March 29, 1941

Dear Governor Lehman:

I am in receipt of your letter of March 22, 1941, in which you inquire as to the possibilities which exist whereby your son Peter might qualify for service as a pilot in the U. S. Naval Reserve.

Your letter presents two particular problems. Your son's first interest is to become a Naval Aviator through enrollment and training as an Aviation Cadet. The requirements for such an appointment are very rigidly observed and are outlined in the enclosed NRB Form 90. It would appear that your son could not qualify for two reasons, one of which is his marital status, and the other, his lack of two full years of college training.

Your son's next choice, as I understand it, would be to become associated with the Navy in a flight status, regardless of the specific details of enrollment. I believe I can offer him some encouragement on this score provided, of course, that he meets the necessary physical requirements. My suggestion is of such a nature that some time and effort on his part will be necessary to consummate the details.

The Navy Department has, in the U. S. Naval Reserve, a classification known as A-V(T) officers. These men are selected, for the most part, from civilian pilots who meet certain basic requirements which are explained on page 10 of the enclosed circular. You will note that the college training requirement has been eliminated. In addition, it is required that the applicant have a "Rerated Instructor's Rating" as issued by the Civil Aeronautics Authority.

My suggestion is that your son continue with his training under a civilian operator. When he has secured his commercial pilot's certificate, with the appropriate ratings, he should then submit his application for appointment as an A-V(T) officer in the U. S. Naval Reserve.
Prior to doing this, I would suggest that he call upon the Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Reserve Aviation Base, Floyd Bennett Field, and discuss his proposed action with him in detail. On the chance that your son will follow this suggestion, I am asking the Commanding Officer at the Naval Base, at Floyd Bennett Field to be on the lookout for him, and to be as helpful as possible.

Upon receiving his commission, your son would then be sent to one of the Naval Air Stations where he would receive the Instructor's Course in flying and in ground school work, after which he would probably be sent to one of the Naval Reserve Aviation Bases for further duty as an instructor.

The suggested procedure which I have outlined is, in my opinion, the best for your son to follow in order to secure the desired results. I am sorry that I cannot suggest something which would appear more immediate in accomplishment.

I know how proud you must be in the knowledge of your son's desire to serve our country, and the Navy will be honored to receive and give prompt consideration to his application.

Very truly yours,

Frank Knox

Hon. Herbert H. Lehman
Governor, State of New York
Albany, New York.

Encl.