President Coolidge*.

11.10 Preparedness an agency for peace.

The desire for peace is the spirit of America, but that peace must be dynamic, not a peace characterized by weakness of purpose or lack of courage.

"Common defenselessness" is in opposition to the spirit of the Constitution. The best guaranty of peace is a physically fit people inspired by the spirit of the Constitution and strong enough to defend themselves against any foe.

True Americans should be prepared to defend our Nation against those influences that will not only destroy all patriotic ideals that have been acquired through years of struggle but which advocate the overthrow of our Government by force. Our very freedom allows enemies within to operate with appalling boldness. They have powerful allies in the persons of those who would abolish all of our defenses — who would have peace at any price.

The writings and utterances of the men who laid the foundations upon which posterity has been called to erect the superstructure of this Nation continually remind the citizen of the necessity to provide for an adequate defense of the blessings of liberty that, to insure them for future generations, we must be strong enough to protect and defend our country and our institutions from any hostile aggression, whether from without or within.

By diffusing through the mass of the Nation the elements of military discipline and instruction; by augmenting and distributing warlike preparations applicable to future use; by evincing the zeal and valor with which they will be employed and the cheerfulness with which every necessary burden will be borne, a greater respect for our rights and a longer duration of our future peace are promised than could be expected without these proofs of the national character and resources. — *Madison*.

11.11 Moral qualities essential to self-preservation.

The American citizen must emphasize those qualities of character which mark him as truly worthy of the privileges of independence and liberty. His claim to self-respect is sound only as he upholds the self-respect of his fellow citizens. His honor is sacred only as he protects the honor of his country. He values liberty and independence only in so far as he is willing to pay the price for its protection.

It takes more than eloquent speeches and hot words to accomplish sublime purpose — it takes risk; it takes sacrifice. It takes the spirit of a Nathan Hale, who, having been sent by General Washington to bring intelligence concerning the British in New York City, was captured within the British lines and executed as a spy by order of Sir William Howe, the British commander. His last words were: "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." This is the spirit that won our liberties. It takes the same spirit to preserve our liberties.

"We mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." — *Signers of the Declaration of Independence*.

The moral qualities essential to self-preservation are —

The will to win.

The courage to endure.

The willingness to die.