

REPORTS

on

CONDITIONS OF MORALE IN THE A.E.F.

SUBMITTED TO SECRETARY BAKER AND GENERAL PERSHING

by

RAYMOND B. FOSDICK

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1919

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MEMORANDUM

for

GENERAL PERSHING

on

MORALE IN THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL PERSHING

on

MORALE IN THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

Paris, February 1, 1919.

(1) The morale of the A.E.F. can be affected by two sets of factors: first and obviously, steps taken by the Army itself, such as the improvement of billets, the extension of leaves, the encouragement of athletics and entertainment, etc., and second, a stimulation of the activities of the non-military Societies, such as the Y.M.C.A., the K. of C. and the Red Cross, that are supplying a large part of the recreational and relaxational service to the troops.

(2) In considering this problem of morale, the importance of the machinery now being built up by the G-1 Section of the General Staff cannot be over emphasized - i.e. a system of central inspection so that G.H.Q. can be constantly informed as to the factors that undermine the morale of the troops and be continually in touch with the shifting situation as regards recreation and kindred needs. Through this machinery it is proposed to call to the attention of appropriate Army Sections steps that could be taken to improve the spirit of the troops, and to stimulate the work of the non-military Societies.

(3) Until this system was affected, the G-1 Section G.H.Q. was passing on detail questions relating to the morale of the troops in the field without any first-hand knowledge of the situation. For

example, no one in the G-1 Section could have told from any facts at hand whether the Y. M. C. A. in the 4th Brigade of the 4th Division was or was not functioning to the satisfaction of the troops or to the limit of its capacity, nor was any information available as to what units in the 2nd Army or the S.O.S. were without service of any kind from any of the Societies. Without this information no real guidance or advice could be given the Societies as to the prosecution of their work. Similarly, there was no way of telling where athletic supplies were needed or were not needed, or indeed what units offered the Y.M.C.A. or the K. of C., the greatest opportunities for service. Although the G-1 Section was passing on questions relating to the morale of the troops in the leave areas and the extensive operations there of the Y.M.C.A., no representative of the Section had studied the situation on the ground so as to keep in touch with changing conditions.

(4) This is not said in criticism of the G-1 Section. The war was on, and even after the Armistice, in the pressure of more urgent matters, the less tangible questions of morale had to be given scant attention. But the effect of this lack of supervision is still everywhere obvious, particularly in the uneven development of the work of the Societies. Under proper direction and with proper machinery it is possible that the resources of the Y.M.C.A., the K. of C., the Salvation Army, and even the Red Cross insofar as it touches recreation, might be pooled so that the entire field could be covered with more or less completeness. At present there are large gaps and whole units of troops are either inadequately

served or not served at all, while in other places there is duplication and competition between the Societies. Illustrations of this can be furnished from many parts of France. For example, in the 35th Division, which is scattered through villages and hamlets centered around Commercy, the Y.M.C.A. covers a part of the field -- probably not more than 50 per cent. The Knights of Columbus cover five points in this same area. At each of these five points Y.M.C.A. work is in progress, and yet it is possible in this one divisional area alone to find scattered groups of troops that have no service of any kind from the Societies. Again, one can go through such villages as Grandpré, Marcq, or any of the points in the Northern Argonne Section and not find a single representative of any of the agencies, or even so much as a base-ball, a bar of chocolate, or a magazine.

(5) In other words, the task of supplying the needs of the Army along recreational and kindred lines has been left largely to the initiative of the non-military organizations. These organizations work without any particular relation to each other and the Army is placed in the position of trusting them to supply necessary facilities without any check or follow up system of its own. None of the Societies, with the possible exception of the Y.M.C.A., is in a position to determine where the needs are most urgent, and even the resources of the Y.M.C.A. are not great enough to cover the field. Indeed, so ineffective has been the co-ordination between the Army and the Societies in the development of new work that at present it is only by chance that a Divisional Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. or of the K. of C. finds out where the troops are

located. Until recently no plan had been worked out on the basis of which the Army systematically placed before the Societies the location of its detached units or the needs of the field. Consequently, the Societies were to a considerable degree working in the dark, without definite information or adequate supervision. Unless the Army could furnish the necessary guidance, such conditions as I have described were inevitable.

(6) In the light of this situation the importance of the machinery now being installed by the G-1 Section is obvious. Under this plan, as I understand it, a number of officers attached to G-1, G.H.Q., are detailed in the capacity of inspectors to different Army Sections in France, each officer having his own territory to cover. These officers will report to G-1 on both the negative and the positive aspects of morale, that is on the factors, if any, that are undermining the spirits of the troops and on the positive steps to be taken either by the Army itself or by the Societies to meet the conditions described. In addition, there will be corps, divisional and regimental welfare officers, with whom the G-1 representatives will be in close contact.

(7) This system is exactly similar to the one which has been employed in the training camps of the United States under the direction of the War Department. The country was divided into nine districts, each with its inspector. The inspector constantly reported on the recreational needs of the camps and the situation as regards morale, and the War Department, through the Commission on Training Camp Activities, at once took steps to see that these needs were supplied. In consequence, there was a uniform development of the

field work, and one camp, better located perhaps for purposes of publicity, was not allowed to be developed at the expense of another less fortunately located.

(8) As one who has had some slight experience in developing a system of this kind, perhaps I may be permitted to suggest the importance of choosing the field inspectors with scrupulous care. They should be officers of sympathy and tact who will understand the point of view of the doughboy and who will think in terms of the man who is billeted in the mud. If these officers are perfunctory in their work or casual in their inspections, nothing whatever will be accomplished except the creation of an entirely useless machine.

(9) Equally important is the selection of someone in the G-1 Section, G.H.Q., who will head up this field work and whose job -- whose sole job, I believe, -- should be to put ginger into the process of providing the men in the field with all the leisure-time facilities which the Societies or the Army can supply. Armed with the facts furnished by his inspectors, he would keep constantly after the Societies, through the Paris Liaison Officer, to see that new fields were covered, that duplication was eliminated, and that the work which they were doing and the personnel with which they were doing it, were satisfactory and effective. It would be his task, I should imagine, through proper channels, to take up with such Army authorities as might be concerned, the correction or creation of such steps or measures as the Army might adopt on its own initiative to keep up the spirit of the troops. While I am not intimately familiar with the detailed

operation of G-1 Section, it does not seem to me possible that a man charged with such responsibilities could find time to do anything else.

(10) The reports of the inspectors, as I understand them, will cover not only the facilities to be supplied by the non-military Societies, but also such conditions affecting morale as can be remedied by the Army itself. It is therefore probable that the representatives attached to G-1 Section would want to report among other things on the following:

- (a) Adequacy of entertainment features, such as Army, Y.M.C.A. and K. of C. Shows. Are these features available for the smaller units in the area? If not, what measures could be taken by which the shows could be brought to the men, or the men brought to the shows?
- (b) Musical instruments, such as banjos, mandolines, band instruments, etc.
- (c) Games, such as cards, chequers, chess, etc.
- (d) Sheet music - need and supply.
- (e) Athletic equipment - its need and distribution.
- (f) Books, magazines and newspapers. This point is of very great importance as there are many places, particularly in the 2nd Army, where the men, living in small detachments, often have no reading material whatever, not even magazines.
- (g) Canteen supplies. Adequacy. Methods by which supplies can be made available to small detachments.

- (h) Non-military Societies. Adequacy or inadequacy of service. Suggested methods of correlation.
- (i) Back Pay. In spite of the efforts of the Army authorities it is still possible to find, particularly in the hospitals and among casual outfits, hundreds of cases of men who have not been paid for three or four months. Moreover, this matter is apparently not confined to casual groups. For example, on January 26th, Company B. of the 341st Labor Battalion, stationed at Varennes, consisting of approximately 250 men, had not been paid since September 30, 1918. Some units in the 308th Field Artillery, stationed near Dijon, within two weeks received back pay for three months. I heard of similar cases from men in the field, but I mention only those which were verified through responsible officers.
- (j) Billetting. Adverse conditions effecting morale.
- (k) Lighting facilities, such as candles, etc.

The importance of this point is, I believe, paramount. I have come across many outfits, both in the 2nd Army and in parts of the 3rd Army, that had a very limited supply of candles, or no candles at all. As it gets dark between half past four and five the men are unable to read or play games or have any entertainment. In some cases the last mess was served in the dark because of the lack of

any light. To men living in dug-outs, as many of the 2nd Army are living, the supply or lack of candles may mean the difference between good and bad morale.

(l) Leaves. Application of leave arrangements to individual units.

(m) Wood. There seems to be a noticeable absence of wood for fire in parts of the 2nd Army and elsewhere.

(11) These suggestions are capable of almost indefinite expansion, and I am outlining only a few that occurred to me as the result of what I have seen in the field. It is possible that the complete investigation of some of these matters would have to be made by the Inspector General's Office. It seems to me that the object of the G-1 representatives' reports should be not so much to ascertain the cause of previous failures on the part of any of the Societies or the Army as to find out what positively and affirmatively can be done now to remedy whatever bad situations exist.

(12) Several other factors which I am discussing in the following paragraphs are matters which obviously can affect the spirit of the troops.

(a) Uncertainty of plans for returning home: It is unnecessary to remark that the thing uppermost in the minds of the troops is the desire to return home. This question dwarfs all others and has apparently become in some parts of the Army almost a mania. Rumors, often of the wildest sort, fly from group to group, and the troops seem to vibrate between hope and despair

according to the latest report which they can obtain relative to the plans of the Army for returning them home. These rumors often have to do with the future use of the troops, and I have heard in various parts of the Army from the soldiers that they expected to be sent to Russia, that they expected to be sent to the West Coast of Africa, that they expected to be used to rebuild the devastated areas of France, that they expected to have to quell uprisings in the Balkan States, etc. In other words, it is the indefiniteness of their status that seems to worry the men almost as much as their enforced sojourn in France. I have been told many times by men in the Army that if they could only know authoritatively that they were going to return on approximately a certain date, the fact that the date was four or six months off would not be half so demoralizing as the recurrence of hope and despair that must inevitably accompany the present state of uncertainty.

Assuming that it is not possible to forecast with any degree of accuracy the probable date of sailing of specific units, would it not be possible to use every conceivable channel -- general orders, chaplains, "Stars & Stripes", welfare agencies, etc. -- in keeping the troops informed on the following points:

- (aa) the policy of the Government with regard to the return and demobilization of the A.E.F.,
- (bb) the varying amounts of shipping available for troop transport,
- (cc) the actual progress of demobilization by number and organization,
- (dd) the probable future rate of demobilization.

If this information could be accompanied with occasional reassuring statements from the Commander-in-Chief, Mr. Hurley, etc., much might be done to bridge over the present state of uneasiness and dissatisfaction in parts of the Army.

(b) Mess: At many points, noticeably in the 2nd Army and to some extent in the 3rd, mess is still served in a mess line out-of-doors. The men stand in a single line regardless of the weather and are served as their turn is reached. After being served they sit or stand where they can, sometimes in the rain. Many of the men attempt to take the food to their billets, but complaint is made that it is often sold before they get it there. Some of the Commanding Officers have improved the situation by having a double mess line instead of a single line, so that the time necessary for the soldiers to stand in line is cut in half. Still other Commanding Officers, possessed perhaps of more imagination, have contrived various ways and means by which the men are served indoors, where they sit down to eat in barracks style. I believe that through the proper channels this matter could be brought to the attention of Commanding Officers so that a uniform practice could be established on the basis of which the men could eat in more or less comfort.

(c) Hours of drill: The question is raised whether the long hours required for military drill are producing the results desired. General Order No. 207 (1918) modified by G.O. No. 236 and G.O. No. 241, paragraph V, prescribe twenty-five hours a week of various kinds of drill, except that men desiring to take part in athletic sports are excused from military training in excess of

four hours a day. Even this concession is applicable only to those organizations that have completed a month's training under the Schedule issued to take effect January 1, 1919. So that practically from the time of the Armistice the troops have been given at least five hours a day drill, and often longer, and in the future the minimum can be no lower than four hours a day under any circumstances.

Most of the men in the Army are not looking forward to any career as soldiers. They did not get into the Army because they had any special predilection for soldiering. They answered the nation's call in the time of crisis and gladly made themselves part of a great war machine. But now that the crisis is over they turn instinctively to their peace-time habits of mind and are impatient with any attempt to continue unrelieved the military tasks for which most of them have no natural fondness. In other words, the motive is gone out of the whole business, and the ideal of perfecting themselves in the profession of arms is not to them an acceptable substitute. To see a Battery that has fired 70,000 rounds in the Argonne fight going listlessly through the movements of ramming an empty shell into a gun for hours at a stretch, or training the sights on an enemy that does not exist, is depressing enough to watch, and its effect on the spirits of the men is apparent. They seem to wilt under it. The same is true of infantry drill in the muddy roads, up and down which columns of American soldiers trudge listlessly and without spirit. As one Lieutenant expressed it, it would only need a contagious word or two, and his whole outfit would throw down their guns and run like a pack of

schoolboys. It would seem as if it were more important to the whole cause of military preparedness in the United States that these men should not be sent home disgruntled or out of sympathy with the principle of military training, than that they themselves should be perfected as soldiers. The chances are that they will not be called upon in their lifetime to fight again. If unnecessarily fed up with soldiering they may prejudice a new generation against military preparations of any kind.

I am conscious of the impertinence of a suggestion of this kind coming from a civilian, and I would not venture to broach it except for my knowledge of what the British are doing in their Army of Occupation. Two hours a day, in the morning, is the maximum required. There is no formal tactical drill of any kind. "We only aim to keep our men physically fit," the Chief of Staff told me. The rest of the time is given up to mass athletics, sports and educational work, together with such details of military duties as may be necessary. In other words, the British aim to keep their men continually busy, but military drill forms only a small proportion of their duty.

I asked the Chief of Staff in Cologne what would happen if the schedule of drill were extended to cover perhaps five hours a day. "Why frankly we would have a mutiny," he said. "The soldiers would think that it was being done just to take up their time and would see the needlessness of it. These men are not professional soldiers, -- they are citizens who have been turned into excellent fighters for the time being, but who are looking forward eagerly to their civil occupations. It would break the back of

the Army to insist on more drill than we give them now."

(d) Absence of opportunity to play: In some units Commanding Officers, regardless of General Order No. 241, have taken the position that they have no time for games or contests as their men work all day. I think this matter should be carefully checked up. There seem to be a few officers in the Army who regard anything like athletics, education, or play as an unnecessary frill. I recall an officer who boasted that he worked his men all day long "on the job we were sent out here to do. They are so tired at night they are ready to drop in their tracks. They have no time for homesickness." The men in this particular outfit had as low a morale as any I have seen. They appeared dull and listless. Obviously the men of the American Expeditionary Force will submit cheerfully and gladly to any kind of hardship or any hours of labor during wartime, but when the deep and impelling motive for work and sacrifice - that of helping to win the war - is withdrawn, other moving forces have to be substituted and the process of replacement has to be skilfully handled or the morale of the Army will rapidly fall off.

(e) Mass play necessary: In this connection it may be permitted to emphasize the special value of those games and recreations that make demands upon the soldiers' own resourcefulness, and I note that this matter is being taken up under the wise guidance of Colonel Kelly, in G-1, G.H.Q. Moving pictures, concerts, professional plays and lectures are necessary and they should be pushed as far as facilities will allow; but it must be remembered that the soldiers' part in these forms of amusement is a passive one.

They constitute diversion - and diversion is essential - but they do not supply a substitute for the intense activity that in so many of the fighting units has been succeeded by the dull routine of duty. As Colonel Salmon of the Medical Corps points out (Chief Surgeon's Weekly Bulletin No. 42) our troops have had emotional experiences of the most tremendous kind suddenly discontinued. A few weeks ago they were themselves the actors in great events. They cannot now replace this experience by becoming spectators of lesser ones. Therefore, recreations in the preparation of which many men have a part, or mass games in which whole companies participate, are especially useful. The "shows" which have been so much employed in the British Army have been most successful from this psychological point of view. Cinemas, Wild-West shows, imitation country fairs, group singing, horse shows and various forms of tabloid athletics have this advantage that many men are actively engaged.

I mention this matter not to imply that it has escaped the attention of the Recreation Officers, but in the hope that the G-1 representatives in the field may constantly bring it to the attention of Commanding Officers, Chaplains, Y.M.C.A. Secretaries, and others who may be charged with responsibility along lines of morale.

(f) Conditions North of Toul: While the steps that are now being taken, through the machinery of G-1, will provide more systematically for the men of the Army such comforts as candles, books, etc., I doubt whether anything can permanently be accomplished to maintain the morale of parts of the 2nd Army as long as this

body of troops is located in its present desolate situation. Thousands of them are living under conditions of great hardship and discomfort in the area that was fought over north of Toul. They are billeted in villages that were destroyed during the war or in dugouts that were constructed during the fighting, surrounded on every hand by desolation and waste. I believe that the morale conditions in some of the smaller detached units of these troops are really serious. Added to the uncertainty as to the time when they will be returned to their homes, these soldiers have to withstand the mentally depressing effects of their environment. They are leagues from human habitations save those of soldiers, and the country for miles around consists of far-stretching seas of mud, crossed by water-filled trenches, fenced into long strips by endless wire, dotted with graves, littered with the debris of battle, and showing here and there the remains of dead horses. In one case I found a Commanding Officer of a small detached unit, a Lieutenant, in a mental state bordering on hysteria. The conditions are not unlike those which existed among the small detached units of the Marine Corps in the West Indies a year ago, except that in the West Indies there were plenty of civilians who, while they did not speak the language of the Marines, were at least human beings: and there were there no signs of devastation and ruin such as surround our men on every hand in the neighborhood of St. Mihiel, Verdun, and the Argonne.

Obviously this suggestion is made in ignorance of military requirements, but it is apparent to a casual observer that to preserve the morale of the men in these parts they should be moved at the earliest possible moment.

To summarize:

1. Steps towards bettering morale are of two sorts:
Those taken by the Army itself, and those taken through the welfare Societies.
2. The most important instrumentality for guidance in taking steps of both sorts is the new system for central inspection through G-1, G.H.Q.
3. This new system consists of detailing morale officers to army areas to report conditions to G.H.Q., and to maintain close contact with the corps, divisional and regimental welfare officers. A similar plan has worked with marked success in the training camps of the United States.
4. These officers should possess sympathy and tact and be able to think in terms of the doughboy living under uncomfortable conditions.
5. This field-work should be headed up by an exceptionally able officer in G-1, G.H.Q., detailed exclusively to this duty.
6. The task of this officer would be to get the Army itself to take every possible means to better conditions affecting the morale of the men, and to supervise the work of the welfare Societies so that they might effectively co-operate toward the same end.
7. Among matters on which the inspectors in the field might report to G.H.Q. are the following:
 - Adequacy of entertainment features.
 - Need for musical instruments.
 - Sheet music.
 - Games.
 - Athletic Equipment.
 - Books, magazines and newspapers.
 - Canteen supplies.
 - Welfare societies.

Pay.
Billeting.
Lighting facilities.
Leaves.
Fire-wood.

8. It seems probable that much unrest could be allayed by using appropriate methods for informing all organizations of such decisions as are reached for sending them home. At present, uncertainty is general; the men credit the wildest rumors; and disappointments are repeated.
9. Improved mess arrangements would better living conditions.
10. It is suggested that some study might well be made of the results obtained under the present daily drill schedules.
11. A similar suggestion is made with regard to the results obtained under the G.O. providing for athletic games and contests.
12. Attention is called to the beneficial results obtained through recreational activities involving the participation of large numbers of men.
13. Almost insurmountable difficulties stand in the way of doing much for the morale of those men of the 2nd Army who are stationed in the fought-over area.

RAYMOND B. FOSDICK.

REPORT

to

THE SECRETARY OF WAR

on

THE RELATION OF OFFICERS AND MEN IN THE A.E.F.

REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR

on

THE RELATION OF OFFICERS AND MEN IN THE A.E.F.

Paris, April 17, 1919.

Honorable Newton D. Baker,
Secretary of War,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I have been living with the American Expeditionary Force now for more than four months. I have eaten and slept with officers and men under all conditions, in all parts of France. In this way I have had for a civilian perhaps unusual opportunity to size up the opinion of the Army as regards both the conditions under which it has been living and the whole military idea which has molded and regulated its daily life.

As a result of what I have heard and seen, I cannot help thinking that a larger proportion of the enlisted men than might reasonably be expected are going home pretty well disgruntled with military training and the kind of life which it entails. While there are many causes of this dissatisfaction, one of its main roots, I believe, is to be found in what may be called a misfit in the relationship between officers and men. This misfit cannot easily be defined under one formula, but it manifests itself in ways that are galling to the democratic spirit of the troops. In our army both officers and men are drawn from a common economic and social reservoir. There are plenty of men of superior education and high mental and moral qualities in the ranks of the A.E.F.

Conversely there are plenty of commissioned and non-commissioned officers who have none of these attributes. I do not believe that an army was ever recruited in which the common soldier possessed such a high average of intelligence and social experience as in the American Army of 1917 to 1919. By the same reasoning it must be admitted that in no army have the officers been superior to their men by so small a margin. Yet the difference between officers and men in point of the privileges and social position conferred upon the former has been emphasized to what seems to me a totally unnecessary degree. Under foreign service conditions, both officers and men are limited to practically the same public facilities for their means of recreation and relaxation. Yet the possession of a Sam Browne belt in the A.E.F. has carried with it advantages out of all proportion to disciplinary requirements or the needs of the occasion, and officers have been allowed and encouraged to claim and even monopolize such advantages in ways that have shown a total lack of the spirit of fair play.

A few illustrations will perhaps make clear the point I am trying to develop:

Last December I was in Chaumont on the occasion of the opening of the new Y.M.C.A. Auditorium. An attractive show by a cast of doughboys was on the bill and the troops were anxious to see it. The Y.M.C.A. authorities evidently intended to set aside 200 seats for officers in the front of the house, but the matter had been overlooked, and by 7 o'clock, an hour before the show was scheduled to commence, the whole house was jammed with doughboys. At 7:45 officers began to arrive, and finding there were no seats, evidently entered some complaint. A Captain or Major (I forget his exact rank) who appeared to act in the capacity

of a Provost Marshal, thereupon came to the front of the theatre and ordered from their seats 200 doughboys who were occupying the front rows. The men obeyed with military precision but with undisguised expressions of anger and contempt. Someone in the back shouted: "If those men have to give up their seats, let's all go." Whereupon the whole house moved for the doors. The officer thereupon mounted the stage and shouted a warning to the effect that if the men left the theatre it would be closed for two weeks. After some discussion the men returned to their seats except the 200 doughboys in front, whose places in the meantime were taken by officers.

Seats for officers are customarily reserved in all the Y.M.C.A. and Army show houses throughout the A.E.F. In order to secure a place the doughboy has to get in line at least an hour and sometimes two hours before, and frequently hundreds are turned away because they are unable to crowd their way into the halls. It is no unusual sight, just before the curtain rises, to see scores of officers with women on their arms taking the places reserved for them in the front. The comments of bitterness from the doughboys on such occasions can better be imagined than expressed.

At one large leave center in the 3rd army, an entire gallery in a theatre was set aside by the orders of the divisional commanding general for the exclusive use of officers. Although the gallery contained 650 seats, there were seldom more than 25 to 30 officers present at a performance. In spite of repeated protests by representatives of welfare societies and others, the commanding general stubbornly refused to allow the doughboys to occupy the empty seats, although they stood every night, literally by hundreds, trying to get into the building.

The feeling on this matter in the division ran so high as seriously to affect the morale of the whole outfit.

Only a few weeks ago, in this same army area, a Major peremptorily ordered a dozen doughboys out of their seats in a theatre on the ground that the seats had been set aside for officers - and this, in spite of the fact that the show was half over, and soldiers were standing by scores. The seats in question remained empty during the balance of the performance, as there were no officers waiting to occupy them. Similarly, in a recent basketball game between two divisions, in the Third Army area, approximately 75 men were ordered out of their seats, after the game had begun, to make place for officers.

Again, it is by no means exceptional, in the long lines of soldiers waiting to be served at a canteen or commissary, to see an officer calmly take his place at the head of the line, evidently by virtue of his Sam Browne belt. The fact that the enlisted men have been standing for perhaps three quarters of an hour awaiting their turn is no concern of his. There are, of course, plenty of officers who take their place in line; there are too many who resort to the short-cut practice.

When trouble occurs in any village or town in the neighborhood of a camp, it is often customary to put the place out of bounds. On several occasions these places have been put out of bounds for the men only, the officers not sharing in the prohibition. I recall one such village in the Second Army area, which, because of some question of drunkenness, had been placed out of bounds for the enlisted men only. It was the one village within miles of the camp and was the natural gathering point in leisure hours. The angry comments of the enlisted men on the discrimination

practiced against them would hardly bear repeating. If the drunkenness in this particular outfit had been confined exclusively to the men, the discrimination might have been deserved. It was an open and notorious fact, however, attested not only by the men but by Army nurses and Y.M.C.A. and Red Cross girls, that the conduct of the officers in this respect was far from irreproachable.

The question of short leaves is another matter which illustrates the distinction in privilege between officers and men. In many parts of the Army the ease with which officers obtain passes to visit nearby points is as great as the difficulty with which the enlisted men obtain them. I have in mind a camp in the vicinity of Toul which illustrates my point. The officers experience no difficulty whatever in visiting the city practically whenever they desire, and transport accommodations are always available. The men are allowed to go at rare intervals and often have to walk. Similar situations are observable in other parts of the army.

The situation at the American Headquarters of the Peace Commission in Paris, the Hotel Crillon, is another matter which, while it differs in type and perhaps in explanation from any of the illustrations I have been citing, nevertheless emphasizes the point that I have in mind. The Crillon is one of the best hotels in Paris and its dining rooms at noon and night are crowded, among others, with officers in uniform. At the very beginning, specially selected enlisted men with good records in fighting outfits in the Army were detailed as door boys, coat boys, and elevator boys in this hotel, and this service has been continued for nearly four months. Among other duties is that of pressing the clothes of the attaches of the Peace Commission. The knowledge of it has spread

through the army, has undoubtedly been exaggerated in the telling, and has caused no inconsiderable bitterness. Personally, as an American citizen who was unable to join the active fighting forces in the war, I resent the fact that a soldier in uniform who has gone over the top and risked everything he had in the conflict and perhaps wears wound stripes on his arm, as is true of some of these men, should be detailed to hold my coat or open the door for me when I dine at the Hotel Crillon.

Details for work of this kind are by no means limited to this instance. I remember dining at an Officer's mess presided over by a Colonel. At rigid attention on either side of the door, inside the dining room, stood an enlisted man who seemed to be a sort of lackey or butler. Military etiquette marked the entire meal. Even the officers did not speak until spoken to by the Colonel.

It would be possible to multiply instances of the kind above cited. They can be found by any observer. At first I was inclined to believe that they represented cases of bad manners, bad taste or bad judgment on the part of individual officers. After four months of living with the Army I am not in a position to claim that they represent much more, but they are so widespread and the bitterness which they have created is in some quarters so real that I am forced to the opinion that there must be something fundamentally wrong in our system of selecting and training officers.

It seems to me that the fault lies in the first place with the Regular line Officer who does not realize that the army of America which this war called into being, is made up of men of a far different stripe and calibre from those represented by the post and garrison troops whom he was accustomed to command in pre-war days. It is an army of in-

dependent young Americans, full of initiative and imagination, who joined the service not because of any predilection for soldiering, but because they believed enough in the ideal for which we entered the war to fight for it. They understand the game well enough to be willing to subordinate their individualities for the time being to the good of the whole machine. They are not willing to subordinate themselves in order that a few men wearing Sam Browne belts, coming from the same environment in America from which they come, shall have special privileges and a superior social status which is denied to them. These young men are doing a good deal of quiet thinking, and they see clearly enough that such privileges as I have enumerated above have nothing whatever to do with the efficiency of the military machine of which they willingly made themselves a part. They realize, too, that these privileges suggest a caste system which has no sanction in America and against which they instinctively rebel.

In other words, these men are not professional soldiers in the old regular army sense of the word, yet many of the officers are apparently not conscious of the distinction. I am not defending the caste system of our old army which was obvious enough in many of our Army Posts before the war. I recall all too vividly the peremptory manner in which a group of officers broke up a long scheduled basketball game in an enlisted men's gymnasium in one of our Army Posts because they wanted the floor for a game among themselves. My point is that however reprehensible such conduct was in the old regular army, it is doubly reprehensible in this army.

I would not want this observation to be extended into a generalization on all Regular Army Officers. I can think of scores of such

officers among my own acquaintances whose solicitude for their men and whose spirit of comradeship in a common cause it would be difficult to match. I believe that these broad-spirited officers constitute perhaps the majority in the regular army. My point is that there is frequently too much of the other kind of spirit and that the training and perhaps the traditions of the army are such as to give it emphasis rather than check.

The second reason for the existence of unfair privileges in our new army is to be found, I believe, in the inadequate and hasty training of those officers who, until this war broke out, had never had any military experience. It is easy and perhaps cheap to say that candidates for the officers' schools, particularly those in the A.E.F. and in the last officers' camps in the United States, were often arbitrarily and unwisely chosen, although in many cases this is undoubtedly true. The relevant point is that these schools with their hasty training too often turned out officers with no well-developed sense of responsibility, officers to whom the Sam Browne belt and the epaulets were merely the badge of a superior social class, the symbol of rights and privileges jealously to be guarded even at the expense of the welfare and morale of the men of their commands. The new status meant to them not so much an opportunity for larger service, as an escape from disagreeable kinds of work, and an easier approach to entertainment and diversion. It meant, too, in many cases, a certain immunity from the consequences of misconduct - a fact eloquently borne out by the sights one sees daily in Paris and occasionally in other large centers. The soldiers of the draft army are too wide awake, too critical by habit, and too well educated to concede special privileges

that have no military significance or value to officers who are the mental and moral inferiors of half of their subordinates.

That such privileges are unnecessary, indeed, that far better results in point of discipline and morale are secured when they are absent, is amply borne out by the army itself. As I write I am thinking of units of troops with which I am personally familiar where the spirit of fair play between officers and men is all that could be desired. I have particularly in mind an army corps in which the frank solicitude of the officers for their men is matched only by the devotion of the men to their officers. I recall a regiment in another part of France whose remarkable esprit de corps in the trying days that immediately followed the armistice was the result of the spirit in which hardships and privileges were commonly shared by officers and men alike. In these particular outfits there was no relaxation of discipline and no unnatural social blending between the two classes. In matters of mess and quarters, each lived much by itself, as such an arrangement undoubtedly affords the happier basis. But this segregation did not confer on one class superior advantages in the way of access to entertainment, or superior rights to a rational social life. Neither did it result in making one class the personal servants of the other.

It is highly probable that the United States will maintain by one method or another, a fairly large standing army in the future. If that army is to attract the services of our best young men, if it is to respond to the new influences that are sweeping the world, indeed, if it is really to succeed in the face of the forces opposed to its organization and maintenance, it must shake off the suggestions of social caste that have too often stigmatized our military machinery up

to the present time. To accomplish this I believe a new emphasis is necessary, not only at West Point but at all centers where officers are trained. Certainly there is need of increased vigilance in choosing as officers men who possess the moral and mental qualities that are indispensable if they are to establish their leadership over the soldiers drafted from the high average of American citizenship.

I have written with the utmost frankness because I believe that if the facts which I have outlined are not faced and dealt with they will prejudice public opinion in America against the whole future program of rational military development.

Cordially yours,

RAYMOND B. FOSDICK.

REPORT

to

THE SECRETARY OF WAR

on

THE ACTIVITIES OF WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS

SERVING WITH THE A. E. F.

REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR
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THE ACTIVITIES OF WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS
SERVING WITH THE A.E.F.

War Department,
Washington, D.C.
June 1, 1919.

Of the seven organizations that joined in the United War Work Campaign for the one hundred and seventy million dollar fund last fall, six are working with our troops in France, to-wit: The Y. M. C. A.; the Y. W. C. A.; the National Catholic War Council (Knights of Columbus); the Jewish Welfare Board; the Salvation Army and the American Library Association. The other organization, the War Camp Community Service, is not represented with the American Expeditionary Forces by reason of the fact that it would be impossible to develop its specialized line of work under existing conditions in France. The Red Cross is, of course, operating in a distinctly different field and is therefore not considered in this discussion.

These six organizations above mentioned have been working directly under the Administrative Section of General Pershing's Staff and every effort has been made to coordinate and adjust their lines of work so as to eliminate overlapping and duplication. Added to the tremendous project of education, athletics and entertainment which the Army itself is conducting, the work of these six societies helps to form what is probably the largest and most comprehensive leisure-time program ever undertaken. The effect of all of this work upon the future citizenship of the United States is incalculable, and the American people can take pride in their own generous participation in its successful prosecution.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

Of the six organizations in France, the Y.M.C.A., is the largest and its budget constitutes 58% of the money collected last fall. The Y.M.C.A., has received a good deal of criticism from the soldiers in France. Some of this criticism is merited; much of it is due, I believe, to misunderstanding. Probably the bulk of the criticism arises from the operation by the Y.M.C.A., of the Army canteens. Personally, I believe it was a mistake for the Y.M.C.A. to go into this business at all. In doing so it entered upon a delicate field fraught with difficulties. The canteen as an institution has been from early days an Army perquisite by which company funds were increased, and the soldiers of the A.E.F., without adequate information as to the arrangement, could not understand why it should be handed over to a private society which was at the same time raising millions at home for support. Moreover, the personnel of the Y.M.C.A., was untrained for this kind of work, and it soon found itself in a maze of business and technical difficulties with which it was unable at first to cope. In the minds of the soldiers, it immediately became a commercial organization and from this stigma it has never succeeded in freeing itself.

It must be remembered, however, that the Y.M.C.A., undertook this work as a distinct service to the Army Command, and at a time of crisis its handling of this canteen proposition saved a large combatant personnel for our fighting forces. It was a general relief to the General Staff that during the fighting days of the Army, it did not have to handle the ever-troublesome canteen problem. The charge that the Y.M.C.A.. made money out of the canteen is of course erroneous. However high its prices may have been in individual localities, considered as a business venture, the total results show large losses.

Another ground for criticism of the Y.M.C.A. may be found in the character of its personnel. While many of the men chosen to work among the troops were excellently qualified, many others were utterly unadapted to this purpose, and had no common ground in mixing with our virile, red-blooded young soldiers. The excuse for this situation may perhaps be found, in part at least, in the fact that the best men for this kind of work were themselves in the Army, and other sources for workers had to be tapped. This view is supported by the fact that the Y.M.C.A. women in France were of an exceptionally high order, far better adapted on the average than the men. The Y.M.C.A. has 2,500 young women serving with the troops in France. Their work is beyond praise, and the "Stars and Stripes", the military newspaper, which is the best barometer of soldier feeling in the A.E.F., in a glowing editorial recently referred to them as "100% efficient". In choosing these women, the Y.M.C.A. had the entire womanhood of America to draw from, where, as I have already pointed out, the best material among the men was in the Army. Moreover, it must be remembered that this charge of badly adapted personnel is one which cannot be confined to the Y.M.C.A. Other organizations in France, too, suffered from the same disability. In fact, the impression is inescapable that the Army itself could supply out of its own ranks a more uniformly qualified personnel for welfare work than is possible to private organizations.

In discussing these criticisms lodged against the Y.M.C.A., one must not forget the enormous volume of creditable work which it has carried on and is carrying on at the present time. Its huts are to be found with nearly every unit of troops in the A.E.F. Its

athletic department, its wide-spread entertainment facilities, its admirable organization of the leave areas, the work, which it did in forming the educational machinery of the Army, are all on the credit side of the balance, and at General Headquarters I found the liveliest gratitude not only for the willingness with which the Y.M.C.A. has met the wishes of the Army, but for its general spirit of service. Looked at in the large, the Y.M.C.A. deserves the appreciation of the Army and the continued support of the public.

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

The work of the Young Women's Christian Association covers two general fields: first, providing proper accommodations for the women employed both by the Army and by the other welfare societies; and second, providing rest and recreation rooms for French women in war industries. This latter field has recently been broadened to cover some of the work for women in the devastated area. The work of this society is of an exceptionally high character, and its willingness to accept responsibility, together with its imagination in discovering and its ingenuity in meeting the real needs among women workers, have had gratifying results.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The Knights of Columbus, as one of the branches of the National Catholic War Council, is carrying on work largely similar in plan to that of the Y.M.C.A. It has a substantial number of huts and recrea-

tion halls, and it has done good work among some of the scattered units so located that they received little attention from the other societies. It has done a great deal too, to stimulate the interest of the Army in boxing, and it is taking generally a prominent part in the forthcoming Interallied games to be held at Pershing Stadium near Paris. A legitimate criticism of the activities of the Knights of Columbus would lie in the fact that the amount of its work in France is not as large as the size of its allotment in last fall's campaign would seem to suggest. The Knights were late in starting with the A.E.F., and they have never succeeded in overcoming that handicap. Moreover, I believe, that they are losing a real opportunity for service through their failure to employ women personnel. After eight months with the troops in France, I am convinced that the average woman worker attached to a hut is worth four or five men workers. Certainly her effect on the morale and spirit of the troops is extraordinary. An "honest-to-God American girl", as the soldiers call her, can do more to keep the men cheerful and create an atmosphere of home than any other factor; and the work of our women in France -- Y.M.C.A. girls, Salvation Army girls, Red Cross girls and the representatives of the other agencies -- has been in no small degree responsible for the unflagging devotion and the inexhaustible patience with which our troops carried forward their high enterprise.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC
WAR COUNCIL

The work of the Special Committee of the National Catholic War Council, which corresponds somewhat roughly to the Y.W.C.A.,

is being conducted in Paris with marked success. Indeed, I think the institution which this Committee is conducting in Avenue Wagram in Paris is perhaps one of the most interesting and significant pieces of work in the city, and it is gratifying to learn that it is being extended, and that the Special Committee is assuming large responsibilities in connection with the living conditions of our women war workers in Paris and elsewhere. The crowded conditions of French cities make work of this kind absolutely essential.

JEWISH WELFARE BOARD

The Jewish Welfare Board is admirable in every respect and is working under able leadership. Like the huts of the Y.M.C.A. and of the Knights of Columbus, its buildings serve all troops regardless of faith, and I was greatly interested to note in a recent trip to the Le Mans area, how widely its facilities were employed by Jew and Gentile alike.

SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army is easily the most popular of the six organizations in France. The work of this organization is not large; indeed, it is a great deal smaller than most people think. Where the Y.M.C.A. has six thousand representatives in France and the Knights of Columbus eight hundred, the Salvation Army has less than two hundred. Its work is limited to a few divisions, so that a comparatively small number of the troops have actually been in contact with the organization. Its fame, however, has spread far

beyond its work and it is difficult to find a doughboy who does not speak its praise. Its success is not due to any material equipment or any external policy. Contrary to general belief, it does not give supplies away free except in cases of need. Its policy is to sell its canteen supplies--even its far-famed doughnuts--and its prices, due to the fact that it has no extensive buying machinery, are generally higher than those of the Y.M.C.A. It is the inner spirit of service that has endeared this organization to the heart of the doughboy. Its personnel has been carefully selected from trained workers in the Salvation Army--men and women who knew how to meet their fellow men on a common plane--and no task has been too humble and no service too small for them to perform for the troops. The Salvation Army wisely limited its activities to a size that could be carried on by its small but highly trained personnel, and its reward is the genuine affection of the A.E.F.

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The American Library Association with its ample supply of books has worked largely through the other organizations, although through its mail service, it has sent thousands of special books to individual soldiers upon request. No matter how isolated a soldier might be from his fellows, he could have books for the asking, and the Army is deeply indebted for the trained services which this splendid organization put at its disposal.

II.

I have roughly reviewed the bare outlines of the activities of these organizations in France, and although I have perhaps been associated with the work at too close a range to give the best impartial opinion, I am confident that the verdict of time and perspective will be one of generous approval. Certainly, the activities of these societies have marked a new conception in the mobilization and maintenance of an Army.

SECTARIAN AUSPICES

As one who believes sincerely in the work of these societies, I may perhaps be permitted a comment on the future development of the kind of work which they have been conducting. I have come increasingly to the belief, in two years of intimate association with this work, that the sectarian basis underlying much of it is fundamentally wrong. None of the societies, of course, works exclusively for its own constituency. Their facilities and privileges are open to all regardless of faith, but the auspices through which these privileges are extended are in some cases sectarian. The tendency of this arrangement is to stimulate rivalries and a jockeying for position that are disheartening to witness and discouraging to cope with. To see the representatives of these different agencies vying with each other in an attempt to make a last good impression upon the returning troops bringing prominently into the foreground their respective emblems and insignia, is to despair of the whole system of social work in the war. It was necessary for the American military authorities in France to

set aside a special division of the General Staff whose energies are largely devoted to straightening out the differences between these societies and correlating their work. Much of my own time in the last two years, both here and abroad, has been given to nothing else. Under the system of sectarian cleavage in vogue, this has been unavoidable. Even when the heads of the societies are in full accord--as has happily been true in the case of the agencies in question--their spirit may not permeate their constituencies. Cooperation at the top does not necessarily prevent competition at the bottom.

But even were competition utterly eliminated, sectarian divisions in work of this kind are unfortunate. To have Protestant huts, Catholic huts and Jewish huts in the same camp or operating in the same area not only is wrong in principle but represents a waste of overhead and a duplication of personnel, even when the total volume of the work thus carried on is necessary. No one represents this thing more than the troops themselves. A baseball is a baseball to the soldiers no matter whether it is presented by the Y.M.C.A., the Knights of Columbus or the Jewish Welfare Board. The same is true of huts, chocolate, entertainment, stationery or good advice. Our men have been glad to receive what the societies had for them in the shape of service or supplies, and they have not cared two straws whether it came from Protestant, Catholic or Jewish hands.

Sectarian stratification is the worst possible basis for social work with the Army, and the insistence upon auspices on the part of the societies in question has not represented any corresponding feeling among the troops. In fact, it runs counter to the spirit of cohesion

and unity which it is the glory of any army to develop. In this war all sorts of barriers and prejudices have given way in the flame of a common purpose, and a new brotherhood has been forged to achieve a common end. Our boys fought at Chateau Thierry and in the Argonne as Americans. They did not fight as Protestants, Catholics or Jews, and the emphasis upon these differences in faith strikes a discordant note in the whole spirit of their work. As a matter of fact, there is no reason for this sectarianism. The religious interests of the Army are wisely committed to the Chaplains, and with an ample number of Chaplains, no need appears for further emphasis along this line.

I am not saying this in criticism of the societies. Indeed, if there were any blame to assess for the sectarian basis above noted, it would probably lie against the War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities, with whose consent and under whose jurisdiction these organizations carried on their work with the troops. When the war broke out the machinery of these societies was ready at hand, and the Commission of which I was Chairman met the emergency by attempting to work into a comprehensive plan of recreation such agencies as were available. In this we followed the precedent already established by the English Army. As I say, I think if we had it to do over again it would be wiser to eliminate the sectarian societies. But this conclusion is the result of two years of experimentation and is not a just basis of criticism against the agencies themselves. They deserve all credit for the manner in which they mobilized their resources to meet the crisis.

TOO MANY SOCIETIES IN THE FIELD

If we ever have another war to fight or another emergency of this kind to meet, I believe that far better results will be obtained not only by eliminating religious stratification of the sort just mentioned, but by reducing to the lowest possible minimum the number of organizations working directly with the troops in camp or in the field. There is no reason why a single non-sectarian organization in this war should not have handled the whole problem of recreation for the Army. It would have involved a huge expenditure and immense machinery, but the total amount expended would not have exceeded the added budgets of the organizations mentioned above, and the work, I believe, would have been more efficient.

MUCH OF THE SOCIAL WORK SHOULD BE DONE BY ARMY ITSELF

As a matter of fact, I am inclined to go a good deal further. I believe that we have reached a point in the development of much of this social work in the Army where it can safely be intrusted to the Government to operate. This might not apply to such specialized activities with women, as the Y.W.C.A. has been carrying on, for example, or to a program of hospitality outside the military reservations such as the War Camp Community Service has been conducting in the civil communities adjacent to camps. But it certainly applies to all the work which directly touches the troops within the training areas or on active service in the field. I am strongly of the opinion that the leisure time program of the Army of the future can best be carried on by the Army itself, whether it be in posts or

cantonments. The successful experience of the Army officers at home and in France in handling complex entertainment and educational programs fully justifies this belief. There is no logical reason why all this work which the societies have been conducting and which is intimately related to the spirit and morale of the troops should be left to the discretion and ability of private agencies, collecting their funds from private sources. Morale is as important as ammunition and is just as legitimate a charge against the public treasury.

Moreover, there is reason to believe that recreational facilities, provided by the Army and under Army management, will better satisfy the troops than facilities furnished by private agencies. The soldier is instinctively interested in the thing that he does himself. The experience of the war shows that the clubs or huts that were run by the troops were apt to be more popular than those managed by the societies, just as the theatrical exhibitions staged by the soldiers created a deeper and wider interest in the camps than the plays of professional talent. To the easily understood principle of psychology which explains this situation must be added the further reason that the soldier is keen to detect and quick to resent any suggestion of condescension or patronage on the part of those who serve him. He is first of all an American citizen and he asks for no charity. Unfortunately, some of the societies have not always been entirely free from this unhappy method of approach to the troops, and the effect has been heightened in the soldier's mind by the competitive publicity attending the work of the agencies, as regards what they have "done" for the soldier and what they have "given" him.

I believe the time has come for the Army to take over this whole activity from the field of private enterprise. The experiments of the last two years seem to point irresistibly to this conclusion. Baseballs and books and all the other factors that make for a rounded life are an essential part of the nation's direct responsibility towards its troops.

It seems to me that the lesson of the war in social work involves therefore perhaps three points: The elimination of sectarian auspices, reduction in the number of agencies employed, and the transfer to the Government itself of much of the activity hitherto left to private initiative.

RAYMOND B. FOSDICK.