

DIRECTIVE - MORALE COMMITTEE.

1. An AFHQ Morale Committee is to be established w.e.f. date of issue of this directive.

2. The terms of reference of this Committee are :-

- (a) To study morale in its broadest aspect, including future problems when hostilities have ceased.
- (b) To co-ordinate and prepare quarterly morale reports to the War Office. These reports to be based on those received from AAI and NAD.

3. The composition of the Committee will be :-

CAO
 DAG
 DQMG
 ADAG(P)
 D of WELFARE
Secretary - AAG, G1/B/A3.

4. Procedure.

- (a) Committee meetings will be held as decided by the CAO.
- (b) The Agenda will be prepared under direction of the DAG.
- (c) The Committee may call on officers from Branches and Services to present expert opinion or to submit papers on subjects as required by it.
- (d) ADAG(P) will be responsible for collecting and collating relevant data for presentation to the Committee.

5. Heads of Branches and Services are asked to submit to ADAG(P), without request and at any time, any information or reports which bear on any aspect of morale or welfare, and which may be derived from sources, such as tours and visits, newspapers, personal experiences, conferences, etc.

6. Quarterly reports to War Office.

The periods covered in reports will be :-

				Date due W.O.
(a)	Dec	-	Feb	end of March
(b)	Mar	-	May	" " June
(c)	June	-	Aug	" " Sept
(d)	Sep	-	Nov	" " Dec.

The main headings of reports are given in Appx 'A'.

Encl.

A.F.H.Q.

June 44.

47 Reports

C.D. Moorhead

C.D. MOORHEAD.
 Major-General,
 DAG. G-1 (B).

DISTRIBUTION

CAO	Engineers	Medical	DJAG	Claims &
Dep Mil Sec	DD Works	DOS	D V R & S	Hirings
G-1 (B)	D Survey	DME	D Welfare	
G-2	D Tn	D Lab	Fd Arty	PRO
G-3	DMT	PM (Br)	AA & CD	INC
G-4 (B)	CSO	D Salvage	Fire Svces	Camp Comd
G-5	DCG	DDAPS	FA	SCF(RC)
Q Maint	DST	DPIC	DPSS	Supervising
Q (AE)				Officer.

SUGGESTED HEADINGS FOR MORALE REPORT.

Sec I. Morale in General.

Sec II. Factors affecting morale.

1. Discipline.
2. Confidence
 - (a) In Army, leaders and the War.
 - (b) In arms and equipment
 - (c) In efficiency.
3. Mail.
4. Welfare and Entertainment.
 - (a) Living conditions.
 - (b) Recreation and amusements.
 - (c) General.
5. Education and ABOA.
6. Relations between officers and men.
7. Relations with other Services.
8. Relations with Allies.
9. Home Affairs, Post War and Release.
10. Finance.
11. Miscellaneous.
 - (a) Overseas service
 - (b) Leave.
 - (c) Relations with civil population.

17

fm

CONFIDENTIAL.

SUBJECT : Morale Reports.

HQ
LAND FORCES ADRIATIC
CMF

Ref : LFA/44/AG

21 Nov. 44.

- To :
- ✓ 1 Fwd Base.
 - FLOYDFORCE
 - ✓ Raiding Support Regiment. ✓
 - ✓ 2 SS Brigade. ✓
 - ✓ L.F.A. Sigs. ✓
 - ✓ Camp Commandant, L.F.A. ✓
 - ✓ HQ L.R.D.G. ✓
 - ✓ Special Boat Service. ✓
-

1. This Headquarters is required to send quarterly reports upon morale in the theatre to the War Office.

2. Reports will be submitted by you as follows :-

<u>Period.</u>	<u>Report to reach this HQ by</u>
September to November	5 December 1944.

M. B. ...
Col. G.S.

HAW/EE

APPENDIX 'A' TO DIRECTIVE
ON MORALE REPORTS.

SUGGESTED HEADINGS FOR MORALE REPORT.

Sec I

Morale in General.

Sec. II

Factors affecting morale.

1. Discipline
2. Confidence.
 - (a). In Army Leaders and the War
 - (b). In arms and equipment.
 - (c). In efficiency.
3. Mail
4. Welfare and Entertainment
 - (a). Living Conditions.
 - (b). Recreation and amusements.
 - (c). General.
5. Education and ABCA
6. Relations between officers and men.
7. Relations with other services.
8. Relations with Allies.
9. Home Affairs, Post War and Release.
10. Finance.
11. Miscellaneous.
 - (a). Overseas service
 - (b). Leave
 - (c). Relations with civil population.

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COPY NO. 18
ARMY COUNCIL SECRETARIAT.
(Room 278, War Office.)

"Brief" for S. of S.
To be taken on 15th April, 1942.
Prepared by D.P.R., D.G.W. and E. and the General Staff.

SECRET.
A.C.S./B/125.
15th April, 1942.

WAR CABINET.
PROPAGANDA AT HOME.
(War Cabinet reference: W.P. (42)155.)

The memorandum by the Minister of Information deals with the presentation of news to the public, and its effect on public morale. With a national Army, of which a large part is stationed in comparative inactivity in intimate contact with the civilian population, there can be no doubt that the morale of the Forces is to a large extent influenced by the very same factors as affect civilian morale, and that any sense of frustration or apathy among the civilian population rapidly communicates itself to the Forces. Therefore, any constructive efforts to sustain public morale are to be welcomed by the Army.

Conversely the Army, through its ties with nearly every home in the country, can make its own contribution to the maintenance of public morale. You are well aware of the steps which are being taken to sustain the morale of the Army, including such measures as those provided by A.B.C.A.

The suggestion made by the Minister in paragraph 7 of his memorandum (the numbers below are his) to the effect that:-

- (ii) we must stop appealing to, or lecturing at, the public;
- (iii) news must be candid and objective;
- (iv) rumours or complaints that have wide acceptance must be dealt with immediately and with care;

are endorsed by the War Office.

With reference to the Minister's suggestion in paragraph 7(i) that "there must be more explanation", the following comments by D.P.R. are reproduced verbatim.

"If there be a widespread decrease of confidence and a sense that our national purpose (in contrast, it may be held, to that of the U.S.S.R.) lacks "constructive purpose", and the "genuine fervour" of a crusade, is the explanation not to be found in the absence so far of a very satisfactory and simple statement of what we are fighting for? It should not be impossible to frame this in terms which can be understood by the ordinary man. It is not enough to state what we are fighting against. But we are perhaps too apt to attribute the resolution of Japan, Germany and Russia to the fervour of a crusade. Those nations

are the most disciplined in the world. We are perhaps the least, and the public ought to be educated to the need for discipline, which is a very different thing to the uncomplaining endurance of danger, discomfort and disaster at which we are supreme." This problem should also be approached from the angle that a positive crusade is required to create a personal animosity to the enemy throughout the nation.

In paragraph 2 of his memorandum, the Minister asks that the actions of the Departments may generally be consistent with the War Cabinet's policy, in order to make the Government's publicity more effective. It is, therefore, for consideration whether the Army cannot make a positive contribution. For example, if the ceremony of beating retreat were held in public squares in our cities and towns, such as Parliament Square, instead of behind barrack walls; if there were more martial music in the streets; a greater public display of regimental colours and the national flags of the United Nations; and an extension of the ceremonial attaching to church parades in the churches of the country rather than in camp, there is no reason to suppose that there would not be an accompanying uplift in the spirits of the people. Such a policy would be particularly welcome at the end of a long and dreary winter and would act as a tonic on the eve of a momentous Spring.

With regard to the suggestion in paragraph 6(a) of the Minister's memorandum, that he should circulate to the War Cabinet a monthly appreciation of the state of public morale, compiled in conjunction with the Departments primarily concerned with the Home front, you may care to suggest that the Army's morale reports are also available for this purpose.

It is suggested that you can approve the measures suggested by the Minister of Information, as a first step in the right direction, subject only to the proviso that the Minister's regional enquirers should not pursue investigations amongst the troops to discover the state of their morale. This has been done in at least one case which has been brought to the notice of the D.P.R. and is highly undesirable.

Distribution: List D.

+ D.P.R.
D.G.W. & E.
D.P.S.

PLEASE PASS BY HAND

COVER
FOR
BRANCH MEMORANDA

(member of council)
B.M. No. 128/42

2. P.U.S.

Occasionally, some light is thrown on civilian morale from the reports on morale I obtain from formations, and I could extract something from these if the Secretary of State wished to send it to the Ministry of Information. I should regard it as a report on the morale of the soldiers' wives and families rather than a report on the morale of the Army. It will mean extra work, and the reports are now coming in, so that I could not prepare them for some little time.

I agree that anything on the Army's morale must be presented to the Cabinet by the Secretary of State, and I would not for a moment suggest that anything on this side should be incorporated.

Hobart House,
14th May, 1942.

3. S. of S.

I mentioned this question to you and you were disposed to think that the War Office should not make any contribution to the Minister of Information's Report. It is, however, probable that in the information which we receive about the morale of the troops, we shall get information which bears on the morale of civilians, and seeing that the Ministry of Information are not allowed to make enquiries from the troops themselves and that at the meeting at which the Minister of Information's paper was discussed, there appeared to be general agreement that the Minister should have help in producing his monthly appreciation, you may be prepared to authorise us to act on the lines of A of A.G's minute.

16.5.42.

5. A.G.

Thank you. Do you agree with 5.A.? If so will you be kind enough to have the first collection of information sent to me to pass on to the Ministry of Information as soon as it is ready? I should rather like to see at any rate the first collection.

19.5.42.

6. P.U.S.

I agree to 5A, and will have information sent as required.

21 May, 1942.

9. P.U.S.

The Quarterly Morale Report was considered to-day by the Morale Committee.

At 9A are extracts which seem suitable for forwarding to the Ministry of Information.

19th June, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL.
Secretary of State

You asked me for some thoughts on Army morale and the machinery in the War Office for assessing it.

About the importance of morale in the Army there can be no two opinions. Unless we have an Army willing to fight, we shall not win this war, no matter how perfect our plans, organisation or equipment. To be willing to fight, the Army must believe in the cause in which it is fighting; this is the most important point: second in importance, the Army must believe that it is being given a reasonable chance to fight under the best possible conditions for a successful outcome.

Fundamentally, therefore, the basis of good morale is belief in the cause. History teems with examples of a successful fight made in a good cause with inferior weapons, though as modern war gets more complex so does the triumph of the good cause depend increasingly on good weapons.

It is not unprofitable from this angle to attempt to analyse the state of Army morale after Dunkirk in 1940. The 300,000 odd soldiers who came back from Dunkirk were not, by and large, in any way a defeated Army so far as their morale was concerned. An angry Army they were in many respects: angry with suspected defeatism and lack of fight in some portions of their Continental allies; angry with shortcomings in equipment, air support and with other partly-true and partly-imagined shortcomings of the British military machinery; but angry above all with the enemy, and determined to give him back blow for blow at the earliest opportunity. The German invasion of this country in 1940 might have succeeded through overwhelming superiority of armaments; there is no reason whatever to think it would have succeeded through the Army not fighting it out with the Germans a l'cutrance - what the R.A.F. did in the Battle of Britain does not in any way mean that they had a monopoly of the will to fight.

On the equipment side the British Army has now at long last made up its deficiencies, and probably every member of 21 Army Group believes he will go into the coming battle as well armed or better than his foe. Further, the course of the war, revealing in ever darker colours the innate beastliness of the Boche has not in any way weakened the average British soldier's desire to exterminate the Nazi and all his works. But the longer the war goes on, the more does the soldier tend to give importance to his actual conditions of service, and the conditions of life of his family and dependents, matters which in the first flush of enthusiasm in the early stages of a war are relegated well to the background. It is, in a way, the soldier's manifestation of war weariness; it is a perfectly natural and inevitable development, and not in itself a matter far-undue blame.

Equally, as the war goes on Army morale (and the same, of course, applies to the other Services and even the civilian population) becomes a more and more important factor, in its two-fold aspect of:-

- (a) maintaining belief in the cause; and
- (b) maintaining the soldier in a contented frame of mind.

Again, the nearer the war gets to its probable termination, the more the soldier's mind tends to leap over the closing stages of the war and preoccupies itself with the problems of his re-

absorption into civilian life and work. In other words, the latter part of any great war brings with it its own morale problems, largely different from those of the early stages of the war, requiring different solutions, and - this is the important point - calling for much more far-sighted diagnosis, fore-thought and planning.

So much by way of preamble to the immediate problem.

The member of Council responsible to you for the morale of the Army is A.G. Morale is so important a factor in the war-time Army that no Secretary of State could rest happy unless he received periodical assessments of the state of morale in the Army from the responsible Member of Council; and indeed, anything seriously wrong with Army morale very soon obtrudes itself on a Secretary of State's notice in the form of Parliamentary Questions, Press comment, correspondence, or many other less obvious ways.

In order to (a) inform himself as to the state of Army morale and (b) submit from time to time reports to you on that question, A.G. may be expected to require some machinery, since he cannot himself cover more than a limited field by personal visits and tours, however important these may be. For good or ill the present A.G. has evolved a fairly detailed machinery for assessing the morale of the Army; different men use different methods, and if A.G. gets the kind of information he needs for fulfilling his own responsibility in the matter of morale, then presumably it is not for others to interfere.

The real test is what A.G. produces to you as a result of his morale machinery, and whether experience shows that his machine enables him to make accurate diagnosis of the state of Army morale; and it is relevant that you are not without outside checks upon A.G.'s assessment of Army morale, in the form as mentioned above - of Parliamentary and Press re-actions, and your correspondence bag; no film star can hope to rival the fan-mail of a minister who really "puts his foot into it" in Service matters affecting the rank and file or their dependents.

The real trouble with the presentation of Army morale by A.G.'s Department in the past seems only partly with the methods by which information about morale is obtained; it is rather with the screening and sifting of that information, the sorting out of the grains of gold from tons of rubbish, and the presentation to you of a sufficiently and "in proportion" view of the whole field of Army morale.

You have rightly pointed out that recent Quarterly Morale Reports have consisted largely of recitals of grievances; in deference to your comment thereupon, A.G. has lately attempted some numerical assessment of the more prominent grievances to which he draws attention; but even so, grievances are only one (and perhaps the less important) aspect of morale, and that its negative aspect. A grievance may be felt by, say, a particular searchlight detachment in this country. One or two hundred searchlight detachments similarly placed in the U.K. may, to a greater or lesser extent, share that grievance. It will therefore figure in the reports of a considerable number of Commanders. But what one would expect A.G.'s Department to do is to ascertain whether the grievance is a temporary difficulty or not; whether it is easily remediable or not; whether it is just one of those things which are part of the inevitable conditions of life of isolated searchlight detachments; or whether the grievance is shared by other kinds of troops and is evidence, therefore, of something wrong on a wide scale with a particular aspect of Army service. Only after some such careful process of quantitative and qualitative assessments should

A.G. bring it to your notice as a matter requiring definite and positive action in the interests of Army morale. On the other hand, it is A.G.'s job to see whether even the more or less limited grievances can reasonably be put right, and to take up with other Members of Council as necessary, the problem of finding a remedy.

This line of thought leads to the conclusion that the machinery which A.G. requires to assess the state of Army morale is largely a matter for his own determination. Different A.Gs. will work in different ways. But the reports on the general state of Army morale which A.Gs. make to you as S. of S. should be reports written with a due sense of proportion and perspective, with not too much detail to obscure the main outlines, i.e. the old question of the wood and the trees.

The form which the short reports on the state of morale at home, produced in recent months by the Ministry of Information, has much to recommend it from this angle, whether those reports were good or not in substance. To put it another way: A.G. should present you with a picture of Army morale painted with the impressionistic brush of a Turner and not with microscopic detail of a Cennacchio: the details he can always supply on demand.

Turning now to the attached B.M.: A.G. in minute 15 attempts to persuade you to concurrence in a continuance of the present morale machinery: for the reasons set out above, I think that is really a matter for A.G. himself to determine, within his responsibility to you for Army morale, provided that he produces what you want in the way of morale information. At 16A he presents his latest Morale Report in a form which he hopes will commend itself to you: to the extent to which he has grouped difficulties and grievances under a few broad heads, and tried both to assess their substance and to indicate what is being done or is possible to do to remedy the matter, 16A appears a much more acceptable form of the Morale Report. You will have gathered from what is said above that this is not the form of report I think A.G. might be expected to put up to you, but that something on far broader lines and less a collection of (however real) grievances, is what is wanted.

The other possible defect of the existing morale machinery is perhaps even more important, and certainly of increasing importance.

The existing morale machinery probably ensures that no substantial grievances of the troops or hardship of their conditions of service goes unrecorded, and to that extent it covers one aspect of morale fairly thoroughly. But grievances are only a "spotty rash" upon the Army body which indicates a state of illness within that body-, and though very useful for diagnostic purposes, the more important thing is preventive hygiene for avoiding the spots coming out. The point I am trying to labour is that morale should not only be concerned with the "present discontents" .but should, to an even greater extent, .be looking ahead to foresee probable causes of trouble and enable anticipatory preventive action to be taken: the medical analogy, though obvious, is a very good one.

This function of the morale machine is likely to be of the highest importance in the period which will follow the coming Continental battle. Assuming a reasonably short, however intense, campaign in Europe, the problem of Army morale, as I see it, will bear two main aspects. In the first place there will be the problem of keeping those in good heart who have to remain with the Colours to finish off the Japanese war; in the second place there will be the, perhaps even more

difficult, task of ensuring reasonable contentment among the large number at home and overseas (particularly overseas) who are earmarked for release at the end of German hostilities, but who, by reason of the necessary time taken by the machinery of release and through shipping shortages, organisational problems, etc., can only be brought back to civil life over a period of months or even a year or more. Experience indicates that the latter aspect is likely to be by far the more troublesome one.

The Army can claim credit for having been the prime mover in commencing a study of the problem of maintaining morale in the Armed Forces to fight the war with Japan, a problem which is now being actively studied by the Inter-Services Committee under the chairmanship of Brigadier O'Donnell. I understand this Committee is producing very soon an interim report, not by way of a blue print or the measures necessary for meeting this problem, but to give an early indication of the scope and nature of the problem. It has associated with it Ministry of Information representatives, and for the present purpose this aspect of the dual Morale problem can be regarded as covered by the future activities of O'Donnell's Committee.

But no similar body has yet been charged with pulling together the manifold aspects of the problem of the "releasable" soldier. The War Office (in consultation with other departments) have made many plans which impinge upon this problem, for example the planning of education during the demobilization period, the many measures taken to facilitate the whole demobilization machinery and make it work quickly and smoothly, the plans for providing good civilian clothing for the released soldiers etc. etc. What seems, however, to be needed, is some committee or body to look at the problem of the "releasable" soldier as a whole, to see that all main foreseeable needs of the transition period from total mobilization to partial mobilization for the Japanese war are covered, and (not least) to ensure some sense of proportion among the many plans which relate to that period and which concern both "releasable" soldiers and the soldier retained for the Japanese war. Further, the problem is not solely a Service one; it largely also concerns the Minister of Labour., who has to co-operate in the vocational training of the "releasable" soldier and smooth his reception into the possibly not too friendly atmosphere of civilian employment; the Board of Education, which will be concerned with the special needs of the student and young professional class; the Colonial Office, India Office, etc. who will want to recruit promising men for "the white man's burden"; and many other departments for their special interests. The main problem, however, will be for the three Service Departments and the Ministry of Labour, and it seems that the nucleus of any committee or body which is to study this aspect of Army morale after German hostilities ought, as its nucleus, to comprise representatives of these four Departments.

Clearly, both as concerns the Japanese war aspect and the demobilization aspect of morale after the end of the German war, the War Office should be far less concerned with tackling troubles as they arise than that of planning to avoid their arising. In an imperfect world the 100% foolproof and event-proof plan is not practice but, particularly in the light of the experience of 1919, many troubles will be avoidable by adequate forethought, and it is not too soon to begin the thinking process now.

Attempting to sum up: what is suggested is:-

- (a) A.G. is responsible to you for the morale of the Army.
- (b) In fulfilling this responsibility he should present you, from time to time, with a general picture of the state of Army morale at home and abroad; this general picture should not

enter into such detail as results in difficulty in distinguishing the general shape of the wood from the shape of individual trees.

- (c) There is something to be said for the reversion to the practice of the early Morale Reports at the beginning of 1942, when the Quarterly Report was presented to the E.C.A.C. and discussed by them; such discussion could be a stage preceding any periodical report made to you by A.G., or alternatively the E.C.A.C. could, after discussion of the Morale Report, make a submission to you on any major "discontents" which represented a serious threat, present or potential, to the morale of the Army.
- (d) The morale machine should be concerned not only with assessment of "present discontents", but as much, and possibly in future even more, with future threats and the avoidance of foreseeable problems calculated to militate against the maintenance of a high morale in the Army.
- (e) Particularly after the German hostilities cease, the morale problem will be in the main two-fold: on the one side the morale problem of the Japanese war, now being explored by Brigadier O'Donnell's committee, and on the other side the problem of the "releasable" personnel for which some special machinery including Ministry of Labour representation, is desirable.
- (f) Further, Army morale and its problems are not confined within the bounds of A.G.'s periodical reports or the reports from Commanders on which they are based; part and parcel of the morale problem is the education of the soldier, by A.B.C.A. and the B.W.P. pamphlets: the Parliamentary Questions which so often represent the first airing of an Army grievance; the War Office post-bag and particularly the Ministerial post; and many other War Office day to day concerns: is A.G. sufficiently aware of some of these aspects of the morale problem which do not necessarily come directly within the preview of his Department.
- (g) Finally, the morale machinery should be two-way; it should not only obtain reports from Commanders and impress on those Commanders that the careful assessment of morale of the troops under them is one of their most important personal responsibilities; it should also produce in return to the Commander guidance upon the main problems which Commanders' reports have put forward and also a directive on policy to be adopted or action to be taken to avoid foreseeable troubles in the future. At present this "return action" of the morale machine seems only to be fulfilled by the War Office commentary upon the major grouped grievances (see 16A).

I apologise for the length of this note; its excuse is some attempt to get at the elements of the problems as a precedent course to indicating

10 May, 1944.

SECRET

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

HOME INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REPORT

The aim of this Report is to present an impartial assessment of public feeling about the war and the war effort. It is not a record of fact, except in so far as public opinion is itself a fact. The public is sometimes ill-Informed, prejudiced, or inconsistent.

The recording of such feelings without comment implies no endorsement of them.

The public is more prone to criticise than to praise. Good work or efficiency is usually taken for granted. An accurate record of expressed feeling will, therefore, tend to be critical rather than laudatory. Though this Report must inevitably represent mainly articulate opinion, it has been found in practice that the views of the less articulate do not substantially differ, though their range is smaller.

The method of compiling the Report is such that the amount of space devoted to each subject, and the order in which subjects are placed, are roughly indicative of the amount of public interest each is arousing. The omission of a subject from the Report means that it is not a matter of widespread comment.

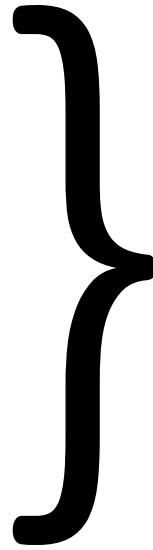
In assessing the state of public feeling there are no absolutes. Findings can only be comparative. Each issue of this Report must therefore be read as part of a continuous series. Unless the series is seen as a whole, the significance of fluctuations in feeling cannot be appreciated,

The figures in brackets at the end of each section refer to sources of information, a list of which is given on the next page. The weekly reports from Regional Information Officers (R.I.Os.) are compiled by their Regional Intelligence Officers from a large number of sources. Details of the methods of compilation and cross—checking are contained in a paper on "How the Home Intelligence Weekly Report is made". This will be supplied on request to the Home Intelligence Division of the Ministry of Information.

P.T.O.

REFERENCES

1. Northern Region (Newcastle)
2. North Eastern Region (Leeds)
3. North Midland Region (Nottingham)
4. Eastern Region (Cambridge)
5. London Region (London)
- 5SE. South Eastern District Office, London
Region (Tunbridge Wells)
6. Southern Region (Reading)
7. South Western Region (Bristol)
8. Wales (Cardiff)
9. Midland (Birmingham)
10. North Western Region (Manchester)
11. Scotland (Edinburgh)
12. See 5SE.
13. Northern Ireland (Belfast)
14. Special Reports from R.I.O.s
15. Regions Adviser's Reports
16. M.O.I. Speakers' Reports
17. Postal Censorship
18. Police Duty Room Reports
19. Wartime Social Survey Reports
20. B.B.C. Listener Research Papers
21. B.B.C. Special Papers
22. Scottish Unionist Whips' Reports
23. Liberal Party's Reports
24. Primary Sources



Weekly
Reports
from
R, I, Os.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
HOME INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REPORT

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13. Northern Ireland (Belfast)
14. Special Reports from R .O.s
15. Regions Adviser's Reports
16. M.O.I . Speakers' Reports
17. Local Information Committees! Reports
18. Home Press Summaries
19. Regional Press Summaries
20. Hansard
21. Postal Censorship
22. Police Duty Room Reports
23. Wartime Social Survey Reports
24. B.B.C. Listener Research Papers
25. B.B.C. Special Papers
26. Citizens' Advice Bureaux Reports
27. W.V.S. Reports
28. Scottish Unionist Whips' Reports
29. Liberal Party's Reports
30. Economic Leaguers Reports
31. War Office Post Bag Summaries
32. Primary Sources

1-13: Weekly Reports from R.I.O.s

SECRET

HOME INTELLIGENCE DIVISION HOW THE WEEKLY REPORT IS MADE

1. THE AIMS OF THE REPORT.

The 'Weekly Report aims at presenting an unbiased and objective picture of the state of British public opinion on matters connected with the war. It covers a period which ends three days before the report is produced. It attempts also to assess, as accurately as possible, the general state of public confidence during the same period.

It must be emphasised that the Report sets out to be a record of opinion, and not in fact, except in so far as opinion itself is a fact. Frequently the public is misinformed or mistaken, and on such occasions the public's views are given without comment.

There are no absolutes by which the state of public confidence or morale can be measured. Estimates of public confidence must, therefore, be comparative. In order that the Report may be seen in perspective, it is essential that the contents of previous Reports should be borne in mind. The British public tend as a general rule to take good work or efficiency for granted; they are reluctant to voice praise or satisfaction. Most of their comments on current events, on the Government, and on Government action, are, therefore, critical. Unless this fact is remembered, the Report may be thought to overpaint the critical side of the picture. It is a safe assumption that, when a topic is not mentioned in the Weekly Report, it is not a subject of widespread criticism among all strata of the community.

There are two important provisos which readers of the Report should bear in mind large section of the British public is inarticulate and does not formulate its feeling at all clearly. Special methods have therefore been devised so that the opinion of this section may be expressed; but in the process of converting ill-formulated ideas into words, distortion may sometimes occur. Further, since the Report is a summary of public opinion in the country as a whole, it represents more than any one individual is likely to be thinking or feeling. An industrial worker may have strong views on the loss of some tanks in battle, transport difficulties to and from work, and hold-ups in production; a housewife may feel strongly about the B.B.C. news service, dependents' allowances, and the shortage of canned peas: the Home Intelligence Weekly Report adds up the views of everybody and records those views which are held strongly by wide sections of the community.

Since the Report is primarily intended to show how the public is reacting to the news and its presentation, and so that the Ministry of Information may be guided in its work, the report has to be produced very quickly. Unless this is done, it is impossible for the Ministry to take corrective measures while the news is still fresh in the mind of the public. The need for rapid production prevents the use of an exact numerical method for expressing the extent and strength of public opinion. The absence of such exact checks makes it necessary for the greatest care to be taken at all stages in the production of the Report, if the qualitative assessment of opinion is to be accurate.

2. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The principle adopted throughout the process of collecting Home Intelligence is that of continuous cross checking. At every stage in the work, source is checked against source, and assessment against assessment.

Sources:

i. Regional Intelligence Officers: Attached to the Regional Information Officer in each of the civil defence regions is an officer whose special duty is Home Intelligence work. In London, owing to the great complexity of the problems, there is a special unit composed of three officers. To make it clear that the work is not concerned with the views or the activities of individuals, but rather with the broader facets of public opinion, the word 'intelligence' is, as far as possible, avoided; these officers are therefore called Senior Assistant Officers.

Great care has been exercised in their selection. Before they begin-work, they are given a short training course in which the essential need for objectivity is repeatedly driven home. They are taught that, when at work, they have to become impartial recording and assessing machines free from political or other bias; in short their emotions must be put in cold storage.

The basis of each Intelligence Officer's work is a panel of voluntary contacts scattered throughout the region, roughly on a population basis. Each contact must fulfil the following criteria:

- (a) He or she must be personally known to the Intelligence Officer as a sensible, level-headed person.
- (b) He or she must have the nature and object of the work adequately explained and must be in sympathy with it. It is expected that the recruitment of a new contact will seldom be done in less than one hour's interview
- (c) He or she must be a person who, by the nature of his, or her, occupation comes into contact with a large number of people every day. Examples are:-
Doctors, parsons, shopkeepers, trade union officials, bank managers, W.V.S. officials, C.A.B. secretaries, librarians, W.E.A. organisers, hospital almoners, factory welfare workers, business men, local journalists, factory managers, licensed victuallers, newsagents, etc.

To each contact it is explained that the Ministry of Information is not concerned with 'snooping' on people, but with what is thought and said about the war, the news, legislation and administration, because, as the Government's central publicity department, it is the Ministry's job to find out where explanation is needed and where things are not running smoothly. It has to be impressed on contacts that they must try to reflect the opinion of those they meet, not what they themselves feel. In practice, Intelligence Officers soon came to know the personalities of individual contacts, and it is only in the light of such knowledge that their reports can be assessed. Intelligence Officers are continually

recruiting new contacts and, as this progress goes on, the validity of the work increases. But the recruitment of each contact has to be carried out on an individual basis and unless this is done the accuracy of the work is not maintained.

In each Region, Intelligence Officers now have between two hundred and four hundred contacts. Each week, a proportion of are asked, by telephone, by letter or by personal interview, how the people they meet are taking the war and the news; what particular difficulties, if any, have arisen; and if there is any substantial volume of praise or criticism. Intelligence Officers are taught most precisely to avoid the use of leading questions, as it is of vital importance not to stimulate grumbles and criticisms which are latent or unexpressed. A Rota of contacts is thus worked through each week and in this way the danger of over-tiring contacts is avoided. The number of reports which Intelligence Officers receive each week from their contacts varies, but a minimum of thirty is aimed at. In practice, a much larger number is frequently obtained. Thirty such reports from reliable contacts will, of course, reflect the opinion of a very much larger number of people.

ii. Local Information Committees: Throughout the country there are a large number of Local Information Committees. These are co-opted bodies, which include representatives of the political parties, local authorities, voluntary organisations, etc. Many of these committees submit reports on the state of public feeling in their areas. Such reports are treated by Home Intelligence with some reserve. Committees are not in the nature of things a reliable means of assessing public opinion. The eloquence or personality of one member may colour the views of the whole Committee; or a majority opinion may be recorded instead of a statement of both sides. Furthermore, the training of committee members in the task of assessing public feeling is fraught with difficulties. For certain routine enquiries, committees have their value; e.g. for reporting public feeling about the shortage of certain commodities. Such information is regularly collected for the Board of Trade and other Government Departments. Individual members of committees may, however, from time to time, be recruited as intelligence contacts.

iii. Regional Office Staff: Besides the Intelligence Officer in the Regional Information offices there are Meetings Officers, Committee Officers, Films Officers, etc. The duties of these officers frequently bring them into contact with large numbers of members of the public and they co-operate most helpfully with the Intelligence Officers. Staff speakers, who address public meetings both small and large, submit reports of the problems which were raised at their meetings and these are sometimes of value: questioners at public meetings are not, however, regarded as in any way representative.

The Intelligence Officer thus collects a large amount of "mw material" each week on which to base an appreciation of the state of public opinion. This appreciation is similar in format to the Hums Intelligence Weekly Report. In making it, the Intelligence Officer has constantly to bear in mind, not only the information received, but the source from which it came. Sources are cross-checked against each other, and unless there is a considerable volume of evidence for a statement, it is omitted from the appreciation. Before this is sent to London (by express passenger train), it is vetted carefully by the Regional Information Officer and points which appear doubtful to him are verified or omitted. Intelligence Officers are discouraged from reporting to London purely local matters which the Regional Information Officers can deal with much more satisfactorily, conjunction with regional

heads of Government departments.

iv. Postal Censorship: Special arrangements have been made by Postal Censorship to prepare weekly reports on subjects covered by Home Intelligence, at their regional censorship units. In addition, much fuller monthly reports are prepared at the London headquarters of Postal Censorship, but the weekly regional reports are of greater immediate value, because they are more up to date.

The Postal Censorship material is of enormous volume, but, in using it, certain provisos have to be borne in mind:

(a) The largest part of the outgoing mail is bound for Ireland. This part contains an unduly high proportion of lower class writers and on account of certain special affinities, these writers are not necessarily representative of the British working classes. Thus, the question of the Irish ports continued to be an important topic in Postal Censorship long after it had ceased to interest the average Englishman.

(b) Writers abroad may frequently adopt a conscious or unconscious propagandist attitude, either from patriotic motives, or with a view to producing same action by relatives overseas.

Such sources of bias as these have constantly to be remembered in dealing with Postal Censorship material

v. Police Duty Roan Reports: By arrangement with the Home Office, Chief Constables' Police Duty Roan Reports on Home Opinion, News, and Propaganda, are sent to the Home Intelligence Division. There is inevitably a time lag between the production of these reports and their scrutiny. Further, it is not always easy to know how much value should be placed on them without knowing something of the personality of the reporter.

vi. Special and Occasional Reports: The most valuable of these are the reports from the Listener Research Department of the B.B.C. These give a very exact index of the reactions of the public to all phases of broadcasting; but again there is a certain time lag which limits their value. Reports are received from a number of voluntary societies, e.g. The Women's Voluntary Services, the Citizen's Advice Bureaux, etc. These are of greater value in confirming trends already noticed, or in suggesting new lines for investigation, than as a major source of new material.

3. THE METHOD OF COMPILATION

The same principle of cross checking is applied to the compilation of the final Weekly Report as is applied by each Intelligence Officer. Each regional report is checked against the others and, unless there is substantial evidence for a statement, that statement is not included in the final Home Intelligence Weekly Report. In addition, the regional reports are cross checked against the postal censorship weekly regional reports and against any other sources of information which may apposite. Three carefully trained workers prepare the first draft of the Intelligence Report on this basis. The draft is then taken over by the Director, or Deputy Director, of the Home Intelligence

Division, together with all the regional and other reports, and the whole is cross checked once more and re-assessed. Then the final draft has been prepared, it is again rapidly re-assessed by, the senior officer who has not performed the first re-assessment, and is also read through by the Director of the Ease Division.

The whole process of compilation has to be done in under forty-eight hours, but in spite of this there is very rarely any dispute among the different assessors about the final version.

Perhaps the most convincing evidence of the validity of the Report is the 44 high degree of agreement which is usually found between the thirteen different regional intelligence reports. The Intelligence Officers have no possibility of collaborating, and at any time they may be called upon to give the evidence for any particular piece of information. That public opinion throughout the country, (on other local matters) should be so uniform is not really surprising sinceeverybody is now touched the B.B.C. and nation newspapers, while war time legislation is also on a national basis.

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SECRET

W.P. (42) 548
25th November, 1942.
WAR CABINET

THE ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC FEELING AT HOME
Memorandum by the Minister of Information

1. At their meeting on 12th October the War Cabinet asked me to furnish a memorandum explaining the system adopted in the compilation of the periodical paper that I submit under the title of "Report on Home Opinion" (Item 4. 138th Conclusions). Their basis is the weekly Home Intelligence Reports which are drawn up by the Ministry of Information, and I must first explain therefore what is the genesis of these Reports.
2. There is a Regional Information Officer in each of the Civil Defence Regions. On his staff are one or more regional intelligence officers whose job it is to make a weekly report to headquarters about public feeling in their area. They gather their material partly through their own observation and partly through "contacts", - that is someone who is supposed to be sensible and level headed and whose calling (e.g. doctor, woman social worker, publican, trade union official) brings him into daily contact with many people. An intelligence officer is expected to develop numerous contacts of this kind and he should get a minimum of 30 reports a week.
3. In London the various regional reports are checked against each other and a lot of additional material is drawn up for cross checks. This material consists of Postal Censorship reports, Police reports from the Home Office, B.B.C. Listener Research reports and contributions from voluntary societies such as the W.V.S. and Citizens' Advice Bureau.
4. Out of all this comes the Weekly Home Intelligence Report. So far as an honest attempt at objectivity can achieve it these reports are intended to reflect the main currents of thought and feeling revealed by a comparison of all the available material to which, certainly, a very great number of people have contributed.
5. The periodical Report which I lay before the War Cabinet is best described as an essay based on a close study and comparison of the trends displayed in the weekly reports covering the period under review. We have made it our rule not to introduce on our own responsibility subjects which the reports do not deal with. The draft of the periodical report is submitted to me by the Director General after its form and contents have been agreed at meetings attended by senior officials in the ministry. It is also discussed informally with the Public Relations Officers of some of the other Departments whose work keeps them specially in touch with the home public.

B. B.
25th November, 1942.