To the People of the 7th Congressional District of Indiana.

The American people are now charged with the execution of an issue of far more solemn and momentous import than was ever before submitted to any nation. Such are the fearful proportions to which the Rebellion has grown, that unless it shall be speedily suppressed, the Union must inevitably be destroyed, and the Government be lost forever.

The Constitution has made it the duty of Congress to decide upon the best means of carrying on the war. For this purpose the "Conscription Law" has been passed, pursuant to all the requirements of the Constitution, and until repealed or declared to be null and void by the Court, our citizen can exempt himself from the obligation of obedience to it. No Court has yet decided it to be unconstitutional, and, therefore, the man who puts himself in opposition to its execution is clearly manifestly, a violator of law and subject as such to punishment in the civil courts of the United States. If a number of men shall combine together for that purpose, they are, in the eye of the law, conspirators. If they so far as to carry their common purpose into execution by force of arms, they have revived war against the United State and are guilty of treason.
Such has always been the law, and whenever it shall become otherwise, there will be an end of all government, and we shall be plunged into universal anarchy, without any protection to life, liberty, or property.

When I accepted the office of Postmaster Marshal of this District, to aid in the execution of this law, I acted from a sense of duty to the Country, and from no personal motive whatever. I yielded more to the wishes of others, of the parties, than to my own, and in return for their confidence, can only pledge myself as I now do, in all sincerity and earnestness, that I will neither do any thing myself, nor suffer it to be done by others, acting under my authority, except what may be necessary to an honest and impartial enforcement of the law. The draft shall be publicly and fairly made, so that no individual shall have just cause of complaint. This shall be done whatever the personal sacrifice necessary to accomplish it, and I have the right not only to invite but to expect the co-operation of all the people.

War exists by the act of those who are seeking to destroy the Government. It is the most terrible conflict.
known to history, and leave no neutral ground for the citizen to stand upon. He who does not aid in resisting the Rebellion by the means in his power, lends his influence against the government. He who actively resists the employment of the means provided by law for that purpose, aids the Rebellion. The law is not the act of the President; it is the act of the Government. Insolent resistance to it, therefore, is resistance to the Government. The citizen may dispute its provisions and his conduct be, comparatively, harmless; but when he resist it, his conduct becomes criminal. These consequences cannot be escaped. No sophistry can argue them away.

It is well known that in this district there has been already serious resistance to the execution of the Conscription law. In several neighborhoods, the Enrolling officers have been threatened that, if they persisted in the discharge of their duties, their lives should pay the forfeit. In other, their houses have been entered in the night and the Enrolling paper taken and destroyed. In other, they have been terrified by threats of personal violence. And in one neighborhood, an Enrolling officer has been cruelly
brutally murdered in sight of his own home.

In some sections of the district these efforts to defeat the law have engendered opposition to all authority of the Government. Deserters from the army are protected from arrest by bodies of armed men, who, by fire, concerted signal, are brought together in a few hours. Hundreds of these have been so brought upon by a ruse, appeal to their passions, that they have, in a great measure, abandoned their ordinary pursuits, and parade the country under arms, both day and night, openly proclaiming defiance to the military and civil authority of the United States. They have notified the supporters of the Government that they must quit their homes, or suffer the consequences. Remaining — and there are now in the city no less than five citizens of Sullivan County who have sought refuge here against threats of assassination. Secret organizations exist where men are put upon trial for their support of the Government and the war, and where special agents are deputed to execute their sentences. And, in more than one instance, those who are misled by these combinations have avowed that they are ready for war with the Government authorities, and have boasted that they are strong enough to resist any force that may be sent against them. It is impossible for this state of things...
to continue. Those who have brought it about must submit themselves to the authority of the law, or bloodshed will inevitably follow. The Government cannot and will not recede.

What object do these men seek to accomplish? He who supposes that by the murder of one or of a dozen Enrolling Officers or other supporters of the Government, the enforcement of the Conscription Law can be defeated or postponed, must have become insane with passion. Let him not deceive himself, or be deceived by others. The law will be executed: "peaceably, if it can, forcibly, if it must." The Government has the power to execute it in every neighborhood, and they who invoke, by persisted opposition, the employment of this power will have no just cause to complain of the consequence, however severely they may be visited by them. I declare, in all sincerity, that no man could deplore more than I do, the necessity which would drive the Government to this extremity, and solemnly promise that I have done and will continue to do whatever I can rightfully do to avoid it. But the law must be executed, at every hazard. I am not aware that a single
right of any peaceable citizen has been invaded by the government. And yet those in the district who have combined to defeat the law, seem resolved to begin another rebellion in the loyal state, because of the pretence that some right in the loyal state has been impaired. Will they consent to destroy their own government — all that is left to them of law, order and security — merely that such imaginary wrongs may be avenged? I beg them not to forget that the Rebel States are at war against the Constitution, which they have sworn to trample under foot, and that they are the common enemies of the government and of all who support and defend it. Will they cherish the public animosity, for employing whatever means may be necessary to reduce them to obedience by putting down the rebellion? Rebels in army have no rights under the Constitution and the law. They have sworn and it is ignored both. Hence, no intelligent man can fail to see, that resistance to whatever more may inflict the severest of speedy and punishment upon them, is less than more (in less than taking sides against the government). Mr. Douglas enforced this idea, in his own strong and expressive language, when he said:
"There are only two sides to the question. Every man must be for the United States or against it. There can be no neutral, in this war, only patriot or traitor."

There is a simple and easy means of preventing a resort to force to compel obedience to the Conscription Law. Let every citizen who cherishes affection for the government, and who has any reverence for law and order, set his face sternly and patriotically, against the existing condition of affairs, and lead his influence to the public authorities; and quietly will be immediately restored. No man will be oppressed and no legal right impaired. To such an appeal, in the name of the country, the Constitution, the Union, and all the sacred memories of the past, and all the cherished hopes of the future, let them not be misled into the belief that they are absolved from the high obligation of citizenship because the administration is not of their choice, or because they may differ with the President about the mode of conducting the war. When South Carolina attempted to secede, in 1832, did any Whig president of the United States claim that he was exempt, by reason of party differences, from the obligation to support him in what
ever one measure he considered necessary to repel insurrection? Did not all the great leaders of the Whig party, with Clay & Webster at their head, rush to his support, with un
questioning confidence in his loyalty to the Constitution? They forgot all party question for the time and stood by the administration, because the administration stood by the coun-
yry. Gen Jackson unfurled the old flag of our fathers and that was enough for them. Whenever that was carried, they were ready to follow without stopping amid the thunder of battle, to inquire what were the party politics of the man who bore it. And thus, Gen Jackson, sustained by all parties, was enabled to rise up triumphant to the lofti
test dignity of the State, man, when he declared:

"The laws of the United States
must be executed. I have no discre-
tionary power on the subject — my duty
is emphatically pronounced in the Constitu-
tution. Those who told you that you might
peaceably prevent their execution, deceived you — they could not have been de-
cieved themselves. They knew that a for-
cible opposition could alone prevent the
execution of the law, and they knew
that such opposition (must be repelled)."

What was then the duty of
The Jacksonians, with the duty of Mr. Lincoln. The Constitution, obdurate in resting upon both, is precisely the same. All the words understood by Jackson to be a Military chieftain, and knew, full well, that when ever be deemed the occasion to call for it, he would resort to military force to put down forcible opposition to any existing law. Mr. Lincoln is not a military chieftain, but then he will be found to lack neither earnestness, determination, nor courage in discharging a like constitution: and obligation. Let these, then, who have armed themselves to resist the Conscript Law, take warning in time. I utter words of caution and entreaty—practise threats, saving or defiance. I implore them, in the name of all they hold dear in life, to beware, and not push forward to their own destruction. Disobedience to law can have no impunity until all law and all government is destroyed. Those who seek to destroy them must be overwhelmed by the public opinion or crushed by the public power. I either create their name, and memories will be held in perpetual execration—a curse on the lightning bolts, whatever the striker.

There is too much in the past of our history to be forgotten, and too much involved in our future to be abandoned to either chance or passion. The eye of manhood is open, and as we shall see the incapacity of man for self-government, so will the hope of the world for free institutions, rise and fall. If our government shall be new, God will it ever be seen again. If it shall be destroyed, the Union become again compact, preparation will receive a new impulse over all the earth. The nation, which refuses to pay respect to our free government, will be compelled to dread our power. Is not Compell utility work of any party. It belongs to all alike. It demands the sacrificing the energies, the labors, of all, whatever they may
think about public men or the opinion they for-

jep. The men of to day are nothing compared to
the great future which we have the power to secure
for ourselves, our children. They may commit error,
but we can correct those. If the government is lost,
the Constitution must be put down within this time,
or we shall never have another President. If it is
just done, the people have the undisputed right
to elect whom ever they please. If they and the
Mr. Lincoln he will be entitled to like respect as the
Constitutional Representative of the Nation. But the
man who, in order to bring about such a result,
would put at hazard, for a moment, the best
government in the world, is either a slave to pas-
sion or unserviceable to the demands of patriotism.

In view, then, of the immense

Consequence, which are involved in the present strug-
gle, it appears to the people of this district - of all opinion, of all parties - to submit to the
claws of the land; and lend their influence to the
cause of the country. The struggle is for an inheri-
tance common to us all alike; and it is for
more important for us, that we shall preserve
this, for our children, than that any particular
party shall enjoy the emoluments of public office. Rise up, then, to the dignity of
good our true manhood, break loose whatever shackles may have bound you - and let not the
fair fame of the District be tarnished with the suspicion of disloyalty. The innumerable blessings which are in the future of a happy and prosperous Country, are in reserve for those who yield to the call of duty & patriotism, but the curse and execration of their children will rest upon those who shall persist in resistance to law until blood shall flow.

Let all those who have taken up arms to resist the Enlistment law, or to prevent the arrest of deserters, return to their legitimate avocation, and quiet will immediately follow. No act of mine toward them shall be otherwise than fair & impartial. They shall be dealt with as others are, with our favor or partiality to any. They shall be entitled to every possible security & protection from the public authorities. But, if they will not act in obedience to this plain and patriotic duty, "they, know", in the language of Gen. Jackson, "that a force of the opposition can alone prevent the execution of the laws, and they know that such opposition must be repelled."

R. W. Thompson
Provo Marshal
7th District of Illinois