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THE INTEGRATION OF MORALE

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AMERICA's morale can be made impregnable. We have the material and psychological resources. Only an organized, integrated approach to the problem and effective carrying out of planned activities are lacking.

A threefold approach is called for: first, activities aimed at speaking up for democracy, defining, explaining, expounding what democracy is and is not; second, activities aimed at strengthening democracy, making it work better, so that all may know what we are fighting for; third, a morale commission appointed by the government to give counsel and advice to men in the government so that they may function more democratically and more efficiently.

Two overwhelming facts face us in our national war effort. One is our reliance on physical resources. We depend on materials to provide the physical armaments of offense and defense—guns, ships, tanks, ammunition, machines, airplanes—and on man power to make use of them.

The other fact is our reliance on the morale factors, the attitudes of our people. Attitudes control the actions of the men who operate the machinery we are creating and of the civilians back of that machinery. Unless we are well equipped physically and ideologically in both these equally important fields, we are failing in our war effort for democracy.

These two forces in our national war effort are interdependent. Both should receive equal thought and action. We are turning to scientists and inventors, to armament experts and our tremendous industrial machinery for the building of our physical armaments. We are appropriating half of our national income in 1942 for arms and armaments. We are attempting to make this expenditure as effective as possible to assure America's protection against external enemies. The effective use of our physical resources depends to a great extent on our morale. Our main considerations in this paper are the problems of maintaining morale.

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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL RAMPARTS

Morale, Our First Line of Defense

Our first real line of defense is in our minds. They can ensure that our arms shall defend what they were created to defend. France fell with much of her army and armaments intact, in part because her people were not wholeheartedly in the fight to save democracy for themselves. The weapons created by the French to defend their democracy are being used now for entirely different purposes from those they were intended for.

A faith of the people in the future of democracy is of primary importance for a strong national morale. Faith is the evidence of things hoped for. Our people need to have the will to defend democracy, even to die for it, if need be. Arms and armaments are not enough. The intangibles are as important as the tangibles.

Morale Defined

"What 'condition' is to the athlete's body, morale is to the mind," says William Ernest Hocking. National morale is behavior which affects our national interest. A strong national morale is behavior which advances our national interest potently. Weak national morale does the opposite.

Physical and emotional well-being condition an individual's morale. When an individual has a definite goal, a leader whom he trusts, a belief in his fellow citizens which he will exert in the face of obstacles and dangers, his morale will be strong.

Group morale is the fusion of individual morales. It too can be weak or strong, depending on the strength of its component elements.

With a strong national morale, the men and women of the country are keen, enthusiastic, working in unison behind common leaders toward common goals. This indicates their faith in the future. With low morale, a country suffers from frustration, apathy, confusion.

Under war conditions, a strong national morale is essential to overcome hazards, pain, hunger, and other shocks and to withstand the sacrifices we all shall have to make.

How can we build morale?

The Basis of Enemy Morale

In our country the problem is different from what it was in Nazi Germany. There a common goal of *Lebensraum* was trumped up. The desire for more land and raw material was made the goal. Since leadership was not based on the consent of those who were governed, but on regimenting them through force, threat, intimidation, brutality, and, in addition, censorship and propaganda, a leader, once he assumed control, was able to consolidate his position. With a false goal and a leader who used force, threat, coercion, and intimidation, propaganda and censorship, plus a homogenous population, false faith was established, strengthened in turn by success in arms.

Democratic Morale

In the United States we have and want no goals outside those that exist in our own country. We have no desire for imperialism, for riches, for the lands of others. We do not as a nation need food or clothing. We can find our goal right here—the goal of democracy. With all our food and clothing and raw materials we still all haven't got as much as we need of everything. We have still the underprivileged "Third of a Nation."

However, we have a basis for a strong, unassailable morale, because we have both the physical resources and the psychological resources to merit a belief in our own future. It should be possible to establish this belief in our future—our common goals, our leaders, and ourselves—if we go about it intelligently.

Our definition of morale needs to be all-embracing. The physical and psychic happiness of men in the army and navy represents one important aspect of morale, but this is as the aspect of two million to one hundred and thirty million, a segmental and minor approach. The need for real morale, the building of psychological and economic security for all the people, is broader than that.

Strong Morale Depends on Security

Nor is the attitude of the civilian population toward the armed services the basic problem of morale. We can have a strong morale of the civilian population and a weak morale of the armed forces. Exhortations, talks, discussions, forums, or any single or multiple series of activities will not make a strong

morale. We cannot depend on verbalism. Words alone create emotional fervors, but they also create emotional hangovers. Words need realities behind them. Nor can we depend on censorship and propaganda, on threat, intimidation, or brutality, or on any other brutalized totalitarian methods. Morale goes right back to this: the psychological and physical well-being of a people expressed in a faith in their future; goals they are willing to fight for, to shed blood, sweat, and tears for despite dangers and sacrifices; faith in their chosen leaders and in one another. The future of democracy rests on a permanent morale achieved through building physical and psychological securities.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

Basic Propositions for Morale

Certain basic premises underlie the building of a strong morale:

1. The American people have already committed themselves, their money, and their manpower to the war effort. They have provided for the physical defenses.
2. Democratic leadership in government is called for to provide the psychological defenses that will fill the need for psychological and physical security. The aim of our national morale is the maintenance of democracy and the defeat of Nazism and all it stands for.

The recommendations which follow depend on democratic methods to build a strong national morale, voluntary effort by the people, and effort by the government as representative of the people. The activities are democratic—persuasion, suggestion, and education, and above all, *truth*.

Persuasion through Truth

Rauschnig comments that the Nazis have made the lie their ideal, have harnessed deeds and thoughts to the negation of all that is best in the world. Democracies, on the other hand, still place reliance on those standards through which we have realized our individual development and freedom. If we have faith in democracy, we shall continue on our proven paths, but we shall also enlarge our activities in order to strengthen the values in our way of life.

Faith in democracy can be strengthened by helping the people to understand both what it is and what it is not. Democracy is difficult to define. Both a way of life and a form of government, it is not static; it is dynamic and moving. Its very response to the needs of the times makes it difficult to define as one defines a rigid idea. Millions of Americans should be educated to become active, articulate, and dynamic focal points, mobilized as an undefeatable army to build up these psychological ramparts. Individuals can be taught to understand what democracy is and what it means to them, as well as what its absence would mean to them.

Voluntary citizen groups and the government can speak up for democracy, tell and teach. The crisis demands that ignorance and apathy be dealt with.

Speak Up for Democracy

Bringing the facts to the people so that they will have a true basis for their judgments is essential in a democracy. Today they are exposed to a competitive barrage of facts from many sources, near facts, and lies.

Voluntary groups already do speak up for democracy, on a national, statewide, and community basis. They define what it is, what it does, how it differs from other systems. They try to take up the slack, to counteract and counterattack subversive and other antidemocratic propaganda, and their work should continue and expand.

The Need for a Broad Integrated Plan

The time has arrived for the United States to undertake a consistent effort to carry on education in the meanings and importance of democracy to the American individual. There are dangers in such a program, dangers of regimentation, of peaceful infiltration by those who twist or distort democracy to whatever meaning they may want to give it. But against those dangers are the greater dangers of apathy and ignorance, of myopia, of misguided zeal, which in a crisis situation may lead to national disaster. It is time for the government, as such, to weigh the risks of centralized public information versus haphazard public information and to decide on the former.

This is not an easy task, because a democracy represents

different meanings to different people. It may be questioned whether the government as such can explain what our democracy is and what it is not. But the government already functions in this field. It does it in the schools, through elementary and high-school and even public college education. It does it when the Chief Executive makes a pronouncement.

What is needed is one centralized authority that gives out facts, that correlates and coördinates the activities of the many scattered information agencies. There is, of course, some coöperation today between these departments. The Office of Facts and Figures is closest to being such an organization. But no matter how good its intentions, unless there is centralization with specific authority, consciously or unconsciously, some of the groups engaged in the activity will be competing with their fellows for the attention, interest, and action of the public. Practically every branch of the national government has its Department of Public Information and there are, of course, superbodies. All at the present time are decentralized.

In the previous war George Creel, authoritative head of the Committee of Public Information, did such a job of coördination and made remarkably few mistakes in the selection of his staff, even though there were few men of training and experience available for use at the time. As Creel himself points out, "All that offered were authors, newspaper men, advertising men and college professors." Today, of course, that situation does not hold. Since the last war technicians in all the fields of communications and in the social sciences have been developed and offer a reservoir of resources from which to draw.

There is no basic plan, no underlying concept that governs the various agencies today. There has been no implementation of what the President has laid down as policy. No single organization develops an approach which the others follow as part of a whole. Overlapping, duplicating, and conflicting facts and points of view reach the public, which is left as puzzled as it was in the recent gasoline-scarcity controversy.

The government organization to carry on such activity should correspond in its informational aspect to the Committee on Public Information of the last war. But it should not be a censorship organization. It should be headed by a technician in mass communications. Its sole function should be to do one thing on a centralized basis: Present truthful material that

would enlighten the public about democracy and its present status. Such an organization should supply fact and definition to the people. It would thus provide an effective way to strengthen morale.

Make Democracy Work Better

The second recommendation is to make democracy work better. Democracy is not a finished product. We know that. There are still millions to whom it is not an actuality. More than definition is needed to make the alternative we present appear true. We have an obligation to strengthen democracy, to make it work better, so that the morale we desire to build may rest on a firm foundation of economic and psychological security. This can be done through democratic means, by voluntary and governmental groups working toward it.

Of voluntary groups, there are today thousands functioning in many fields on a national, state, and community basis. The Public Administration Year Book lists many of them—in education, child hygiene, housing, etc. Many of their activities overlap and duplicate themselves. Many are inefficient.

As an example of how aimless and uncoordinated the efforts of these groups are today, let us take the group of voluntary health-education organizations working for better health of the people. Chaotic competitive situations rule. If all the time, money, and effort, much of which is so badly misspent, were properly used in a unified public-health education movement aimed at solving our health-education problems, thousands upon thousands of illnesses and physical defects would be prevented in this country yearly. There is competition between good causes, not to mention direct jealousies and antagonism between good causes and good causes.

This obviously is true of other things as well as of health education. In every field the mushroomlike growth of efforts to strengthen our way of life requires reappraisal in the light of today's crisis.

Nondemocratic Lags

Our national government, state, and other political subdivisions, of course, are trying to strengthen democracy through laws furthering psychological and economic security. But

government itself is only an abstraction. We fail to think of it in terms of men and what they do, of departments and bureaus and commissions. These men, these agencies can give us democratic leadership which will exert itself wherever possible to ensure that democratic principles and practices shall prevail. Recent discrimination in employment in the war-materials product industries and against Negroes in the army and navy are cases in point. It is the obligation of democratic leadership to take up such nondemocratic lags.

Problems of Morale in World War I

Government acceptance by the people depends, too, on the actions of officials, elected or appointed, and how policies are carried out so that they are both democratic and efficient. That leads to our third recommendation: An activity aimed at harnessing the intellectual resources of the nation for a psychological general staff to be helpful with advice and counsel to make the government, in this time of crisis, more democratic and efficient.

In the last war, George Creel attempted to do that. In his own words: "It was just as though the Babylonians had been asked to build a threshing machine. Moreover, speed was the essence, and not only did an organization have to be built up overnight, but in the face of bitter and continuous attack. Of course, we had no chart, for at that time psychology was just a word and public relations counselors were unknown."

We know that in a democracy the consent of the people depends upon their desire to be led. But that in turn depends on the quality of the leadership. Today a leader needs to be proficient not only in mass communications but in a knowledge of those whom he is leading. The complexities of our background, the highly competitive interests in the conflict of ideas struggling for the attention of the public, demand a scientific approach toward leadership. It is not enough to be a naturally gifted leader. In the last fifty years the social sciences and experience have provided us with intellectual resources to implement leadership. There is among experts in this country a vast store of knowledge of what men do, what their motives are, their desires, their imagined and real grievances, their prejudices and taboos, the elements that strengthen morale, those

that weaken it. And there is still much to be learned. There are today experienced, skilled individuals, many of them already engaged in one or another branch of government, who could be appointed to such a national psychological general staff.

In the *Infantry Journal* of May, 1941, I stated that the government needs a psychological general staff to advise on all major questions of morale—in industry, civilian life, army, and navy. I envisage such a staff as providing the soundest available knowledge for building morale and for psychological warfare, and having on tap the ablest technicians, speeding up the entire morale-building process. Such a commission, carefully chosen by the government, could take its place in its field of psychological defense on a parity with the General Staff in physical defense.

The Need for a Master Plan

Much good work is now being done in this field by the public-relations divisions of many government departments—army, navy, and the others—but according to informed observers of the Washington scene, *there is no master plan* worked out by technicians drawn from the fields of the social sciences, sociology, psychology, ethnology, adult education, economics, the army, navy, public opinion, communications, public relations.

Technicians and experts in the physical sciences already advise the government on many subjects, and similarly, advantage might be taken of expert knowledge in the non-physical fields. There ought to be a master plan of psychological approaches just as there is a master plan for physical defenses. A psychological general staff would advise on methods and procedures to meet the national goals that have been set up by the government. It would be, essentially, not a policy-making agency, but an advisory body helping to translate policy into practice efficiently and democratically. Many governmental and private bureaus are carrying on activities to build morale. A group of experts working closely with the formulators and executors of our national policy might coordinate all these morale activities by giving them a broad orientation. This would give the important over-all psychological situation the same kind of attention the General Staff gives to planning to achieve military objectives. It is important that this organiza-

tion should not be a propaganda bureau nor a publicity bureau. It is a planning, strategy, and advisory body, with no authority except that which is inherent in good advice.

Laissez-Faire Is Costly

We cannot afford to adopt a laissez-faire attitude toward the problem of maintaining and strengthening morale. Only by attacking the whole problem in this broad, integrated way can we ensure that our psychological ramparts shall grow in keeping with our physical ones. Only in this way can we ensure that the doubts and indecisions of some of us will be dissipated.

More than a year ago I called a meeting of sociologists, publicists, and social psychologists in New York to consider the subject. I quote from the statement we signed at the meeting. The need is even more urgent today.

“A sound American morale cannot be built on a mere defense of traditional American rights, or on heresy-hunting, a suppression of dissent or on the hatred of a common enemy. It must rest upon a positive program. Such a program must conceive Democracy in terms of increasing satisfaction of the needs of all our citizens. The building of American morale requires the systematic extension of economic and psychological security, and of mass participation in the formation of public policy. It requires the assurance that all the people shall enjoy the right to work and to grow, which is the basic premise of democracy.

“Many groups and agencies are aware of this problem and are already contributing to its solution. But they are in need of a more comprehensive, systematic and unified endeavor. The achievement of a high morale, like military preparation, takes time. It is imperative that this preparation begin at once. But to achieve a sound American morale is to do more than meet a temporary emergency. It is to lay the foundation of a vigorous and developing national life for the years to come.”

OUR REASONS FOR UNIFIED ACTION

The Background of the Situation

There are many reasons why we cannot permit matters to rest as they are, and why we should think of morale building as a continuous process now. If we examine the background of the

present situation in the United States we can understand the need for not permitting ourselves to be lulled into inaction by the magnificent demonstration of unity after Pearl Harbor.

Consider first of all our population. We are not homogeneous. We differ as to culture, religion, race, economic status, political party, educational background, and in many other ways. The last available census figures indicate that approximately 11½ per cent of the population of Americans are foreign-born and that 21 per cent are Americans born of one or two foreign-born parents; 32½ per cent are of foreign birth or are the children of foreign-born parents.

Under the stress of recent years, there has been intensification of the tribal or group feeling, an identification of the individual with his own group. Cleavages that in times of calm did not exist arose, and the population has lately presented, instead of a united front, a patchwork of different cultural, economic, geographic, racial, and religious patterns, with different goals, leaders, and interests. Dissipated for the time being, we want to ensure that these divisions shall not rise again to plague us.

We cannot permit emotional reactions to hate or fear, induced by psychological and economic insecurity, to affect our decisions concerning national policy in our internal and external relations. We recently made a study of voters before an election to determine what the basis for their choice of candidates was. The voters, it was found, fell into groups determined by religious, racial, economic, or other backgrounds. Their choice of candidates was prompted, not by the real issues of the campaign, but on a basis of emotion—hate or fear. Morale building can help to prevent this.

Escapism and Isolationism

In our adherence even in wartime to what psychologists call the "pleasure principle," and in our aversion to facing reality, many of us, in the present situation, still seek escape. Escapism is responsible, certainly, for some of the attitudes which made for isolationist movements before the war. National escapism has helped to produce, too, a passive attitude in the presence of dangers. In order not to face realities, we are willing to tell ourselves that Hitler's actions are actions that will not touch us.

This national escapism finds its outlet, too, in concentration on the "pleasure principle." Sports contests have much pulling power. The public is still preoccupied with Greta Garbo and whether double or single features should rule in the movie houses. These energies could effectively be turned to the pursuit of more realistic goals. Again morale building may help.

Insecurities—Psychological and Economic

America has had a great depression, which brought with it psychological and economic insecurity. Many of the idea values we accepted have been destroyed in the last decade. In our youth no one could have imagined the realities of evil we face today. We have not been prepared by our education or experience to face them. Democracy was a great living ideal in our youth—not yet fulfilled, but attainable. Today there is in existence a strong regimented system of life, Nazism, which appeals to some persons with a passion for order. There are illusions, too, that further psychological insecurity: a large part of the population, particularly youth, see the world they have been born into as not having the values they are now urged to accept. Psychological insecurity has been accelerated, hastened, spread over wide areas by economic insecurity brought on by the depression. And these attitudes have been exploited by all those propagandists and special pleaders who want to divide democracy, who want to array class against class, group against group.

The "invasion from Mars," put on the radio by Orson Welles a few years ago, illustrated to what extent this psychological insecurity had made large segments of the American population believe in even the most unrealistic illusions.

There is statistical as well as visible evidence of economic insecurity. Our income figures and other quantitative yardsticks show that millions of Americans have reason to worry about their future security, old age, sickness, and unemployment. With such psychological and economic insecurity, there is in the United States a background situation for lack of a strong morale.

Psychological Warfare

Another reason for the need for building morale is the psychological warfare directed at America by the Nazis. The

Germans, using ideas as weapons, have developed a science of psychological warfare—research, fact finding, analysis, positive and negative factors in stimulating civilian morale, strategy, and tactics, fields of activities like national psychology, weapons of psychological warfare, propaganda, press, leaflets, films, geopolitics, radio, fifth column. We see astute Machiavellian propaganda techniques aimed against this country in the same way in which they have been so successfully employed against other countries. We are subjected to propaganda capitalizing on traditional prejudices, inequalities, jealousies, implemented in certain cases by threat, terror, and intimidations.

Internal antidemocratic propaganda does not appear on the surface today. But antialien, antilabor, appeaser, “super-patriotic,” and anti-civil-liberty propagandas are only quiescent. If it had not been for the basic adherence to the traditional faiths of America, we should have been sold down the river long ago.

The strength of the Nazi machine has had an effect upon our national morale. We are worshippers of power and certainly, in this scientific age, of efficiency. The sweep of the Nazi blitzkrieg has undoubtedly had its effect in creating situations where a weak devotion to democratic goals and ideals was further weakened.

Democracy Taken for Granted

We must not forget, too, that our public education has not stressed democratic loyalties and a knowledge of democracy as much as it might have. Our school system, our most effective means of social control, has not grown up to meet a crisis situation.

The uphill fight for free education developed on an evolutionary basis, without advance planning. Crises jolted the public education system into meeting them. The cultural time lag in the schools has not prepared our present generation for grasping the realities involved in what Hamilton Fish Armstrong calls “we or they,” a clear-cut understanding of two ways of life. Like health, which we take for granted because there is no sensory perception of it as there is of illness, we take our democracy and our democratic education for granted. Unless we feel the impact of the tyrant, it all seems remote and far away. Our sense of realism is jolted into action only when a crisis demands it.

Our Policy of Noninterference

There is yet another point. This stems from the postwar cynicism that brought with it the rejection of the Versailles Treaty, the “back to normalcy” of the Harding period, the thought expressed in “I didn’t raise my boy to be a soldier,” and in the anti-armament movement of the twenties, the Nye investigations of war-armament manufactures, and the Oxford oath. The emphasis in the last generation has been placed on peace and on not interfering in Europe. It is this underlying factor in the attitudes of millions that helped to keep alive the America First Committee, the isolationist point of view. This cynicism has now been shelved, and morale-building efforts are needed to keep it from resurrection.

The Engineering of Consent

What has been called the engineering of consent in a democracy is a new concept. It presupposes a knowledge of the social sciences and an experience of working on an engineering approach with the leadership of public opinion in a democracy. I have defined it in this way: the engineering of consent in a democracy means that the chosen leader gains the consent of his followers to his program through truth—by education, persuasion, and suggestion, not through threat, intimidation, or brutality. This cannot be done on a haphazard basis. It is comparable to the way that a bridge is built by an engineer, or a military campaign is worked out by a military strategist or tactician.

Our chosen leaders believe mainly in the power of the word. The tradition that words that won the last war can win this one still holds. As a matter of fact, the tyranny of words has been greatly deflated in the last years. Words are the foci for other activities. Neither the leaders in this country nor those in England appear to recognize that this matter of indoctrination, of teaching, is a matter not of telling but of effective planning, strategy, and timing.

Our people are being called upon to make sacrifices—sacrifices of life, sacrifices in time, sacrifices in money, sacrifices of comfort—without really ever having been given a full understanding of why these sacrifices are called for, why they need to be made. A chaos of words and pictures appears before the pub-

lic through all channels of communication, overlapping, contradicting. What is needed is planning of activity, implementation, selling, action, on a front developed on a broad integrated basis which utilizes all methods and all forms of conveying ideas to men.

Conflict and Cleavage

A democratic people is made up of many groups. They reach equilibrium through conflict. Adjustment is sometimes peaceable, sometimes not so peaceable as it might be—as in the case of strikes and lockouts. In peacetime such conflict resolves itself. In crisis periods these conflicts are dangerous to the necessities of unified action. Simple, direct, quick decisions are difficult for a democracy to make. Many such conflicts go on in a democracy: capital versus labor, industry versus farming, large business versus small business, trade versus industry, farmer versus worker, producer of capital goods versus producer of consumer goods. Sometimes these conflicts reach a breaking point. Factions want to rule on the basis of their specific interests rather than to consider common interests and goals. There is a basic difficulty in continuing to maintain national morale unless factions see the rights and obligations of the other groups.

Dominant Private Interests

There is yet another point in morale building. That is the personal-power complex of individuals. Men want to retain their position in politics, industry, the professions. Undoubtedly the desire for private good rather than the common good was one of the factors that helped to defeat France, the desire of those of the ruling class to retain their personal privileges rather than their rights in the democracy. It is important in national morale that the personal angle be laid aside.

To achieve a continuously strong morale, we need physical and emotional well-being, a common goal, common leaders we can trust, and a belief in one another. A short study of our background situation shows us the necessity of planning the work on an organized basis if we are to maintain and strengthen our national morale.

March, 1942.