

WAR DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

May 16, 1944

TO ALL VOLUNTEERS OF THE AIRCRAFT WARNING SERVICE:

You have had a unique opportunity to see and to take part in the gradual transition from the defensive position into which your country was forced at the start of the war to the offensive that is today forcing our enemies back towards Berlin and Tokio. Many of you have served loyally and well in the Aircraft Warning Service ever since December 8, 1941. All of you have contributed your share to making this transition from retreat to advance possible.

The most crucial battles of our Nation's history are now in prospect overseas. They demand the full resources of our country, both in manpower and materiel. For that reason, the War Department has directed the further reduction of air defense measures within the continental United States and the release to the offensive of trained soldiers and equipment that could not otherwise be brought to bear upon the enemy.

The aircraft warning centers, at which so many of you have served and to which so many others have reported as ground observers, are to be closed. The Aircraft Warning Service, on a reduced scale, will be absorbed into installations used for the training of fighter pilots. The resulting savings in military personnel and equipment will be substantial.

This does not mean that the War Department is of the opinion that all danger of enemy bombing has passed. On the contrary, a small-scale sneak raid is still within the capabilities of our enemies. We must win this war in Europe and Asia, however, and the calculated risk we are assuming in reducing our air defense measures is justified by the offensive power we will thereby release.

During your period of duty with the Aircraft Warning Service, you have learned many facts which, if made public, might be of service to the enemy. The War Department looks to you to maintain silence with respect to these matters of national security. The obligation you assumed to safeguard military information remains in full effect.

This war has a long way to go. We are only just entering upon its crucial phase and victory lies far ahead beyond many bloody battles. The War Department sincerely hopes that you will not relax your war effort, and urges that you transfer to one of the many remaining vitally important jobs the loyalty and self-sacrifice you have shown in your work for the Aircraft Warning Service.

The War Department is deeply grateful for the important service you have rendered your country.

Sincerely,



HEADQUARTERS I FIGHTER COMMAND
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
MITCHEL FIELD, N. Y.

May 27, 1944

TO: All Volunteers of the Aircraft Warning Service.

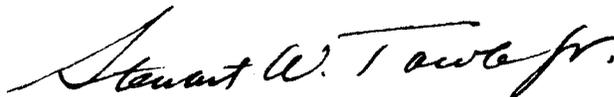
With the announcement by the War Department of the discontinuance of the Ground Observer Corps and the Aircraft Warning Corps, I want to express my personal appreciation and that of all the officers and men of this command to the volunteers who have served so loyally and efficiently with us in the defense of the eastern seaboard.

It has been almost two and one-half years since that Sunday in 1941 when thousands of patriotic Americans sprang to the defense of their country by manning round-the-clock watches at Observation Posts, Filter Centers, and Information Centers. It is my conviction that there never existed a more sincere and loyal group of Americans than those who volunteered for this work.

You have done a splendid job and have successfully accomplished your particular mission which must now be terminated because of the developments of our strategic situation. Now with the war almost entirely in its offensive phase, I hope and believe that you will turn your patriotic efforts into other forms of work which will help to support the attack and bring the day of victory nearer.

As an indication of the appreciation of this command, and in recognition of your faithful performance of duty as a member of the Aircraft Warning Service, you will receive in the near future the I Fighter Command Certificate of Honorable Service.

I want to thank each of you for all you have done. Your country, the Army Air Forces, and your fellow Americans owe a debt of gratitude to the members of the Aircraft Warning Service.



STEWART W. TOWLE, JR.,
Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.