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Funtville Ala

Apr. 9-17



Hon John H Bankhead,
Deot Senator:-

I see by the Administration bill for Com-
pulsory or Universal Military training that
men between the ages of 18 to 25 are drawn-

A Young Gentleman 24 years of age
has just been over to see me this morning
to see if something could not be done to
exempt him. He embarked in business
about 24 or eight months ago - the merchan-
tile trade here in North Madison Co.

He tells me that if forced to leave his bus-
iness that it will be a great pecuniary
loss to him - He says he would not care
a particle to go and serve in the Army
if he could avoid this loss which repre-
sent his earnings for several years.
His argument is that a young man



who amounts to much has generally or at least many times at least embarked in some business or has gotten married by the time he is 25 years old, and that after making those investments or assumed the responsibilities of a family it would be hard to require them to abandon them when there are plenty of young men, who have not arrived at that age and in a majority of cases are unmarried and have no business ventures.

He convinced me that he was right to drag a man 25 years of age away from his business and drill him a year or so, then keep him in the service say a year or so is appropriating quite a portion of his active years - after being discharged it would take him some while to pick up other business. I think decidedly the best plan is to take the young man

from 18 to 20 or 21 years, before he forms marriage or business alliances. This young man pointed out some three or four young men in this community whom I know who would be affected in like manner.

I hope you can see your way to make an effort to have the bill amended in the way suggested. Thanking you very much and asking your pardon for so long a letter to express so few ideas I am with much respect
Yours truly

J. L. Burgess
Huntsville
Ala

Route 1



Huntsville, Ala
Apr. 9-17

Hon. John H. Bankhead,

Dear Senator-

I see by the administration bill for Compulsory or Universal Military training that men between the ages of 18 to 25 are drawn.

A young gentleman 24 years of age has just been over to see me this morning to see if something could not be done to exempt him. He embarked in business about six or eight months -the merchantile trade here in North Madison Co.

He tells me that if forced to leave his business that it will be a great financial loss to him-He says he would not care a particle to go and serve in the army if he could avoid this loss which represents his earnings for several years.

His argument is that a young man
(p. 2)

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Route 1 Ala

Huntsville Ala

April 11 1917

Hon. John H Bankhead
Dior Senator:-



I mailed you a letter yesterday about the Compulsory Military Service Measure before Congress - known as the Administration measure - I written under a Misapprehension or Misunderstanding of the Nature of the Measure

I thought it was a Measure that provided for Conscription in the event the Volunteer System failed. In this I find I was mistaken and I find that the bill provides for Conscription independent of Volunteers.

I think this idea would be Violently resented by an Overwhelming body of our people

I am just a former, living out on the farm - no politician, but I happened to go to Huntsville yesterday and heard - numbers and numbers of people here in Madison Co Express themselves and I don't recall a single man who approved conscripting excepting where an insufficient number of volunteers were not forthcoming.

Every body who I heard Express themselves were against conscription at present and they generally thought enough and even more volunteers would enlist.

I thought I would write you this for unless I did so you might infer that I was in favor of conscripting.

Asking your pardon for taking up your time I am
Yours truly -
J. L. Burgess

Huntsville Ala
April 11, 1917

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Asking your pardon for taking up your time I am Yours truly,

J. L. Burgess

COPY

14 April 1917. b-c

Mr. J. L. Burgess,
Huntsville, Alabama,

My dear Mr. Burgess:

I am replying to your letters of the 9th and 11th instant. Congress has not yet determined what method will be adopted for raising an army for the present emergency. I have not yet brought myself around to the belief that we should send an army to the trenches in Continental Europe, nor am I convinced that any form of conscription is the proper method to secure an army at this time. Notwithstanding your two letters of explanation there is considerable merit in the suggestions contained in your letter of the 9th.

If I can be of service at any time in any way command me.

Sincerely yours,

