

Nursing Answers

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PEARL HARBOR! The crash of bombs heard around the world! A nation working for peace perfidiously hurled into war. Outraged and angry, Americans closed in their ranks, united against the enemy.

The smoke had not settled over Hawaii before those who stand ready at all times to meet emergencies were speeding up the already moving machinery that will provide nurses to bind the wounds of destruction. Galvanized instantaneously into action for an offensive program, the nursing groups of the country moved out of their plans for defense with characteristic quiet courage. Unity of purpose, co-operation in action, are not new to nurses—they are part and parcel of their training and of their experience in the daily emergencies of sickness and accident.

But behind this response lies a great machine whose parts are scattered from one end of the country to the other, composed of nursing schools, hospital services, public health departments and organizations, alumnae associations and individual nurses. This machine must be stepped up for production; its main departments must be revamped to cut red tape, to do away with waste effort, and every phase of its structure must be inspected, and its weak places strengthened. Not even the smallest part must break under strain. It is not made of iron and steel; it is made of living breathing human beings in constant flux but moving steadily forward to meet all enemies.

The demands of the defense program already have taxed all parts of this machine heavily. The sudden augmentation of the Army to two million men drew

nurses from civilian hospitals into the camps. The influx of population to Army camps and new industrial areas created a serious health problem which again drew upon the already depleted nursing staffs of both hospitals and public health services. Everywhere the need for nurses, for more and more nurses, has been felt.

And then—Pearl Harbor!

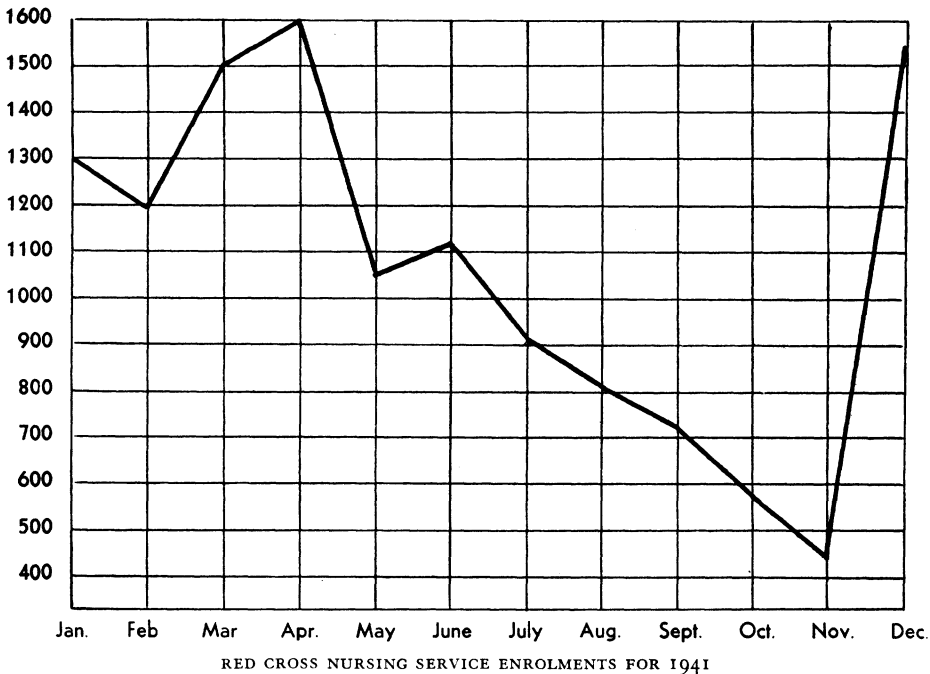
Have you stopped to think that nurses as well as bombers and troop reinforcements are on their way there? Recently the High Command announced plans for an Army and Navy increase of certainly not less than four million men. That means more Army nurses! Production pressure for war material means more plants in new areas, which again means more nurses! At every point of increase the call comes for more nurses!

The Red Cross is asking for fifty thousand First Reserves. For Army service there is an age limit at forty years—for civilian needs there is a limit only of physical capacity. Thousands of retired professional nurses are being urged to return to active, full- or part-time duty to release the younger women for the Army and Navy. Refresher courses are being made available to them. There is opportunity for active service for every professional nurse in America!

To make possible the most extensive use of the professional nurse upon whose shoulders the responsibility for adequate care of our sick rests, the Red Cross has issued a call for the immediate training of one hundred thousand volunteer nurse's aides. Their help in hospitals of all kinds and in public health services always under adequate supervision will be incalculable. To ensure greater secur-

RED CROSS NURSING SERVICE

New enrolments including general and home defense enrolments



ity against illness and the results of minor accidents in our homes, the Red Cross is making courses in home nursing available to five hundred thousand women of all ages. The importance of this to all of us who compose the civilian population cannot be measured.

But the machinery will stall if a flow of new material is not fed into it unceasingly. Student nurses are needed, fifty thousand of them this year! And schools must find ways to take them in. Fortunately the Congress of the United States recognized this need and, on July 1, 1941, the President signed an appropriation bill within which was an allotment of \$1,200,000 to be used to assist schools of nursing in giving refresher courses and basic courses in nursing education. Further appropriation will be necessary to carry the teaching forward at the speed demanded by Pearl Harbor.

Hospitals too must do their part to

supply the armed forces with an adequate supply of nurses. A readjustment of work can often relieve the professional nurse of everything except the highly scientific care of the patient and can even simplify that so much that fewer such nurses will be needed. By training and using nurse's aides and other carefully supervised subsidiary workers and by instituting labor-saving methods, hospitals can make themselves well-oiled parts of this great machine.

Pearl Harbor! What an impetus it gave to the important flow of nurses into the Army and Navy! Before December 7 recruitments had fallen off. Qualified nurses were reluctant to give up good positions for an indefinite period of work; some were taking extra courses in anticipation of advancement; some were disinclined to possible foreign service; many were unable to see how they could meet personal obligations on the low Army

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pay; many were fearful of the postwar possibility of unemployment. But those three thousand lives lost in Hawaii brushed aside these objections and put service before all. The young women qualified for military service are offering themselves in telling numbers.

It is my privilege to sit in with the Subcommittee on Nursing of the Health and Medical Committee set up within the office of Defense Health and Welfare Services in Washington. Here are represented the three national nursing organizations and their own fine Nursing Council on National Defense, through whose agency all professional nursing groups are kept in touch and moving. The Subcommittee functions similarly within the various government agencies. These constitute the machinery that has the direct responsibility for the nursing care of our Army, our Navy and our civilian population. Never have I sat with any group whose consecration to the work in hand was so evident. And this was so before Pearl Harbor! Never have I seen such subordination of the individual to the whole. Never have I felt such quiet, calm, unfaltering determination to bring about results.

There is no question of the answer the

nurses of this country are giving to the treacherous attack upon us. As individuals they are putting their houses in order and are enlisting "for the duration" in whatever phase of the nursing need they are qualified to fill. As members of groups they are co-operating in splendid fashion with all other responsible organizations. These things will happen no matter how slow some of us outside the profession are to recognize our responsibilities in this great national and international need for and of nurses. But we should recognize the fact that the wheels will turn faster if, for instance, the Army pay increase becomes law, if further appropriations are made for the assistance of nursing schools, if hospitals swing into the tide of simplifying nursing procedures and using subsidiary and volunteer groups, if our civilian population learns to help itself wherever possible, and if our young women recognize the nursing profession as the most far-reaching medium for their participation in the war years that lie before us.

So with grim determination, quiet courage, and renewed consecration every nurse and every nursing organization in America is ready for service to the whole world.

Our Hour

THIS IS OUR HOUR—the hour toward which everything in our past lives has been leading. Perhaps we have been complacent and indifferent to life's need of us. But now in this time of real danger the future depends on you and me. We cannot deny the fact that the war can be lost. If we and others refuse to believe this and remain careless of our country's danger, the fate of other unprepared peoples can be ours. But now the time of excuses and delays is past. The destruction of the lives and homes of our countrymen has occurred and our liberties are being imperilled.

We know we shall win, but victory won't be gained because of shock, horror, and grief. We shall have to earn it every day by doing more than our best—giving more than our all. We nurses are working together with all our might, but our might each day is going to be mightier. Nurses are leaders. Each must lead herself to greater giving of self, greater willingness to seek and find more ways to help, better ways to add her strength to that of others.

This is our hour. Our hour today of utmost giving will be our hour in God's good time, of victory and content because we have not failed.

—JULIA C. STIMSON.

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