

*To the House of Representatives:*

Herewith is returned, without approval, H. R. 7752, a bill to limit the issue of reserve supplies or equipment held by the War Department.

This bill provides that no issues of reserve supplies or equipment shall be made where such issues would impair the reserves held by the War Department for two field armies or 1,000,000 men, except supplies or equipment becoming obsolete, deteriorated, or useless.

For several years the annual appropriation acts for the War Department have included a provision that under the authorizations therein contained no issues of reserve supplies or equipment shall be made where such issues would impair the reserves held by the War Department for two field armies or 1,000,000 men. The authorizations to which this provision directed itself were those embraced in the annual appropriation acts for the War Department covering the issuance of uniforms, equipment, or matériel to the National Guard, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, and the civilian military training camps from the surplus or reserve stocks of the War Department. Bill H. R. 7752 goes far beyond the scope of the provision which has appeared in the annual appropriation acts for the War Department. It virtually sets aside these reserve supplies and equipment and precludes their issue for any purpose where such issues would impair the reserves held by the War Department for two field armies. In cases of emergency happening within any of our States, involving the loss of life or property, the War Department has been the principal Federal agency to render assistance. The ability of the War Department to respond in these cases is necessarily measured by the availability of the supplies and equipment necessary to proper relief. If the War Department be precluded from using these reserve supplies and equipment in case of actual and imperative call, its effectiveness as an agency to relieve distress is diminished. It is my understanding that the War Department thinks this measure too restrictive.

I do not understand that it was the intention of the Congress to place any restriction on the use of these reserves in real emergencies where the aid of the Federal Government is necessary to relieve the suffering and distress of the people. Rather do the reports on this bill indicate that it was the intention of the Congress simply to enact into permanent legislation the provision which has appeared in the annual appropriation acts. If this proposed legislation carried out only this intention, I would have no objection to offer to it, but for the reasons stated I am returning the bill without my approval.

CALVIN COOLIDGE.