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Oregon Secretary of State

Exhibit Home

Overview

Welcome to **Life on the Home Front** — an exhibit and learning resource that explores the experiences of ordinary Oregonians on the home front during World War II, seen primarily through the records of the Oregon State Defense Council and records at the Oregon State Archives. This exhibit consists of the equivalent of over 400 printed pages of narrative text augmented by hundreds of images and thousands of pages of original documents describing Oregon before, during, and after World War II.



Clockwise from top left: A poster warning about spies; This man's cigarette tastes odd, a possible sign of an enemy gas attack; A poster calling on women to get involved in the war effort as cadet nurses; a "Paper Trooper" on a salvage drive.

Contents

Introduction — Get a bird's eye scope and content view of the exhibit
Before the war — Explore Oregon and the world before Pearl Harbor
Threats real and perceived — Discover how fears of attack affected us
Civilian protection — See the efforts to safeguard Oregon from attack
Civilian war services — Examine how Oregonians helped the war effort
Oregon home front life — Experience life in the state during the war
After the war — Learn about Oregon and the world after the guns fell silent
Learn more — Continue your research with further resources and links

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Introduction

This exhibit and consists of the equivalent of over 400 printed pages of narrative text augmented by hundreds of images and thousands of original documents describing Oregon before, during, and after World War II. It looks at the lives of ordinary Oregonians and how they responded to the challenges of world war.

A Bird's Eye View

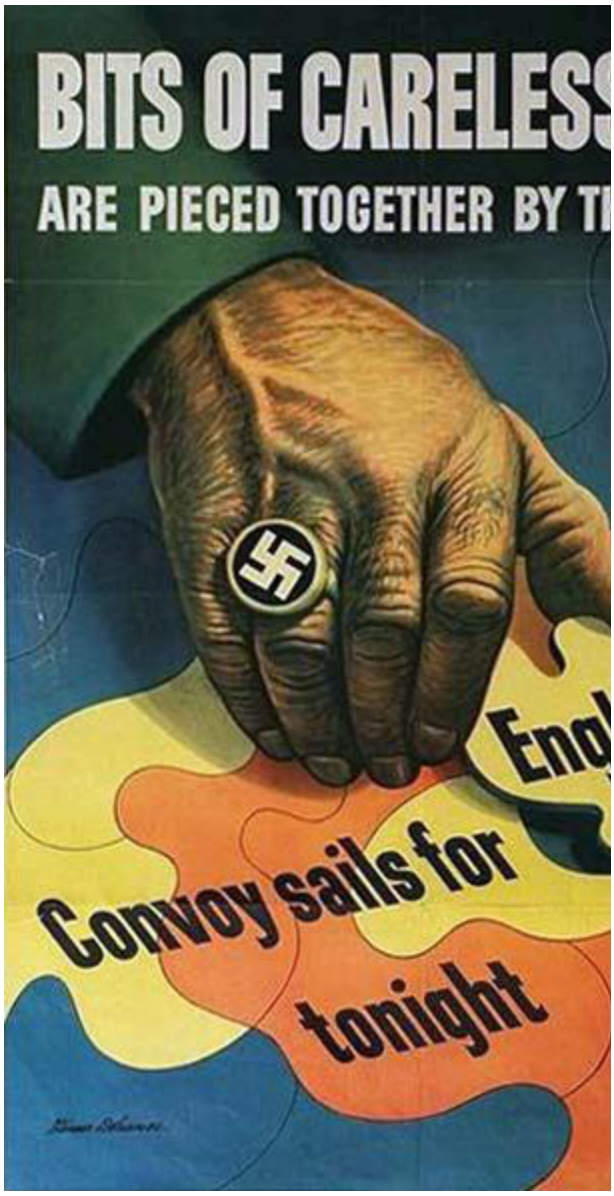
The exhibit reviews Oregon life and the larger world of politics and power before the war. It traces how Japanese Americans came to be seen as a threat and how they were treated in internment camps. Then, it examines the extraordinary measures, such as blackouts and incident drills, designed to protect the state from attack. The exhibit also explores rationing, victory gardens and other steps aimed at maximizing resources in the war effort. Home front life covers topics such as rumor control, prostitution and juvenile delinquency. Returning veterans, the G.I. Bill, and the advent of the Cold War are a few exhibit subjects describing life after the war.

Exhibit Goals

The main goals for this exhibit are to educate and entertain. The exhibit uses original records to highlight research opportunities at the Oregon State Archives. Whenever possible, it directly quotes from the letters, reports and other documents created by people who participated in historical events. Their actions reveal the full range of human experience -- from selfless to petty and from heroic to criminal. Their stories are at the heart of life on the home front and come from every corner of Oregon.

Target Audience

While designed for a general audience, this exhibit includes resources for students. Middle school students and older will find useful information.



The threat of Nazi spies lurking in the shadows forced home front Americans to be careful about what they said about troop movements, military production and other sensitive subjects. **(Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://www.dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/b6d469c5-95bc-4f00-9d05-a11e67232c8d)**)



Axis leaders, such as Adolf Hitler, were portrayed as stupid or evil, or both. (Image courtesy Disney Online)

Records Used

This exhibit uses mostly primary records. These consist of original documents, publications and other items created in the years surrounding World War II. The focus is on the records of the Oregon State Defense Council, but other record groups are used as well. These are documented in the "learn more" section. Primary sources are augmented by secondary sources such as books and periodicals. Relevant sources are cited in notes at the bottom of pages.

Content Note

Some subject matter and images deal with violent situations. Also, some text and images of the era portray groups, such as German, Italian, and Japanese leaders, in a negative light. These portrayals are accurate historical reflections of the times and are therefore left intact.

Images and Media

Images in this exhibit have been edited for display. Most are from the Oregon State Defense Council. These are supplemented by images from other Oregon State Archives record groups and outside sources. All images with the citation "OSA" are available at the Oregon State Archives.

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Before the War

World War II was born in the decades before Hitler's 1939 march into Poland. As the United States looked inward, dark forces grew beyond control and aggression went unconfronted. This section follows the path that Oregon and the world took to war.

The Legacy of World War I and the Versailles Treaty
Oregon's Roaring Twenties Bring Mixed Record
Oregon Weathers the Great Depression
A Specter Abroad: The Axis Rises from Turmoil
Isolationism and Appeasement Fail
Preparing for War: The Nation Shifts Gears
The Oregon State Defense Council Takes Action



Clockwise from top left: An insignia for U.S. civilian defense; Oregon Governor Charles Sprague; a Nazi swastika; German dictator Adolf Hitler.

Legacy of World War I and the Versailles Treaty



Political cartoon mocks Senate resistance to ratifying Treaty of Versailles. ("Seein' Things," Brooklyn Eagle, 1919, authentichistory.com)

Entangling Alliances

The end of World War I and the resulting Treaty of Versailles profoundly affected the geopolitics of Europe and the rest of the world. President Woodrow Wilson, claiming that "idealism is going to save the world," tried vainly to gain support for the League of Nations to keep the peace internationally.

During the war, Wilson and others tried to find a way to bring about peace based on four principles: the substitution of an international organization for the old alliance system; the substitution of arbitration for armaments; the institution of self government; and the avoidance of seizures of territories and of reparation demands. In 1916 he advocated the idea of a "league of nations" and the next year he called for a "peace without victory." In fact, Wilson spurned the idea of entangling alliances when the United States entered the war not as one of the "Allies" but rather as an "associated" belligerent.

The Fourteen Points

By January 1918, Wilson announced his Fourteen Points, with the hope of bringing a lasting peace. The points reflected his belief in the interconnections between free trade, democratic institutions and human liberty. While the Allied leaders disliked the Fourteen Points, sufficient pressure was applied to make them the basis of the Armistice. But Wilson later confronted powerful geopolitical forces in Europe that forced numerous concessions in the Fourteen Points. Compromises were made related to rights of self-determination and harsh reparations were imposed on Germany. Still, the Treaty of Versailles, signed in June 1919, may have been the best deal he could make considering the politics and attitudes of those involved.

Wilson hoped a key provision of his Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles would provide a mechanism to rectify some of the treaty's shortcomings. The treaty included the covenant of the League of Nations. In the aftermath of the greatest carnage ever seen, the league sought to promote international cooperation to achieve international peace and security. Among other provisions, members agreed to seek arbitration through the League before going to war.



President Woodrow Wilson sought to engage America in ensuring world peace. (whitehouse.gov)

Seeking Senate Ratification

The president turned his attention to gaining the necessary ratification of the treaty by the U.S. Senate to allow American participation. Popular opinion in the nation was favorable. But the Senate was full of crosscurrents of opinion and 2/3 of the body was needed for ratification. Many senators believed rather than get involved in international affairs, the U.S. should create a model society for other nations to emulate. Other senators wanted to make adoption of the treaty based on various reservations, many related to the League of Nations.

Listen to speech by U.S. Secretary of War Newton Baker (https://www.firstworldwar.com/audio/Newton_Baker_-_The_League_Of_Nations.mp3) "On the League of Nations," 1919



Senator Henry Cabot Lodge fought treaty ratification. (Library of Congress)

In the end, the Senate failed to ratify the treaty. Politics, personal animus, and Wilson's refusal to compromise doomed the effort. Throughout the negotiations, Wilson had to contend with Senate Majority Leader Henry Cabot Lodge. The two men hated each other and Lodge was well positioned to cause problems for the president. Lodge was not an isolationist, but he believed the League of Nations threatened national sovereignty. He and others demanded changes that Wilson refused to make on moral and other grounds.



President Warren G. Harding campaigned for a return to "normalcy."

As negotiations dragged on, the public lost interest and shifted focus to the rising problems of inflation, unemployment and fear of radicalism. With the election of Warren G. Harding in 1920, America turned inward as it embraced his call for a return to "normalcy."

Listen to speech by Warren G. Harding (https://www.firstworldwar.com/audio/Warren_G_Harding_-_Acceptance_Speech.mp3) 1919

The League of Nations limped on without the participation of the United States. America moved into the "Roaring Twenties" effectively on its own.

Oregon's Roaring Twenties Bring Mixed Record

Building the State

Economic Challenges

While the 1920s "roared" through much of the American economy, in many ways they only whimpered in Oregon. World War I heated up Oregon's economy with demand for the production of ships, lumber, grain and other materials. But in its wake, the state's economy faltered as farming slumped and orders to shipyards and lumber mills declined precipitously. Housing starts dropped, stock market speculation increased, banks grew more unsteady. Looking for brighter horizons, 50,000 Oregonians left the state after World War I.



Tourists take in a panoramic view looking east from Crown Point in the Columbia River Gorge. The success of the Columbia River Highway inspired Oregon leaders to improve other roads in the 1920s. (Postcards, Accession 88A-057, OSA)

Oregon's Good Roads Movement

One impediment to economic prosperity was the state's transportation system. Certainly, Oregon had a network of railroad, stage, and steamboat routes, but its road system could only be described as primitive. A spectacular exception was the just completed Columbia River Highway, which provided both inspiration and impetus to push modern road building forward statewide. After passing the nation's first gas tax to pay for roads in 1919, Oregon moved at full speed to construct a network of modern paved and concrete roads. The campaign to "Get Oregon Out of the Mud" began to pay dividends as highway projects such as the Pacific Highway and later the Oregon Coast Highway captured the imaginations of wandering Americans. Meanwhile, great efforts went into enhancing a network of farm to market roads linking agricultural communities with railroads and other shipping resources.

Social Trends

Americans indulged in the ironic combination of excess and Prohibition during the 1920s, all in search of what President Harding called "normalcy." Symbolic of the decade, alcoholic beverages were illegal but plentiful at the same time, leading to the rise of organized crime and other distortions of the social fabric.

New Freedoms and an Advertising Age

As it struggled economically in the 1920s, Oregon also experienced the excitement and fears of the tumultuous social and cultural times. Changes hastened by World War I expressed themselves in American culture as old traditions waned. Many women, newly empowered by the right to vote, broke social constraints on dress and behavior. They "bobbed" their hair, discarded their corsets, wore flapper dresses, listened to jazz music, danced the Charleston and openly smoked cigarettes. Many demanded



Actor and filmmaker Charlie Chaplin.

easier and more equitable divorces along with access to birth control.

Movie idols such as Rudolph Valentino, Clara Bow, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie Chaplin captivated film audiences. Film plots followed classic themes reflecting ideals of society: farm boy conquers city while remaining pure; poor boy struggles and saves to achieve wealth and happiness; nice boy meets and marries rich girl. Sports combined with the booming advertising profession to create heroes such as Babe Ruth in baseball and Jack Dempsey in boxing. Radio broadcasts and ownership grew rapidly. Automobiles, made more useful by improving roads, provided Oregonians with a level of physical independence they had never known.

They "bobbed" their hair, discarded their corsets, wore flapper dresses, listened to jazz music, danced the Charleston, and openly smoked cigarettes.

Darker Currents

Yet troubling aspects of the society dampened the exuberance for many. The great social experiment of Prohibition led to underground economies, increased organized crime, and an erosion of respect for government. Labor strife boiled over at regular intervals, sometimes leading to violence. Fear and distrust of American radicals as well as foreigners grew while Bolsheviks were seen in the shadows of society.

The Twenties also saw growth in the application of Social Darwinism principles to state institutions. The eugenics movement blossomed in Oregon, leading to the violation of the rights of many disabled and incarcerated citizens. Specifically, a 1923 state law provided for "the sterilization of all feeble-minded, insane, epileptics, habitual criminals, moral degenerates and sexual perverts who are a menace to society..."

The Oregon Eugenics Board regularly made decisions to sterilize residents of the Oregon State Hospital, Oregon State Penitentiary, Eastern Oregon State Hospital and the State Institution for the Feeble-Minded (later Fairview Hospital and Training Center). Officials initially used the law to punish people for having homosexual sex. And, for years they also favored castration over vasectomies as a means of sterilization. The board reasoned that the gene pool would be stronger if "defective" individuals were not allowed to breed. Sterilization was also thought to have a "calming" effect on individuals. Until reforms

in 1967, sterilization often was used as a condition of release from state institutions or to punish people who acted out. The board was finally abolished in 1983.Footnote [1]



Eastern Oregon State Hospital, opened in 1913, was one of several state institutions in which residents were sterilized. (Photographs, Box 1, Board of Control Records, OSA)

Rise of the Klan

Perhaps the most menacing trend during the decade was the rise of anti-Catholic bigotry and racist vigilante movements, which established a firm foothold in the state. The Ku Klux Klan formed chapters in Portland, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg and other communities. Its members donned robes and paraded through streets igniting crosses and intimidating Catholics and minorities. In 1921 Medford Klan organizers perpetrated "necktie-parties" (near lynchings) against two African Americans suspected of bootlegging as well as against a piano dealer who had filed a lawsuit against a Klan member. Deploring the incidents, Governor Ben Olcott declared: "Oregon needs no masked night riders, no invisible empire, to control her affairs.... The true spirit of Americanism resents bigotry, abhors secret machinations and terrorism, and demands that those who speak for and in her cause speak openly, with their faces to the sun."

But the Klan's rise in the early 1920s carried considerable political clout. In 1923, the Klan-dominated Oregon Legislature passed an Alien Land Law barring Japanese land ownership. The new law

"Oregon needs no masked night riders, no invisible empire, to control her affairs... The true

came on the heels of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that Japanese people could not be naturalized citizens. The law passed despite the fact that Japanese aliens held less than 1% of Oregon land in 1920. Similar laws passed in Washington, California and other states.Footnote [2]

spirit of Americanism resents bigotry, abhors secret machinations and terrorism, and demands that those who speak for and in her cause speak openly, with their faces to the sun."



The Ku Klux Klan enjoyed a warm reception from many Oregon communities in the 1920s as Catholics and minorities suffered both blatant and subtle bigotry.

The organization also endorsed a ballot measure to require children of ages 8 to 16 to go to public schools. While other reasons were given, a primary impetus of the measure was to wipe out Catholic schools. Approximately 7% of Oregon students attended private schools, many of which were Catholic. Most of the state's newspaper editors supported the measure or remained neutral.

Turning the Progressive tool of direct legislation into a reactionary weapon, supporters convinced Oregon voters to pass the compulsory school measure by a vote of 115,506 to 103,685 in the November 1922 election. They also managed to get Walter Pierce, who supported the measure, elected governor, replacing Ben Olcott, a staunch opponent.

The Oregon Legislature decided not to enforce the measure until the courts ruled on it. Finally, the U.S. Supreme Court in "Pierce vs. Society of Sisters" unanimously ruled in 1925 that the bill was an unconstitutional violation of parents' rights to send their children to schools of their choice. By the time of the ruling, the Klan had faded from prominence, a victim of internal conflicts, corruption rumors, and the second thoughts of Oregonians.Footnote [3]

The tired end of the frenetic decade saw the event that precipitated the next major era of American history, the Great Depression. The stock market crash of 1929 was more of a symptom of the underlying excesses and weaknesses of the economy than a cause. But it served as a wake up call for the despairing times ahead.

Notes

Eugenics Board: Oregon Laws, 1923, Ch. 194.

Ku Klux Klan: "An Oregon Century" Web Exhibit by *The Oregonian*.

Compulsory school measure: Gordon Dodds, *Oregon: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1977); *Oregon Blue Book*.

Oregon Weathers the Great Depression

Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?

Oregonians watched helplessly as the nation's economy collapsed. Federal leaders seemingly had no answers as the despair deepened and shook the confidence of the entire nation.



The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) gave jobs to thousands of young Oregonians and left a legacy of public works improvements. (Box 2, Boardman Collection, Parks and Recreation Department Records, OSA)

The Downward Spiral

The chain of events that followed the crash of the stock market in 1929 seemed unending and unstoppable. Those who owned stock certificates found themselves holding worthless pieces of paper. Banks nationwide went bankrupt leaving their depositors' savings wiped out.



President Herbert Hoover lost the 1932 election.

Failing banks led to foreclosures on businesses, homes, and farms, further eroding the national and local economies. As money dried up, so did factory orders. Fewer factory orders meant more layoffs. More layoffs meant less money to spend in local merchandise shops and restaurants as the downward spiral continued.

Despondent Americans looked for help to stop the spiral. But President Herbert Hoover, who grew up in Newberg, Oregon, held the belief that government was not the solution. While he took some measures to attempt to stem the bleeding, he shared a strong philosophy with his Republican Party stalwarts that prevented a large scale government response.

Do Something, Anything!

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Democratic Party rival in the 1932 presidential election, was not so encumbered. Desperate Americans voted him into office in the hope that at least some action would be better than none.

The New Deal

Seizing the mandate, Roosevelt unleashed a whirlwind of federal government action dubbed the "New Deal." Many of his initiatives were aimed at restoring the battered confidence of Americans. Soon after taking office, he declared a "bank holiday" in which he closed financial institutions across the country until federal auditors could examine their books and decide on their solvency. Thousands of banks were closed permanently, but those that reopened could be trusted, assured Roosevelt.

An Alphabet Soup of Recovery



The Bonneville Dam exemplified the willingness of President Roosevelt and New Deal planners to think big in an effort to break the grip of the Depression. The dam, and others like it, transformed the economy of the region as the Bonneville Power Administration managed the potential of the Columbia River. (Image no. 5618, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

The president then began cooking a pot of "alphabet soup" programs for economic recovery.

Roosevelt recognized that he needed to get the millions of unemployed Americans back to work, as much for psychological reasons as for economic ones. While he met substantial political and legal resistance to his plans for unprecedented expansion of the federal government, most Americans supported him. The creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) yielded far reaching consequences for Oregon. Not only did it provide employment for thousands of young Oregonians, but it left a myriad of functional and attractive improvements to the state's infrastructure. Bridges, roads, campgrounds, buildings, ranger stations, guard stations, fire lookouts and reservoirs numbered among the achievements of the CCC in Oregon.

Meanwhile, the Works Projects Administration (WPA) employed more Oregonians who worked as writers, teachers, lawyers, historians, painters, architects, masons, and in other arts, professions and trades. Their efforts resulted in numerous books such as the fascinating tour of Oregon entitled Oregon: End of the Trail. They also left monuments to the artists and craftsmen of the day with works such as the magnificent Timberline Lodge on the flanks of Mount Hood. And, the WPA, along with other federal agencies such as the Public Works Administration (PWA), built post offices, libraries, and federal buildings across Oregon. The agencies also commissioned numerous projects resulting in the creation of murals, furniture, decorative iron work, and other enduring pieces of art.



The New Deal reshaped the landscape and the future of the state in other ways as well. Most notably, the federal government began an ambitious plan to build dams on the Columbia River. Soon, construction started on the massive Bonneville Dam, one of the striking engineering achievements of the period. The project employed 4,000 laborers directly and created thousands of other jobs in support industries and services. It provided irrigation water for the surrounding arid land, electricity to power factories

and homes, a navigation route for barges carrying grain, and most of all hope for a brighter future.

The ground floor lobby of the WPA era Historic Timberline Lodge features timber and stone construction. (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/56572#lg=1&slide=0)**)

From Despair to Horror

These and other public programs kept Oregon and the nation moving forward through the 1930s even as the Depression stubbornly persisted. While they did not end economic problems, they did succeed in providing Americans with jobs and hope. As the clouds of war gathered in Europe and Asia in the latter years of the decade, the national economy gradually transitioned to supplying materials for another far off war. On Dec. 7, 1941 America turned from the hardships of the Depression to the horrors of the next world war.

A Specter Abroad: The Axis Rises from Turmoil

Fascism and Aggression Grow



The swastika symbolized the German Nazi Party.

While Oregon and the rest of America gazed inward through much of the 1920s and 1930s, dark forces were gathering strength in Europe and Japan. The future Axis nations of Germany, Italy and Japan grew powerful and bold in the decades between World War I and World War II. Intense nationalism and growing aggression were two of many common threads in their tragic convergence.

Mussolini Pioneers Fascism



Italian dictator Benito Mussolini cultivated a myth of invincibility to help him maintain absolute control of his country.

Postwar Italy saw the rise of fascism as a political movement led by Benito Mussolini. In the chaotic political climate of the early 1920s, the "Fascisti" formed armed squads of war veterans that terrorized other groups, including anarchists, socialists and communists. Mussolini's intimidation and scheming paid off. The Italian king, fearful of a civil war, appointed Mussolini to be prime minister.

Once in power, Mussolini enforced a fiercely authoritarian and nationalist ideology that counteracted the general feeling of anxiety and fear in the postwar Italian society. By 1926 he had dissolved all other political parties and assumed dictatorial powers. Mussolini's complete control of the press, coupled with his propaganda skills and personal charisma led to his legend as a man who could solve all of Italy's problems. His brand of state controlled capitalism appealed to many Italians yearning for the order symbolized by the trains running on time.

By the mid-1930s Mussolini adopted an increasingly aggressive nationalism, attacking Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) and intervening in the Spanish Civil War. Italy's invasion of Albania in April 1939 dovetailed with German aggression before all out war later in the year.

Hitler Dominates Germany

Mussolini's success in Italy did not go unnoticed in Germany. Adolf Hitler and his fascist Nazi Party rose using the tactics of intimidation and thuggery employed by the Fascisti in Italy. Hitler, however took much longer to gain power.



Dictator Adolf Hilter preyed on German fears.

Hitler and his party maneuvered in the fractious, bare-knuckled world of radical politics with vicious anti-Semitic and nationalist rhetoric designed to prey on the fears of Germans.

The deplorable conditions in postwar Germany helped Hitler gain a foothold. Over the years, important provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, such as the "war guilt" clause and heavy war reparations imposed on Germany, contributed to the rise of resentment

and radicalism in German society. It was in this context that Hitler wandered through a 1920s Germany wracked by war humiliation and debt. Inflation devastated life savings and national collapse seemed just around the corner. A range of radical movements competed for attention in Germany's chaotic political scene. By 1921 Hitler discovered his impressive skills in public speaking and controlling a crowd as he took the helm of the Nazi Party. Hitler and his party maneuvered in the fractious, bare-knuckled world of radical politics with vicious anti-Semitic and nationalist rhetoric designed to prey on the fears of Germans. At the same time, the electorate grew desperate for a leader who could restore order and dignity to the nation.

His big break came in 1930 when, largely because of voter disgust with the failures of the Weimar Republic, the Nazi Party rose from obscurity to become the second largest party in the country. By 1933 Hitler had parlayed the opportunity into his new position as chancellor. He consolidated his power over the state and the military in the next year.

Hitler wasted no time expanding industrial production and public works like highways. These efforts, along with military expansion and increased production of armaments, reduced unemployment, raised living standards and increased the confidence of the citizens still reeling from the aftermath of World War I and the worldwide economic Depression.



German troops goose step through Warsaw, Poland during the 1939 invasion that saw Poland fall in 3 weeks. The invasion caused Britain and France to declare war on Germany. (**National Archives, image 200-SFF-52 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/559369)**)

Through skillful oratory and propaganda, Hitler built up the national psyche by preaching the superiority of the Aryan race. He claimed Germany was entering a "Third Reich," or empire, that connected the glorious past of Charlemagne and others with an equally glorious future. While exalting the German race, he claimed Jews and others were inferior and the cause of all of Germany's problems, sapping the nation's strength. Increasingly, the power of the state was used to persecute Jews and other minorities. Brutal state organizations such as the Gestapo and SS began to use greater violence and intimidation, a trend that would not stop until the last concentration camp of the Holocaust was liberated in 1945.

While exalting the German race, Hitler claimed Jews and others were inferior and the cause of all of Germany's problems, sapping the nation's strength.

Like Mussolini, Hitler began flexing Germany's new found military muscle beyond its borders. German troops moved into the Rhineland in 1936 and annexed Austria in 1938, precursors to a much larger design. The invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1939 preceded the September invasion of Poland that caused Britain and France to declare war on Germany. By the next spring, Hitler launched his invasion of several western European nations, including Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium and France. Paris fell in June and Britain endured months of devastating bombing at the hands of the German Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain.

Japan Expands in the East



Japanese cavalry soldiers on parade after invading China. (Image courtesy hiarmymuseumsoc.org)

While the world's attention was focused on the growth of fascist, militarist states in Italy and Germany, Japan pursued its own nationalist expansion in the east. Like Germany, Japan was hit hard by the Depression. Among other reasons, the government's inability to respond adequately made it look weak. This led to the rise of militarist leaders, who eventually gained de facto totalitarian control.

Japan's lack of natural resources to feed its industries increased pressure to expand. It watched in earlier decades as Britain, France, Germany and other countries carved up most of the undeveloped world into colonies, protectorates and other forms of empire. Japanese nationalists saw it as their nation's right to build an empire in Asia to feed its desire for territorial expansion and raw materials such as oil and iron ore.

Under the premise it was protecting business investments, Japan invaded and annexed Manchuria (northern China) in 1931. Three years later it annexed the large province of Jehol. And, in 1937 it launched a full scale invasion into the rest of China. While Japanese forces managed to occupy coastal areas, Chinese resistance continued by the Chiang Kai-shek government and the Chinese communist forces led by Mao Tse-tung. Because of Nazi successes in Europe in 1940, Japan saw the opportunity to seize the Asian colonial empires of France and other countries in order to achieve a "new order in Greater East Asia." By September 1940 the Axis was formed with the signing of the Tripartite Act with Germany and Italy, making America's hope of avoiding war unlikely.

Isolation and Appeasement Fail

Democracies Offer a Weak Response

Fascism's rise to power on the world stage was only possible because of the distractions and weaknesses suffered by the United States, Britain and France during the 1930s. The failure of the democratic powers to confront the threat made war inevitable. Yet, at the time reasonable people believed that something short of war could contain fascism.

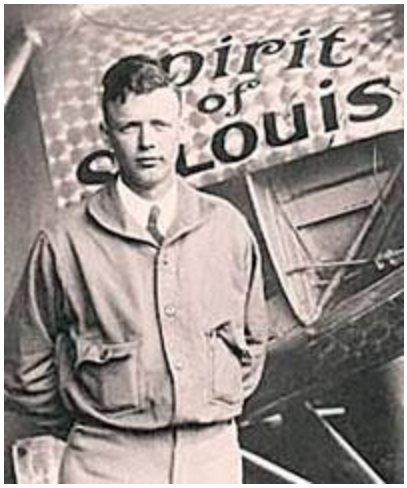
Ongoing American Isolation



The folly and carnage of World War I led many to believe America should avoid any foreign war. (Image courtesy Wikimedia)

Isolationism ran deep in the currents of American politics and society in the 1930s. Most people believed the nation had plenty to deal with in its attempts to rise out of the Depression. And "revisionist" historians argued that World War I had been nothing more than a sordid scramble among imperialist powers for wealth. It was therefore in the best interest of peace and democracy that the United States avoid overseas wars. To be sure, most Americans looked on in horror at the brutality against German Jews or the massacre of innocent Chinese. But they did not see how American intervention could do anything but pull the nation into another mess.

Neutrality legislation beginning in the late 1930s aimed to limit American exposure to being drawn into conflict. For example, the "cash-and-carry" provisions required that belligerents pay cash on the spot for any purchase of war materiel from the United States and transport the goods in their own ships. And, American citizens were prohibited from traveling on ships operated by belligerents. This arms length approach imposed on President Roosevelt by Congress reflected public misgivings about making the United States a target of aggression. In practice, these and other measures were complicated



Famed pilot Charles Lindbergh argued strongly for isolationism as a leading member of the America First Committee in 1940 and 1941. Other prominent Americans, such as former President Herbert Hoover, were also proponents of isolationism. One of the largest anti-war organizations in U.S. history, the committee dissolved 3 days after the Japanese attack in Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. (Image courtesy Minnesota Historical Society, neg. no. 89262)

by economic, political, and diplomatic uncertainties that led to unintended consequences. Overall, American actions until the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 were marked by a tension between strident isolationists such as famed pilot Charles Lindbergh and a much more activist Roosevelt who advocated a "quarantine" of the aggressors.



Winston Churchill inspired more American support.

Even the invasion of Poland and entry of Britain and France into the war in 1939 failed to dent the isolationist resolve of Americans. A poll in October 1939 showed less than 30% favored American entry in the war even if Britain and France were in danger of defeat. However, the success of the Nazi blitzkrieg and aerial pummeling of Britain in 1940 stunned American opinion. Roosevelt asked Congress to ramp up defense spending, including the annual production of 50,000 warplanes. After stiff resistance from isolationists, he secured the passage of the Lend-Lease Act that dramatically increased American support for Britain and other besieged countries. The program extended credit to Britain for badly needed war supplies and authorized American ships to protect the shipments. It also raised the possibility that Nazi U-boats (submarines) would target American ships. Yet, after hearing British Prime Minister Winston Churchill offer his people nothing but "blood, toil, tears, and sweat," most Americans were now inspired to do everything to help Britain short of going to war. **Listen to Winston Churchill's May 13, 1940 speech to the House of Commons (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8TlkN-dcDCk)**

Passivity and Appeasement by European Democracies



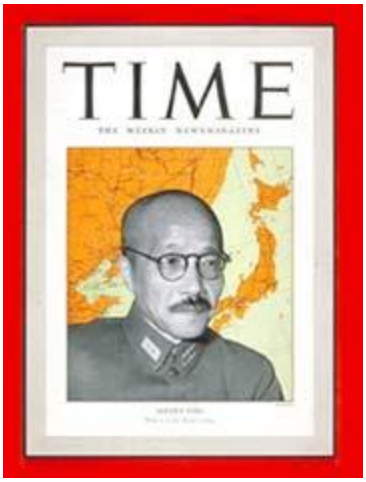
British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain tried to reason with Hitler until 1939.

While the United States was firmly entrenched in isolationism throughout the 1930s, European democracies had their own reasons for not confronting Germany. They too were struggling with the Depression and spent most of their energy coping with the resulting economic, social and political fallout. Between 1934 and 1937 Britain was sympathetic to a German recovery, holding out hopes that Hitler could be managed. Once Neville Chamberlain became British Prime Minister in 1937, he followed a policy of appeasing Germany until 1939 when Hitler's aims became obvious to everyone. Until then Chamberlain maintained that Hitler was simply uniting the German speaking people and would not cause a full scale war. Meanwhile, France was reluctant to intervene against Germany because Britain and America could not be relied upon for support. So, fascism rose while western democracies focused on their own problems and took half-measures to influence Hitler to limit his aggression.

Tense Relations with Japan

The United States maintained a tense relationship with Japan until the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941. Japan needed American oil and scrap metal for its military efforts in China. The United States provided 66% of Japan's oil and 90% of its scrap metal. Oregon ports shipped a significant amount of the scrap metal, which drew protests in Astoria from Chinese Americans and others sympathetic to the plight of the Chinese. At the same time, President Roosevelt was primarily concerned with the crisis in Europe and wanted to hold off a showdown with Japan.

But by the fall of 1941 militants in the Japanese government, led by General Hideki Tojo, were poised to attack the United States over a number of demands, including American abandonment of China. The United States decoded secret Japanese messages that made it clear that an attack was imminent. American forces in the Pacific, including those in Hawaii, were put on war alert in late November. Most



Japanese leader Hideki Tojo.
(Image courtesy *Time*)

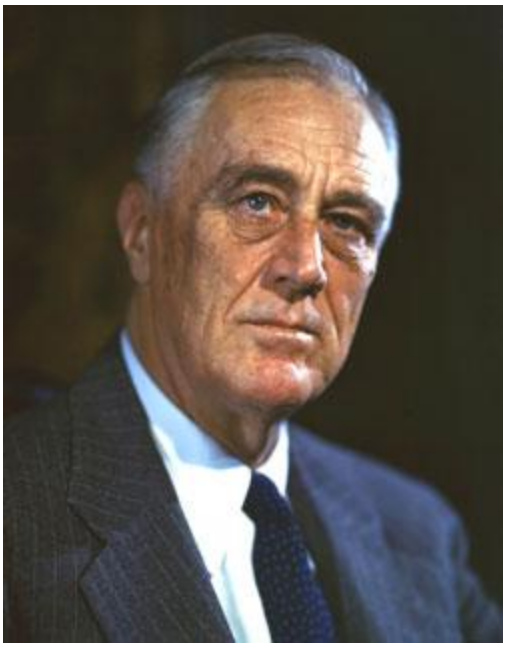
military experts expected a Japanese attack to the south in the direction of the Philippines, not to the east in the direction of Hawaii. The attack on Pearl Harbor, on Dec. 7, 1941, obliterated any meaningful isolationist arguments and thrust shocked Americans into a war they hoped to avoid.

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Preparing for War: The Nation Shifts Gears

Arsenal of Democracy

As the situation in Europe rapidly deteriorated in the late 1930s, the Depression and isolationism held a firm grip on the economy and psyche of the United States. Meanwhile, President Roosevelt saw the need to hedge the nation's bet by calling for increased defense appropriations in 1938. Subsequent American defense increases as well as large British and French orders for military equipment helped to break the economic slumber of the Depression. By early 1941, driven by the dire situation in Europe, American factories were humming and great numbers of the unemployed were back at work. The passage of the Lend-Lease Act gave the president broad discretion to transfer military, agricultural and other goods to countries such as Britain, China and the Soviet Union to further the defense of the United States. This advanced Roosevelt's goal of America doing "its full part in creating an adequate arsenal of democracy." **Listen to President Roosevelt's Fireside Chat on the arsenal of democracy (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oI-xc7XbWA)** dated 1940



President Franklin Roosevelt saw the need to mobilize for war early but struggled with setting up effective agencies. (Image courtesy Wikimedia)

Mobilizing the Nation

Mobilizing America's government and economy to the needs of war before the attack on Pearl Harbor proved daunting, marked by fits and starts and general disorganization. The passage of the Executive Reorganization Act of 1939 gave Roosevelt flexibility in creating agencies but resistance from isolationists and lack of expertise hampered efforts. The president experimented with creating bureaucracies such as the National Defense Advisory Commission and the Office of Production Management. But these bodies were ineffective at managing the complexities of mobilizing the nation and were not invested with clear leadership. In 1942, after weathering increasing criticism, Roosevelt established the War Production Board (WPB) with power to control and coordinate the national economy for the war effort. Some in the press claimed its new head, Donald M. Nelson, was about to "tackle the biggest job in all history." In a nod to the effectiveness of the new office, Nelson soon gained the unofficial title of "assistant president."Footnote [1]

Manufacturing Challenges

The United States had tremendous production capability that was underutilized in the late 1930s. For example, automobile plants operated at only 50%. But many American manufacturers resisted conversion to war production. After a decade of economic depression, they wanted a piece of the reviving civilian production market (refrigerators, cars, vacuum cleaners) and they feared empty factories resulting from overexpansion and a boom-bust defense production cycle.



Early in the war automobile factories started producing tanks and other war necessities instead of cars. (Image courtesy Library of Congress)

Business leaders chafed at the thought of accepting the expanded government regulation that came with defense production.

To entice participation, the government set up incentives for producing war goods and for converting, expanding, or building factories. Low-cost loans, tax write-offs, subsidies and favorable depreciation regulations rewarded companies that cooperated. Particularly attractive were "cost-plus" contracts that guaranteed companies the cost of production plus a fixed profit, essentially wiping out the risk. The federal government also invested billions of dollars in building new factories that were then leased to private companies at low rates. One estimate pegged government financing for industrial expansion at over 65% from 1940 to 1943.Footnote [2]

While incentives helped, Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war soon brought about further changes in government and new imperatives to manufacturers. Nelson's WPB got the authority to commandeer materials and prioritize their use, force the conversion and expansion of factories, and ban the production of "nonessential" goods. Soon, items such as refrigerators, bicycles and waffle irons were largely out of production for the duration of the war. In an even bigger hit to civilian life, automobile production plants were converted to the production of jeeps, airplanes, tanks, guns and other war products. Still, for all of the inconvenience, the conversion to war production was critical as Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin noted: "The most important things in this war are machines, and the United States is a country of machines."

Research and Innovation Prove Crucial

As government ramped up production numbers to respond to the growing need, it couldn't ignore issues related to quality and innovation. After a slow start in which American products such as fighter planes and tanks failed to match those of the enemy, improved design and construction techniques leveled the quality playing field, making sheer numbers more decisive. Before Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt set up government science research and development offices that eventually led to major advances in atomic energy, radar, and synthetic rubber - all critical to the war effort.



Liberty ships, such as the SS Joseph Henry built at Kaiser shipyards in the Portland area, benefited from new mass-production techniques that drastically reduced build time. (Image courtesy Smithsonian Institution)

Synthetic rubber, for example, proved the importance of the research. In 1942 Japan quickly dominated Southeast Asia, cutting off the supply of about 90% of America's crude rubber supply. While rationing and salvage helped the military tread water with existing supplies, researchers worked feverishly to synthesize rubber in the laboratory. The efforts paid off by late 1942 and the government quickly poured $700 million into the building of 51 synthetic rubber production plants. By 1944 synthetic rubber accounted for nearly 90% of the total used. Shipbuilding saw similar successes, this time by using new mass-production techniques. In 1941 it took about a year to build the transport Liberty Ships. By 1942 Portland's Kaiser shipyards had cut the time to two months and by 1944 the time was reduced to an amazing two weeks.Footnote [3]

Organizing the Home Front Effort



Colorful New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia was not the right man to lead the federal Office of Civilian Defense. He was replaced in 1942 by the steadier Harvard Law School Dean James M. Landis. (Image courtesy Wikimedia)

The growing thicket of federal agencies included a mind-boggling array of abbreviations.

The War Production Board played an important role in mobilization for war, but it was not the only player. The growing thicket of federal agencies included a mind-boggling array of abbreviations: for example, the OPA (Office of Price Administration), the OWI (Office of War Information), and the OCD (Office of Civilian Defense). Roosevelt set up the OCD in the spring of 1941 with the goal of channeling the efforts of the American population on the home front into needed work ranging from conducting air raid drills to salvaging scrap metal.

First headed by the dynamic and colorful New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, the OCD focused primarily on civilian protection, which sharpened even more after the Pearl Harbor attack brought the possibility of invasion more clearly to the imaginations of Americans. Unfortunately, La Guardia was miscast in his role. He only served part time in a job that was massive in its demands. And, he showed little interest in organizing volunteers, a key need for the OCD. Eventually his critics, including First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, managed to oust him in early 1942 in favor of the methodical James M. Landis. By 1943 as the fears of enemy attack lessened somewhat, the war services role of the Office of Civilian Defense took on more prominence. Organizationally, the OCD set up offices based on regions and sectors with San Francisco as the west coast headquarters and Seattle anchoring the Pacific Northwest. It also encouraged states to form defense councils. Oregon Governor Charles A. Sprague eventually responded and formed the Oregon State Defense Council by executive order in June 1941.

Notes

Ronald H. Bailey, *The Home Front: U.S.A.* (Time-Life Books, Inc., 1977), Page 79.

John W. Jeffries, *World War II and the American Home Front: Part One* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 2004), Page 11.

Ibid., Page 16.

The Oregon State Defense Council Takes Action

The Council Comes to Life

Oregon Governor Charles A. Sprague dragged his heels creating a state defense council. Early in 1941 an Oregon Journal editorial writer noted that 35 states had formed defense councils of one sort or another. Moreover, he claimed that states with defense councils appeared to do better at attracting defense jobs. Sprague delayed action for several months. His natural inclination was to resist setting up more government bureaucracy but pressure was mounting. Finally, on June 1 he relented and signed an executive order creating the Oregon State Defense Council. [1] Actually, Sprague recreated the council, since during World War I the State Council of Defense for Oregon played a prominent role in the home front effort before it was dissolved after the war.



Jerrold Owen served as defense council coordinator. (Folder 2, Box 10, Defense Council, OSA)



Governor Sprague reluctantly formed the state defense council. (Photos, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA)

The governor named Jerrold Owen as state defense coordinator, answering directly to Sprague who retained the title of director. He appointed 26 council members to represent sections of the state and segments of society, including labor, veterans, women's clubs and civic organizations. Sprague noted that "as the war emergency tightens, our loads are bound to increase." The council, he said, would reflect public opinion and provide him with sound advice. [2]

Organization and Responsibilities

Meeting ten days later, the council set about organizing the state as efficiently as possible. While other western states created independent city defense councils, Oregon settled on counties as the best level to base local administration. Later experience showed the wisdom of the decision as some states suffered with delays and coordination problems associated with too much decentralization. Governor Sprague appointed county defense councils based on

recommendations from county courts. Each county selected a chairman and vice chairman and appointed a county coordinator as administrative officer. The State Defense Council adopted a policy of dealing only with county defense councils, not directly with each city or town, thereby avoiding "confusions and irritations" and maintaining a chain of authority.



The Oregon State Defense Council meeting in executive session Dec. 7, 1941. Members standing from left to right: Robert H. Baldock, State Highway Engineer; Jerrold Owen, State Defense Coordinator; Charles P. Pray, State Police Superintendent; David Eccles, Executive Secretary to Governor; Colonel Elmer V. Wooton, Acting Adjutant General; Brazer Small, representing Joseph Carson of Portland; and Governor Charles A. Sprague, seated. **Image courtesy Ben Maxwell collection (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/max/id/4508/rec/1)**.

The State Defense Council sought to provide for the organization and training of civilian volunteers to meet the threat of enemy attack; provide information and direction for the county defense councils; and serve as a screen between the federal Office of Civilian Defense and the county defense councils. Once the county defense councils were created, the state council provided instructors who traveled to each county to set up training programs customized to individual county needs. Regional training schools set up by the Army and the federal Office of Civilian Defense also contributed. By its peak in early 1943, the program had trained nearly 100,000 Oregonians associated with civilian protection programs. [3]

He came to the council from the World War Veterans State Aid Commission, which managed loans for World War I veterans. According to his biography, he edited the *Oregon Legionnaire* newspaper and served as Sunday editor of *The Oregonian* newspaper before entering state service. His connections with the influential American Legion proved valuable, especially in the early phase of the war. **Owen's biography (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151143)** [9]

In June 1942 the State Defense Council changed its organizational structure to conform with federal Office of Civilian Defense guidelines. Essentially, this set up two major divisions centered on civilian protection and civilian war services. Civilian protection, with such efforts as aircraft warning and blackouts, saw the most attention until the threat of attack diminished in 1943. Still, war services efforts related to rationing and salvaging played an important role in the darkest early days of the war. The state council tackled other responsibilities as well. These included playing a big part in the coordination of public relations efforts in newspapers, magazines, the radio, and public speakers. And rumor control was an important focus, especially early in the war. Later, the Oregon Legislature passed the Oregon Civilian Defense Act of 1943 that codified the authority previously based on executive order and granted more power to the governor to defend against an enemy attack.

The Eternal Pecking Order

Generally, the state council operated effectively during the course of the war but suffered its share of frustrations and growing pains. Not surprisingly, council dealings with the tangle of federal agencies resulted in friction. County defense programs also presented challenges to the small staff of the State Defense Council.

Relations With the Federal Government

Relations with the federal Office of Civilian Defense followed a largely cordial and positive pattern but at times state officials couldn't hold their ire. For example, in the midst of reorganization to conform with federal "peremptory guidelines" Governor Sprague lamented to OCD head James (Dean) Landis: "...we rapidly are getting fed up with the imperious, domineering attitude of the sectional and regional offices which lack information on local conditions and apparently are utterly incapable of evaluating the importance of various matters on which action is requested."

"...we rapidly are getting fed up with the imperious, domineering attitude of the sectional and regional offices which lack information on local conditions and apparently are utterly incapable of evaluating the importance of various matters on which action is requested."

Sprague complained that "we are told bluntly that unless we create a flock of useless jobs to deal with a vague program of coordination...that OCD will move into Oregon...and take over the operation of civilian defense in this state." **Sprague memo (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527731)** [4]

Some ruffled feathers were smoothed after Oregon defense council coordinator Jerrold Owen attended a conference with Landis in Washington D.C. Owen voiced 11 numbered complaints to Landis at a meeting later recounted in a report to the governor. These included:

"2. A minimum of reports and drastic simplification of the same. Civilian defense executives are busy men and women. (Landis said new simplified reports were under preparation).

3. Elimination of the 'gas mask hysteria', galloping jitters and cries of 'wolf! wolf!' (with this Dean Landis thoroughly agreed).

...8. Recognition of state sovereignty and the ability of states to handle defense problems without federal wet nursing and dictation. (Landis nodded his head in agreement on this)." **Owen memo to Sprague (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527729)** [5]



This administrative staff symbol was one of dozens of civilian defense insignia used across the country. (Folder 18, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)

Landis later said he "had no desire to do aught [other] than cooperate fully" and blamed an OCD regional official who "is inexperienced and assumes too much authority." Landis telegram [6]

Owen summed up the conference by reporting all points of disagreement had been ironed out. And, while the usual bureaucratic friction between federal and state officials persisted throughout the war,

major disagreements were the exception.

Relations With County Defense Councils

Just as the federal bureaucracy gave the state defense council fits, so did county defense councils. County officials complained about the state red tape and excessive paperwork. They also tried to drag the state defense council officials into local squabbles and personality conflicts.



William Penn Lewis was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross in World War I. His civilian World War II service in Tillamook County earned less praise. (Folder 14, Box 20, Defense Council, OSA)

An incident in Tillamook County grew into a larger story covered by newspapers statewide in May 1942. As often was the case, it hinged on control and turf. William Penn Lewis, the Tillamook County Defense Council chairman, by most accounts had an abrasive and outspoken management style. In typical fashion, he fired Tillamook Mayor Dave Steinbach from his position as chief of public works services for the defense council. Lewis charged Steinbach with "inefficiency, total lack of cooperation, and [a lack of] co-ordination" in relation to defense council offices and a defense control center housed in the city hall. Lewis called the place "dangerously unsafe and unfit for human beings to occupy." He added that the floor of the control center "sags at least six inches." Not content to attack only the mayor, Lewis lambasted two county commissioners for failing to provide adequate funding for civilian defense work. At the same time, he praised the county defense council under his leadership: "There isn't a better defense organization in the state than Tillamook County."

Amid the ongoing acrimony, Lewis blanketed state and federal officials with long, rambling letters pleading for support. He sent a six-page single-spaced letter complaining to Colonel R.C. Moffatt in the Seattle office of the OCD: "This thing is getting under my skin and if this Commanding Officer [Moffatt] would back me up in what he should know is right I could knock out these damn little politicians in a minute instead of using up all of my energy fighting them." Later in the letter, he seeks sympathy: "My wonderful wife, however, is unable to stand the gaff. She has broken down completely and is now quite ill in bed and it is all due to the fact that she is worrying about me, and is afraid it is going to cause me to have a nervous breakdown." [7]

With the confrontation growing more malignant through the summer, Lewis alienated most officials in Tillamook County and those in state and federal civilian defense offices. Since Tillamook County was of critical importance in 1942 for coastal defense, exasperated officials probably decided he was more trouble than he was worth. Lewis was "kicked out of Civilian Defense." In his own words: "I was knifed in the back while I was away at school."

Lewis chose to escalate the conflict. He sent state council coordinator Jerrold Owen several long handwritten letters seeking to "refute some malicious propaganda" about him. He also called Owen a number of times and tried to arrange a meeting at Owen's home to "sit down quietly and go over this very bad situation." Lewis capped off his offensive with a twelve-page single-spaced letter to the regional director of the OCD in San Francisco. The diatribe railed against those who conspired against him in Tillamook County: **Lewis letter (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148338)**

(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148338)

(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148338)

> ***"These damn rats have made life a perfect hell for my wife and myself."***[8]

The struggle continued until Jan. 14, 1943 when Lewis sent a letter to new Governor Earl Snell. After months of sending remarkably long letters, he was uncharacteristically brief: "I hereby resign from the Tillamook County Civilian Defense Council." So ended the era of William Penn Lewis in the defense of Tillamook County. Luckily for officials at the State Defense Council, his story was an exception in otherwise garden variety local intrigue.

Related Documents

Civil Defense in Oregon, 1944
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527725). Folder 18, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Annual Report of Oregon State Defense Council: Civilian War Services, 1943
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527736). Folder 19, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Final Report Oregon State Defense Council, 1945
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151116). Folder 19, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Marion County Defense Council Report of County Coordinator, 1943
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151172). Folder 11, Box 19, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Jackson County Defense Council...Outline of Duties, 1942
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151141). Folder 1, Box 18, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Notes

Floyd J. McKay, An Editor for Oregon (Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1998), Page 130.

"Report Oregon State Defense Council," 1942. Folder 18, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Civilian Defense in Oregon" Report, 1945. Pages 1-2, Folder 18, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Written Statement from Governor Sprague to OCD Director James Landis, June 1942. Folder 2, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Report from Jerrold Owen to Governor Sprague, June 16, 1942. Pages 2-3, Folder 2, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Telegram from Jerrold Owen to Governor Sprague, June 16, 1942. Folder 2, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

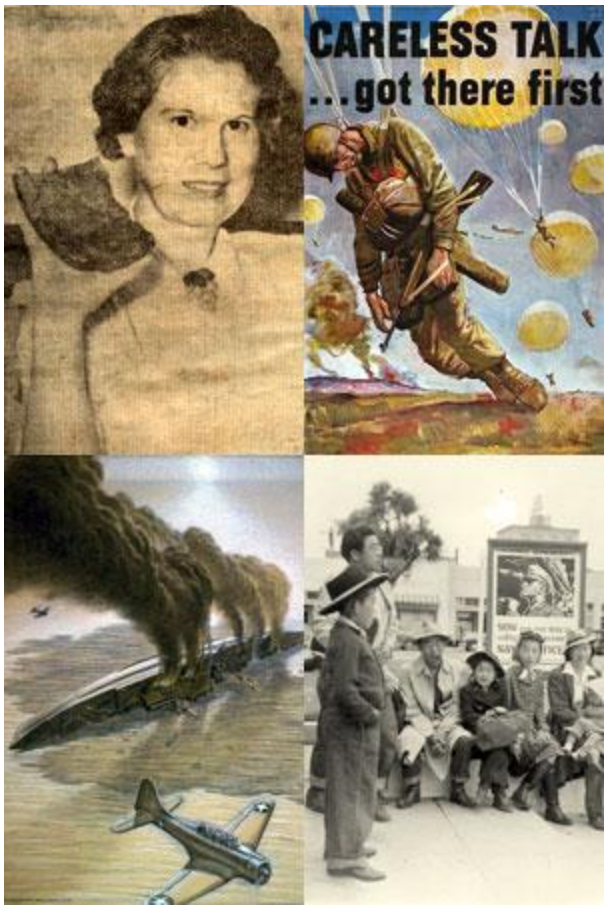
Letter from William Penn Lewis to Col. R.C. Moffatt, May 15, 1942. Folder 14, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from William Penn Lewis to James Sheppard, Oct. 14, 1942. Page 9, Folder 15, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA. Also see related letters and newspaper clippings in folders 14 and 15.

Typed Biography of Jerrold Owen, circa June, 1941. Folder 6, Box 8, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Threats Real and Perceived

Following the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor, Americans saw danger lurking everywhere, leading to, among other things, the controversial internment of over 110,000 Japanese Americans and nationals. This section looks at some of the real and perceived threats and the actions taken against them.



Clockwise from top left: A woman shows a fragment of a bomb dropped from a Japanese airplane on southern Oregon; A poster warns of accidentally giving away secrets to the enemy; Japanese Americans await internment; the pivotal Battle of Midway.

News from Abroad: A Summary of the War Fronts

Shock and Resolve: Oregon Reacts to Pearl Harbor

Sabotage, Subversion and Espionage Lurk in the Shadows

Under Suspicion: Enemy Aliens Draw Scrutiny in Oregon

The "Japanese Question" Confronts the State

Oregon's Japanese Americans Learn Their Fate

Japanese Americans Move on to the Assembly Center

Not Exactly Paradise: Japanese American Internment Camps

Behind the Fence: Life in the Internment Camp

Idealism and Resentment: Two Sides of Internment Camp Life

Into the Sugar Beet Fields: Japanese American Labor

Bombs Fall on Oregon: Japanese Attacks on the State

News from Abroad: A Summary of the War Fronts

This chapter outlines major events on the battlefronts of the war. Many events were described in Oregon newspapers or radio broadcasts and were part of the daily thoughts and conversations of Americans, nearly all of whom had a son, father, brother, or neighbor fighting in a far off place. News of battles motivated Oregonians on the home front as they protected the state from attack, salvaged materials for war equipment, or bought savings bonds to finance the war.



Governor Sprague, himself a newspaper man by profession, keeps up on the news from the battlefronts.

Image no. 1238, courtesy Salem Public Library, Ben Maxwell Collection

(https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/max/id/166/rec/13)

From Anschluss to Atomic Bomb

1939

Germany invaded Poland in September following three years of mounting international tension marked by the Spanish Civil War, the Anschluss (union) of Germany and Austria, Hitler's occupation of the Sudetenland, and the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The invasion of Poland triggered Britain and France to declare war on Germany two days later. Meanwhile, the United States claimed neutrality but continued to supply Britain with essential goods. Over the winter, the "phony war" followed in Western Europe during which preparations for war continued, but few signs of conflict were evident.

In eastern Europe Germany and the Soviet Union had signed the Ribbentrop Pact in late August and the Soviet Union moved into Poland from the east in September. Soviet troops continued this aggression by invading Finland.

1940

Germany invaded Denmark and Norway in April with Denmark quickly surrendering. Norway continued to fight with the help of the French and British until June when France surrendered and could no longer assist.

Winston Churchill replaced Neville Chamberlain as British Prime Minister on May 10. That day Germany unleashed its Blitzkrieg invasion on France, Belgium and The Netherlands. The Blitzkrieg, or "lightning war" combined fast armored tanks of the Wehrmacht on land with the powerful Luftwaffe in the air. The highly unified attack shocked the defenders with its innovation and effectiveness. The Netherlands and Belgium fell by the end of May, with Paris falling two weeks later.

British expeditionary troops were forced to make a scrambling retreat from the fast moving German



An aircraft spotter searches for Nazi attackers on the roof of a London building. St. Paul's Cathedral is in the distance. **National Archives, image no. 306-NT-901B-3 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/541900)**

attack. Miraculously, vessels ranging from pleasure boats to navy destroyers managed to extract 226,000 British and 110,000 French troops from the channel port of Dunkirk.

The puppet French Vichy government signed an armistice with Germany and controlled the unoccupied part of southern and eastern France. Germany retained control the rest of the country and Hitler visited Paris, a symbolic poke in the eye after the harsh terms placed on Germany after World War I. Free French leader Charles de Gaulle escaped to England and continued the fight.

Miraculously, vessels ranging from pleasure boats to navy destroyers managed to extract 226,000 British and 110,000 French troops from the channel port of Dunkirk.

Hitler next looked to invade Britain and began the task by attempting to destroy British air power and coastal defenses. The Battle of Britain, lasting from July to September, was the first in history to be fought only in the air. After months of aerial fighting and the devastating bombing of British cities, the German Luftwaffe still did not have the air superiority needed to support a ground invasion. German military leaders reluctantly turned away, postponing their invasion plans. However, the bombing continued throughout the war and claimed 40,000 civilian lives.

1941

With much of Europe under German control, Nazi forces moved into North Africa in February and invaded Greece and Yugoslavia in April. In a shocking move, Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union, in June. Using the tested coordinated air and land attack, German forces moved quickly. Sebastopol fell at the end of October, and Moscow was under attack by the end of the year. However, the Soviet Union had a powerful ally in the bitter winter weather, which slowed the German advance. The Soviets counterattacked in December and the Eastern Front held steady until the spring.

In the Pacific the Japanese mounted a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. This triggered the American entry into the war against Japan, Germany, and Italy. Within the week, Japan invaded the Philippines, Burma and Hong Kong as the global war ensued.

1942

German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps began their counteroffensive against the British, capturing Tobruk in North Africa in June. Meanwhile, bombing runs in both England and Germany intensified, with the Allies first thousand-bomber air raid on Cologne, and German bombing of British cathedral cities.

In the Pacific, the Japanese continued their expansion with Borneo, Java and Sumatra falling. Singapore fell in February, with around 25,000 prisoners taken, many of whom would die in Japanese camps in the years to follow. The Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines fell in April. This led to the Bataan "Death

March" of American prisoners in which 5,200 died. But June proved to be the peak of Japanese expansion. The Battle of Midway, in which American sea-based aircraft destroyed four Japanese carriers and a cruiser. Effectively crippling the Japanese navy, the battle marked the turning point in the Pacific War. The American forces were aided by previously deciphered Japanese war plans.

German forces suffered setbacks as British forces under Field Marshal Montgomery gained advantage at El Alamein in North Africa, and Soviet forces counterattacked at Stalingrad. Meanwhile, the Allies received news of Nazi mass murders of Jewish people.

1943

German U-boats continued to wreak havoc in the Atlantic. During one four-day period in March U-boats sank 27 Allied merchant vessels. Yet the tide was beginning to turn here as well. Using long-range aircraft and information gathered by codebreakers, the Allies began to inflict heavy losses on the U-boats. By June Admiral Dönitz had withdrawn the German fleet from the contended areas, effectively ending the Battle of the Atlantic.

After a long and desperate siege, German forces suffered their first major defeat following their surrender in Stalingrad in February. Hitler was enraged by the surrender of his troops, many of whom were starved and freezing to death.

German and Italian forces in North Africa also surrendered to the Allies in May. By July the Allies had used Tunisia as a springboard to invade Sicily. Mussolini was deposed later that month and the Italians surrendered to the Allies within two months, prompting German forces to invade northern Italy to attempt to salvage the situation. Nazi troops pushed farther south and the Allies' fight through Italy proved slow and costly.

In the Pacific, American forces won against the Japanese at Guadalcanal and British and Indian troops began their guerrilla campaign in Burma. Further U.S. gains came in the Aleutian Islands, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands.

Soviet forces continued to advance on the Eastern Front, recapturing Kharkov and Kiev from the Nazis, Meanwhile, Allied bombers began devastating daylight air raids over German cities. Preparation for the opening of a second front in Europe, long demanded by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, began in earnest after numerous delays. Stalin looked for a western front to relief pressure on his Soviet forces in eastern Europe.

Listen to early radio report of the D-Day invasion (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bj2pXLZd2UI) - via YouTube)

Listen to President Roosevelt's D-Day prayer (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-weBUzQleo) - via YouTube)

1944

Japan began its last offensive in China and captured further land in the south, thus adding to the

territory conquered in central and northern areas following the invasion of 1938. Chinese resistance forces, however, continued to slow the Japanese, whose control effectively was limited to the major cities and lines of communication.

January saw the Allied advance continue in central Italy with landings at Anzio. But the Germans counterattacked in February and little movement resulted. Finally, at the end of May, the Germans retreated from Anzio and Rome was liberated in June.

About the same time, on June 6, the Allied invasion of France, known as "Operation Overlord," began. The largest invasion ever included 6,500 vessels that landed over 130,000 Allied forces on the beaches of Normandy. Landing forces were supported by 12,000 aircraft, ensuring air superiority for the Allies. Most of the 4,649 American casualties that day occurred at Omaha beach, where they met fierce German resistance. Other beaches saw fewer losses. While Hitler knew an invasion was imminent, the location of the landings caught the Germans by surprise, limiting the ability to counterattack, especially with Allied air superiority. Even though the landings proved a solid success, further progress inland was slowed by the narrow lanes and thick hedgerows of the French countryside. However, even with stiff Nazi resistance, Paris was liberated with great fanfare about two months later.

On the Eastern Front, German forces suffered another setback as a result of a successful Soviet counterattack in June. Driving 300 miles west to Warsaw, the Soviets killed, wounded, or captured 350,000 German soldiers. The Soviets gained further advantage in eastern Europe late in the year with advances in Romania, Estonia, and Hungary.

Meanwhile, amid a general retreat, German forces mounted a successful counteroffensive at the Battle of the Bulge in the snowy Ardennes of France. While the action only delayed the Allied movement into Germany, it resulted in the loss of 19,000 American troops and shocked public opinion.

1945

The Soviet army liberated the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz, thus clearly revealing the horrors of the Holocaust. More camps were liberated in the following months as the race to Berlin continued.

In Britain, German V1 and V2 rockets fell on London. Meanwhile, Allied bombing raids over Dresden, Germany obliterated the city in a firestorm.

As Soviet tanks rolled into Berlin, Hitler killed himself in a bunker on April 30. Other Nazi leaders fled. Some were captured and tried at Nuremberg while many escaped to far off refuges in South America and elsewhere. Two days earlier, Italian partisans captured and publicly hanged Mussolini. Germany surrendered unconditionally on May 7, with V-E (Victory in Europe) day celebrated the next day.

With the war in Europe over, the Allies turned their attention to defeating the Japanese. The British advanced further in Burma, and by February the Americans invaded Iwo Jima, resulting in bloody fighting. Further Allied advances took the Philippines and Okinawa.

Military leaders planned an invasion of Japan but, based on their experiences with fierce Japanese resistance, anticipated extraordinary loss of life. American President Harry Truman, still new to the job after the death of President Roosevelt in April, was forced to make a terrible decision: move forward with the invasion and accept the loss of huge numbers of American lives or unleash the atomic bomb on

Truman ordered atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. At least 120,000 people died in the immediate aftermath of the bombings and more died subsequently from radiation. About 95% of the dead were civilians.

Japan in hopes of shocking it into surrender. In the end, he ordered that one bomb be dropped on Hiroshima on August 6 and another on Nagasaki three days later. At least 120,000 people died in the immediate aftermath of the bombings and more died subsequently from the radiation. About 95% of the dead were civilians. Strategically, the bombs achieved the objective and Japan surrendered on August 14, ending the nearly six year war.



A dense column of smoke rises more than 60,000 feet in the air over the Japanese port of Nagasaki after an American plane dropped an atomic bomb on Aug. 8, 1945. (**National Archives, image no. 208-N-43888 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/535795)**)

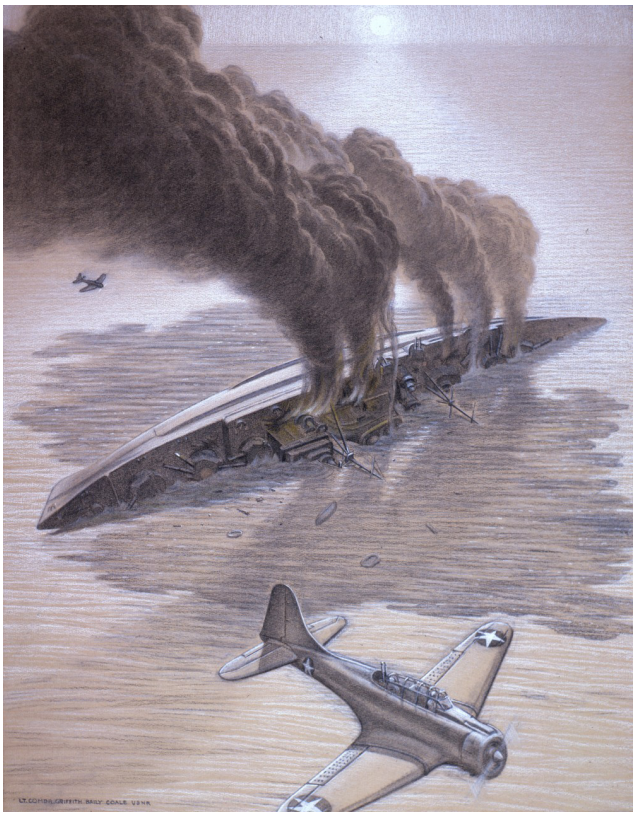
The war proved to be the largest in history and left staggering statistics. More than 16 million American soldiers, sailors, and marines served in the war and more that 405,000 of them died. Overall, the war killed about 50 million people, including about 15 million soldiers, 20 million Soviet civilians, six million Jews, and over four million Poles. Much of Germany was in ruins and eastern Europe was now in the clutches of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, himself a bigger killer than Hitler. The war was over but monumental challenges remained.

Sources

This overview is based on a number of sources including "World War Two: Summary Outline of Key Events" by Bruce Robinson (www.bbc.co.uk).



American soldiers rush off the landing boat and into intense Nazi machine gun fire as they hit the Omaha Beach during D-Day in 1944. National Archives, image no. 26-G-2343: https://catalog.archives.gov/id/205578425



"Mikuma Capsizing at Sunset," charcoal art of the Battle of Midway by Griffith Baily Coale #29, circa 1942. (Image no. 88-188-AC, courtesy www.history.navy.mil)

Shock and Resolve: Oregon Reacts to Pearl Harbor

Oregon Gets the News

Japanese bombs still were falling on Pearl Harbor as most Oregonians heard the news on the radio that quiet Sunday morning. Stories of the tragedy in Hawaii were relayed to the mainland by telephone, telegraph and teletype throughout the day. The United States government censored the news, refusing to release information about the number of ships sunk or the number of casualties, but Americans knew it was bad. In truth, the attack crippled the Navy's Pacific fleet, destroying five battleships and almost 200 planes while killing over 2,400 men. The size of the loss was devastating: the Navy lost three times as many men at Pearl Harbor as it had in the Spanish-American War and World War I combined. (

Listen to a radio news report of the attack (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_f9A3fwn6w) - via YouTube)



The *U.S.S. West Virginia* in flames after the Japanese aerial attack on Pearl Harbor. (**National Archives image 80-G-19930 (https://www.archives.gov/files/publications/prologue/2011/winter/images/ph-decklogs-westvirginia-l.jpg)**)

Upon hearing the news of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Oregonians shared feelings of shock, disbelief, fear, anger and sadness. The attack galvanized Americans, many of whom just a day earlier believed strongly in isolationism. The next day the United States declared war on Japan, triggering total American involvement not only in the Pacific but also in the war raging in Europe.

Sprague Responds

In Salem Governor Sprague quickly took action. In addition to being governor, he was the publisher of the Oregon *Statesman* newspaper. The paper already had delivered the regular Sunday edition when the news broke. Sprague ordered all of the staff back to work to publish an "Extra" edition. An editorial on the front page braced the readers for the inevitable: "We are at war. Well, we have been at war before and have acquitted ourselves honorably. We will do so again. We are all Americans in this war of defense." [1]

The same day Sprague wired a message to President Franklin Roosevelt assuring "full support of the human and material resources of the State of Oregon." In a related statement, he called for vigilance against espionage and sabotage but interestingly made an appeal for the rights of Americans of Japanese descent who were living in Oregon: "...these Japanese-Americans who are citizens should not be molested." On Monday, December 8 Governor Sprague issued a proclamation declaring an "unlimited emergency" and outlining steps to coordinate military, law enforcement, and civilian defense organizations throughout the state.

"Portland Area Dons Full War Dress"

That was the headline of a front-page article in *The Oregonian* newspaper the morning after the attack detailing plans to protect against air raids and invasion. By the morning after, Portland residents were coming to the "grim realization that the mouth of the Columbia river is the closest mainland point to Japan." Interceptor pursuit planes were dispersed to strategic fields in the region and all military leaves were cancelled. Guards were doubled around local military installations and airports and posted on bridges. Fifty soldiers from the Vancouver Barracks were dispatched to Portland's St. Johns area to guard docks and government stores. As in other coastal cities, officials rounded up certain Japanese citizens. [2] Howard Nomura, a 31-year-old Portland Japanese American druggist, was resigned in the face of events: "...we know our lot is going to be a tough one. We can only rely on the fairness of the Caucasian Americans to help us through." [3]

According to one reporter at *The Oregonian*, future notable University of Oregon History Professor Earl Pomeroy, Portland residents quickly overcame the shock of the attack: "There was no hysteria. There were no demonstrations. But there was emotion - a mounting anger born of the conditions under which the United States had been attacked, a gnawing kind of anger which found release in fervently expressed desire for full vengeance." [4]

The Nation Goes to War

The day of the attack, national leaders moved to action as they recovered from the stunning events. America's 2.1 million member armed forces were put on emergency alert. Machine gun emplacements were set up on the roof of the White House. An airplane was kept running at a secret airstrip on the edge of Washington D.C. so President Roosevelt could be quickly evacuated. But the challenges of protecting the city and the nation were symbolized by the soldiers who quickly took up posts at government buildings in Washington D.C. They wore World War I vintage helmets and carried the old Springfield rifles from the last war. [5]



President Roosevelt signs the declaration of war against Japan. **National Archives, image no. 79-AR-82**

"Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy, the United States was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan."

—President Franklin Roosevelt

The next day Roosevelt addressed a joint session of Congress. A record radio audience of 60 million listened as the president proclaimed that "Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy, the

United States was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan." **Declarations of a State of War** **(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319036)**[6] **(https://catalog.archives.gov/id/520053)** Roosevelt finished his speech by asking Congress to declare war on Japan. (**Watch the speech (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lK8gYGgodkE)**- via YouTube) The Capitol erupted in applause and within an hour Congress had obliged the Senate by a vote of 82-0. Soon after war was declared on Germany and Italy.

Willamette Football Team Stranded in Hawaii

When news of the attack on Pearl Harbor was broadcast on radio Sunday, some of the first fears for Oregonians were for the Willamette University football team and fans in Honolulu. They had traveled to Hawaii for a series of post season games known as the Shrine Bowl against the University of Hawaii and San Jose State. The first game was played Dec. 6 before a crowd of 24,000. Although the Bearcats suffered a 20-6 defeat, many were looking forward to several days of post-game festivities. The Willamette team and fans from Salem were waiting outside the Moana Hotel for a bus to take them on a sightseeing tour. They also were planning to see Pearl Harbor. As black oily smoke filled the air the team and their supporters realized that they were witnesses to a terrible and momentous event.
After the devastating attack the football team was enlisted by the Army to fend off a possible Japanese invasion by water. Their first set of orders was to string barbed wire on Waikiki Beach at low tide. The players were issued bolt-action Springfield rifles from World War I and given brief training before being told to be prepared to defend the beach. Shortly after they were assigned to Punahou High School in the hills above Honolulu. Authorities feared that water towers and storage tanks nearby might be targets of sabotage. The players moved into the dormitories and class rooms and went on sentry rotation.



Delmore "Verdi" Sederstrom, one of at least 17 Oregonians to die during the Pearl Harbor attack, later had a ship commissioned in his name. (OSA image)

Foremost in everyone's minds were the questions of how and when they would get home. They finally left Hawaii December 19 aboard the *SS President Coolidge*. A luxury ocean liner, the Coolidge had arrived in Hawaii with evacuees from the Philippines. It was commandeered to transport gravely wounded servicemen. Roy "Spec" Keene, the Willamette coach, and Douglas McKay, a state senator and future governor traveling with the team, persuaded the captain to take the team and their followers back to the mainland in exchange for assisting with the wounded. There were approximately 1,200 people on board the ship that was designed to carry 800. The normal four-day trip took seven days because of the zigzagging route required to avoid Japanese submarines. On Christmas Day the Willamette football party finally returned safely to San Francisco. It was the last time they would all be together. [7]

Offers of Help Roll In

Offers of help and advice came from around the state in the days after the Pearl Harbor attack. The Oregon Congress of Parents and Teachers wrote to Sprague to offer the services of its 364 local

associations totaling 25,618 members. The congress president noted all members could be contacted within 24 hours and stood ready to "help make Oregon safe." [8] Oregon chiropodists pledged support while proclaiming: "We know there is some place where we would fit in." [9] And World War I veteran Alfred Steele of Holland, Oregon offered his "services for the duration in whatever capacity you may choose." **Letter from Alfred Steele**
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151145)

> **"I will go anywhere, do anything, in order to do my bit." [10]**

Organized labor, known for its bitter strikes, also got on board. The 1,400 members of Locals 1-8 of the Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union in Portland pledged "support and full cooperation mentally, physically, and financially" to the effort. They further promised to "prevent any stoppage of work in this business until the very end...to safe-guard this port of Portland and the nation as a whole in this National emergency." [11] Members of the International Woodworkers of America in Westfir "voted 100 percent to aid in the national defense in any way possible." [12]

Some unions sent resolutions offering their support, albeit prefaced by sharp rhetoric. The IWA-CIO union in Dorena adopted a resolution claiming that: "labor will carry its bitter recollections of...vigilantes committees, of sundry clubbings and shootings...of Jim Crowism and Lynch law and relief lines, but whatever fires of resentment may still burn at memories such as these, they fade into feeble embers in the fierce light of a world in flames.... Be it resolved that the IWA-CIO Local Union No. 5-248 go on record pledging all-out on a new picket line, a picket line against universal terrorism...." **Resolution of the IWA-CIO Union in Dorena**
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151245)[13]

Related Document

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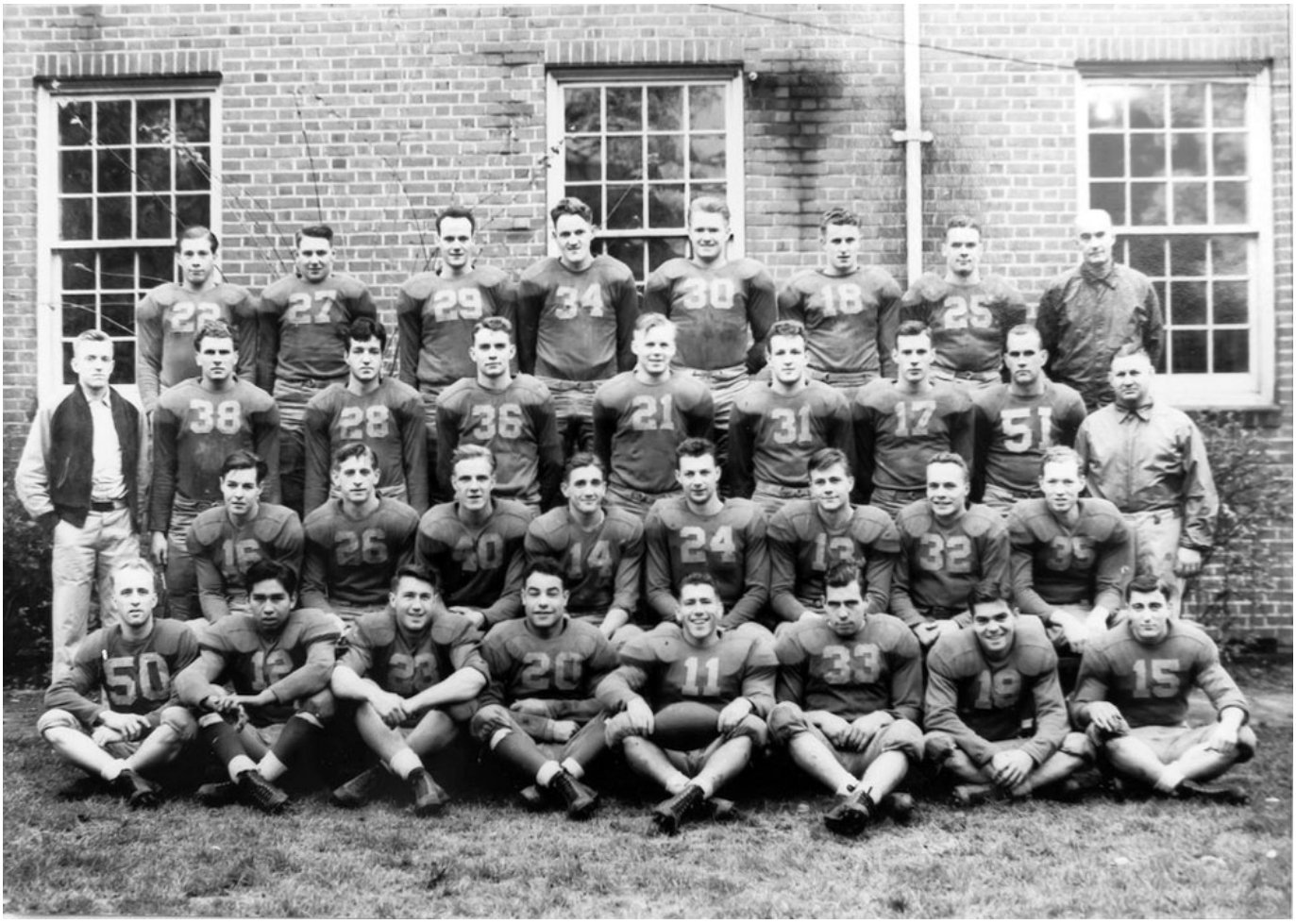
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Resolution of the IWA-CIO Union in Dorena, Dec. 19, 1941. Folder 13, Box 13, Defense Council Records, OSA.



After the Pearl Harbor attack, guards patrolled Portland's bridges, such as the Morrison Bridge shown here in 1942. Bridges along the Coast Highway and the Pacific Highway also drew protection. (Photo no. 1945, Highway Dept. Records, OSA) https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/1811/rec/2



The Willamette University football team was stranded in Hawaii after the attack on Pearl Harbor. It took weeks to get back to the mainland.(Image courtesy Willamette University)

The 1941 Willamette University Bearcats: (front row, from left): Irv Miller, Cecil Conner, Pat White, Tony Fraiola, Al Walden, Jim Fitzgerald, Buddy Reynolds, Chuck Furno, (second row from left) Earl Hampton, Bill Reder, Martin Barstad, Ted Ogdahl, Jim Burgess, Gene Stewart, Glenn Nordquist, Wally Olson; (third row from left) Dick Kern (manager), Paul Cookingham, George Constable, David Kelly, Ken Jacobson, Allan Barrett, Marshall Barbour, Clarence Williams, Assistant Coach Howard Maple; (back row from left) David Kurtz, Robert Bennett, Gordon Moore, Andrew Rogers, Neil Morley, Marv Goodman, Carrel "Truck" Deiner, Coach Roy S. "Spec" Keene. Note: Kurtz, Clarence Walden and coach Maple did not make the trip to Hawaii.

Sabotage, Subversion and Espionage Lurk in the Shadows

An Enemy in the Midst

In the years after the attack on Pearl Harbor, military and civilian defense officials in Oregon and along the Pacific Coast circulated correspondence labeled secret, restricted or confidential. They shared sightings, reports and analysis detailing the possibility of further attacks or sabotage in Oregon and warned of spies operating in society.

The Real Threat of Sabotage

Civilian defense officials were tense in the weeks after Pearl Harbor. They were scrambling to shore up plans while coping with the influx of citizens wanting to help and offering advice or rumors. The heightened state of alert for sabotage and enemy acts was apparent in a Christmas Eve letter to the Oregon Defense Council from the Army at Fort Lewis, Washington warning that "it is the crafty nature of our enemy to choose those periods when the country is least likely to guard, to launch their attacks."[1]

Later confidential correspondence described the need for vigilance along the Oregon coast. The beaches, inlets and sparse population of the area offered "innumerable opportunities for the landing of such agents from Japanese submarines... It is likely that enemy spies or other hostile agents will be landed at points where they can make contact with disloyal elements resident in the vicinity." Further possibilities for saboteurs to

Hobo Saboteurs?



A Klamath Falls railroad policeman questions a hobo. (Folder 23, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The top Army general in the West, Lt. Gen. J.L. DeWitt, raised a stir in Oregon when he demanded that Governor Sprague remove "hobos" from trains passing through forest areas. The general was concerned about the "possibility of forest fires being started by saboteurs, disguised as hobo train riders." DeWitt particularly objected that hobos were sent through a revolving door of arrest, suspended sentence and release - often back to the train. He complained that "it is not uncommon for peace officers to take these defendants to the railroad yards and see that they leave by freight train." DeWitt wanted Sprague to lean on police and judges to "vigorously enforce and prosecute offenders."[12]



Lt. Gen. J.L. DeWitt wanted to crack down on hobos. (Image courtesy U.S. Army)

Oregon officials were not sympathetic. State Police Superintendent Charles Pray wryly noted that "the General is tackling a pretty difficult social problem on the mere chance that some saboteur may elect to masquerade as a hobo." He sarcastically wrote how grateful officials would be for DeWitt's suggestions for solving the "vexatious" problem.[13] Sprague, usually compliant with Army requests, instead lectured the general: "Most of them [hobos] are harmless merely taking this way of living out their earthly existence." He claimed that the "only cure is to herd them all in camps and subsist them at public expense."[14]

While DeWitt managed to persuade Washington Governor Arthur Langlie to write a form letter about the issue to police chiefs and justices of the peace in his state, Sprague would have

enter would be to transfer them from a submarine to a fishing boat and then go openly into port. Experts discounted the likelihood of entry by parachute.

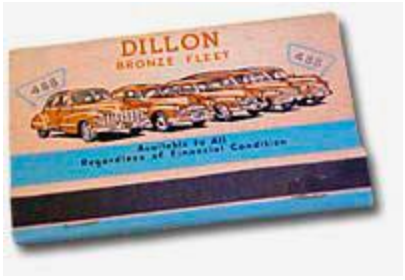
Confidential memo from Lt. Col. S.F. Miller (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151161) [2]

Officials saw plenty of potential targets for saboteurs, including military and government property, bridges and forests. The Army warned that telephone, radio and telegraph companies were "not only especially vulnerable, but that they are likely to be one of the earliest targets of acts of sabotage."[3] The assumption was that the enemy would try to break the lines of communication in an attack.



State Police Superintendent Charles Pray mocked DeWitt's demand. (Image courtesy OSP)

none of it in Oregon: "I hardly feel like issuing a general order to enforcement officers covering the subject of hobos riding on the trains. It is prohibited by law and the law is known to everyone; and frankly I do not see any particular menace from the reduced numbers of hobos who are now riding the trains."[15] With that, Oregon's hobos continued their perpetual journey - by train.



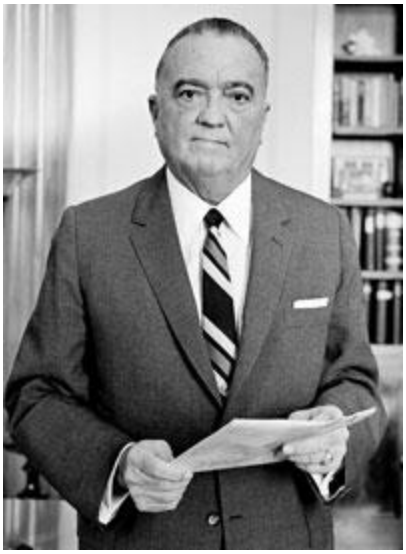
A matchbook was all a saboteur needed in summer to start a forest fire in Oregon.

Summertime brought heightened fears of sabotage. Civilian defense officials saw four main threats from arson, explosion, mechanics and psychology. Not all sabotage had to be spectacular. Sometimes subtle was better. For example, officials noted that in the summertime with dry grasses and forests "the packet of book matches becomes the simplest but most effective aid to the arsonist." Likewise, machinery, already running hot from summer temperatures, could be destroyed with friction by using abrasives or by letting the lubricants run dry.[4] Concern about food sabotage also surfaced. Governor Sprague was asked by federal officials to "direct all civilian police agencies in your state to arrest any Japanese who is seen or known to be plowing under or damaging crops..." The request stated that "the destruction of growing foodstuffs is outright sabotage and will be dealt with accordingly."[5]

Suspicious Characters

The best defense was vigilance - keeping an eye out for suspicious activity - especially in smaller towns. Oregonians were encouraged to "clear your suspicious characters or strangers through the FBI... Remember too that NO INFORMATION IS TOO INSIGNIFICANT to be turned into the FBI." It was simple: "You furnish the leads, FBI will establish the facts." While encouraging citizens to report the slightest suspicions, officials at the same time cautioned that it was "no time for witch-hunting. Hysteria is a form of sabotage itself."[6] The subtlety between the two may have been lost on many Oregonians. Undoubtedly, many small town busy-bodies erred on the side of reporting insignificant information.

Vigilance was reinforced, especially early in the war, by periodic reports of suspected sabotage. Perhaps most shocking were the small German sabotage squads that landed in June 1942 on Long Island, New York and Ponte Vedra, Florida. Having lived in the United States before the war, the eight men spoke fluent English, knew American customs, and had been trained at a special sabotage school near Berlin. The teams landed in rubber rafts launched from U-boats and carried a large supply of explosives and



J. Edgar Hoover kept the hunt for saboteurs in the public eye. (Image courtesy FBI)

incendiaries, intent on targeting aluminum plants, river locks and rail lines. The plot quickly fell apart as officials rounded up both teams, the Long Island team after a comedy of errors. One of the leaders was a bitter naturalized German American who felt cheated in life, apparently the impetus of his actions. While doing no damage, the plot gave civilian defense officials proof of the threat of sabotage.[7]

Maintaining vigilance against sabotage in the general population was increasingly difficult after the Allies gained the initiative in the last two years of the war. Characteristically, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was up to the challenge. At the end of 1944, Hoover cautioned against complacency and warned, "the enemy has made many attempts to penetrate our inner defenses." He described one such attempt a month before when two enemy agents were caught in New York City. A German U-boat brought them to the coast of Maine where they landed on the beach using a rubber raft. One agent was American born and had been discharged by the Marine Corps. According to Hoover, both had been trained in the "Hitler school on the handling of short wave radio and sabotage methods." They were carrying a short wave radio and $60,000 in cash when arrested.[8]

The Specter of the Fifth Column

Fear of domestic subversives or "fifth columnists" reached its heights in the months after Pearl Harbor. But it began earlier as Americans watched the collapse of western Europe in 1940 and concluded that domestic saboteurs had added to the debacle. The fear of internal sabotage manifested itself most visibly in the removal of Japanese Americans along the West Coast to relocation camps inland. Yet, Japanese Americans were far from the only perceived threat.

Fifth Column Operations

The broad groups of suspected Americans shown in the sidebar to the left were seen to have ominous intentions. Officials classified a number of potential operations that included sniping; spreading false rumors; issuing false orders; causing panic and riot; signaling the enemy from the ground; storing gasoline, vehicles or other supplies for advancing hostile forces; and other organized acts of sabotage in support of the enemy. Oddly enough, the plan cited the dearth of actual sabotage as evidence of the cunning of the enemy: "The lack of proven enemy-inspired sabotage to date confirms the possibility that the Fifth Column is well disciplined and is awaiting planned and unified major action when directed."[10]

In the end, fears about widespread fifth column activity in the United States proved groundless. Certainly, there were plots that included Americans, such as the two on the East Coast described above, but little came of them. During the war the FBI investigated 19,649 cases of suspected internal sabotage but failed to find any directed by the enemy. Yet, at the time there were enough stories and rumors to make people say: "It could happen here."[11]

Loose Lips Sink Ships

Even as Oregonians worried about their neighbor, the potential fifth columnist saboteur, they also fretted about the spies in their midst.

Censorship and Spies

Censorship was a fact of life during the war. Some restrictions were obvious. For example, all mail entering or leaving the country was subject to censorship. By 1942, a million pieces of mail were read and censored by 10,000 civil servants. Censors also checked mail for useful information about the enemy. GIs writing home could not mention anything about the military situation they saw and their families were encouraged to write back with happy, non-specific letters that avoided reference to the workplace.

The federal Office of Censorship also devised a voluntary code for broadcasters and publishers. It restricted news that could be valuable to the enemy, for example, information on troop or ship movements and the number of battle casualties. Other restrictions were less obvious. Radio programmers were banned from doing "man on the street" interviews and had to stop music request shows. The Office of Censorship contended that these shows could be exploited by spies to transmit coded messages.



Posters minced no words about the results of careless talk.

Wanted poster courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d2f34ffc-c75e-489c-acfb-0b712f24163a)

Education

Meanwhile, government officials launched a massive publicity campaign to educate Americans on the potential harm of seemingly harmless conversation, even with close friends and relatives. An example of the reasoning saw one friend innocently telling the latest happenings from work to another friend who would then mention the news at a bar where a spy was listening, ready to transmit the information to the enemy. News about design or production of ships, airplanes, and other war assets could be particularly harmful. Before long posters bearing slogans such as "Enemy agents are always near; if you don't talk they won't hear" were tacked to walls in factories and shipyards across the country as America responded to the threat.

Related Document

Case File of Portland Resident Lloyd Reynolds, Suspected Communist Subversive, 1943 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151060). Folder 8 , Box 15, Defense Council Records, OSA. Includes copy of letter from FBI Director John Edgar Hoover to OCD Director James Landis.

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Letter from Lt. Col. S.F. Miller to Oregon State Defense Council, Dec. 24, 1941. Folder 7, Box 15, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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"Northern Security District Counter Fifth Column Plan," 1944. Folder 8, Box 15, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Ibid.

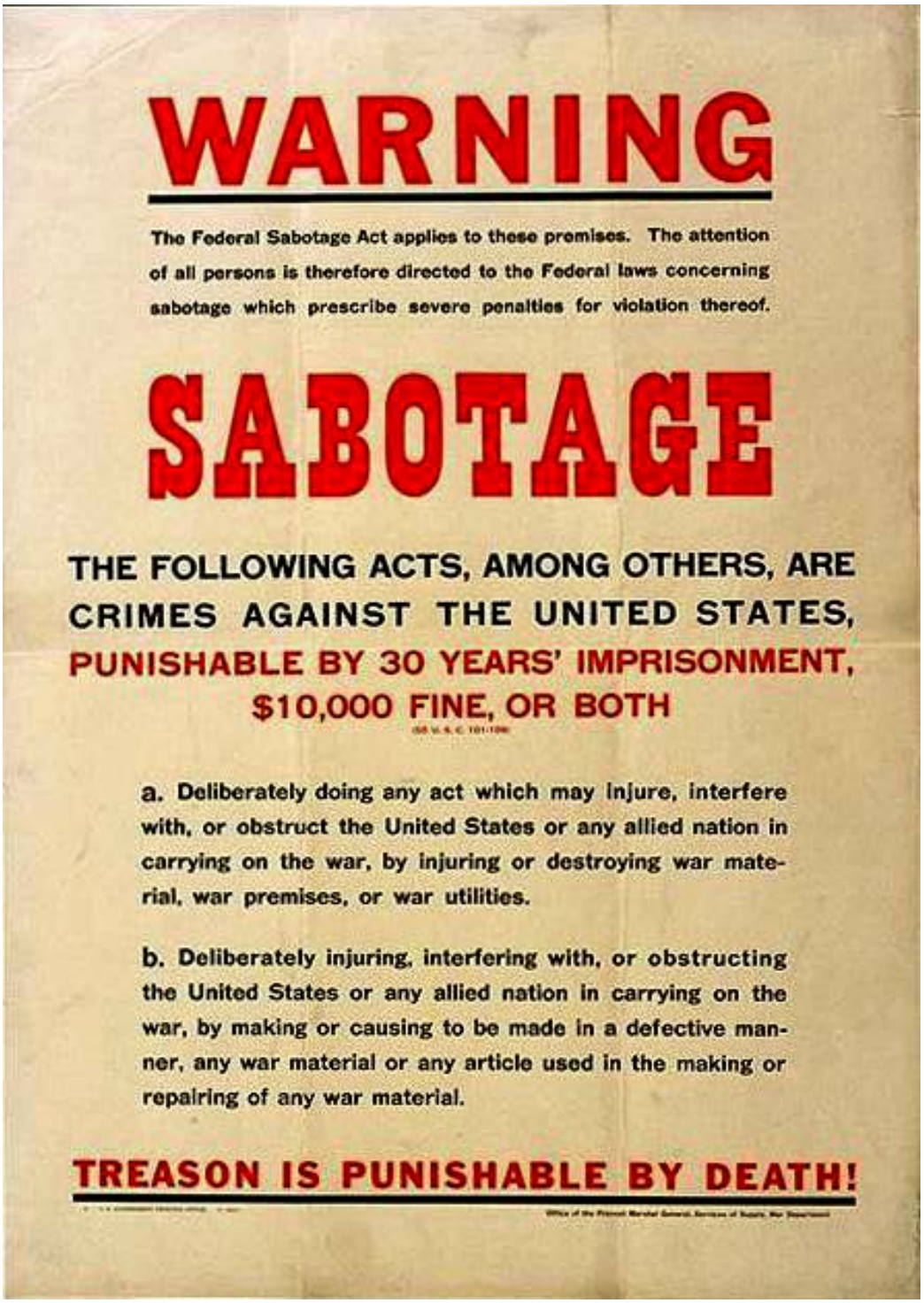
Ronald H. Bailey, *The Home Front: U.S.A.* (Time-Life Books, Inc., 1977), Page 115.

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Memo from State Police Superintendent Charles Pray, May 29, 1942. Folder 15, Box 3, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

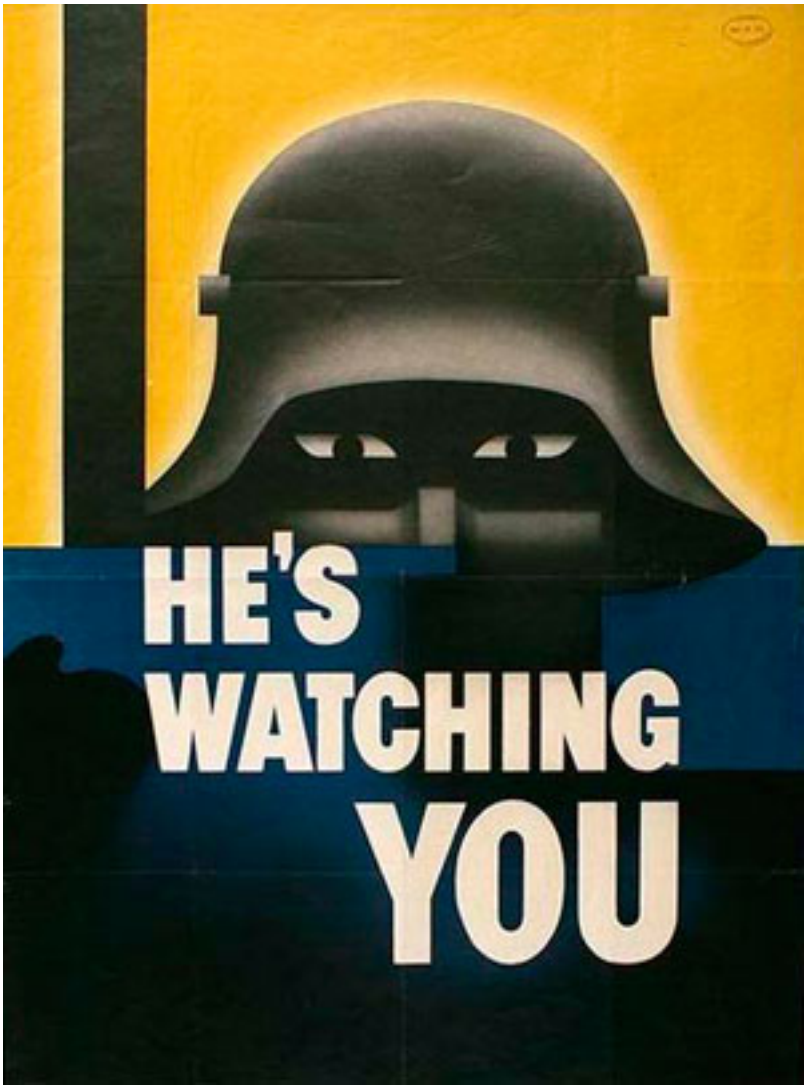
Letter from Governor Sprague to Lt. Gen. J.L. DeWitt, June 1, 1942. Folder 15, Box 3, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Letter from Governor Sprague to F.N. Finch, July 25, 1942. Folder 15, Box 3, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.



Sabotage laws were harsh. Poster image courtesy Northwestern University Library: https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/257bd905-77b2-4551-b6da-b3a9f861e44f

Potential Fifth Columnists



Posters reminded Americans spies can be anywhere. Art Deco style graphic courtesy Northwestern University Library: https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/b1f17878-0a3b-491f-b742-1bdedd770492

Officials in the Northwest categorized the fifth column threat in a restricted 1944 plan that included the following types of people as potential domestic subversives:

- "Enemy agents and sympathizers, including persons having personal or political grievances against the United States and those amendable to promises of money or power.
- Those with property or close relatives in enemy, enemy-occupied, or pro-enemy countries.
- Those educated in, residents therein of a long period, or frequent visitors to enemy countries.
- Enemy agents disguised as refugees.
- Fanatics, citizens or aliens, such as extreme radicals, pacifists, religious zealots, habitual criminals (especially arsonists), racketeers, and those in narcotic or other vice rings, and unbalanced, perverted, and thwarted individuals such as sadists, frustrated "geniuses," disgruntled failures and swindlers.
- Members of so-called minority groups stirred by subversive propaganda to resentment against the United States and its military forces or imbued with the possibility of utilizing the war to gain social or political advantage."

  Northern Security District Counter Fifth Column Plan: https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151191



Posters portrayed the costs of loose talk. Careless Talk graphic courtesy Northwestern University Library: https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/451d0ca0-baec-422b-96cb-a8ebc5078699



Cartoons depicted how spies operated. Image no. ww1646-71 courtesy Northwestern University: https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/e5e303cb-9efd-4b5f-af66-8163db7d9972

Under Suspicion: Enemy Aliens Draw Scrutiny in Oregon

German and Italian Aliens Experiences

As the nation came to grips with the events of Dec. 7, 1941, many Americans reacted by looking with suspicion and hatred at enemy aliens - everyone of German, Italian, or Japanese birth who lacked U.S. citizenship. These amounted to about 900,000 nationally. But attitudes and actions towards Germans and Italians differed greatly from those aimed at Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans.



Italian citizen and Metropolitan Opera basso Ezio Pinza was classified as an enemy alien and interned for months in 1942. He was one of many detained for an extended period during the war. (Image courtesy villagevoice.com)

National Restrictions After Pearl Harbor

Soon after America declared war, the federal government took several actions on the matter. To set the stage for subsequent moves, President Roosevelt issued a proclamation declaring German, Italian, and Japanese citizens in the United States to be enemy aliens. The government then issued regulations prescribing how these aliens could travel, engage in business, and conduct themselves. As part of this, the U.S. Treasury Secretary ordered that assets of enemy aliens be frozen. Stanley Donogh, U.S. Attorney for Oregon, emphasized that the order applied to all enemy aliens, even if "he is a gardner [sic] producing cauliflower or celery or something else, or operating a drug store or restaurant or a larger concern." According to Donogh, enemy aliens had to secure a license or permit from the Treasury Department "before anyone can regularly do business with them or before they can legally continue their business operations..." [1]

Other restrictions and requirements applied as well. For example, Oregon Governor Charles Sprague issued a press release in February 1942 outlining a federal mandate that all enemy aliens 14 years of age or over apply in person at post offices for Certificates of Registration.[2] Enemy aliens could not possess short-wave radios and were restricted in where they could travel. They could be detained, arrested, or deported, according to Donogh: "Your government has the power to detain and to arrest anyone whom we feel is dangerous to the peace and good order of the United States." [3] Nationally, about 3,000 enemy aliens considered to be dangerous were arrested and some were detained for the duration of the war.

After Pearl Harbor, some officials considered relocating or detaining enemy aliens throughout the country. Thousands of aliens of German or Italian descent were ordered away from coastal security zones in early 1942 but were allowed to return by summer. By that time the government had dropped serious discussion of the mass relocation or detention of unnaturalized Germans or Italians. The move would have been logistically and politically impractical and officials were reaching the conclusion that these

enemy aliens did not pose a significant security threat. The U.S. Attorney General removed Italians from the enemy alien list just before the 1942 elections. They undoubtedly were "freed from the 'enemy alien' stigma" at least partially because Roosevelt wanted to secure the very large Italian American vote for the Democrats. [4]

Oregon Alien Restriction Headaches



State Defense Council official Jack Hayes gave advice to people wrestling with confusing enemy alien regulations. (Folder 16, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The federal restrictions caused Oregon civilian protection officials problems in the first year of the war. Regulations related to alien curfew permits confused Yamhill County Sheriff G.W. Manning, who was designated as the alien permit officer for the county. The arcane nature of the federal regulations left questions in practice. For instance, a 20-year-old German student at Pacific University lived outside of town and worked nights at the local theater to earn tuition money. The sheriff wondered: "will it be necessary to issue him a permit every day...?" The reply from Jack Hayes, head of civilian protection for the State Defense Council, suggested that he contact the federal authorities but further counseled that "where doubt exists...the permit should be denied."

Travel regulations also caused problems. **Travel regulations memo (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319032)** [5] Another question arose for Manning regarding a Catholic priest who was German and lived in Grand Ronde, about 30 miles from the Sheriff's Office in McMinnville. The priest also served churches in Tillamook, 40 miles from his home, and Ocean Lake, 30 miles away. Would he regularly need to drive the 30 miles out of his way to McMinnville to get his permits? Hayes replied that the priest would indeed "be required to come to McMinnville for the first permit." But, he continued with some bureaucratic compassion: "Any subsequent permits it seems logical may be mailed to him for his signature as they cover the same details as the original permit." **Sheriff Manning's letter (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151210)** [6]

Suspicious Activity Draws Attention

German aliens also triggered investigations. But, local law enforcement officials were denied the authority to arrest these suspects as the U.S. Attorney for Oregon made clear: "The warrant for his arrest...comes from the Attorney General of the United States, and consequently no local officer...has the authority to take such a man into custody or to hold him." [7] The lack of authority to arrest suspects didn't deter Oregon state and local law enforcement from "actively assisting" the FBI by following up on leads of suspicious activity by enemy aliens. The Portland Police Bureau reported on Andrew Sneer and his wife after hearing they had radios and firearms in their home. An officer's report from March 24, 1942 went into detail:

> Officer's Report
> Subject Confidential
> Captain J.J. Keegan
> Re: Andrew Sneer and Family

Sir: It has been reported to this office that Andrew Sneer and Helen Sneer, man and wife, living at Beaver Creek, Clackamas County, Oregon are both aliens, of Austrian-German descent, and that they have radios and firearms in their home.



Cameras were off limits to enemy aliens.

Josephine Sneer, age about 26, 715 29th St., Milwaukie, Oregon, daughter of the above couple, is decidedly pro-German in her sympathies, and has radios and cameras in her possession... When it was suggested that she turn in her cameras and radios for her own protection, she said "To H--- with this country, nobody is going to tell me what to do." In her capacity as substitute air raid warden, or whatever her job may be in the Civilian Defense at Milwaukie, she said that if she saw an enemy plane she would not report it... She is also an alien.

Andrew Sneer, Jr. son of the above couple is also an alien, and is now living at Warrington [Warrenton], Oregon, in sight of the buildings of Fort Clatsop. It is possible that he may be in possession of firearms...

Practically the whole family have radios, but it is not known whether or not the short wave has been eliminated from them.

This information was given by Ralph Clem, 1615 S.E. Tenino St., Portland, who is the divorced husband of Josephine Sneer.

Respectfully,
W.B. Odale
D-9 [8] [4]



Officials in the Bandon area held enemy alien Dick Wullert "under suspicion for some time." Shown above is the Coquille River Lighthouse near Bandon. (**Oregon Scenic Images collection**

The Oregon State Police (OSP) also investigated "suspicious" German American behavior. Dick Wullert, a naturalized American born in Germany, caught the attention of an OSP investigator just after Christmas in 1941. Apparently, Wullert served on a German submarine during World War I. He also worked with the German intelligence service and was fluent in German and English. After gaining citizenship, Wullert became an honorary member of the American Legion and was active in local civilian defense, in which he "seems highly interested." Wullert knew in advance of the transfer of eight men from the Coast Guard Station at Bandon to Honolulu. In fact, he

(https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/56869#lg=1&slide=0)) knew of it before the men being transferred knew they were leaving.

A Coast Guard official had Wullert "under suspicion for some time" but was "somewhat at a loss to know where he secures his information." One method may have been eavesdropping, according to the investigator who "received information from the telephone office in Bandon that Mr. Wullert followed two of the seamen into the office when they were calling their mothers to advise them of a transfer. His purpose here was apparently to determine the place these men were being put aboard ship and then [when] the ship was leaving." Wullert came under further suspicion because, in his position as chief engineer at a Bandon lumber company, "he has knowledge of the arrival and departure of ships loading lumber at this plant." Coincidentally, "one of the ships which loads at this plant was recently damaged by a torpedo off the California Coast." Needless to say, all of Wullert's phone calls were "being supervised" by officials. [9]

Notes

"Oregon State Defense Council Meeting of Advisory Council" Proceedings, Dec. 15, 1941, Page 42, Folder 10, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Governor Sprague Press Release, circa Jan. 22, 1942. Folder 14, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

"Oregon State Defense Council Meeting of Advisory Council" Proceedings, Dec. 15, 1941, Page 42, Folder 10, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Italian Aliens May Join Defense Corps," *War-Victory Bulletin No. 32*, Dec. 17, 1942. Page 5, Folder 5, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA.

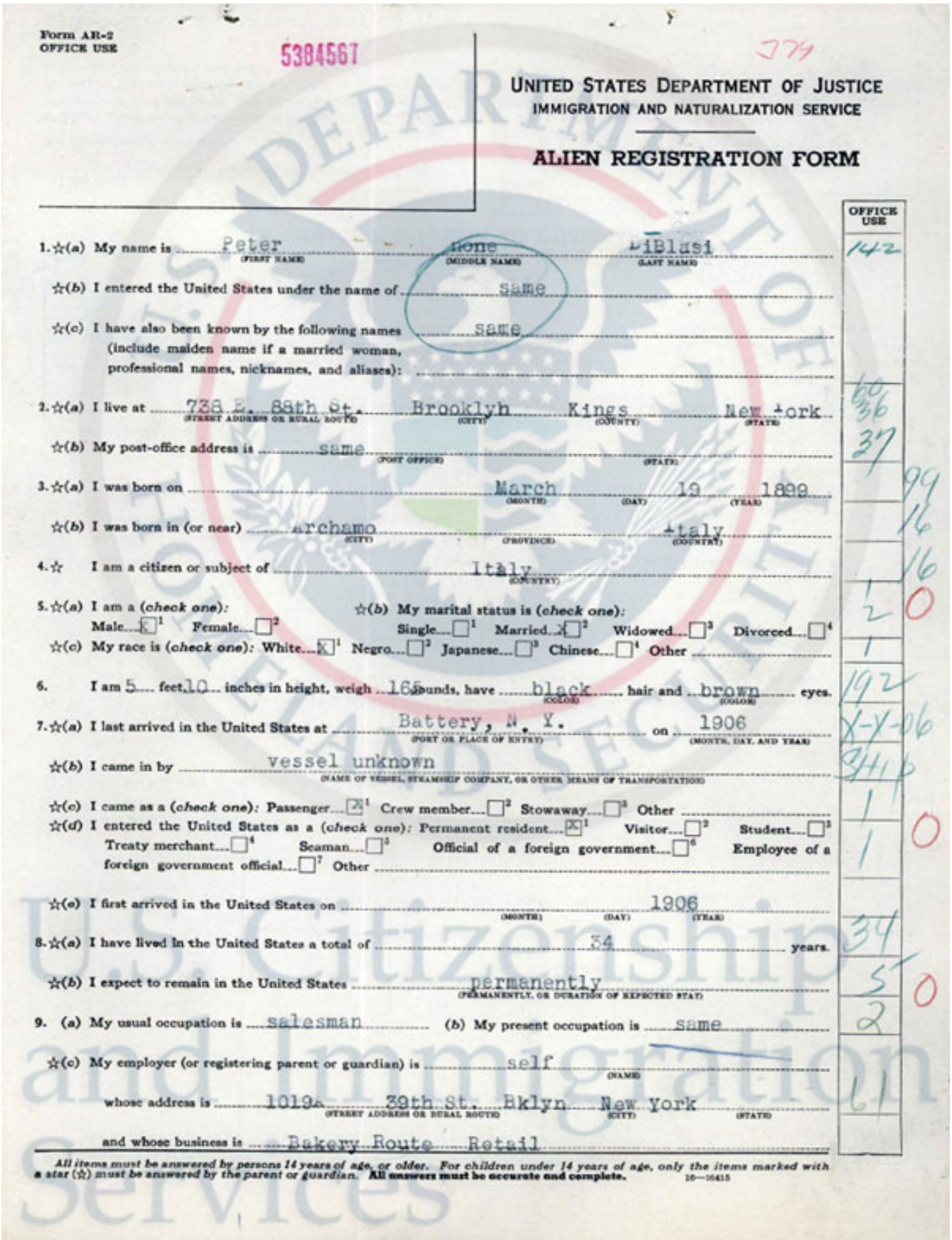
United States Attorney, District of Oregon Travel Regulations, Jan. 8, 1942. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

"Oregon State Defense Council Meeting of Advisory Council" Proceedings, Dec. 15, 1941, Page 44, Folder 10, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from G.W. Manning to Jack Hayes, Oct. 2, 1942. Folder 14, Box 21, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from Jack Hayes to G.W. Manning, Oct. 3, 1942. Folder 14, Box 21, Defense Council Records, OSA.

W.B. Odale Officer's Report, March 24, 1942. Folder 5, Box 26, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Oregon State Police Officers Report, Dec. 27, 1941. Folder 15, Box 16, Defense Council Records, OSA.



Form AR-2
OFFICE USE

5384567

374

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

ALIEN REGISTRATION FORM

OFFICE USE 142

1. ☆(a) My name is Peter (FIRST NAME) none (MIDDLE NAME) DiBlasi (LAST NAME)

☆(b) I entered the United States under the name of same

☆(c) I have also been known by the following names (include maiden name if a married woman, professional names, nicknames, and aliases): same

2. ☆(a) I live at 738 E. 88th St. (STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE) Brooklyn (CITY) Kings (COUNTY) New York (STATE)

☆(b) My post-office address is same (POST OFFICE) (STATE)

3. ☆(a) I was born on March (MONTH) 19 (DAY) 1899 (YEAR)

☆(b) I was born in (or near) Archamo (CITY) (PROVINCE) Italy (COUNTRY)

4. ☆ I am a citizen or subject of Italy (COUNTRY)

5. ☆(a) I am a (*check one*): Male... [X] 1 Female... [ ] 2

☆(b) My marital status is (*check one*): Single... [ ] 1 Married... [X] 2 Widowed... [ ] 3 Divorced... [ ] 4

☆(c) My race is (*check one*): White... [X] 1 Negro... [ ] 2 Japanese... [ ] 3 Chinese... [ ] 4 Other

6. I am 5 feet, 10 inches in height, weigh 165 pounds, have black (COLOR) hair and brown (COLOR) eyes.

7. ☆(a) I last arrived in the United States at Battery, N. Y. (PORT OR PLACE OF ENTRY) on 1906 (MONTH, DAY, AND YEAR)

☆(b) I came in by vessel unknown (NAME OF VESSEL, STEAMSHIP COMPANY, OR OTHER MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION)

☆(c) I came as a (*check one*): Passenger... [X] 1 Crew member... [ ] 2 Stowaway... [ ] 3 Other

☆(d) I entered the United States as a (*check one*): Permanent resident... [X] 1 Visitor... [ ] 2 Student... [ ] 3 Treaty merchant... [ ] 4 Seaman... [ ] 5 Official of a foreign government... [ ] 6 Employee of a foreign government or official... [ ] 7 Other

☆(e) I first arrived in the United States on (MONTH) (DAY) 1906 (YEAR)

8. ☆(a) I have lived in the United States a total of 34 years.

☆(b) I expect to remain in the United States permanently (PERMANENTLY, OR DURATION OF EXPECTED STAY)

9. (a) My usual occupation is salesman (b) My present occupation is same

☆(c) My employer (or registering parent or guardian) is self (NAME)

whose address is 1019a 39th St. Bklyn (STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE) (CITY) New York (STATE)

and whose business is Bakery Route Retail

All items must be answered by persons 14 years of age or older. For children under 14 years of age, only the items marked with a star (☆) must be answered by the parent or guardian. **All answers must be accurate and complete.**

16—16415

Aliens holding citizenship from Germany, Italy and other enemy nations were required to register with the government and were subject to detention or deportation. (Image courtesy U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services)

The "Japanese Question" Confronts the State

Racial Hatred Unleashed



Many Issei women, first generation Japanese immigrants, such as Ai Hitaka shown in 1915, came to the United States as picture brides. (**National Archives, image ARC 296466 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/296466)**)

While many Americans viewed German and Italian aliens with suspicion, they hated all things Japanese after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The severity of the reaction was apparent when the Tennessee Department of Conservation asked the state purchasing department to order six million licenses to hunt Japanese invaders at a fee of $2 each. The reply: "Open season on Japs'--no license required."Footnote [1] The hatred had deep roots along the West Coast where anti-Asian racism had flourished for nearly a century. In this context, distinctions between unnaturalized Japanese aliens and Japanese American citizens often lost their relevance. Lt. General John DeWitt, head of the Western Defense Command, boiled it down to race and spoke for many along the West Coast: "...racial affinities are not severed by migration. The Japanese race is an enemy race." [2]

Usage Note: Except when specific differentiation between Japanese aliens and United States citizens of Japanese descent is required, this exhibit generally will use the term "Japanese American" to refer to all people of Japanese descent living permanently in the United States. The more accurate Japanese term for this group is Nikkei. Moreover, despite ongoing debate about the proper terms, this exhibit will call Japanese Americans housed in assembly centers "evacuees" and those housed in relocation centers "internees." Many scholars have called it euphemistic to use "internment" to describe the camps housing both aliens and citizens without due process. President Roosevelt used the term concentration camp early in the war before dropping it to avoid association with the Nazi death camps. During the war, government officials commonly used the term relocation center.

Experiences in Oregon

Earlier federal anti-immigrant laws effectively created two groups of people of Japanese descent in the United States. Issei, or first generation Japanese immigrants, were not allowed to become citizens; while Nisei, those born in the United States, were citizens. Despite constitutional protections, most Americans saw little practical distinction. The 1940 census found a total of 4,071 Issei and Nisei in Oregon, of whom 2,454 were citizens. Portland had the largest concentration at 1,680 combined population. The orchards of Hood River County counted 480 people with farming areas in Washington, Clackamas and Marion Counties representing other sizable concentrations of Japanese Americans. Statewide, men

outnumbered women by nearly 2 to 1. **Population table, 1940 Census of Japanese in Oregon (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527728)** [3]

State law also worked against Japanese aliens. The Issei largely built their own communities in the previous decades, relatively isolated from mainstream society by language and cultural differences. This contributed to strong and pre-existing racial prejudice in Oregon. Fearing Japanese immigrants were gaining too much farmland, the Ku Klux Klan lobbied the Oregon Legislature to take action in 1923. The Legislature responded by passing a measure outlawing Japanese aliens from owning land. In an indication of the overwhelming support, the House passed the measure with only one negative vote; the Senate vote was unanimous. [4]



The farmland of Marion County played host to a significant community of people of Japanese descent. (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/56427#lg=1&slide=0)**)

The Drumbeat Grows Louder

With this history of racism, many Oregonians were eager to vent their anti-Japanese hatred in the wake of Pearl Harbor. Fueled by caustic radio programs and alarmist magazine articles, residents sent letters to Governor Sprague decrying the Japanese attack and demanding action. Alta Bridges of Saginaw, Oregon sent a handwritten letter to the governor (mistakenly confusing him with Senator Charles McNary) hoping he had been "listening to John B. Hughes every morning at nine O'clock." The Hughes radio program spewed racist invective against people of Japanese descent and Bridges had clearly absorbed much of it: "I am an American 100% [and] it makes me disgusted to think how the Alien Japs aslo [sic-and also] some Americin [sic] born, are allowed to go free to do thier [sic] dirty business against our government." **Letter from Alta Bridges (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151146)** [18]
E.M. Westhefer of Portland sent Sprague a telegram voicing a growing attitude:

> **"In view of Japanese treachery why wait until a major disaster requires removal of all American born and alien Japs 500 miles from the coast? Action is needed immediately. Moving a few Japs from a few restricted areas is not enough."** [5]

Residents of Lakeview wanted action from the FBI to have their "sons of Nippon" moved, according to a State Defense Council field inspector's report in early 1942. Apparently the residents were "worrying about the 9 or 10 Japs who live here. The Jap laundry is directly under their water reservoir. This laundry is owned by K Kawaji who at this time is in the Japanese Navy, and another Jap who was recently arrested in Calif[ornia] as a spy." [6]

Farm and Workplace Pressure



Many families of Japanese descent worked hard to achieve the "American Dream." Above, the Shibuya Family of Mountain View, California pose on the front lawn of their prosperous home in 1941. (**National Archives, image NWDNS-210-G-A60 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/536037)**)

Frank Warfield of Forest Grove had a suggestion about what to do with the Japanese American farmers in his area. Rather than send off the Japanese Americans, leaving their strawberry fields uncultivated, he recommended to Governor Sprague that "if people think they can't be trusted...why not let each grower hire these Japanese to do their hoeing & ect. [sic] and make it compulsory for each grower to hire a white American to guard and boss the workers requiring each worker to wear a number and report morning noon and nite being under guard at all times." [7]

Further pressure came in the workplace. The Union Pacific Railroad "found it necessary to relieve certain Japanese from their employment and felt the State should be advised of their whereabouts... All have been given three days to make up their minds where they are going and get off the property." No mention was made as to whether the fired employees were alien Japanese or Japanese Americans and no pretext for dismissal was given. [8]

The registrar of Oregon State College (now University) in Corvallis was forced to defend employee Molly Kageyama. The Corvallis Post #11 of the American Legion unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the appointment of Kageyama to the selective service register board. Registrar E.B. Lemon responded, first of all, that the accusation was false. Kageyama was not on the board, she simply worked in the office. Furthermore, Lemon protested it was "unfair and unnecessary to discriminate against one individual whose loyalty there has been no occasion to doubt. Molly Kageyama is an Oregon born girl, a graduate of Hood River High School and Oregon State College. Last year, while a senior student, she was sufficiently appreciated by her colleagues to have been elected to Mortar Board, which is regarded as one of the highest honors...." [9]



Weatherford Hall, Oregon State University (earlier College) campus, Corvallis. The college registrar defended the employment of a Japanese American woman from critics in the local American Legion. (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/13707#lg=1&slide=0)**)

Portland came to be seen as a national leader in restricting Japanese American activities. In January the city council ruled that "no license of any kind be granted by the City of Portland to any Japanese national." The next month the city council

passed a resolution calling on the federal government to move forward with the internment of all people of Japanese descent, including American citizens. [10]

Veterans Groups Demand Action

By February veterans groups, such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, were demanding that "all" Japanese be removed from western Oregon. The Scout Young Camp of the United Spanish War Veterans listed many reasons to "emphatically urge that all Japanese, whether American-born or otherwise, be immediately removed..." Their resolution implied that Japanese Americans in Portland were plotting massive sabotage:

> **"It has been conclusively proven to the Scout Young Camp that thousands of films have been submitted to photo developing firms which consist to a large extent of pictures of bridges, manufacturing plants, highways, tunnels and potential defense sites, and a majority of these films are submitted by the younger generation of the Japanese...." [11]**

A later resolution from the Scout Young Camp called for a prisoner exchange with the United States trading thousands of Japanese aliens for captured American soldiers "whose plight is so deplorable." [12]

A Valiant but Vain Response



Grades 3-5 of the Oak Grove School in Hood River County show a mix of students of Caucasian and Japanese descent in September 1941. (Image courtesy www.carolynbrady.com)

The Japanese American Citizens League, Japanese churches, and other organizations tried to stem the overwhelming tide of sentiment in favor of the removal. Some went to great lengths to proclaim the loyalty of people of Japanese descent. The minister of the Hood River Japanese Methodist Church organized a pledge by local Japanese aliens proclaiming "our loyalty to the Stars and Stripes just as do our children who are patriotic American citizens...." They added that "we love this country so much that we wish to live here permanently...to cooperate whole heartedly, endeavoring to prove our destinies common with that of the American public." The signers noted that "fourteen of our American born boys of Japanese ancestry have answered the call to duty with the United States army. We hope there will be further opportunities to prove our mettle as good, law abiding nationals, maintaining the good will of our neighbors."

Resolution of Hood River Area Japanese Aliens

(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151244) [13]

Few non-Japanese American groups or individuals rose to protest the stampede. Most groups such as the Red Cross and YMCA, as well as many civil libertarians and churches, were mute to the issue. Some, however, did speak up. Days after Pearl Harbor, Clarence Oliver, a teacher at Portland's Jefferson High School, wrote a letter to Governor Sprague on "a matter of very grave importance." Oliver had long associations with Japanese Americans through school, church and in his home that convinced him they were "useful and loyal citizens." He called on Sprague to appoint committees of prominent citizens in counties with large Japanese American populations "to serve in a guardianship capacity for the people of Japanese blood residing in our state." He also suggested that American friends post bonds for the conduct of Japanese aliens in Oregon. In response, Sprague demurred, referring to the matter as a local one. **Letter from Clarence Oliver to Governor Sprague (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151150)**[14]



Clarence Olivier, a teacher at Portland's Jefferson High School (shown above), called on Governor Sprague to take action to protect the rights of Japanese Americans in Oregon. (Image courtesy www.vintageimages.net)

In February other voices of support were heard, this time at the "Tolan Committee" of the U.S. House of Representatives that was holding hearings in Portland on the need to remove Japanese Americans from the West Coast. Some social welfare organizations, churches and personal friends of Japanese Americans spoke in support. A former missionary in Japan, Azalia Emma Peet was the only witness at the hearings to question the need for removal on moral grounds: "Is there anything in their history in this area to justify such fear of them developing overnight?" she questioned. Committee chairman, Representative John H. Tolan retorted: "So far, there are no cases of sabotage...[but] if the Pacific Coast is attacked, that is when the sabotage would come, with the attack, wouldn't it?"Footnote [15]

Governor Sprague Relents Under Pressure

The pressure on politicians to take a stand grew by the day in early 1942. Major Oregon newspapers, including *The Oregonian* and Salem *Capital Journal*, mirrored newspapers in California and elsewhere in calling for the evacuation of Japanese Americans. A poll of Portlanders on February 12 found 80% favored the removal of "all enemy aliens."Footnote [16] Governor Sprague decided he could resist no longer. He had been challenged on the right in the Republican primary for governor by Secretary of State Earl Snell and needed to look strong on the issue to voters. On February 17, Sprague sent the following telegram:

Salem, Oregon February 17, 1942
Honorable Francis Biddle, Attorney General
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C.

I am convinced that our people on this coast demand more thorough action for protection against possible alien activity particularly by Japanese residing on coast. I do not believe measures now being taken are adequate and urge further and prompt action to remove this menace and recommend internment. We want no repetition of the Honolulu experience here. Recommend your agents confer with military and police authorities to plan positive protection for Americans, with decent treatment of Japanese.

Charles A. Sprague, GovernorFootnote [17]

Related Documents

Telegram from Hood River County Civil Defense Council to Senator Charles McNary (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319024), Dec. 26, 1941. Folder 15 , Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Resolution of Hood River County Civil Defense Council to Senator Charles McNary, (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151246) Feb. 24, 1942. Folder 15 , Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Notes

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John W. Jeffries, *World War II and the American Home Front: Part One* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 2004), Page 34.

1940 Census of Japanese in Oregon, Census Bureau, 1940. Folder 14, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Floyd McKay, *An Editor for Oregon* (Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1998), Page 123.

Telegram from E.M. Westhefer to Governor Sprague, Feb. 17, 1942. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Oregon State Defense Council Field Inspector's Report, March 20, 1942. Folder 11, Box 18, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from Frank Warfield to Governor Sprague, Feb. 2, 1942, Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Memo from Oregon Executive Office to Superintendent of State Police, Feb. 16, 1942. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Letter from E.B. Lemon to American Legion Corvallis Post, March 3, 1942. Folder 6, Box 1, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Ellen Eisenberg, "As Truly American as Your Son," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 104, No. 4 (Winter 2003): Page 544.

Resolution of the Scout Young Camp of the United Spanish War Veterans, Feb. 13, 1942. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Resolution of the Scout Young Camp of the United Spanish War Veterans, Aug. 4, 1942. Folder 1, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Resolution of Hood River Area Japanese Aliens, Jan. 3, 1942. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Letter from Clarence Oliver to Governor Sprague, Dec. 11, 1941. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA; Letter from Governor Sprague to Clarence Oliver, Jan. 8, 1942. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Ellen Eisenberg, "As Truly American as Your Son," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 104, No. 4 (Winter 2003): Pages 542-565.

Ibid, Page 565.

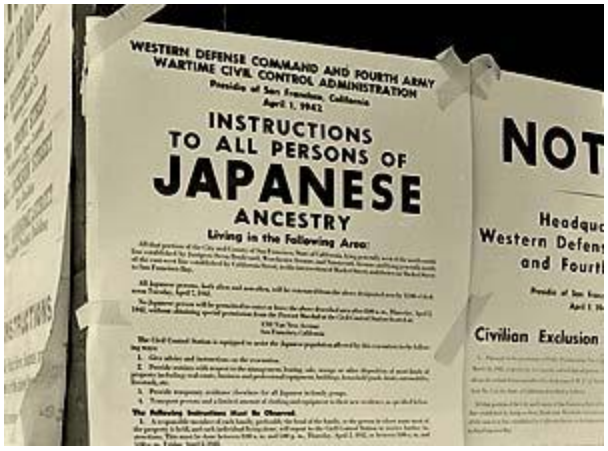
Telegram from Governor Sprague to Francis Biddle, Feb. 17, 1942. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Letter from Alta Bridges to Governor McNary [actually Sprague], Jan. 6, 1942. Folder 15, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Oregon's Japanese Americans Learn Their Fate

Roosevelt Starts the Process

On Feb. 19, 1942, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 9066 and put to rest more than two months of intense speculation and lobbying about the fate of Japanese Americans during World War II. By September more than 110,000 Japanese Americans had been uprooted from their jobs and homes, denied their civil rights, and interned in camps surrounded by barbed wire in the single largest forced relocation in American history.



Signs give instructions to Japanese Americans and nationals in the wake of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Roosevelt. (**Image courtesy National Archives, Truman Library (https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/exclusion-order)**)

Proclamations and Confusion

Executive Order 9066 empowered the secretary of war or designated military commanders to prescribe military areas and to exclude "any or all" persons from them. While couched in broad terms, the order was aimed at Japanese Americans. Less than two weeks later, Lt. General J.L. DeWitt, commanding general of the Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, was more specific. His Public Proclamation No. 1 defined Military Area No. 1 and No. 2 running north-south from the Canadian border to Mexican border. In Oregon, these areas roughly were divided by Highway 97 in Central Oregon with Area No. 2 lying to the east. DeWitt signaled that he would soon issue Civilian Exclusion Orders to clear the "exclusion area" of Military Area No. 1 in Western Oregon along with territory in other western states.

Voluntary Relocations and Increased Restrictions



Before mandatory evacuations were imposed, the federal government encouraged voluntary resettlement outside of the demilitarized zone. As a result, some Japanese Americans attempted to move inland but they often met with resistance from a Caucasian population fearful of unsupervised aliens. Masaomi Kibe's family tried to relocate from Tacoma, WA to a farm near Merrill in Klamath County with the intention of farming on a friend's property. They complied with all rules and regulations and secured a permit from authorities to make the move. The family simply wanted to be self-supporting and "avoid becoming government charges in a concentration camp."

Japanese American families endured discrimination and vandalism in the run-up to relocation. (Image courtesy latinamericanstudies.org)

Their problems began quickly, however, when the Klamath County Sheriff took them into custody with no end in sight "because he fears mob violence if they move into the Merrill neighborhood. For two weeks they have been couped [sic] up in a dark, dingy apartment while the sheriff has tried to obtain a permit to move them back to Tacoma." The Kibe family was caught in a bureaucratic nightmare. They had been issued a valid permit to move to Merrill. But days later General DeWitt had announced that voluntary evacuations would cease and all future "evacuation would be on a planned, orderly basis to War Relocation Authority relocation camps." A friend pleaded with Governor Sprague's office for help and was told that "they are to be escorted to Portland when the military authority issues the necessary order, and they will be cared for as other Japanese of the coastal area are to be cared for." [1]

Restrictions increasingly constrained Japanese Americans during the spring. Andrew Kuroda, a Japanese American minister from the Salem area, summed up the situation in a letter to friends:

> May 6, 1942
>
> Dear Friends:
>
> We do not know when the evacuation order will come. But we do know that it is imminent. Therefore, while I still have a little time to spare, I shall write these few lines to you.
>
> ...At first only aliens were effected [sic] by various restrictions. But presently citizen children of Japanese aliens are brought into regulations. Proclamation followed proclamation, swiftly and widely along the whole western States by the Western Command and Fourth Army to set up the prohibited and restricted areas, the curfew from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m., five mile limit, forbidding voluntary evacuation from the Military Area No. 1, and compulsory evacuation of not only aliens but also citizens from that area.
>
> To the Nisei-American citizens of Japanese descent - this is all but unintelligible. They were born in this country and have never lived in any other. They owe their allegiance to no other nation. They speak the American language, they have been educated in American schools, they accept American customs, pay taxes, vote and render military service. They are proud of their citizenship which is protected by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, that "no person may be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law...."
>
> Andrew Kuroda [2]

Exclusion Orders for Oregon

Authorities issued exclusion orders based on the most sensitive and critical zones in the military area. Civilian Exclusion Order No. 1 ordered those of Japanese ancestry to evacuate Bainbridge Island by

March 30. The controlled process of relocation began for the Japanese population of Multnomah County by the issuance of Exclusion Orders Nos. 25 and 26. No. 25 applied to about 950 people who lived west of the Willamette River while No. 26 affected those to the east of the river extending further east to 122nd Avenue.

The order required that each Japanese head of household report to one of two Army directed Civil Control Stations on April 29 or 30, 1942 to register for movement to an assembly center. The evacuees also provided information on a social data registration form, including the name, sex, age, birthplace, education, occupation, alien registration number and physical condition of each family member. [3] Evacuees received instructions on how to arrange for movement, how to prepare household goods for storage, and when to be ready for transfer to the Portland Assembly Center. Exclusion orders for other Oregon locations soon followed.



Despite efforts by government officials to limit the impact, many Japanese Americans disposed of their assets for a fraction of true value before their forced relocation. (National Archives, image no. ARC 299687)

Evacuees had only a few days to get their affairs in order before they had to report to the Portland Assembly Center that was part of the internment process. Homes, businesses, and farms had to be disposed of on extremely short notice. Bargain hunters, fully aware of the situation, stood ready to purchase the property and belongings at a fraction of their true value.

> **"No one understands what our hardship and suffering means unless one is among the evacuees. Uprooted from their businesses, jobs, lands, they have to be dispossessed of whatever they have toiled hard to gain for the past half century." [6]**

To combat this, the Civil Control Stations were staffed by representatives of a number of federal agencies to offer advice and assistance to the evacuees on how to avoid forced sales and otherwise "cope with the multitude of problems involved in suddenly cutting off the normal business, social and economic relationships of the evacuees." For example, the U.S. Employment Service offered registration and provided welfare service; the U.S. Health Service gave examinations and inoculations; the Federal Reserve helped with the sale, lease, or management of property; and the Farm Security Administration arranged for new operators to work evacuated farms to limit the loss of crop production. **National Reclamation Association Bulletin (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151189)**[4]
To further ease the transition, Portland area Japanese Americans were allowed to store personal property in the Oregon Transfer Company Building. [5]

The evacuees could take only a small amount of personal belongings to the assembly center. Within a dizzying few days, Japanese Americans lost not only their property but also their civil rights and freedom. One Japanese American observer noted: "No one understands what our hardship and suffering means unless one is among the evacuees. Uprooted from their businesses, jobs, lands, they have to be dispossessed of whatever they have toiled hard to gain for the past half century."[6]

Related Document

Public Proclamation No. 1 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151230), Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, March 2, 1942. Folder 23, Box 32, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Notes

Letter from Kenneth Lambie to Governor Sprague, April 11, 1942. Folder 16, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA; Letter from Governor Sprague's Office to Kenneth Lambie, April 15, 1942. Folder 16, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Letter from Andrew Kuroda to Friends, May 6, 1942. Page 1, Folder 16, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

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Japanese Americans Move to the Portland Assembly Center

A Way Station on a Longer Journey

Most Japanese Americans went to assembly centers without protest, hoping their compliance would prove their loyalty. Still, they harbored worries about what would become of them. Salem area minister Andrew Kuroda gave voice to the apprehension in a letter to friends in early May, before leaving for the Portland Assembly Center:

May 6, 1942

Dear Friends:

...I cannot tell you in any definite ways about how we might live in the Assembly Center, much less in a resettlement place later. However, we shall be among those 4,000 Oregonians to be housed in the Portland camp, a converted International Livestock Exhibition Pavilion. With little jobs available there, most people will be forced to be idle. With so many people living in a congested place, what parents worry most about is the welfare of their young people, how to keep them away from detrimental influences, how to lead them in creative, constructive living.



The Expo Center in Portland stopped showing livestock and served as a Civilian Assembly Center from May to September, 1942. (Image courtesy Wikimedia)

...Sayonara - since it must be so....
Andrew Kuroda [1]

Transition to the Assembly Center

Once the evacuees navigated the local Civil Control Station and received instructions on when to report to the assembly center, the frenetic transition began. - for some more than others. Newton Uyesugi, President of the Japanese American Citizens League, arrived at the center late, but with good cause. The "stress and strain of packing" caused his wife to go into labor three weeks early. As Uyesugi recounted: "the baby came before we had a chance to go to the hospital. On top of that, Dr. Shiomi was already at

the assembly center; therefore, we had no doctor, and when we got her to the hospital, an interne [sic] finished the job." Because of the "harrowing experience," officials granted him a temporary extension allowing for his late arrival at the assembly center. [2]

"The evacuation of these people was quite pathetic at least in a number of cases. Many of the older folks wept and I think most of the younger ones were quite satisfied that they would never be permitted to return. I know that I myself was very sorry for at least one or two of the evacuees because I feel that they probably were spiritually American."

While the individual circumstances of evacuation varied, the Hood River County District Attorney, Tuenis Wyers, captured one scene: "The evacuation of these people was quite pathetic at least in a number of cases. Many of the older folks wept and I think most of the younger ones were quite satisfied that they would never be permitted to return. I know that I myself was very sorry for at least one or two of the evacuees because I feel that they probably were spiritually American."

Wyers went on to indict the Caucasian population of the area: "The practically unanimous reaction of the townsfolk and the farmers of this valley, however, has surprised me. There is an almost vicious and almost universal attitude that they must never return -- that their coming here was wrong and that the valley is far better off without them. One hears this even from those who had close personal friends among the evacuees." **Letter from Teunis J. Wyers to Gov. Sprague (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151164)** [3]

Assembly Center Overview

Officials described an assembly center as "merely a way-station" to the war-duration relocation area. It was a temporary collecting place where evacuees were provided with food, shelter, medical care and protection while more permanent relocation camps were selected and constructed. [4] The Army operated 15 centers on the West Coast from late March to late October 1942. The Portland Assembly Center operated from May 6 to September 10 and reached a peak population of 3,676 on June 6. [5]



Evacuees wait for a bus to an assembly center. (National Archives, image no. ARC 536195)

The center was converted for use from its previous role as a livestock center on the county fairgrounds. Thin sheets of plywood were set up to divide the existing building into housing "apartments" for four, six, eight, or ten individuals. Since the alterations were designed to be temporary, many of the plywood walls only extended part way to the ceiling, further limiting privacy. A typical unit may have 200 square-feet of space with a single, bare light bulb. While mattresses were provided at the Portland center, other locations only provided a mattress ticking that had to be filled with hay or straw. [6] Owing to the previous use of the building, evacuees tolerated the strong smell of livestock dung.

Life in the Center

Generally, Japanese Americans entered the assembly centers resigned to their fate but determined to make the best of it. For example, Newton Uyesugi looked on the bright side upon arriving at the "very large" Portland Assembly Center: "The mere physical exertion of walking around this center makes one very tired; but I presume it is very good for an individual to exercise once in a while." [7]

Internal Organization

Uyesugi jumped right to work inside the center. He helped out on the administrative board, which was only temporary. A general election would wait until more people arrived and became more organized. This advisory group included Uyesugi, a Methodist preacher, a Buddhist reverend, and a past president of the Japanese American Citizens League. They met daily with the center administrator, E. Sandquist, whom Uyesugi described as "a very fair, tolerant, and just person," to coordinate the functions of the center. [8]



Evacuees move to the Portland Assembly Center. (Image courtesy Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center)

Within the confines of living in a converted livestock center, people tried to make life comfortable. Scraps of lumber and other materials were converted into tables, chairs, shelves, stools and other furniture. Radios, hotplates, and other electrical items added to the comfort but also sometimes caused the inadequate electrical system to blow a circuit, leaving people in the dark. [9] Temperatures varied widely as Uyesugi lamented in concern for the small children and older people: "It is rather cold in the mornings since there is no heat in the rooms, but on days when the sun shines, the afternoons become very hot." [10]

Police and Fire Services

The evacuees formed their own police and fire departments with the Portland Assembly Center. Military police patrolled outside the center to prevent unauthorized entry or departure. Inside, eight unarmed civilian officers provided security with the evacuee police department assisting. As Uyesugi noted: "...the military passes up and down outside the barbed-wire fence, but inside we govern ourselves. The military will not step in unless there is a riot." A curfew ran from "lights out" at 10:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. but its observation was variable.

Fire was seen as a big hazard and the evacuees who were part of the fire department took shifts to provide protection around the clock. Uyesugi pointed out the danger: "Yesterday, we had our first fire drill and everyone was out of the building within three minutes. Still, when one considers the fact that this place has burned down three times, and the last time it burned, the building was in ashes in twenty-eight minutes, you can imagine that three minutes is [a] very good time, but it does not give us a great deal of leeway." [11]

Meals and Diets

Meals at the Portland Assembly Center were prepared by evacuees under administration direction. Waitresses served food family style in two large dining halls. Despite their size, the dining halls could not accommodate all the people at once, thereby necessitating two dining shifts. About 150 people worked in the mess halls and kitchens where dishwashing was done by hand. Families with small children ate in a special section. In the early days, the Army supplied "B-rations" consisting of canned goods, smoked meats, beans, rice, flour and sugar. Later arrangements provided for the purchase of food from stores near the center. The Portland center benefited from the services of the two best Japanese cooks in the area. [12] But, cooks had to cope with varied dietary needs of thousands of people: "...we have diabetics, people with stomach ulcers, and others who cannot eat regular food," noted Newton Uyesugi. The center experienced problems early on because one- to six-year-old babies were being fed the same diet as the adults. The resulting illnesses caused the military doctor to consider changes to the diet. [13]



Women work in the laundry room at the Portland Assembly Center. (National Archives image)

Medical Services

Medical services were provided at the hospital-medical complex located to the east of the main recreation building. The complex had a 25-bed ward for men and one for women in addition to a 10-bed isolation ward. An officer with the U.S. Public Health Service oversaw medical services with the assistance of two evacuee doctors and four nurses. The facility functioned as an infirmary with serious operations referred to local medical centers. The first communicable disease reported was whooping cough. That caused worry and sleepless nights for evacuees such as Saku Tomita of Portland. She wrote in her diary: "Last night, I did not get a bit of sleep because the Kurihara children next door were coughing alternately all night with whooping cough. I can imagine the trouble and anxiety this must cause their parents Mr. and Mrs. Kurihara, and I truly sympathize with them." Overall, the center saw four deaths and 23 births during its operation. [14]

Art and Recreation

Recreation helped the evacuees relieve the boredom and oppression of involuntary confinement. In fact the first night that the center was occupied "people rigged up a phonograph and loud speaker system to provide music for a dance." Talent shows, art exhibits, pageants, concerts, films and other activities filled the time as well. [15] Evacuees set up recreational facilities including basketball courts, volleyball courts, and baseball diamonds. Other pursuits included chess, darts, badminton and checkers. The evacuees also set up a canteen where items were sold at cost and they could order items through the Sears catalog. [16]



A woman shows off her makeshift assembly center closet. Evacuees proved remarkably resourceful in creating a more livable environment. (**Image courtesy the Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley (https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/ft5z09p01t/)**)

A True Way Station

Over the course of its operation, the Portland Assembly Center saw a constant stream of people arriving and departing. As new areas of the exclusion zone were cleared and Japanese Americans were ordered to appear at the center, sometimes large numbers were added to the population. For instance, June 4 saw the arrival by train of 524 new evacuees from the Wapato, Washington area. The next day a group of 530 arrived by train with 99 more people coming in by bus. Likewise, large groups departed for relocation camps or for work in agricultural labor. On May 26 Transfer Order No. 1 moved 250 people to the Tule Lake Relocation Center in California just south of Klamath Falls. While the length of the stay varied from one person to the next, the center lived up to its description as "merely a way station" for most evacuees before they embarked on the next chapter of their forced journey. [17]

Making the Best of It

While at the camp, Newton Uyesugi summed up what might have been the attitude of many of the Japanese Americans in the Portland Assembly Center:

> On the Whole, everyone is taking the situation very nicely. We are doing our utmost to keep up the morale of the people. I must say there is not one of us who would rather not be outside of these walls since this is so abnormal. Having a great number of people

> cooped up together in one place is not exactly to anyone's liking; but the general attitude is that since we must stay here, we will make the best of it. Everyone agrees that since he has been put into the center, he has received every consideration and fair treatment.[18]

Notes

Letter from Andrew Kuroda to Friends, May 6, 1942. Page 4, Folder 16, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Letter from Newton Uyesugi to Governor Sprague, May 19, 1942. Page 1, Folder 1, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

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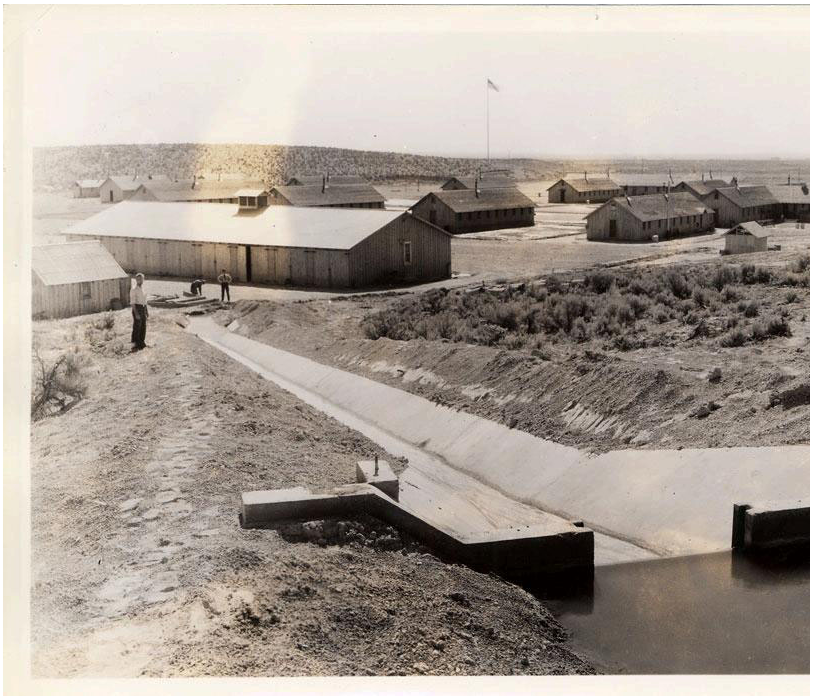
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Letter from Newton Uyesugi to Governor Sprague, May 19, 1942. Page 3, Folder 1, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Not Exactly Paradise: Japanese American Internment Camps

Banished to the Desert

Events moved rapidly in the early months of 1942. The Japanese military scored dramatic victories in Asia and the western Pacific Ocean in their attempt to create a Greater East Asia. Reports of atrocities followed. Fearing an attack on the West Coast, the American public, still reeling from Pearl Harbor, increasingly demanded the internment of people of Japanese descent in the United States. Military officials took action even before President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 in late February paving the way for the removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast. The first step was deciding where to put them.



Federal officials asked the Oregon governor for information about potential relocation center sites in the state such as Civilian Conservation Corps Camp BR 43 in Malheur County shown here in 1940. (**Photo No. OPW0003, Oregon Public Welfare Commission Records, OSA (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/213/rec/3)**)

The Search for Oregon Relocation Facilities

Army Major General Jay Benedict wrote a restricted letter to Governor Sprague on February 5 asking for information about available housing facilities, "in case they should be needed for the use of evacuated enemy aliens and their families." Benedict expressed interest in a variety of state and local facilities such as "prison farms, State parks, migratory farm camps, fairgrounds, pauper farms, and similar installations...." He asked for data to include information such as the location, structure type, housing capacity, water supply, sanitary facilities, and feeding facilities. Betraying the inevitability of the internment process, Benedict stated: "It is probable that domestic Japanese evacuees, including women and children, may be involved at some future time." Sprague immediately put State Parks Superintendent Sam Boardman on the job of compiling reports and blueprints of Oregon facilities such as abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps, county fair buildings, and state park complexes.

Oregon facilities report (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151200) [1]

The War Relocation Authority Continues the Search

Once it became publicly clear that Japanese Americans living along the West Coast would be interned, federal government plans moved quickly. On March 18 President Roosevelt signed an executive order creating the War Relocation Authority (WRA). The new agency was directed to cooperate with the War Department to relocate and provide work opportunities to evacuated Japanese Americans. The order also directed the War Department and the Justice Department to provide necessary and related protective, police and investigational services.



Milton Eisenhower, brother of future President Dwight D. Eisenhower, served as the first director of the War Relocation Authority in 1942. (Photo courtesy Kansas State University)

The WRA immediately quickened the pace of the search for relocation areas, which it defined as the entire area under its jurisdiction surrounding a relocation center. These were designated as military areas and protected by military police. Officials had several criteria for selecting the new relocation areas. During the process they employed "many experts who know the West's resources thoroughly..." as they "combed the country from the border of Military Area No. 1 to the Mississippi River."

They looked for good soil, dependable water supply, a good growing climate, and adequate transportation facilities.

Foremost among the criteria, WRA officials sought areas that would provide work opportunities. These were classified to include public works, such as flood control, irrigation development, and soil conservation; agricultural production, such as cultivating and harvesting crops; and manufacturing, such as the production of clothing, ceramic, or wood items. Officials also considered several other factors in locating the camps. They looked for good soil, dependable water supply, a good growing climate and transportation facilities. New areas had to be on public land and needed to support at least 5,000 people to satisfy efficiencies of scale for schools, hospitals and other planned services. [2] Some areas were located on Native American reservations but Native Americans were neither consulted or compensated in the process.

Camp Locations are Selected

In the end, officials elected to locate all 10 of the new relocation centers outside of Oregon, although the Tule Lake facility was close to Klamath Falls on the other side of the California border. In spite of government claims of searching for places with "climates suitable for people," most camps were situated in barren, desolate locations notable for wild temperature swings from day to night and from winter to summer. Apart from two camps in Arkansas, the facilities were located in Arizona, California, Colorado, Utah, Idaho and Wyoming.

Japanese Americans from Oregon mostly went to one of three relocation centers. The center in Minidoka, Idaho opened in August 1942 and included internees from Portland and northwest Oregon. The 17,000 acre area saw a peak population of 9,397. The Tule Lake Relocation Area in northern California comprised about 30,000 acres of land when it opened in late May. Most internees from southwest Oregon were sent to Tule Lake. Japanese Americans from Hood River traveled by train to Tule Lake after bypassing the Portland Assembly Center for Pinedale, California. It housed a peak population of 18,789 and saw frequent protests and strikes. Some Japanese Americans from Oregon were

transferred to the Heart Mountain facility in Wyoming. This camp opened in August 1942 and reached a peak of 10,767 internees.

Camp Layout and Construction

Each relocation center contained 30 to 40 residential blocks separated by open land to reduce fire risk. Officials designed the camps to be self-contained communities. Housing up to 18,000 people, a relocation center was often the largest community in an otherwise sparsely populated region. Circled with barbed wire and guard towers, the centers included schools, post offices, hospitals and warehouses. Buildings in a typical barracks block included a communal mess hall, recreation building, latrines, and laundry. The surrounding relocation areas usually included farm land, however marginal, that internees worked to produce much of the food used by the camp.



Tarpaper shacks set amid harsh environmental conditions were common in most camps. **Image courtesy of the National Archives (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/536917)**.

While variations existed, the typical barrack contained from four to six one-room apartments ranging in size from 15 by 20 feet to 24 by 20 feet. Each apartment was designed to house one family or a group of individuals, with eight people living in the largest unit. Partitions divided the rooms but did not extend to the ceiling, leading complaints about privacy. One internee at Manzanar, California recalled: "They used cheap pine wood. The knots would fall off so we could see in the neighbor's room, and we could hear the shocking sound of voices, complaining, arguing bitterly. ...and I couldn't shut it out." [3]



The harsh climate of some relocation centers may have brought Alaska to mind. (Image: *Daily Tulean*

In May officials tried to put the best face on the construction of housing and other buildings at the camps. One description called the initial housing "basic": "That is, the structures are soundly constructed and provide minimum essentials for decent living. As evacuees move in, they will have an opportunity to improve their quarters by their own work." [4] But feeling pressure from the WRA, civilian construction contractors built the centers very quickly during the spring and summer of 1942. Camp designs were

> **"tar paper-covered barracks of simple frame construction without plumbing or cooking facilities of any kind."**

Dispatch, Oct. 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.)

based on military barracks, making them ill suited for family living. Along with the speed came shoddy construction and other deficiencies. A 1943 WRA report described "tar paper-covered barracks of simple frame construction without plumbing or cooking facilities of any kind." While the spartan buildings may have satisfied international laws, they left much to be desired.

A Harsh Environment

The less than ideal design and construction quality of the housing was magnified by the desert location of the camps. The heat was blistering in the summer and generally came with dust. One internee recalled: "Inside of our houses, in the laundry, in the latrines, in the mess halls, dust and more dust, dust everywhere." Winters could be equally difficult. At Heart Mountain in northern Wyoming, internees endured temperatures of 30 degrees below zero in the winter. Residents resorted to banking the earth against their barracks to block the icy winds.[5] The situation was made worse by the hasty evacuation process to the assembly center. Evacuees leaving the milder coastal climate had not been told of their destinations, and as a result, many failed to pack clothing for the bitter desert winters.

Notes

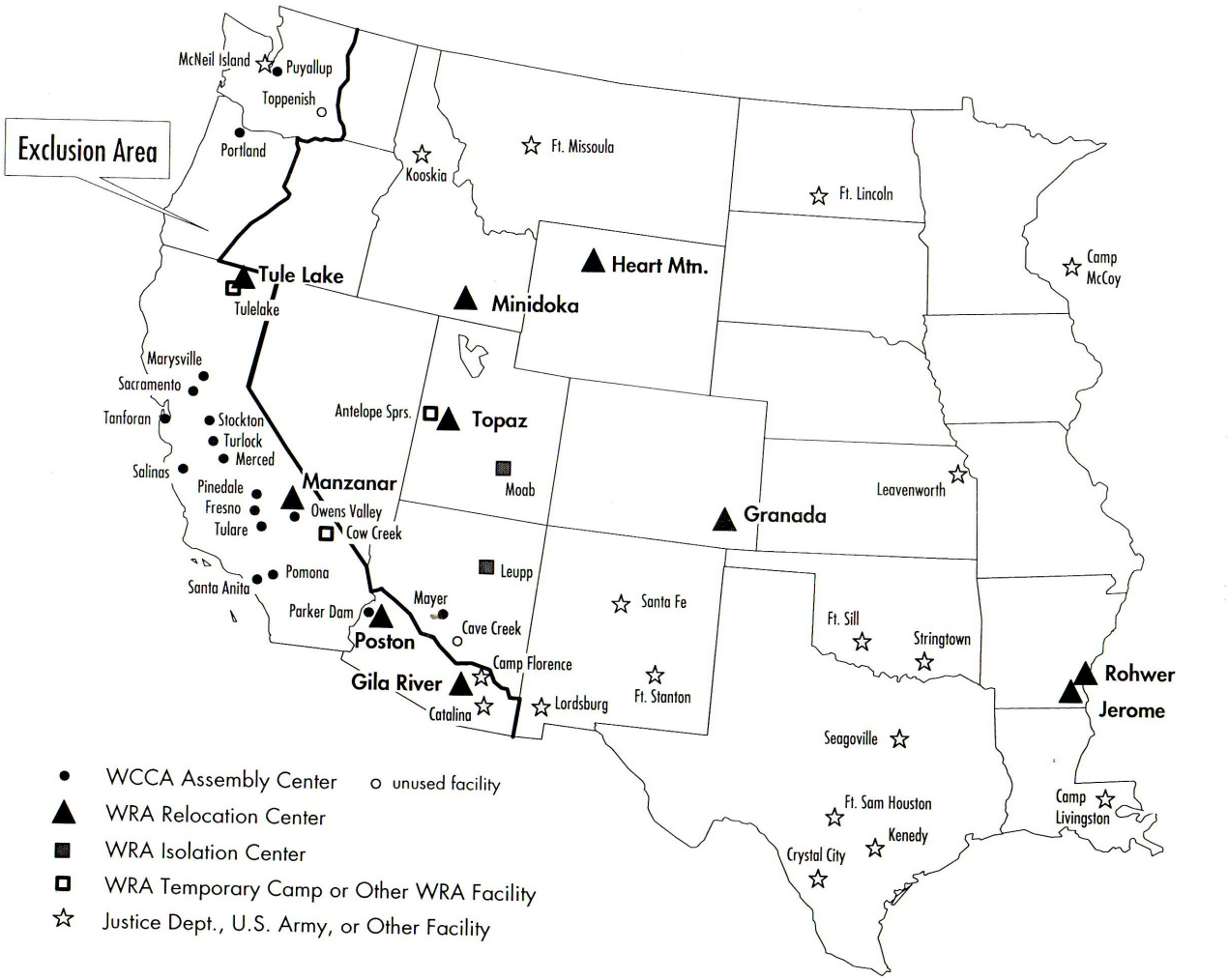
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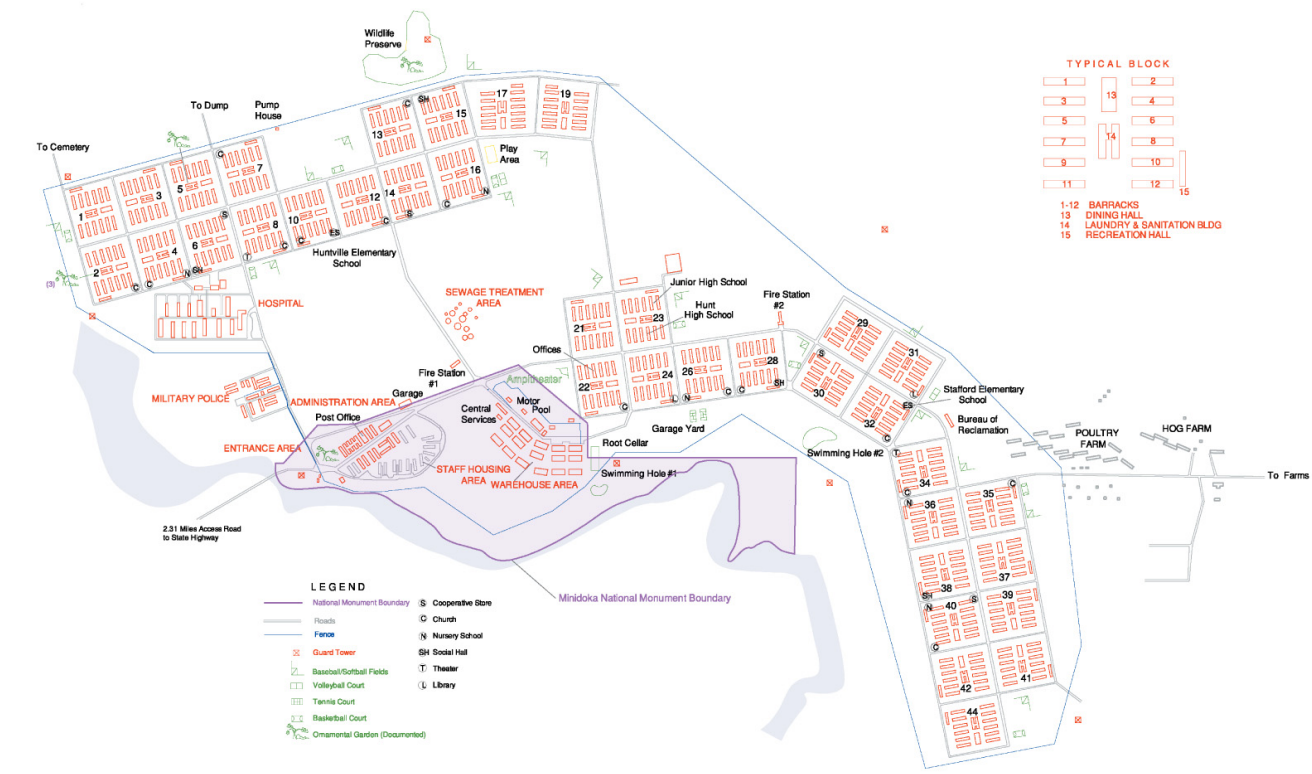
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Ronald H. Bailey, *The Home Front: U.S.A.* (Time-Life Books, Inc., 1977), Page 35.



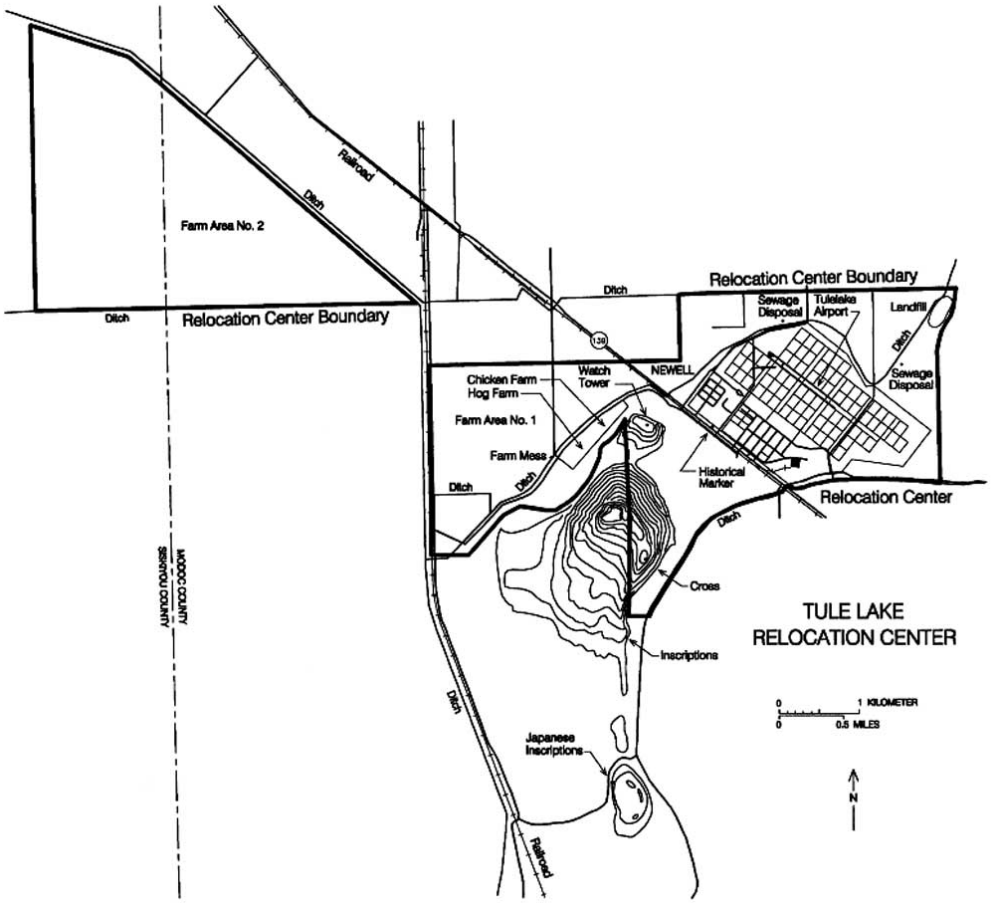
Map of camps - courtesy bookmice.net



1945 Historical Map

Graphics developed by Jones & Jones

Minidoka camp map - courtesy National Park Service



Tule Lake camp map - courtesy National Park Service

Behind the Fence: Life in the Internment Camp

Shikata Ga Nai ... It Cannot be Helped

During the summer of 1942, most evacuees from the Portland Assembly Center were transferred to newly constructed relocation centers at Minidoka, Idaho, Tule Lake, California or Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Upon arrival their evacuation from the exclusion area was complete. They were now internees. About two-thirds were Nisei American citizens, most under 21 years of age. The rest were Issei Japanese aliens prohibited by law from becoming citizens. These internees tended to be much older, averaging well over 50 years of age.



Workers sort the baggage of Japanese Americans after arrival at the Minidoka Relocation Center in Idaho. (**National Archives image (https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/eden-idaho-baggage)**)

Improving the Surroundings

Soon after arriving, the residents set about improving their surroundings. The government furnished only standard Army cots, blankets and a small heating stove for each apartment. Inside the apartment, internees improvised by making shelves and furniture from whatever scraps could be found. Curtains, pictures and posters were hung to add to the livability. One internee remembered how her brother salvaged wood from the camp's scrap lumber pile to build a dresser attached to the wall studs: "Now each member of the family had one drawer for clothes." Then her brother built two standing wood frames for their mother to cover with cloth to serve as room dividers. These improved life because "we had a semblance of privacy now for dressing and sleeping."[1]

Outside the barracks they planted, to the extent that the climate permitted, trees, hedges and flower beds to soften the stark environment. One resident described his experience at Manzanar, California: "Oh, it's really so hot, you see, and the wind blows. There is no shade at all. It's miserable, really. But one year after, it's quite a change. A year after they built the camp and put water there, the green grows up. And mentally everyone is better."[2] As part of the beautification, Manzanar boasted a "lovely landscaped Japanese garden" near one of its mess halls.[3]

Camp Organization



Workers distribute scrap lumber at the Tule Lake Relocation Center. Much of the wood was used by internees to make furniture.

(**Image courtesy Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley (https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/ft6w1006wz/)**)

"Aside from the absurdity of living that way, life went on pretty much as usual," according to one internee.

The Japanese Americans worked to set up a generally stable small-town existence with fire and police departments, newspapers and baseball teams.[4]Of course, all of this was within the limits of the WRA framework. Internees were encouraged to assume responsibility for many phases of community management, but it was always clear who was in charge. Caucasian WRA employees headed by a project director set the basic policies of each camp. From there, camps differed in their organization. Internees in some centers drew up charters and formed governments similar to ordinary cities of the same size. Other camps used more informal methods such as conferences held by a small group of key residents with the project director when important decisions were needed.

Apathy in community affairs could be a problem, particularly with the younger Nisei internees. One leader at the Tule Lake Relocation Center took his fellow internees to task at a "citizens' rally." Shaking his finger at the disappointingly small crowd attending the rally, Walter Tsukamote railed: "Look at this! We are not here to talk about our daily bread, but to discuss the vital questions affecting the very life of the nisei world. And only this many of you are interested!" He continued: "I sometimes wonder if the nisei themselves really do care to have their rights protected."[5]

Camp Population

As an overview, three internees at Tule Lake wrote a letter to Governor Sprague in October 1942 outlining the general demographic and occupational numbers associated with the camp's residents:

> Dear Governor Sprague:
>
> ...Therefore on this day, October 18, 1942, there are remaining in this camp exactly 14,472 persons. Of this number, women and children under 18 years of age comprise 9,412. The remaining 5,060 are males over the age of 18, but of this number 1,060 are over the age of 60. ...Under any circumstances, when nearly 15,000 people are brought together to live in a new community established in a period of less than three months, there will be among them many whose labor is essential to the daily operations of the new community. These include 800 project farm work; 500 construction; 400 maintenance men which includes janitor and garbage disposers; 800 warehousing and other transportation; 350 cooks and cooks' helpers; and 410 wardens, firemen, and other Civic workers; and at least 100 hospital employees, a total of 3,360."

Sincerely yours,
Ichiro Hasegawa, Richard Hikawa, Ken Sekiguchi[6]

Employment in the Centers

Thousands of internees were employed in and around a camp to keep it largely self-sufficient. Typical employees worked 44 hours a week and were paid from $12 to $19 per month. Each internee also received a small monthly allowance to purchase clothing. In October 1942 the Tule Lake Relocation Center employed about 800 workers on the 2,500 acre WRA farm project. At the time, it supplied produce for the Tule Lake camp as well as five other relocation centers totaling about 70,000 people. The 500 construction workers at Tule Lake were completing the barracks and trying to "make them more tenable for the coming winter which is more severe than the climate to which the greater majority of us have been accustomed." They were also working on an addition to the hospital as well as construction of a 20,000 hen poultry farm and a 5,000 head hog farm. Future plans included building schools since "at present the 3,971 students are crowded into makeshift buildings without adequate desk and chair facilities."



The caption of this camp newspaper drawing reads: "Smiling and obliging waitresses serve 250 diners in each mess hall." (Image: *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, Oct. 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.)

Other workers toiled in various services. The 400 maintenance men worked at duties such as: garbage disposal for the city of 15,000; janitors for the approximately 400 public buildings including mess halls, laundries, and washrooms; and a fuel detail that supplied the 7,500 boilers and stoves with coal. Meanwhile, 800 warehouse and transportation workers staffed the more than 50 warehouses that accommodated the center and the project farm, which shipped an average of seven train cars of produce daily. The 350 cooks and helpers provided three meals a day to the camp, meaning that each cook, on average, prepared meals for 45 people. The Community Welfare and Internal Security Division employed 410 firemen, fire wardens, police wardens, and other civic leaders, while more that 100 workers served as doctors, interns, orderlies, dentists, pharmacists and ambulance drivers to the Tule Lake camp. [7]

The 350 cooks and helpers provided three meals a day to the camp, meaning that each cook, on average, prepared meals for 45 people.

Food and Dining

In addition to the produce and other food raised by the camp, the government provided meals, usually at a cost of about 45 cents per person per day. Contrary to rumors, the internees were subject to the same food

rationing restrictions as other Americans. The sheer size of the task of feeding 15,000 residents was daunting. By one accounting, a typical amount of food stuffs provided to residents each day included 8,160 pounds of beef, 9,600 pounds of rice, 120 cases of eggs, 3,000 loaves of bread, 2,400 gallons of milk, and 500 pounds of sugar. [8] The meals were usually served cafeteria style in mess halls designed to seat about 250 to 300 people. A random menu might contain the following:

Tule Lake Relocation Center Mess Hall Menu

MONDAY:
Breakfast: stewed dried fruit, farina with hot milk, french toast with syrup, cocoa, milk.
Lunch: baked macaroni and cheese, steamed rice, tsukemono (pickled vegetables), boiled fresh vegetables, lettuce salad, orange, bread, tea.
Dinner: fresh fried fish, stewed corn, steamed rice, pickled fresh beets, butterscotch dessert.

TUESDAY:
Breakfast: half grapefruit, rolled oats with milk, hot cakes with syrup, cocoa, coffee, and milk.
Lunch: boiled beef-spanish style, steamed rice, tsukemono, lettuce salad, apple tea.
Dinner: beef sukiyaki (a sort of Japanese chop suey), steamed rice, tsukemono, potato salad, spice cake, tea.

WEDNESDAY:
Breakfast: stewed dried fruit, dry cereal with milk, french toast with syrup, coffee, tea, and milk.
Lunch: Boston baked beans, boiled fresh vegetables, steamed rice, tsukemono, lettuce salad, orange, bread, tea.
Dinner: fried fresh fish, steamed rice, tsukemono, cole slaw, fruit jello, tea. [9]

The choice of food on the menu was a source of constant complaint by the internees. The American born Nisei were accustomed to a more standard American diet while most Issei preferred native Japanese dishes. The menus were an attempt to compromise between the two positions. Internees were permitted to buy additional food at the cooperative stores in the camps, although they could not purchase anything that required ration points.

Medical Care

Free medical and dental care were provided to the internees in the camps by hospitals staffed largely by Japanese Americans. Infants and nursing mothers received special medical services. Residents requesting special medical treatments or procedures that were not available at the centers were required to pay for the services. Camp officials were concerned with preventing the outbreak of epidemics and therefore, considering the crowded living conditions, instituted special sanitary precautions.

Education

The WRA provided education through the high school level for all school-age residents. Most relocation centers built high schools and used converted barracks for grade school classrooms. Often entire blocks of barracks were used for classrooms. At first school supplies and equipment were in short supply. Later, internees and people from churches and relief agencies built or donated desks, bookshelves, books, maps and other items. [10] Courses of study were planned and teachers were selected in collaboration with state departments of education following prevailing state standards.



Schools were staffed by both Caucasian and internee teachers. (Image: *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, Oct. 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.)



High school students graduate at the Tule Lake camp in 1944. (**National Archives image (https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/tule-lake-segregation-center-newell-california-guy-ceek-assistant-high-school-principal-of)**)

Teachers came from both Caucasian and Japanese American ranks. One internee remembered that "of my teachers, roughly half were Caucasian and the other half were 'Buddhaheads' as the young fellows referred to Japanese Americans. I vividly remember two of my Caucasian teachers, dedicated and effective, although many students were hostile and uncooperative in the classroom, probably taking out their resentment on them. Who were these individuals who gave up the freedom and comforts of the 'outside' and chose to pursue their profession in the dreary camps? They must have been compassionate and selfless persons." [11]

College students could apply for indefinite leaves to attend higher education institutions located outside of the exclusion zone. According to the camp newspaper, the *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, students were one of several classes of individuals that could leave the camp. Still, the wait for approval could be long "because this type of leave includes both citizens and aliens, [and] the applicants must be cleared by the FBI and through the Record Office of the WRA."

Indefinite leave opportunities also applied to internees who needed 30 days to attend to matters that required their presence elsewhere, and for employment.[12] Student departures became a regular camp occurrence that commonly was noted in the newspaper. This was the case in October 1942 at the Minidoka, Idaho camp where "a student release certificate was received...Monday for Kiyo Fujii, who left this week for the St. Louis College of Pharmacy at St. Louis, Mo. The total member [number] of students relocated is now 45."[13]



Guard towers and fences were part of camp security. (Image: *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, Oct. 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.)

Camp Security

Police services were divided at the relocation centers. Outside the center, military police guarded the boundaries and stood by to quell serious disturbances. Inside the center, a small civilian police force, headed by a Caucasian with prior police experience and several captains, maintained order. This force was also staffed by internee sergeants and patrol police who served as the bulk of the cops on the beat. Misdemeanor offenses were usually handled by the project director or a judicial commission made up of residents. Major criminal cases were referred to outside courts.

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Gary Y. Okihiro and Joan Myers, *Whispering Silences: Japanese Americans and World War II* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1996), Page 197.

Excerpts of the California Senate Journal Re: "Report of the Committee on Un-American Activities Having Special Reference to Japanese Problems in California," April 16, 1945, Page 6, Folder 4, Box 2, Gov. Snell Records, OSA.

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"Walter Tsukamoto: Scores Nisei Apathy for Political Affairs," *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, October 6, 1942, Page 1, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

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"Fujii Leaves for Pharmacy School in Mo.," *The Minidoka Irrigator*, Oct. 21, 1942, Page 3, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.



Image: Daily Tulean Dispatch, Oct. 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA

The caption of this camp newspaper drawing reads: "Cooks from the swank metropolitan hotels and downtown restaurants are all characterized by their individual artistic temperaments." (Image: *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, October 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.)



The caption of this camp newspaper drawing reads: "Everyone helps themselves from common serving plates in family style." (Image: *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, October 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.)

Idealism and Resentment: Two Sides of Internment Camp Life

What Is and What Should Be

Two worlds existed simultaneously in some relocation camps. For one, there was the idealized world of American life with many of the attendant hopes and dreams, albeit behind barbed wire. In the minds of many internees, this included a hard day's work in the mess hall or on the farm project combined with a schedule of social and leisure activities, thus forming a tolerable confinement facsimile of "outside" life. Obviously, some people were better at compartmentalizing the frustration of internment and making the best of the situation, In this world, residents were loyal and patriotic, in spite of what their country had done to them. Many began their days by pledging allegiance to the American flag. But for others, a second and darker world of anger and resentment developed toward a government that deemed them guilty until proven innocent -- against a nation that rejected them.



Films, plays and music were popular in the camps. (Image: *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, Oct. 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA)

Recreation and Leisure



Young Japanese Americans liked spending time at the canteen as this camp drawing shows. (Image: *Daily Tulean Dispatch*, Oct. 1, 1942, Folder 2, Box 5, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA)

Internees tapped into a range of recreational outlets to break the routine of camp life and maintain positive social connections with their neighbors. As in the "outside" world, sports proved extremely popular, and baseball was king. Often, residents from the same city would form a team and join a league. So it was that the Tacoma Busseis "swamped Auburn A.C. by an 11-2 count" to win the Tule Lake League baseball playoffs. The Tacoma squad had earlier defeated teams from Hood River, Oregon and Marysville, California. [1]

Softball, volleyball, football and ping pong were just a few of the sports played. Clubs and classes added to the mix. For example, the *Daily Tulean Dispatch* announced that barbell club members were urged to attend an "important meeting." Meanwhile, fencing classes were offered four nights a week. [2]

Camp residents showed great ingenuity devising entertainment options. The Tule Lake Symphony performed, as did Woody Ichihashi's dance band, the Downbeats, which played popular tunes of the day

from the likes of Glenn Miller and Woody Herman. Ichihashi's busy orchestra served double duty as part of the Cafe International Cabaret that made the rounds to the wards in the Tule Lake camp. The cabaret also featured "gaily attired Tri-State girls. [And] the program is packed full of music and dances...." Numerous other events such as Halloween masquerade balls, pageants, art shows, films, recitals and plays rounded out the social and performance schedules for many residents. [3]



The Norakuro Band, led by Roy Matsunaga of Portland, was a popular fixture at Minidoka Relocation Center dances. (**National Archives, image no. ARC 539490 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/539490)**)

Leisure time was also spent around the community canteens of the center. These canteens joined stores, barber shops, flower shops, gardens and other venues to provide valuable services and gathering spots for internees. Canteens, in particular, were magnets for younger residents as the *Daily Tulean Dispatch* noted:

> **"With tens of luscious, adorable lovelies behind the counter, the community canteens are the center of all activities. Here, dates are approved or reproved, card games and private parties planned, and much idle chatter held to pass the time away, with the latest recordings from the juke box adding to the tumult."**

The newspaper also noted a "surprising amount of ice creams, pops, pastries, and candies are sold daily." [4]

Cynicism and Resentment Rise to the Surface

Despite leisure activities and other diversions, cracks soon appeared in the idealized camp life facade. Some were minor, such as the "unthinking boys" who removed the plumbing fixtures from washrooms at the Minidoka camp. [5] But larger strains were evident as well. Governor Sprague dispatched Hugh Ball to Tule Lake in October 1942 to assess the camp. Ball, who was a newspaper editor from Hood River and knew many of the internees, wrote a long report in which he described a rift: "The older folks accepted their situation with Shikata ga nai ('It can't be helped') - but they do deplore the breakdown of morale among their children in the camp, and it is evident that parental control, in many instances, has fallen to a low ebb." Later, during a conversation with younger men, Ball "discovered what is wrong" at the camp and why many refused to pursue crop work opportunities outside the camp:

Governor Charles A. Sprague
October 19, 1942

Dear Governor:

...For almost complete lack of objective, steady work, many of these young Japanese-

> Americans are rapidly degenerating into cynics, whose ideas are based upon what I believe is the utter hopelessness of their future. Some of these I have known for years, and in former days all white Americans who knew them rated them as fine, loyal American citizens. Today, a number of them with whom I talked, scoffed when I suggested to them that it would be entirely in their own interests if they would regard their internment as "water under the bridge" and take this opportunity to live up to the oath they took and publicized just prior to their evacuation.
>
> Here are but a few of the comments to my suggestion that they cooperate in large numbers to go out and harvest the beet crop: "Why should I work for people who hate me because I am an American born of Japanese parents?" "We are not good enough to be accepted as American citizens, so why should we help Americans?" "They have refused us even a chance to prove our loyalty to our country and have branded us as traitors - well, if that is the way they want to think about us, let it be that way."
>
> Hugh Ball [6]

Ball wished he could report that these were only "smart alecs" showing off to their fellow internees, but he was forced to conclude otherwise. He noted that these "formerly active young men, largely raised in conformance with American ideals" were now inmates with plenty of time to mourn their fate "and to listen to a relatively small group, members of which are, by propaganda, keeping the old wound open and smarting at all times, and doing their worst to convert these young men into potentially dangerous enemies." [7]

The Lid Comes Off



Patriotic ceremonies with boy scouts and American Legion members, such as these at the Manzanar Relocation Center in California, were in stark contrast to the demonstrations and riots served up by some internees.

(**National Archives, image no. ARC 538506 (https://catalog.archives.archives.gov/id/538506)**)

Frustration continued to build with strikes and protests until rioting eventually erupted at Tule Lake in the spring of 1943. This was preceded by a serious disturbance at Manzanar in December 1942 between the supporters and opponents of the WRA administration in which two people died and at least ten were wounded by military police gunfire. A few months later, an "epidemic of rioting...broke out at the Tulelake Center and continued for nearly six weeks," apparently triggered by an inquiry into the allegiance of internees on a questionnaire. [8]

A newspaper report captured the scene: "Before the end of the trouble bands of hoodlums roamed up and down the camp's streets, breaking into homes and attacking the occupants. The Japanese *** who were in cooperation with the administration were nearly killed, and two Christian Priests were

badly beaten. A Jap flag mysteriously appeared and, as mysteriously disappeared. The army moved in, followed by the FBI. There were mass arrests, and one hundred men were thrown into near-by jails and deserted C.C.C. Camps. When the prisoners were carried off they were surrounded by howling Japanese who yelled, 'Banzai!'" One official declared: "You can't imagine how close we came to machine-gunning the whole bunch of them..." [9]

Loyalty Questions

The events at Tule Lake and Manzanar involved a relatively small percentage of the population in the camps and they represented extreme examples of resentment in the Japanese American community. Still, while most abhorred the violence, many identified with the frustration. Some internees found less open ways to express their pro-Japan sentiments. For example, Manzanar internee workers scratched inscriptions into the wet concrete of the settling pond they were building that read: "Beat Great Britain and the USA" and "Banzai, the Great Japanese Empire..." [10]

A government questionnaire revealed frustration and confusion about the issue of loyalty. One question asked if internees wanted to renounce their U.S. citizenship and 5,589 said yes. Most of the renunciations were determined in subsequent hearings to be invalid because of what many considered to be the coercive conditions in which they were obtained. Moreover, the question of renouncing their Japanese citizenship as a show of loyalty to the United States caused problems for many first generation Japanese immigrants. Some respondents had difficulty answering because of their limited English language skills. Others knew that if they renounced their Japanese citizenship, they would become stateless persons since U.S. law denied them citizenship. In the end, many of the 1,327 who were expatriated to Japan were not accepted by the Japanese government. [11]



Japanese American men register for the draft at a Selective Service headquarters in the Tule Lake camp in 1942. (Image j11DD-38A courtesy Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley)

Military Service

Not surprisingly, given their treatment by the government, most young male internees expressed little interest in serving in the military. A questionnaire at the Tule Lake camp asked how many of the 6,000 to 7,000 men who were qualified would volunteer for military service and only two responded favorably. [12] Overall in camps, only 6% of military-aged men who responded to a questionnaire said they would volunteer for military service. Yet most of those who refused said that they would be willing to serve if their rights were restored. They complained about a government that would take away their freedom and rights as citizens while asking them to fight for the freedom and rights of others. [13]

In spite of widespread misgivings about their treatment, many young Japanese American men signed up when the Army announced in 1943 that it would accept volunteers for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an all-Nisei combat unit created to serve in Europe. About 3,000 volunteered and passed loyalty interrogations before acceptance on the team. The unit went on to be one of the most highly decorated in American history. Among other courageous actions, the 442nd gained fame for saving the 141st or "Lost



Members of the highly decorated Nisei 442nd Regiment stand at attention during service in Italy. The 442nd was an all-volunteer unit. (Image courtesy latinamericanstudies.org)

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Battalion" from the German forces. In 35 minutes the 442nd rescued 300 soldiers from Texas who had been surrounded for a week. The bloody fight left the 442nd with 60% casualties but earned them honorary Texas citizenship bestowed by grateful Texans. [14]

Overall, about 8,000 Japanese American men, many draftees, served in the military during the war. A sizable number served as Japanese language interpreters with the Allies in the South Pacific, particularly in the latter stages of the war. There they translated captured enemy documents, helped to interrogate Japanese prisoners or war, and eavesdropped behind enemy lines. Japanese American women also volunteered from the camps to serve in the Women's Army Corps and the Red Cross. [15]

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> Americans are rapidly degenerating into cynics, whose ideas are based upon what I believe is the utter hopelessness of their future. Some of these I have known for years, and in former days all white Americans who knew them rated them as fine, loyal American citizens. Today, a number of them with whom I talked, scoffed when I suggested to them that it would be entirely in their own interests if they would regard their internment as "water under the bridge" and take this opportunity to live up to the oath they took and publicized just prior to their evacuation.
>
> Here are but a few of the comments to my suggestion that they cooperate in large numbers to go out and harvest the beet crop: "Why should I work for people who hate me because I am an American born of Japanese parents?" "We are not good enough to be accepted as American citizens, so why should we help Americans?" "They have refused us even a chance to prove our loyalty to our country and have branded us as traitors - well, if that is the way they want to think about us, let it be that way."
>
> Hugh Ball [6]

Ball wished he could report that these were only "smart alecs" showing off to their fellow internees, but he was forced to conclude otherwise. He noted that these "formerly active young men, largely raised in conformance with American ideals" were now inmates with plenty of time to mourn their fate "and to listen to a relatively small group, members of which are, by propaganda, keeping the old wound open and smarting at all times, and doing their worst to convert these young men into potentially dangerous enemies." [7]

The Lid Comes Off



Patriotic ceremonies with boy scouts and American Legion members, such as these at the Manzanar Relocation Center in California, were in stark contrast to the demonstrations and riots served up by some internees.

(**National Archives, image no. ARC 538506 (https://catalog.archives.archives.gov/id/538506)**)

Frustration continued to build with strikes and protests until rioting eventually erupted at Tule Lake in the spring of 1943. This was preceded by a serious disturbance at Manzanar in December 1942 between the supporters and opponents of the WRA administration in which two people died and at least ten were wounded by military police gunfire. A few months later, an "epidemic of rioting...broke out at the Tulelake Center and continued for nearly six weeks," apparently triggered by an inquiry into the allegiance of internees on a questionnaire. [8]

A newspaper report captured the scene: "Before the end of the trouble bands of hoodlums roamed up and down the camp's streets, breaking into homes and attacking the occupants. The Japanese *** who were in cooperation with the administration were nearly killed, and two Christian Priests were

badly beaten. A Jap flag mysteriously appeared and, as mysteriously disappeared. The army moved in, followed by the FBI. There were mass arrests, and one hundred men were thrown into near-by jails and deserted C.C.C. Camps. When the prisoners were carried off they were surrounded by howling Japanese who yelled, 'Banzai!'" One official declared: "You can't imagine how close we came to machine-gunning the whole bunch of them..." [9]

Loyalty Questions

The events at Tule Lake and Manzanar involved a relatively small percentage of the population in the camps and they represented extreme examples of resentment in the Japanese American community. Still, while most abhorred the violence, many identified with the frustration. Some internees found less open ways to express their pro-Japan sentiments. For example, Manzanar internee workers scratched inscriptions into the wet concrete of the settling pond they were building that read: "Beat Great Britain and the USA" and "Banzai, the Great Japanese Empire..." [10]

A government questionnaire revealed frustration and confusion about the issue of loyalty. One question asked if internees wanted to renounce their U.S. citizenship and 5,589 said yes. Most of the renunciations were determined in subsequent hearings to be invalid because of what many considered to be the coercive conditions in which they were obtained. Moreover, the question of renouncing their Japanese citizenship as a show of loyalty to the United States caused problems for many first generation Japanese immigrants. Some respondents had difficulty answering because of their limited English language skills. Others knew that if they renounced their Japanese citizenship, they would become stateless persons since U.S. law denied them citizenship. In the end, many of the 1,327 who were expatriated to Japan were not accepted by the Japanese government. [11]



Japanese American men register for the draft at a Selective Service headquarters in the Tule Lake camp in 1942. (Image j11DD-38A courtesy Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley)

Military Service

Not surprisingly, given their treatment by the government, most young male internees expressed little interest in serving in the military. A questionnaire at the Tule Lake camp asked how many of the 6,000 to 7,000 men who were qualified would volunteer for military service and only two responded favorably. [12] Overall in camps, only 6% of military-aged men who responded to a questionnaire said they would volunteer for military service. Yet most of those who refused said that they would be willing to serve if their rights were restored. They complained about a government that would take away their freedom and rights as citizens while asking them to fight for the freedom and rights of others. [13]

In spite of widespread misgivings about their treatment, many young Japanese American men signed up when the Army announced in 1943 that it would accept volunteers for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an all-Nisei combat unit created to serve in Europe. About 3,000 volunteered and passed loyalty interrogations before acceptance on the team. The unit went on to be one of the most highly decorated in American history. Among other courageous actions, the 442nd gained fame for saving the 141st or "Lost



Members of the highly decorated Nisei 442nd Regiment stand at attention during service in Italy. The 442nd was an all-volunteer unit. (Image courtesy latinamericanstudies.org)

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an all-Nisei combat unit created to serve in Europe, went on to be one of the most highly decorated in American history.

Battalion" from the German forces. In 35 minutes the 442nd rescued 300 soldiers from Texas who had been surrounded for a week. The bloody fight left the 442nd with 60% casualties but earned them honorary Texas citizenship bestowed by grateful Texans. [14]

Overall, about 8,000 Japanese American men, many draftees, served in the military during the war. A sizable number served as Japanese language interpreters with the Allies in the South Pacific, particularly in the latter stages of the war. There they translated captured enemy documents, helped to interrogate Japanese prisoners or war, and eavesdropped behind enemy lines. Japanese American women also volunteered from the camps to serve in the Women's Army Corps and the Red Cross. [15]

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Into the Sugar Beet Fields: Japanese American Laborers

Serving Two Needs

The festering resentment and rioting that occurred at Tule Lake and Manzanar served to underscore the ongoing critical importance of employing as many Japanese American internees as possible. At the same time, eastern Oregon farmers desperately needed help tending and harvesting the sugar beet crop. Matching the two needs would prove to be more challenging than imagined.

Acute Labor Shortages

Pearl Harbor accelerated an earlier trend that saw millions of young men moving from America's farms and into military service and defense production jobs. This left agricultural producers scrambling for help in the fields, especially during harvest time. Officials made efforts to fill the gaps, such as postponing the beginning of school so that local students could assist in the harvest; importing Mexican "braceros" laborers; and encouraging urban dwellers to help with the harvest. One effort sought to bring thousands of Japanese American internees to the sugar beet fields of eastern Oregon.



Governor Sprague helped broker a deal that brought a sizable number of farm laborers of Japanese descent to the fields of Malheur County. (**Image courtesy Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsac.1a35013/)**)

Well before precise plans developed and Oregon's 4,000 Japanese Americans were ordered to the assembly center, state officials were making a pitch to the War Relocation Authority to put them to work on public works projects or in the farm fields of eastern Oregon. Governor Sprague's secretary, George Aiken, presented the plan to the head of the WRA and governors and representatives of ten western states at an early April 1942 conference in Salt Lake City. The "Oregon Plan" called for moving internees to abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps in Malheur, Harney and Crook Counties. There, the Japanese Americans would provide year-round work on public land and transportation projects and supplement farm labor needs in the beet and vegetable fields of Malheur County. The plan called for the laborers to be under federal supervision and paid prevailing wages. Moreover, the workers would be under guard at all times and would be "returned to the community from which they came at the close of the war." During the meetings, Oregon was the only state to present a "definite and concrete program for evacuation." While conference attendees responded favorably to the plan, ultimately the WRA rejected it and Oregon officials moved forward with a less ambitious farm labor proposal. [1]

Sugar Beet Harvest Seen as Critical



Japanese American laborers work in the sugar beet fields near Nyssa in 1942. Sugar was a highly valued commodity during the war. (**Library of Congress, image no. fsa 8c25290 (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8c25290/)**)

National needs drove the sugar beet problem in Malheur County. With the ramp up to war, the federal government felt pressure to increase sugar production, both for use in explosives (using industrial alcohol processed from sugar) and for beverage alcohol. Seeing an opportunity, eastern Oregon's major producer, Amalgamated Sugar Company, talked Malheur County farmers into converting other crops to sugar beets. With the conversion beginning in March 1942, the only thing missing was a labor force to thin and harvest the crop. Soon farmers were sending desperate pleas to the president and the governor in a frantic effort to move Japanese American laborers to the fields.

Soon farmers were sending desperate pleas to the president and the governor in a frantic effort to move Japanese American laborers to the fields.

Before the pleas could be answered, federal authorities demanded that state and local governments give several assurances: that prevailing wages would be paid; that imported labor would not compete with available local labor; that the employer would provide housing and transportation; and that the labor be entirely voluntary. But most importantly, the state and county were to guard the workers, largely from any locals who may have been harboring anti-Japanese sentiments. Essentially, federal officials wanted guarantees that going along with this would not create headaches for them. [2] Malheur County officials were anxious to move forward: "The farmers in this area have approached us repeatedly in the past few weeks to try to get Japs in here because other labor was not available. Many of the farmers are faced with the problem of plowing their beets under if labor can not be had within the next few days." They further assured that "we are confident that our local constituted authority can maintain law and order in case the Japanese are brought in here from Portland." [3] Finally, federal officials agreed to the plan:

Governor Charles A. Sprague
May 14, 1942

Dear Governor:

At the direction of the President, I gave your message to Mr. Eisenhower [WRA director]. He tells me that, in the understanding that you have guaranteed to maintain law and order in any portion of Oregon to which evacuees might go, the War Relocation Authority today authorized their organization in California to permit the U.S. Employment Service voluntarily to recruit among the evacuees, the companies to pay transportation and prevailing wages.

Grace G. Tully

Acting Secretary to the President [4]

The recruitment of workers disappointed the governor and farmers. Japanese Americans, fresh from abandoning their lives to move to the Portland Assembly Center, were skeptical of the hard sell technique of recruiters. And they were downright alarmed at the rhetoric that had come from some of the Caucasian zealots in Malheur County. A representative of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) conveyed these concerns to Governor Sprague: "I believe it is too much to expect evacuees to jump at the opportunity of working in the sugar beet fields, when you consider that the very area from which the request comes now, only a few weeks ago made the statement to your office that they would take vigilante action if the Japanese were allowed to go into Malheur County. Reassurance is not sufficient, there must be absolute guarantee of the provisions of the agreement with the employers. I have the utmost confidence in the people of Oregon on this subject matter." **JACL Letter from Hito Okada (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151155)** [5]

New Routines Set

Eventually, the spring crisis was averted by the actions of 43 young Nisei who went to Malheur County to thin the sugar beet crop. They agreed to telephone and wire other evacuees and encourage them to help. The effort worked and by June 11 farmers reached the target of 400 workers. While some of the crop had been plowed under, the majority was saved, prompting the president of the Amalgamated Sugar Company to offer his "sincere appreciation" to Governor Sprague: "There was, of course, some loss of sugar beet acreage as a result of the labor shortage. However, that acreage represents only a fraction of what might have been lost had we not enjoyed such splendid cooperation from your office. The successful employment of Japanese as farm workers in Malheur County has not only benefited Oregon but has served to demonstrate to areas in other states a solution to a very serious problem." [6]



Japanese Americans at the Farm Security Administration camp at Nyssa share a meal. Many families were reluctant to leave internment camps to work in the sugar beet fields, partially based on concerns about anti-Japanese sentiments in the area.

(**Library of Congress, image no. fsa 8c25222**

(https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8c25222/))

During the summer local farmers put the new labor force to work on other jobs. Most of the 400 Japanese Americans who came to help with beet thinning stayed through the summer. During the height of the summer, work decreased in the sugar beet fields and the laborers went "into other lines of agricultural work such as haying, threshing grain, potatos [sic], celery, onions, tractor driving, irrigation, and most any other kind of agricultural work." Six workers were busy removing moss from irrigation ditches maintained by the Warm Springs Irrigation District. Moreover, the worker program had attracted the interest of farmers in adjoining counties of Idaho and some of the laborers were crossing the Snake River to work. [7]



Japanese American farm workers prepare to leave the Farm Security Administration camp near Nyssa for work in the fields. Local farmers sent trucks to the camp to pick them up. (**Library of Congress, image no.fsa 8a31229 (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8a31229/)**)

Regulations governed the Japanese American workers, about 235 of whom lived at the former Nyssa Civilian Conservation Corps camp with approximately 150 more workers living on individual farms scattered throughout the expansive county. Most of the rules were designed to minimize conflict with local detractors, especially drunk ones. Therefore, the Japanese American workers were subject to curfew from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. five nights a week, of which Saturday had to be one. Two nights a week, the workers could be out until 11 p.m. Any worker out after curfew needed to have a special permit. Further regulations limited visitors at the camp and prohibited pleasure driving by Japanese American workers who owned cars. **Curfew Regulation Meeting Notes** [8] **(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151103)**

Local Impressions of Workers Vary

Longtime county residents and observers offered various impressions of their new neighbors. R.G. Larson, who ran the district office in Nyssa for the Amalgamated Sugar Company, reported in August that "thus far there has not been a single unpleasant incident arise in connection with the Japanese program. They are good spenders and behave themselves when in town; consequently, the merchants are satisfied. They are good field workers which satisfies the farmers." **Letter from R.G. Larson (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151165)** [9]

"Some of them would come and work for a day or two and then fail to show up the following morning."

By November, Joe Dyer, manager of the United States National Bank branch in Ontario, reported that "Charles Garrison told me a few days ago that his entire beet crop has been delivered and that he had very little or no trouble with any of his help." O.F. Wilkins of Oregon Slope also "stated that he had an exceptionally good group of Japanese beet toppers...." But other residents weren't shy about registering negative experiences. Bill De Grofft of Nyssa claimed that he couldn't get a "worthwhile" Japanese crew: "Some of them would come and work for a day or two and then fail to show up the following morning." De Grofft added that "they were very slow and apparently did not care whether they worked or not." [10]

Social and Cultural Friction

Social and cultural differences also led to friction as Joe Dyer observed in a letter:

George K. Aiken, Executive Secretary to the Governor
November 6, 1942

Dear George:

...One of the other things which irks so many people in this area with the Japanese is that they come to town in large groups and when they go into various stores to make purchases, they practically take the place over, which is offensive to the white people. I have seen instances in Taylor's Coffee Shop after a picture shop [sic-motion picture show] in the evening where the fountain and every booth was filled with young Japs. Harry Salisbury at the Moore Hotel had a little trouble with them congregating in the lobby and found it necessary to instruct them to move on.



Young Japanese American workers spend time at the fountain of a Nyssa drug store. (**Library of Congress, image no. fsa 8c25281 (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8c25281/)**)

Another thing which causes a considerable amount of comment is the fact that so many young able bodied Japanese boys are seen on our streets on the forenoon and afternoons of working days when their services are so badly needed in the fields. Upon making further investigation, I learned that quite a number of these Japs are not experienced farmers, having come in here from the Seattle District where they operated as merchants and shop owners. Consequently, when they are put in the fields to harvest our sugar beets, they are no better than the average white office worker.

Joe F. Dyer, Manager
United States National Bank, Ontario Branch [11]

By November 1942 only one serious "flare up" had occurred in Malheur County, this one centered in the tiny hamlet of Harper. According to the report:

> **"...one of the natives after imbibing too freely took it upon his [sic] self to get his Jap. Apparently the Jap was beat up considerably and the Harper boy was fined $25.00 for disturbing the peace, which I understand he readily paid." [12]**

Officials Aim to Move More From Camps to Work

Federal regulations promulgated in September 1942 sought to move more internees out of internment camps and into jobs. According to one report, "the War Relocation Authority is now working toward a steady depopulation of the [relocation] centers by urging all able bodied residents with good records of behavior to reenter private employment in agriculture or industry." By 1943 significant numbers of Japanese Americans were taking advantage of the indefinite leave program to move on to jobs and college classrooms located outside of the exclusion zone.

The War Relocation Authority set up four major requirements to be satisfied by applicants:

Officials conducted a careful check of the internee's behavior record at the relocation center. In questionable cases, FBI and other investigation information was requested. Any evidence of a security risk was grounds for denial.

Officials or citizens from the receiving community had to give "reasonable assurances" that local sentiments related to Japanese Americans were positive. If responses proved hostile, the internee would be advised to revise plans.

Internee applicants for leave needed to show a definite place to go and some means of support.

If approved, the internee would be required to inform the WRA of any job or address change. [13]



Japanese Americans farm workers congregate in front of the Nyssa Theater. (**Library of Congress, image no. fsa 8c25304 (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8c25304/)**)

The WRA sent field employees to set up shop in key cities throughout the interior of the country to help match internee leave applicants with employers offering jobs. Overall, thousands of internees found new temporary homes away from the internment camps. By 1945 most internees were permitted, and later compelled, to leave the camps.

Their forced evacuation ended but many faced an uncertain welcome as they returned to the communities.

Notes

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Letter from Colonel Karl Bendetsen to Douglas Scalley, May 5, 1942. Pages 1-2, Folder 16, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

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Bombs Fall on Oregon: Japanese Attacks on the State

Real Threats to Oregon

Racism and public pressure played key roles in the decision to remove people of Japanese descent from the West Coast. But officials weighed other factors as well. The threat of Japanese attack convinced leaders to designate a broad swath of territory along the Pacific Coast as a military theater of operations. Once that decision was made, it became easier to justify the removal of Japanese Americans, even loyal ones, in an effort to "simplify" the potentially dangerous military situation in the event that bombs fell. Officials could "not permit the risk of putting an unassimilated or partly assimilated people to an unpredictable test during an invasion by an army of their own race."[1] Despite fears, an invasion never materialized. But, attacks did occur, including the shelling of Fort Stevens, two aerial bomb runs near Brookings, and balloon bombs such as the one that killed 6 near Bly.



The administrative area of Fort Stevens, near Astoria in 1942.
(**National Archives, image no. ARC 299673 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/299673)**)

Japanese Submarine Shells Fort Stevens

Events in Japan played a part in triggering the shelling of Fort Stevens near Astoria in 1942. In April, sixteen U.S. Army B-25 bombers managed to attack the Japanese home islands after being launched from the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Hornet*. The "Doolittle Raid," named for its leader, Lieutenant Colonel James H. Doolittle, was the most audacious operation undertaken by the United States in the young Pacific War. Conceived as a diversion that would also boost American and Allied morale, the raid generated strategic benefits that far outweighed its goals. Though it resulted in no tactical advantage, the shock of the attack left the Japanese high command deeply embarrassed. **Watch a newsreel report about the Doolittle Raid (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yXzYxUC93A)**

Among their responses, Japanese military leaders adjusted their forces in the Pacific and dispatched a number of I-class long-range submarines across the Pacific to raid shipping off the American coast. The Japanese high command ordered submarines I-25 and I-26 to the Pacific Northwest to find and attack naval vessels headed to Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. On June 20, 1942, I-26 shelled the lighthouse at



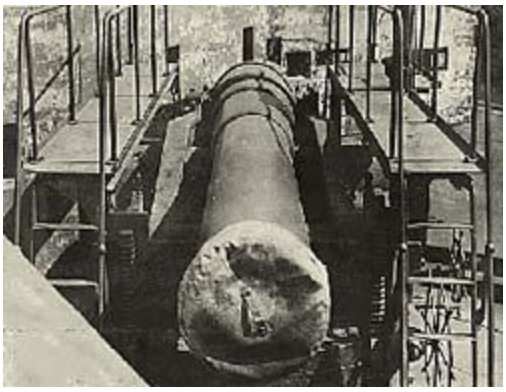
Long-range Japanese submarine I-25 shelled Fort Stevens in June 1942. Later that year it launched a seaplane that dropped bombs on the southern Oregon coast. (Image colorized)

Estevan Point on Vancouver Island and I-25 torpedoed and shelled the freighter S.S. Fort Camosun off Cape Flattery. The freighter did not sink and rescuers towed it to safety in Neah Bay.

The next evening I-25 came in close to the coast through a fishing fleet to avoid minefields off the Columbia River and took position near Fort Stevens. The crew fired its 5.5 inch deck gun at the shore. Japanese Commander Meiji Tagami, who thought he was firing at a submarine base, later recalled: "In shooting at the land I did not use any gunsight at all--just shot." Meanwhile, at the fort the shots rang out as First Sergeant Lawrence Rude saw nothing but confusion: "I opened the door of my room and stood there in my drawers cussing at the guys to shut up. Some nut yells back that the Japs are shooting at us and then tore out of the barracks. It was a real madhouse."[2]

Casualties amounted to one soldier who cut his head rushing to his battle station.

Despite the confusion, soldiers at the fort soon manned their guns and searchlights, and lookouts could see the submarine firing in the distance. But the enemy ship was inaccurately determined to be out of range, and the artillerymen never received permission to return fire. The fort's commander later claimed he didn't want to give away the precise location of the defenses to the enemy.



The 10-inch guns of Battery Russell at Fort Stevens near the baseball diamond damaged by a shell fired from a Japanese submarine. (**National Archives, image no. ARC 299687 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/299687)**)

The I-25's shells left craters in the beach and marshland around Battery Russell at the fort, damaging only the backstop of the baseball diamond about 70 to 80 yards from the facility's big guns. A shell fragment also nicked a power line, causing it to fail later. Casualties amounted to one soldier who cut his head rushing to his battle station. By about midnight the attack ended and the enemy vessel sailed off to the west and north. While the submarine fired 17 shells, witnesses on land only heard between 9 and 14 rounds. Experts surmised that some shells might have been duds or fallen into the sea. Despite causing no significant damage, the attack certainly raised awareness of the threat of future strikes and went into the history books as the only hostile shelling of a military base on the U.S. mainland during World War II and the first since the War of 1812.

Fallout from the attack in the Astoria area included demands from the local civilian population that clear warnings be given in the event of future shellings. As it was, civilian defense officials had no machinery to warn the population to take precautions. Moreover, the sounds of shell fire could be misleading as Clatsop County Defense Council Coordinator D.J. Lewis complained: "I personally heard every shell that was fired and recognized it for shellfire, but it certainly was not sufficiently alarming to cause me to get out of bed. What assurances have we that it wasn't practice at any of the Army or Navy



Soldiers examine a shell crater in a patch of skunk cabbage at Fort Stevens after an attack by a Japanese submarine. (**National Archives, image no. ARC 299678 (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/299678)**)

posts around here, inasmuch as this has been known to happen?"[3] In the end, military and civilian defense officials agreed to communicate more closely to warn citizens of an attack.

Japanese Plane Bombs Oregon Coast

Oregon made national headlines a few months later in two incidents that went down as the first aerial bombing of the United States mainland by a foreign power. Again the Japanese submarine I-25 was the source of the trouble. On Sept. 9, 1942 Japanese pilot Nobuo Fujita catapulted from the I-25 near the coast of southern Oregon aboard a seaplane and headed east toward Mt. Emily. His mission was to drop an incendiary (fire) bomb on the thick forest and cause a massive fire that would shock Americans and divert resources from fighting the war. Once over forested land, Fujita released the bomb, which struck leaving a crater about three feet in diameter and about one foot deep.

Forest service lookout Howard "Razz" Gardner watched the attack unfold. Looking into the dark skies just before dawn, Gardner heard what sounded to be a Model A Ford backfiring.

Meanwhile on the ground, forest service lookout Howard "Razz" Gardner watched the attack unfold. Looking into the dark skies just before dawn, Gardner heard what sounded to be a Model A Ford backfiring. Scanning the foggy skies, he caught glimpse of a small airplane circling above and called to the ranger station to report it. The operator who took the report assumed it was one of many patrol planes that passed up and down the coast.



Forest officials examine fragments from a bomb dropped by a Japanese airplane in September 1942. (Folder 5, Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Later as the fog lifted, Gardner spotted smoke and immediately sounded the alarm and called for help. He assumed the smoke was a result of lightning from a strong electrical storm the day before. After gathering equipment, he took off on a short cut through rugged terrain in the direction of the fire and was later joined by a coworker. They arrived at the scene where they found smoldering fires covering a circular area about 50 to 75 feet across. They

quickly controlled the fires, examined the area, and found a crater at the center that showed signs of intense heat, including fused earth and rocks that resembled lava.

According to a later report: "The bomb in falling had struck a fir tree about six inches in diameter, much as though lightning had struck it, and the fin of the bomb had sheared off a tan oak tree five inches in diameter as cleanly as though it had been done with a heavy and sharp axe. Fragments of the bomb had been scattered over a radius of about 100 feet, one of the blazing pieces lodging in a decayed stub, setting it afire." [4] After finding fragments of metal casings and thermite pellets, it was concluded that a bomb had caused the damage but it was assumed that it had been dropped accidentally by an American plane.

The next day searchers found the bomb nose cone and a casing fragment with Japanese markings, confirming the identity. They gathered up the fragments and pellets, totaling about 60 pounds, and hauled them out for delivery to the Army lieutenant in charge of the Gold Beach detachment. Soon Army and FBI officials were conducting intensive interviews and swearing participants to secrecy. Meanwhile, the small town of Brookings to the south was buzzing with rumors. Residents heard of the bombing but could only speculate on details. Despite their efforts at secrecy, officials watched helplessly as newspapers across the country ran stories that included more details than the government had hoped to release. A second, similar seaplane attack at the end of September yielded similar results. If the forest had been as dry as normal for that time of year, the Japanese plan might have worked, leaving forest fires that diverted hundreds of fire fighters and large amounts of money from the war effort while triggering panic in the population.

State Defense Council officials used the news to support their efforts to raise awareness about the possibility of enemy attack. State coordinator Jerrold Owen put it bluntly: "Morale among civilian defense workers was getting low because many of them believed 'it can't happen here.' Well, it did happen last Wednesday, so the workers can see now just what they are working for. We have been praying for just such an attack to shake people out of their lethargy." He went on to predict that "undoubtedly this small foray is but a forerunner of what may be expected in the future. Similar phosphorus bombs dropped on inflammable wooden buildings may be expected to cause extensive fires..." In response, Owen reminded readers that thousands of Oregonians had been training for a year to respond effectively to the threat posed by incendiary bombs. [5]



Mary Reeder of the forest service shows fragments from a bomb dropped by a Japanese airplane in September 1942. (Folder 5, Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA)

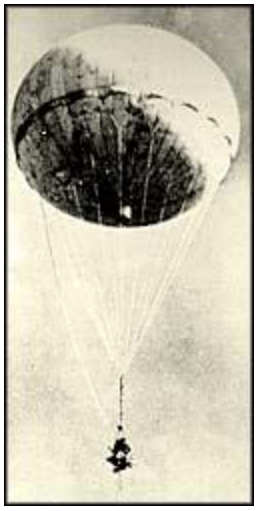
View related video trailer: Samurai in the Oregon Sky
(https://www.samuraiintheoregonsky.com/)

Balloons Carrying Bombs Drift Over Oregon

By November 1944, almost in a cruel and desperate afterthought to what seemed a lost cause, balloons launched from Japan and carrying explosive and incendiary bombs drifted east on the jet stream to the United States. Once again, the goal was to start forest fires and wreak devastation. On December 6 after a "mysterious explosion" in Wyoming, officials found balloon parts and bomb casing fragments from what had been a 33 pound high explosive bomb. During the next several months, Japan launched over 9,000 balloon bombs resulting in over 342 incidents registered throughout western United States and Canada. Oregon alone counted 45 balloon incidents. While they varied in size and design, many balloons

measured about 100 feet in circumference and about 33 feet in diameter. The ingenious design helped them drift along the newly discovered fast moving jet stream at an average elevation of 30,000 feet. [6]

The balloons quickly attracted the attention of military and civilian defense officials across the West. Jack Hayes, the acting administrator of the State Defense Council acknowledged the problem of apathy commonly on display in the later months of the war: "Here in the northwest we have never lost our fear that the enemy would attempt to utilize our forests and unfavorable periods of weather as a means of attacking us here at home. In spite of the developing feeling the war was largely over and that Civilian Defense could be relegated to an almost inactive status." [7] While tracking events related to balloon sightings, Hayes periodically summarized reports to Governor Earl Snell:



January 13, 1945
MEMORANDUM TO GOVERNOR SNELL:

During the course of the afternoon of Wednesday, January 10, a number of reports of Japanese balloons reached the military authorities. The first report involved the Alsea area and occurred shortly after noon. The second report came from residents in the area between Harrisburg and Coburg. The third report came from a State Police officer who apparently sighted the balloon in the vicinity of Cheshire. The fourth report came from the vicinity of Sutherlin. The fifth and most interesting and important, from the standpoint of the military authorities involved the pilot of a Grumman fighter from the Marine Base at Klamath Falls who reported to his base that he had sighted a balloon, was flying along side of the balloon, had taken pictures and intended to shoot it down.

This occurred at an altitude of 28,000 feet and when the attempt was made to shoot the balloon down the pilot found that his guns had frozen. By diving on the balloon from above, the pilot was able to bring the balloon down to an altitude of approximately 8,000 feet where he was joined by a non-combat ship from the same base. Many more pictures of the balloon were taken by this latter craft from all angles and the pilots reported that they had brought the balloon down, from an altitude of 6,000 feet by what they described as a "squeeze play".

The general area in which the balloon finally came to earth is described as in the area of Alturas, California. Search parties are in the area and it is expected that they will be able to recover the entire assembly. Previous incidents have not permitted complete recovery of all parts of the balloons because of the activation of the explosives which are part of the assembly and for this reason the Klamath Falls incident is looked forward to with great expectation by the military.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack A. Hayes, Acting Administrator [8]
(Image source: USAF Museum)



A monument marks the location of the bomb blast near Bly. (Image courtesy Sarah Lowrey)

The most tragic incident involving balloon bombs found a place in history as yielding the only deaths due to enemy action on mainland America during World War II. The events unfolded on May 5, 1945 as a pastor and his wife took five children for a picnic on a beautiful spring day east of Bly. As Reverend Archie Mitchell parked the car, he heard his pregnant wife, Elsye, call out: "Look what I found, dear." One of the children tried to remove the balloon from a tree and triggered the bomb. The force of the blast immediately filled the air with dust, pine needles, twigs, branches and dead logs. The mangled bodies of Elsye and the children were strewn around a crater three feet wide and one foot deep. Elsye lived briefly but most of the children died instantly.

Japanese radio propaganda trumpeted the balloon bombs as being incredibly effective and claimed they had killed thousands.

Other balloon bombs were found in Oregon after this sad event but none caused death or injury. Japanese radio propaganda trumpeted the balloon bombs as being incredibly effective and claimed they killed thousands. In truth, the balloons disrupted routines as officials chased after sightings and reports, but failed to cause the widespread fires or panic anticipated by the Japanese. [9] Most Americans didn't find out about the balloon bombs until after the war. The government censored the news to prevent the Japanese from finding out the effort was even partially successful.

View related video trailer: On Paper Wings (https://www.onpaperwingsthemovie.com/)

Related Documents

Reports and Newspaper Clippings Describing the Events In the Aftermath of the Aerial Bombing Near Brookings (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11318762), Sept. 14-29, 1942. Folder 5 , Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Confidential Memoranda Describing Actions Taken In Relation to Balloon Bombs (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151176), Jan. 8, 1945-March 28, 1945. Folder 14 , Box 12, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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"Establishment of Japanese Relocation Areas," *National Reclamation Association Bulletin*, May 20, 1942. Page 3, Folder 16, Box 4, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

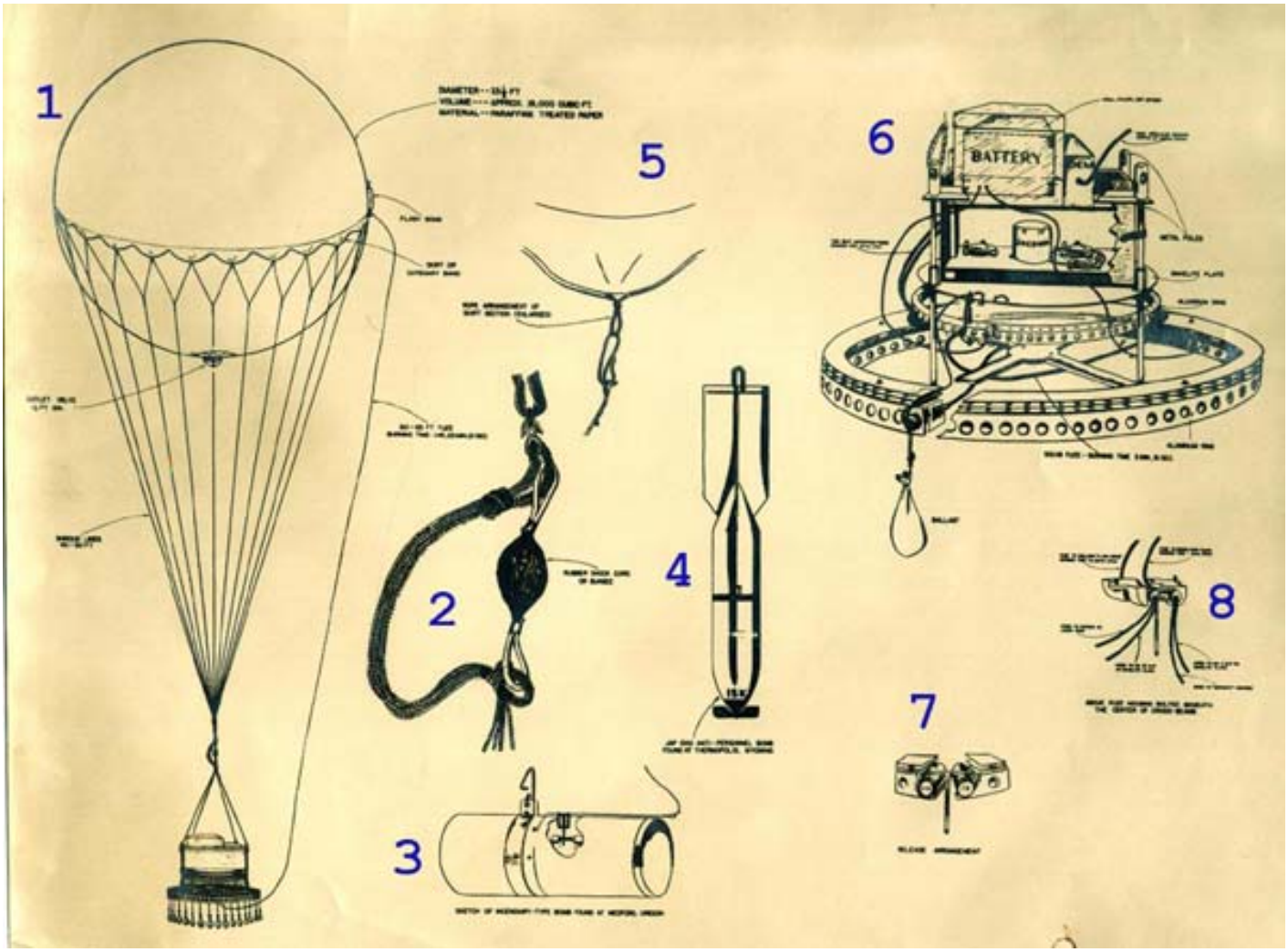
Bert Webber, *Retaliation: Japanese Attacks and Allied Countermeasures on the Pacific Coast in World War II* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1975), Page 55.

Letter from D.J. Lewis to James D. Olson, July 29, 1942. Folder 9, Box 16, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from James D. Olson to Jerrold Owen, Sept. 29, 1942. Folder 5, Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Oregon Civilian Defense Morale Boosted by Jap Bombing of Curry Forest, Coordinator Owen Asserts," Roseburg *News Review*, Sept. 15, 1942. Folder 5, Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Bert Webber, *Retaliation: Japanese Attacks and Allied Countermeasures on the Pacific Coast in World War II* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1975), Page 133.



A diagram of balloon bomb parts. See below for description of parts. (Image courtesy Canada's Digital Collections) Enlarge image

Diagram of balloon bomb parts:

1. The balloon: Diameter - 33 1/2 feet; volume - approx. 19,000 cubic feet; material - paraffin treated paper.
2. Rubber shock cord or bungee.
3. Sketch of incendiary-type bomb found at Medford, Oregon.
4. Japanese 15KG antipersonnel bomb found at Thermopolis, Wyoming.
5. Rope arrangement of skirt section (enlarged).
6. Battery unit of balloon. Includes: metal poles, bakelite plate, aluminum ring, squib fuse, and aneroid barometer.
7. Release arrangement.
8. Fuse housing bolted beneath the center of the cross-beams.

Map showing balloon recoveries or sighting in North America: https://i.natgeofe.com/n/0b46914b-4676-4b38-b830-2607ff5f8449/67790.jpg?w=636&h=324

Letter from Jack Hayes to Colonel Joe W. Leedom, Jan. 3, 1945. Folder 9, Box 10, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Memorandum from Jack Hayes to Governor Snell, Jan. 13, 1945. Folder 14, Box 12, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Bert Webber, *Retaliation: Japanese Attacks and Allied Countermeasures on the Pacific Coast in World War II* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1975), Pages 93-123.

Civilian Protection

American civilian and military leaders took countless steps to protect the nation's population during World War II, from blackouts to incident drills. This section looks at the ways the government and people of Oregon secured the homeland against attack.



The Aircraft Warning Service: Oregon's First Line of Defense

Defense Officials Insist: Air Raids Can Happen Here!

Blackouts Darken the Skies of Oregon

Dimouts Yield New Regulations and Enforcement

Evacuate the Area: Emergency Housing Surveys in Oregon

Beware the Bomb: Oregonians Discover New Ways to Die

Women Save the Day for Oregon's Medical Services

The National Guard is Off to War: Who Will Protect Us Now?

Shielding Oregon's Vital Assets: Forest and Plant Protection

Until We Get This Right: Incident Drills and Control Centers

So Much Work to Do: Other Civilian Protection Activities

The Aircraft Warning Service: Oregon's First Line of Defense

Keep Your Eyes Aloft!

Months before the attack on Pearl Harbor, Oregonians were training their gazes skyward in search of enemy aircraft. American officials had seen the effectiveness of the British Aircraft Warning Service during the waves of aerial bombing by the German Luftwaffe over Britain and wanted to emulate the program. Officials noted that without a civilian program, up to 100,000 soldiers would be needed to provide the same services on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The system saved millions of dollars and freed up hundreds of airplanes for use on the battlefronts.

The Observer's Prayer

Oh Lord, give us the ears to hear, the eyes to see, that Zero if he trys [sic] to hide among the clouds. And if he does come, give us the heart to forgive the poor misguided soul who holds the phone for insignificant gossip while we try in vain to get the warning through. Forgive the man whose time is all absorbed with pleasure, who can not find time to help us keep the watch, who sleeps complacently in the wee small hours of the morn while we must stand in the icy wind and rain on guard that he may sleep. Please find a way to give us just one more cup of coffee, just a little piece of meat or just another gallon of gas, but if there isn't enough to go around, then give it all to our fighting men and just pass us the beans. We, too, can take it.

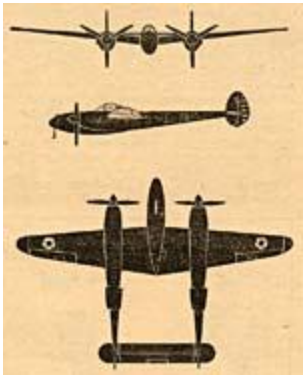
Howard R. Hunter [9]



(Image-modified: Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Program Overview and Process

Oregon's Aircraft Warning Service was up and running in July 1941 after federal military authorities made the request to state officials for assistance. The goal of the service was to track all aircraft within a predetermined area so military authorities would have advance notice of the presence of enemy aircraft before substantial damage could be inflicted.



Putting the work in terms that Oregonians could easily grasp, Oregon State Defense Council Director of Information Robert Smith referred to the daring "Doolittle Raid" bombing run that struck at the heart of Japan and embarrassed its military leaders: "...Oregon men and women are at their stations on hilltop and in forest, on beach and mountain, scanning the skies for the sight or sound of airplanes in flight. This is Oregon's first line of defense against enemy bombing and it is this organization that keeps the Japs from hitting Oregon as Doolittle's boys hit Tokyo." [1]

A three-view drawing of a Lockheed Lightning P-38 airplane to help observer identification. (Image source: [9])

Oregon officials worked with the Army's Fourth Fighter Command to establish the system on a county basis throughout western Oregon. While staffed by civilians, the work of the service was supervised by military officials who also provided training. At its peak in Oregon, the service comprised over 500 observation posts staffed by over 28,000 trained male and female volunteers. Observation posts were manned 24 hours a day and the average volunteer worked one 4 to 6 hour shift a week. Elsewhere, female volunteers with telephone headsets staffed "filter" and control centers where they received reports from the observation posts about aircraft sightings, complete with the approximate speed, direction of travel and the type of plane.



A cartoon encourages observers to scan the skies. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

This information was then represented as symbols on giant maps of Oregon at control centers in Portland, Eugene and Roseburg. Monitoring the map were "representatives of every flying service--the army, the navy, the transport and the civil aeronautics department." These officials compared the information on the map with what they expected to see based on mandatory flight plans. Anything out of the ordinary raised immediate flags: "If the stranger airplane can not be identified within a very short time, our own fighter planes are notified and guided toward the intruder." Further warnings could then be directed to civilian defense authorities to alert air raid wardens and protect key industries. [2]



A cartoon reminds volunteers to stay alert. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Forest Observation Posts

Forest workers also contributed to the program. Federal and state officials cooperated with the Army to operate lookout stations. In these often remote sites, two observers manned each post on alternate shifts of 12 hours each. These observers had to be of "unquestionable loyalty" and needed "vision equal to that demanded by forest [fire] lookouts...." Further stipulations said that "man and wife may be employed, provided the wife is used for lookout or interceptor duty only and is not required to perform manual labor. Two women will not be stationed on any one point." [3]

Communication was critical at remote forest posts. As a Forest Service missive reminded: "The best observers in the world will not function well unless they have satisfactory communication for filing their reports." Those with radios were required to have full training and maintain their sets "in as nearly perfect condition as possible at all times." Stations with telephone connections required observers to patrol "every foot of line at regular intervals in order to pick up trouble before it develops to a point where communication is seriously affected." These patrols were to extend at least two or three miles from the station. Lines farther from the post would be maintained by other workers. [4] Besides the 24-hour

coverage, the communication relied on clear, concise and quick descriptions to reduce misunderstandings and not clog up the lines.

Apathy, Morale and Discipline Problems



A cartoon encourages observers to scan the skies. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)



A poster reminds volunteers of the key responsibilities of their job. (Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Officials struggled to ward off apathy among volunteers. While fears of attack remained vivid in the months after Pearl Harbor, concerns diminished over time, especially when the tide began to turn against the Japanese navy in the Pacific. Thus, military officials distributed circulars and bulletins to observers reminding them of the stakes and acknowledging that "it is a hard task, staying on watch through long hours and days of waiting. But it is well to remember that IF THE OBSERVERS SHOULD FAIL, all the rest of the Civilian Defense effort would be jeopardized, because without the observers there might be no warning to send out to the wardens and firemen and police and all the others -- at least, not any warning that would reach them in time." Officials cautioned that "the first line of defense against a treacherous and clever enemy, is the band of loyal watchers of the Aircraft Warning Service. REMEMBER --The observers and plotters in Britain waited a whole year for the first attack, but they were ready when it finally came, and they didn't miss!" **Circular, June 1942 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151079)** [5]



Morale problems also challenged the system. Many observers spent long hours in cold, damp, dark and cramped observation posts. Some were broken down trailer houses, others were makeshift towers, and still others offered little or no shelter whatsoever. For a sizable number of observers, the long hours left the question: "Why are we doing this?" Some volunteers simply groused among themselves.

Others registered complaints with defense council or military staff who could summarize: "They go something like this: The Observation Posts and the Air Craft Warning Service are a lot of hooey! The Air Craft Warning System is falling down and doesn't

This newly built observation post was described as "the very attractive and efficient post in Silverton." (Image source: [9])

work! All of the Observation Posts are quitting all around you! Some of the Observation Posts are getting pay, but you are not! If the Army wants this thing set up why don't they put soldiers on the Observation Posts?" Officials took a hard line with the carping and with rumors about large numbers of people quitting: "A person who carries and exaggerates a rumor is helping the subversive activities, and if you have any such person in your midst this office will welcome hearing from you in regards to it." **Portland Region Bulletin explanation (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527735)** [6]



The Footes Creek post in Jackson County was little more than a shed. (Image source: [9])

Discipline lapses gave military officials headaches too. Many observation posts used telephones in private homes. While authorities appreciated that the private phones had been made available for observation posts, they lamented the problems caused by the excessive number of personal calls: "Gossiping on the Observation Post telephone, or 'listening in' on a party line seriously detracts from the efficiency of the Observer's efforts. Unnecessary calls must be restricted." Other discipline problems included the presence of too many visitors at the observation posts as a Portland Region bulletin noted:

> **"Several instances have recently been called to our attention where observers have been 'partying' while on duty. The noise and distraction prevent the efficient operation of the post, and all Chief Observers are expressly asked to instruct all observers that while on duty they should avoid any unnecessary disturbances that might prevent their hearing or seeing planes. It is very undesirable to have more than two people on a post at one time."** [7]

The End of the Civilian Service

Military officials put the civilian component of the Aircraft Warning Service on reserve status on Oct. 16, 1943, effectively demobilizing that portion of the program. Many observers saw this action as further contributing to growing public apathy about the war effort. State Defense Council officials, such as Acting Coordinator Jack Hayes, argued that the move eroded their efforts to keep issues of civilian defense foremost in the minds of Oregonians:

> June 10, 1944
>
> Dear Judge Felsheim:
>
> With regard to the elimination of the civilian personnel from continued duty with the Aircraft Warning Service, it is unfortunate that emphasis was not placed upon the fact that improved detection devices [such as radar] makes it no longer necessary that large numbers of people devote long hours of their time on lonely vigil. A more unified control was also made possible by converting the Aircraft Warning Service into a strictly military organization on a greatly reduced basis. Instead the emphasis seemed

to be placed upon the fact that the Aircraft Warning Service was no longer needed because there was no longer any risk of enemy attack.

Jack A. Hayes
Acting Administrator [8]

Related Documents

"Eyes and Ears of the Air Corps," Radio Transcript
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151113), Oregon on Guard Radio Program of the Oregon State Defense Council, circa June 1942. Page 1, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"**How Good an Observer Are You?**
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151130)" Quiz with Answers, Portland Filter Area Ground Observer Corps, circa June 1942. Page 1, Folder 9, Box 7, Forestry Dept. Records, OSA.

Observation Post Visibility Chart for Necanicum
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151192), Aircraft Warning Service, April 27, 1943. Folder 8, Box 7, Forestry Dept. Records, OSA.

Small Plane Identification Drawings, Headquarters Portland Air Defense Region Bulletin
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11318809), circa June 1942. Folder 9, Box 7, Forestry Dept. Records, OSA.

U.S. Forest Service Memorandum on the Aircraft Warning Service
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319034), March 1942. Folder 9, Box 7, Forestry Department Records, OSA.

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"Eyes and Ears of the Air Corps," Radio Transcript, Oregon on Guard Radio Program of the Oregon State Defense Council, circa June 1942. Page 1, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Ibid., Pages 1-2.

U.S. Forest Service Memorandum on the Aircraft Warning Service, March 1942. Page 3, Folder 9, Box 7, Forestry Department Records, OSA.

Ibid., Page 7.

Circular No. 1, Army Headquarters Second Interceptor Command, Seattle, circa June 1942. Folder 4, Box 26, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Portland Region Bulletin, Army Fourth Fighter Command, June 19, 1942. Folder 3, Box 26, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Portland Region Bulletin, Army Fourth Fighter Command, June 5, 1942. Folder 3, Box 26, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from Jack Hayes to Coos County Judge Louis Felsheim, June 10, 1944. Folder 14, Box 12, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Eyes Aloft" Newspaper, Western Flying Publisher, April 1943. Vol. 2, No. 1, Folder 9, Box 26, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Defense Officials Insist: Air Raids Can Happen Here!

Civilian Defense? "It's Your Job!"

"Ladies and gentlemen we are living in a new world. ...civilian defense is not the job of the army, the navy, or the police force. It's your job." So spoke Robert Smith of the Oregon State Defense Council in April 1942 on a KGW radio show entitled "Before the Bombers Come." Each week the 30 minute show hosted experts who covered civilian defense topics such as where to go and what to do in case of an air raid. There was plenty to learn.

Learning the Lesson



Defense council staff promoted the importance of air raid wardens to civilian defense plans. (Folder 15, Box 37, Defense Council Records, OSA)

As with the Aircraft Warning Service, military and civilian defense officials learned a great deal about how to organize and train for air raids from the British. German air raids over London in 1940 killed and injured thousands and left large areas of the city in ruins. Facing ongoing attacks, the British responded by teaching citizens how to cope with fires from incendiary bombs and how to take shelter. While the raids continued, loss of life was greatly limited. Oregon officials played sound clips of a London raid to try to impress the potential horror to radio listeners with the added comment: "These are the sounds of a hell that I hope we in the United States will never experience."

Yet, the capability of the Japanese to strike Oregon was real, according to experts: "Just because we haven't yet received a visit from the Japs doesn't assure us that it

Air Raid Warnings

Yellow message
Enemy 20 minutes (100 miles) away. Confidential message to government officials, factories, institutions, etc. This is the preliminary precaution sent to a district as soon as there is any possibility of a raid in the district. This is a confidential message intended for a limited number of recipients who take precautionary and unobtrusive measures to be ready to act immediately if needed.

Blue message
Enemy 12 minutes (60 miles) away. General public warning for a complete blackout. This is the actual warning sent when a possibility for an air raid becomes imminent. This warning message is sent to the public by way of siren or power whistle according to prearranged plans for a blackout.

Red message
Enemy 5 minutes (25 miles) away. All air raid precaution units are put into action.

can't or won't 'happen here.' The Japs have planes that can easily make the round trip to Portland with a full load of bombs, from their bases in the Aleutian Islands." And, the target was tempting: " We have important military objectives in Portland - our shipyards that are turning out ships that are supplying our forces in the fighting areas all over the Pacific theater."[1] Moreover, officials reminded citizens of the 1942 words of Japanese leader Hideki Tojo: "The Japanese airforce is now ready to attack the American mainland...the people of America won't think it is so amusing when we bomb their skyscrapers."[2]

White message
All clear. Enemy not sighted. This is the "all clear" message sent after raiders have either passed from a district or all danger of a further air raid is over for the time being. [11]

Air raid precautions sheet (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148352)[12]

Air Raid Instructions Issued



Officials feared that chaos during an air raid would limit the effectiveness of their response. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

In response to the ominous threat, officials issued instructions on what to do in case of an air raid. First, they emphasized that the alarm did not necessarily mean a raid was imminent, only that it was possible. The warning signal was a series of short blasts lasting about two minutes. The "all clear" signal was a steady blast of about two minutes. Upon hearing the alarm, regulations said that traffic should stop and people should seek shelter. If they were not near a designated air raid shelter, they were to find the nearest "handy" cover. Motorists were warned that they should drive to the curb and park without blocking intersections or bridges. Only emergency vehicles were allowed to move during an air raid event. People attending churches, theaters, and other public gatherings were to remain there and receive emergency instructions. People at home were instructed to get the family together in the safest room of the house away from windows or outside walls and turn off all gas and electric burners. They were admonished to stay off the telephone since the phone lines were needed for emergency workers. Instead, they were to listen to their local radio station for emergency information. At night during an air raid event, citizens were required to turn off all lights showing from the outside within one minute.[3]

Schools had similar air raid instructions. In many cases, the principal functioned as the air raid warden for the school and oversaw the regular practice drills that became familiar to students and teachers. Students would be ushered to an "air raid refuge" away from windows and doors. Often, these consisted of large interior halls or cellars with ample access points. Anticipating the obvious, principals were reminded that any refuge should have "easy access to drinking water and toilet facilities."[4] In the competition for air raid services, Eugene school officials wanted school employees to be clear about which emergency obligations came first: "All teachers and janitors who have other defense assignments, such as air raid wardens, police or fire reserves, which would require them to go to some other place in case of a red alert, should arrange to be relieved from that assignment as soon as possible, so that they may be available for duty within the school at any time of emergency."[5]

Air Raid Wardens

Air raid wardens carried the preparedness message and education to most city blocks and communities in the state. About 8,000 men and women volunteered, attended warden schools, and put in long hours to help protect the state in the event of an attack. They brought what they learned back to their neighborhoods where they played the role of teacher, coach, inspector and commander. State officials offered high praise for the air raid wardens:



Civilian defense authorities warned citizens to stay off the telephone during an air raid and listen to the radio instead for emergency information. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

> **"Around the air raid warden revolves the whole of Civilian Defense protection. It is upon his shoulders that the responsibilities of all phases of protection rest. He is the man -- and the only man -- who can call upon emergency services during a bombing. He is the boss of your block during an emergency. He is the man to whom you might owe your life when and if we are bombed by the enemy."[6]**

The system worked on the concept of collective responsibility for the protection of the block and the neighborhood, and a weak link in the chain could be disastrous. Citizens were reminded of their duty to assist and cooperate with the air raid warden. They also had a responsibility to prepare their homes for the possibility of a bombing: "You will not protect it with alibis and good thoughts. If your neighbor takes no interest in this program he has become a hazard to you."[7]

In response to a question of what makes a good air raid warden, Ernest Brewer, director of the Oregon American Legion Air Raid Warden Training Program, responded: "You would have to know in your sector or block: everyone, every house, every street, lamp-post, manhole, gas shut-off, and electric connection."[8] Citizens were encouraged to get to know their air raid warden who was described as being a sworn public official who would "have the ANSWERS to ALL QUESTIONS." Literature reinforced the air raid warden's "duty to survey every home on his or her block -- know each member of the family, know the location of blackout rooms, gas and electric shut-off switches, etc."[9]



After the attack on Pearl Harbor, G. C. Waller of the Signal Oil Company in Albany offered the use of this loudspeaker equipped panel truck to the Oregon State Defense Council for emergencies such as air raids. (Folder 4, Box 19, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Compliance with these lofty goals of air raid preparation and training varied. Some air raid wardens failed to contact their neighbors, let alone train them or inspect homes for hazards or safety equipment. One official lamented that "we have many people calling the defense office to ask who their wardens are. They tell us that no warden has ever contacted them; that they have no

instructions." Some air raid wardens gave excuses about working long hours in war industries and being "too tired when I get home" to go into their neighborhoods to spread information or inspect houses. For these excuses officials offered a standard reply about a soldier in the Solomon Islands, a fierce Pacific Ocean battlefield, "who stands in gore and blood fighting...he too, is tired, but he fights on and his conscience is clear because he is doing his duty." In contrast, the air raid warden who failed to do his duty earned swift condemnation in the eyes of some: "It's Sabotage - That's What It Is. It's Sabotage!"[10]

Related Documents

"What to Do in an Air Raid" (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319144) Bulletin, Multnomah County Defense Council, circa June 1942. Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"**Official What to Do During and Air Raid Alarm (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319143)**" Portland and Multnomah County Civilian Defense Council Manual, March 1, 1942. Folder 6, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"**Before the Bombers Come, (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151055)**" KGW Radio Program Transcript, April 6, 1942. Folder 18, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Citizens Alert," (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151082) Radio Program Transcript, circa June 1942. Page 2, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Commissioner Fred L. Peterson Radio Transcript (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151086), circa June 1942. Page 1, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"**Special Bulletin Civilian Protection, (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11318831)**" Eugene Public Schools, Dec. 11, 1942. Folder 12, Box 18, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"**What School Teachers and Pupils Should Do During an Air Raid, (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319141)**" U.S. Office of Civilian Defense Instruction Poster, circa 1941. Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"**On the Selection of Air Raid Wardens, (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151195)**" No attribution of entity, circa 1942. Folder 7, Box 26, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Air Raid Precautionary Report Blank (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148351), Marion County Defense Council, circa 1942. Folder 7, Box 26, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Notes

Commissioner Fred L. Peterson Radio Transcript, circa June 1942. Page 1, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Radio Transcript, Oregon on Guard Radio Program of the Oregon State Defense Council, April 22, 1943. Page 1, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Official What to Do During and Air Raid Alarm" Portland and Multnomah County Civilian Defense Council Manual, March 1, 1942. Folder 6, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"What School Teachers and Pupils Should Do During an Air Raid," U.S. Office of Civilian Defense Instruction Poster, circa 1941. Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Special Bulletin Civilian Protection," Eugene Public Schools, Dec. 11, 1942. Folder 12, Box 18, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Commissioner Fred L. Peterson Radio Transcript, circa June 1942. Page 2, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Radio Transcript, Oregon on Guard Radio Program of the Oregon State Defense Council, circa 1942. Page 2, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Citizens Alert," Radio Program Transcript, circa June 1942. Page 2, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Official What to Do During and Air Raid Alarm" Portland and Multnomah County Civilian Defense Council Manual, March 1, 1942. Folder 6, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Defense Chairman Irked Again," *Oswego Review*, November 13, 1942, Folder 6, Box 16, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Air Raid Warnings," no date, Folder 15, Box 16, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Air Raid Precautions," no date, Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA.



"Are you the hazard in this block?" People who failed to cooperate with the air raid warden endangered their own home and their neighbors' too. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Blackouts Darken the Skies of Oregon

Preparing for the Worst

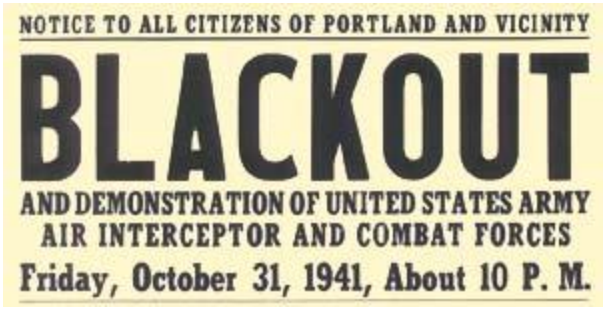
Officials saw blackouts and dimouts as essential defensive measures against the threat of Japanese air raids. Blackouts, which attempted to extinguish or shield light sources completely, usually were called for a relatively short period in relation to a possible imminent air raid. Dimouts, on the other hand, were primarily a regular, less restrictive measure taken in all or part of 14 western Oregon counties. Both measures caused their share of problems, particularly the dimouts, as Oregonians grappled with labyrinthine regulations, confusing interpretations, and new terms such as "foot candles" of light.



Authorities worked hard to see that people took the blackout warnings seriously. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Blackout Drills Deemed "A Pronounced Success"

After months of preparation, Oregon civilian defense officials participated in a set of coordinated air raid maneuvers on Oct. 31, 1941. Designed to test numerous aspects of communication and organization, the maneuvers also tested the public's willingness to participate in a blackout during this pre-Pearl Harbor exercise. Army air interceptor and combat forces were scheduled to provide a demonstration in conjunction with the civilian defense program but most flights were scrubbed at the last minute because of weather concerns.


NOTICE TO ALL CITIZENS OF PORTLAND AND VICINITY

BLACKOUT

AND DEMONSTRATION OF UNITED STATES ARMY AIR INTERCEPTOR AND COMBAT FORCES

Friday, October 31, 1941, About 10 P. M.

Officials posted notices across Portland and other cities announcing the blackout exercise. (Folder 6, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The numbers of volunteers participating were impressive. Multnomah County alone counted 8,000 "lady air raid wardens" and 10,000 male wardens along with over 1,000 auxiliary firemen and over 1,000 boy scouts. Lane County reported over 400 air raid wardens, 742 aircraft observers, and hundreds of associated participants during the blackout exercise. Other counties put up large numbers of participants as well, with the exception of several smaller eastern Oregon counties that reported incomplete organization.

Most reports of the maneuvers from county officials to the State Defense Council described the process as "very satisfactory" or "a pronounced success." Albany, for example, "was black and infractions of the rules were rare. It is true, of course, that a few minor errors took place. Such as, one or two sawmill open sawdust fires that, as you know, are difficult to extinguish and the lighting of matches and cigarette lighters. Business houses, industrial plants, automobiles, etc.

came to a darkened stand-still. Even our largest industrial plant, the Albany Plylock Division of the M & M Woodworking Company, pulled all switches and smothered the boilers (to prevent smoke from the stacks) while several hundred men stood in total darkness." [1]

At the time of the maneuvers, Multnomah County lacked the funds for a dedicated system of sirens to signal the start of the blackout. Instead, officials drafted existing sirens into service: all fire stations drove their fire apparatus outside of the station and sounded their sirens along with the traffic sirens in front of fire stations. All city, county, and state police sirens in the area, all ambulance company sirens, all public, private, and parochial school sirens, and certain large factory sirens also sounded. Women fanned out across Portland's vast residential areas to patrol each block,



The upper photograph shows Salem before a blackout exercise on Oct. 31, 1941. The lower photograph shows the same view during the blackout. (Photographs, Defense Council Records, OSA)

For the week prior to the blackout, the fire marshal sent his inspectors to all of the theaters, beauty shops, sawmills, factories, warehouses, and other sites in the area with instructions.

"notifying occupants and giving instructions how to operate during the blackout." In the week prior to the blackout, the fire marshal sent inspectors to all of the theaters, beauty shops, sawmills, factories, warehouses and other sites in the area with instructions. The night of the blackout inspectors were assigned to theaters and places of public assembly. Boy scouts served as messengers, guarded fire boxes, and patrolled as air raid precautionary officers. **Blackout report [2] (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151242)**



Blackout regulations required "lights out" if they could be seen from outside. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Other counties reported good results as well. Washington County "got a rating of 100%" yet still had a few problems: "We received five reports of 'Smart Alecs' who either did not turn off automobile headlights, or drove through the police lines with lights off." Officials also reported lights left on at a doctor's office, a grange, a machinery barn, numerous residences, and "several others of the careless [and] forgetful type." In Tillamook County the sirens sounded and "all lights seemed to go out instantaneously with the exception of the lights at the Football Game." Shortly after the lights were put out but not before "there was a terrible uproar from the crowds in the streets" about it. [3]

Halloween Fears Unfounded

Problems associated with the maneuvers falling on Halloween were on the minds of some observers in Oregon. A.L. Mason of Mason's Appliance Store in Tigard worried to Jerrold Owen of the State Defense Council ahead of time that his "place of business had to be darkened on that night when pure malicious conduct has taken the place of what was at one time just a little fun." Owen passed the blame for the timing on to the Army Air Corps but also said that "the opportunity for unusual mischief is much exaggerated. If we have the kind of demonstration from the planes which we hope for, with flares dropping and bombers and pursuit ships overhead during the black-out the kids will be much too interested in what is going on in the air to take advantage of the temporary darkness." County officials expressed great disappointment that weather curtailed the planned aerial activity; one even complained that the Army pilots should have been better trained to fly in bad weather. But, despite the lack of flying distractions during the ten-minute blackouts, fears of widespread Halloween mischief failed to materialize. [4]

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Blackouts Follow Pearl Harbor

Western Oregon also fell under a blackout on December 8 after the Pearl Harbor raid raised fears of an attack on the mainland. In Portland the blackout was far from complete, but *The Oregonian* noted: "What the city lacked, however, in its first real war-condition blackout, was more than made up by the vigor of air raid precautions wardens, who worked furiously at the task of darkening the city." Many of Portland's streets were dark well before the 11 p.m. blackout. Early evening crowds quickly dwindled and "the lights of Broadway, far-famed for their brilliance, were snuffed out as by a giant hand." Meanwhile, air raid wardens "searched for light switches, pounded on doors, invaded hotels, and ordered the few automobiles remaining on the streets with unshielded headlights to the curbs." The neon signs and store display window lights still on in downtown caused a ruckus as "what remained of the street crowds gathered at these spots, angrily demanding that the lights be doused by rocks or any means." [5]

Poultry and Dairy Farmers Miffed

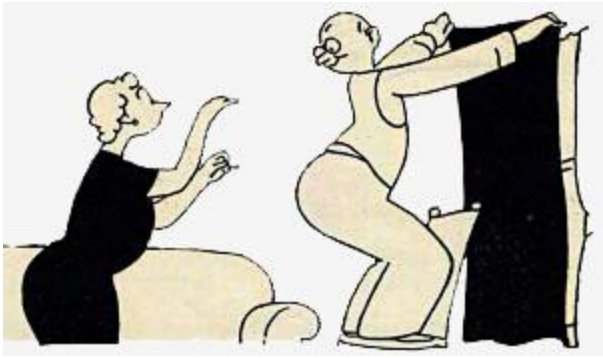
Some people, particularly in rural areas, chaffed at blackout regulations since they were so far removed from military targets. Poultry and dairy farmers complained to the State Defense Council. Military orders after Pearl Harbor set up general precautionary blackouts dictating that no lights could show outside of poultry houses or dairy barns from 1:30 a.m. to 7 a.m. in much of western Oregon. But poultry and dairy cattle were "largely creatures of habit and by upsetting their routine will cause their production to fall off materially." John Stimpson of Locust Hatchery and Poultry Farms in Scappoose claimed he knew from experience "that hens will drop their egg production from peak production to a bare minimum by cutting out lights and disturbing their routine and it takes a period of from three to six weeks after disturbance to bring them back to normalcy." Jerrold Owen of the State Defense Council replied that he was "powerless to change the Army orders" and that he sympathized with the farmers. However, he noted that "it is a favorite practice of fifth columnists...to

"It is a favorite practice of fifth columnists...to leave lights on in isolated farm dwelling[s] in a pattern which might point to a military objective, a guide to planes flying overhead."

leave lights on in isolated farm dwelling[s] in a pattern which might point to a military objective, a guide to planes flying overhead." **Stimpson's letter (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151168)** [6]

More Practice Needed

Oregon civilian defense officials expressed frustration after the Army banned practice blackouts in the wake of the Pearl Harbor attack. According to Jerrold Owen, "it has, of course, been absolutely impossible for civilian defense agencies to perfect blackout arrangements and to make certain that communities and areas can be blacked out promptly when no practices or tests are permitted."



People hung drapes or blinds over windows to comply with blackout rules. (Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Owen made several requests to the Army to lift the ban and at least one general gave him a "sympathetic ear." Still, military officials remained concerned about whether "defense councils are prepared to handle the traffic problems adequately. [7] Eventually in 1944, the Western Defense Command allowed applications for some limited five-minute practice or test blackouts. These were restricted to one every three months and were to occur only on Sundays between 9:30 p.m. and midnight. [8]

Related Document

Blackout Notice, Oregon on Guard Radio Program of the Oregon State Defense Council (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151056), circa Oct. 15, 1941. Folder 6, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Notes

County Air Raid Maneuver Reports, November 1941. Folder 1, Box 26, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Letter from A.L. Mason to Jerrold Owen, Oct. 23, 1941. Folder 7, Box 13, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from Jerrold Owen to A. L. Mason, Oct. 24, 1941. Folder 7, Box 13, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Blackout Lowered on City," *The Oregonian*, Dec. 9, 1941, Page 1.

Letter from John Stimpson to Jerrold Owen, December 10, 1941. Folder 12, Box 16, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from Jerrold Owen to John Stimpson, December 11, 1941. Folder 12, Box 16, Defense Council Records, OSA.

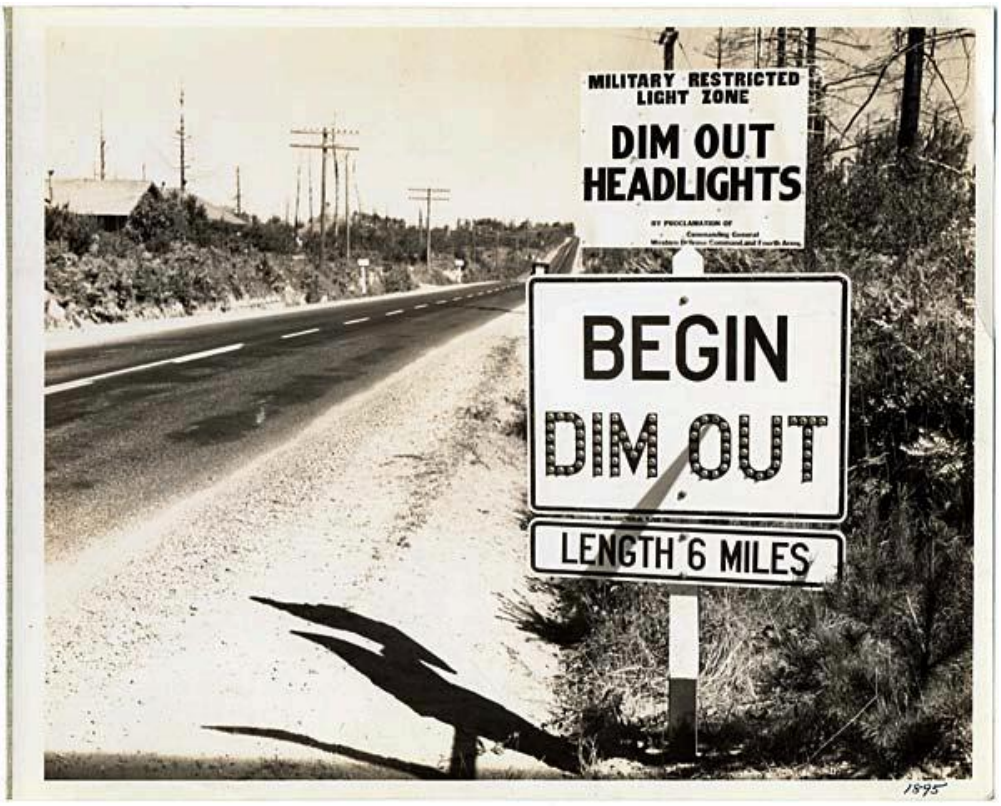
Radio Transcript, KSLM and KEX, Oregon State Defense Council, Oct. 20, 1943. Page 5, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Practice Blackouts: Time Limit for Effecting Blackout" Bulletin, Oregon State Defense Council, March 13, 1944. Folder 43, Box 25, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Dimouts Yield New Regulations and Enforcement

A Field Day for Bureaucrats

Blackouts caused Oregonians some hardships but dimouts introduced a whole new level of bureaucratic regulation. While some dimout regulations were in effect before Aug. 20, 1942, they paled in comparison to the new edicts from the Western Defense Command. Public Proclamation No. 10 and No. 12, which followed soon after, clamped new restrictions on everyday life in homes and businesses across western Oregon but especially those in view of the ocean.



Dimout regulations were in effect along many coastal roads during the war to reduce light used by enemy aircraft to identify targets. (**Photo no. 1895, Highway Dept. Records, OSA (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/1800/rec/1)**)

Restricted Lighting Becomes the Norm

The proclamations set up a "zone of restricted lighting" that required lights to be extinguished or controlled at all times from sunset to sunrise. Outdoor illuminated signs, ornamental lighting, and floodlighting, including advertising signs, billboards, display lighting, theater marquees and lights of "every description" were to be turned off. Outdoor recreational lighting was greatly limited. Moreover, all interior lights that projected rays above the horizontal (skyward) were to be extinguished. Practically, this meant changing habits and retrofitting lights and blinds for many Oregonians. Shades or blinds had to be pulled down to at least the level of the bottom of an interior light. Many people painted door and transom glass black to conform with regulations. Porch lights had to be painted or shielded to emit light only downward and toward the house. Other restrictions applied to traffic signs and signals, navigation and railroad lights, industrial areas and other facilities.

Many coastal areas fell under much stricter regulations based on whether they were "visible from the sea." Officials defined the term broadly to mean "visible at any time from the waters of the Pacific

Ocean." These regulations required that windows of businesses, industrial buildings, and households either be blacked out or have their opaque window shades or drapes pulled down every night so that no light was visible from the sea. Regulations also prohibited all other lighting visible from the sea including fires, bonfires, parked cars, flashlights, and lanterns. Furthermore, in a measure that caused particular aggravation, lighting on cars and trucks was severely limited during dimout hours. [1]

New Adaptations Develop

As is always the case with regulations, adaptations and work arounds quickly developed, in many cases only adding to the confusion. For example, various solutions sprang up to cope with the new restrictions on headlights visible to the sea. The regulations called for not more than two headlights with no more than "250 beam candlepower" of light each. Some people just started driving with only their parking lights on. Others bought one of many "restrainer" electrical devices designed to reduce power to the headlights.



The coastal highway in Curry County hugged the rugged shoreline for about 60 miles, causing dimout enforcement problems for police. The area to the south of Port Orford is shown above. (Photo no. 370, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

Not long after the first regulations were issued, Lincoln County authorities were "experiencing considerable difficulty with the enforcement of Proclamation #10 in regard to the Dim-Out. A good many motorists are covering their headlights with a wide variety of cloth. It is my opinion, after considerable investigation on the matter, that most of the cloth covered headlights do not conform with the regulations of Proclamation #10. Some of the late model cars with strong seal-beam lights will penetrate these coverings to the extent of from 1,000 to 2,000 beam candle power."

In response the State Defense Council issued a bulletin titled "Cloth Covering Now Taboo for Automobile Headlamps Used in Dim Out Zone." The bulletin confessed the council's role in the confusion: "As a temporary expedient to avoid unnecessary inconvenience to persons driving coastal highways on brief pleasure or business trips, the Oregon State Defense Council on August 5, 1942, approved the use of one thickness of muslim or other suitable cloth of a grade comparable to flour sack material for dimming automobile headlamps in light restricted zones, where they would be visible from the sea." Claiming that enough time had passed for motorists to install light restrainers, the council put an end to the use of cloth coverings for compliance with the regulations. **Letter from Jerry Whitlock to Jerrold Owen (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151160)**[2]

Enforcement and Interpretation Problems

Curry County officials had their hands full trying to enforce dimout regulations related to headlights. The remote southwestern Oregon county had about 60 miles of road that, tracking close to the coastline, fell under the strict "visible from the sea" regulations. With few law enforcement officers and only one incorporated town, many drivers discovered that they could ignore dimout rules.

One Curry County defense council official complained: "The result is that tourests [sic] going through quickly find they can leave their lights on without anybody stopping them except at the three villages in the County. So they apologize for having their lights on and drive to the edge of the villages and turn them on again and go on down the highway." The official called for a state police patrolman to be assigned to the area to put an end to the problem: "I am sure that after a few arrests there would be no more trouble! With the Government and State hireing [sic] so many men at fat salarys [sic] to put on a Hollywood war it seems queer that they cant [sic] put one man on such work...." [3] According to one federal official, the lack of patrols in Curry County was exacerbated by politics: "At the present time there is a hot political fight on for the office of sheriff, a four-man race. The sheriff is very busy campaigning and little help can be expected from him until after the November election." [4]

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Authorities struggled along with the public to interpret regulations. In fact, the State Defense Council set up a State Lighting Committee to work with county and area lighting consultants to interpret dimout rules and how they applied to each source of light. It became one of the most active defense council committees. To illustrate the confusion, one federal civilian defense official reported on the situation in Seaside not long after the regulations took effect: "While a number of lighted windows are visible from the sea, the fault lies more with the wording of the regulation than with the willingness of the citizens to obey. It is difficult to judge from the wording of the regulations just how much shading seaward windows need. What appears to be sufficient to one observer may not satisfy another. As a result a number of householders have been given conflicting orders and opinions by civilian police, civilian defense and army personnel." The official hoped that a "definite rule" would be established that would address the variance of texture of shades and drapes that was causing problems. He wrote that maybe it was time to simply require that the windows be blacked out with paint instead of relying on shades even though the change would "cause considerable inconvenience and hardship." [5]

Inspections Uncover Violations

Officials conducted inspections of businesses and industrial facilities looking for violations of the dimout rules. For example, November 1942 inspections in Portland resulted in a long report of infractions. A large area of downtown Portland "contained many interior lights that emit direct rays above the horizontal out-of-

doors, also several outdoor unshielded lights that emit direct rays above the horizontal." Traffic signals drew criticism for being "improperly shielded." Industrial and defense areas yielded several pages of violations just for the Portland area. Inspectors found 16 itemized problems at the massive Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation yards, most related to unshielded lights and floodlights. Willamette Iron and Steel Company drew 16 violations for similar reasons. The Kaiser Shipyards on Swan Island had "many violations" but the chief electrician assured inspectors that "construction of shields for floodlights will start soon." [6]

Too Much Light!



The Rexall Drug Store in Woodburn was cited for violating dimout regulations. It was one of many businesses that allowed too much light to hit the sidewalk.

Many Oregonians began to consider the dimout regulations to be nothing more than a nuisance and cooperated only under the threat of a fine. Others simply failed to comply, which led to dimout violation citations. While inspectors spent considerable time at large businesses and industries, they didn't spare small businesses and homes from checks. Thus, it was reported that the skating rink in West Salem was in violation as was the nearby Puritan Grocery. In Beaverton the Skyway Tavern drew attention for unshaded lights while the "Oregon City Police stated to the inspector that on Saturday nights the dimout regulations are completely disregarded in the business district." The Rexall Drug Store in Woodburn was flaunting regulations by allowing "3 foot candles on sidewalk from window lights" when it was clear that regulations allowed only 1 foot candle. Meanwhile, the Cherry Fried Chicken Restaurant on Highway 22 in Independence had a well lighted "juke box too near [the] window" while the house of Mr. Bartose two miles south of Aumsville was "entirely too brightly illuminated." [7]



New regulations delineated subtle differences in lighting needs for different sports:

SPORT	LIGHTING
Badminton	30 foot candles
Baseball (Amateur)	30 foot candles
Basketball	20 foot candles
Football	20 foot candles
Golf Driving	25 foot candles
Handball	30 foot candles
Horseshoes	10 foot candles
Playgrounds	25 foot candles
Dog Race Tracks	30 foot candles
Softball	25 foot candles
Swimming Pools	10 foot candles
Tennis	25 foot candles
Volleyball	10 foot candles [8]

New Regulations Ease Restrictions

Federal officials issued Public Proclamation No. 19 in October 1943. The new regulation set up three geographic zones that loosened the dimout restrictions for most of western Oregon away from view of the sea. But it still generated its share of bureaucracy, including official explanations of lighting regulations that showed shifting priorities away from strict civilian protection measures and toward

coping with growing social problems. For instance, officials wrote that "in order to reduce juvenile delinquency, provide evening recreation for war workers, and improve the health and welfare of people generally - all of which is necessary for our maximum war effort - lighting for recreation and sports is now permitted in locations more than three miles from the sea, up to a maximum of thirty foot candles" The explanation further delineated the subtle differences in lighting needs for different sports.

Within weeks authorities issued Public Proclamation No. 20 that suspended earlier dimout restrictions. The government cited "improved defensive measures now in effect" as the reason for the suspension. Unfortunately for earlier violators of the dimout regulations, prosecution of any prior infractions would proceed. Moreover, regulations related to blackouts remained in full force. [9]



Evenings around a fire on the beach were put to an end by dimout regulations. (Photo no. 538, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

Related Documents

"Here's How to Dim Out Home and Store Lights" Diagram, Portland and Multnomah County Civilian Defense Council , circa Sept. 1942 **(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151124)**. Folder 20, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Dimout Regulation Questions and Answers, Oregon State Defense Council, circa Sept. 1942 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151106). Folder 20, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Report on Stores Staying Open at Night," Oregon State Defense Council, Oct. 19, 1942 **(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151243)**. Folder 23, Box 10, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Public Proclamation No. 10," **(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151229)** Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, Aug. 5, 1942. Folder 23, Box 32, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"**Public Proclamation No. 12 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151231)**," Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, Oct. 10, 1942. Folder 23, Box 32, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"**Public Proclamation No. 19, (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151232)**" Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, Oct. 10, 1943. Folder 23, Box 32, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Dimout Violation Case File (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151107), Oregon State Defense Council, March 9-May 8, 1943. Folder 11, Box 22, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Notes

"Public Proclamation No. 12," Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, Oct. 10, 1943. Folder 23, Box 32, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from Jerry Whitlock to Jerrold Owen, Sept. 10, 1942. Folder 2, Box 19, Defense Council Records, OSA; Oregon State Defense Council Bulletin, Sept. 15, 1942. Folder 2, Box 19, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from S.O. Newhouse to Jerrold Owen, Sept. 25, 1942. Folder 6, Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Memorandum from Captain William Rogers to Stanley Donogh, Oct. 8, 1942. Folder 21, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Ibid.

Memorandum from Earl Cleworth to Provost Marshal, Fort Lewis, Washington, Dec. 31, 1942. Folder 21, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Memorandum from Lt. Colonel Willis Vincent to Stanley Donogh, Nov. 16, 1942. Folder 21, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Regional Regulations No. 7," Office of Civilian Defense, Ninth Civilian Defense Region. Oct. 10, 1943. Folder 20, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Public Proclamation No. 20," Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, Oct. 28, 1943. Folder 5, Box 27, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from S.O. Newhouse to James Olson, Aug. 14, 1942. Folder 6, Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from James Olson to S.O. Newhouse, Aug. 18, 1942. Folder 6, Box 17, Defense Council Records, OSA.



State Defense Council official James Olson questioned "the I.Q. rating" of some federal bureaucrats. (Folder 16, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Dimwit Regulations?

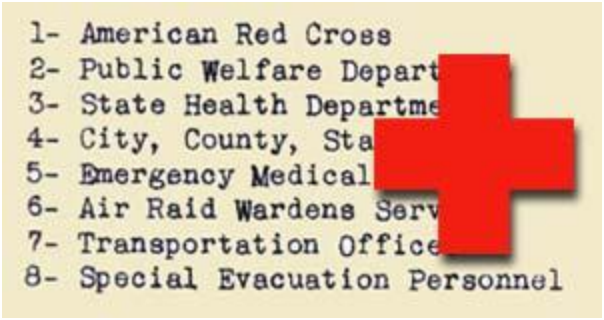
As tough as it was for local defense council officials to decipher and implement regulations related to dimouts, they also had to contend with what some would call the "dimwits" distributing the regulations. S.O. Newhouse of the Curry County Defense Council finally got fed up with the "silly and childish" procedures for distributing information about the regulations. He complained to State Defense Council officials: "To start with I received some 100 posters, which I distributed. I next got some more posters and bulletins from another source, which I also distributed. I next got some 1,700 bulletins, more than there are families in Curry County, after we were satisfied everbody [sic] had been informed. Nobody wants them."

Newhouse continued to assess the situation: "If this case has been an example of efficiency amoung [sic] the armed forces, and various civilian defense setups, God help this country to ever win the war. If anybody at the head of this setup had any brains they would work out a sensible, workable, easy method of getting the public the information they wished them to have...." In fine bureaucratic style, James Olson of the State Defense Council replied to Newhouse by denying responsibility and passing the buck to another level, in this case to the federal regional civilian defense headquarters in San Francisco: "I sometimes wonder what the I.Q. rating is of some of those chaps in San Francisco that are responsible for some of these boners which are pulled from time to time."10

Evacuate the Area: Emergency Housing Surveys in Oregon

"Our Darkest Hour of Peril"

Evacuation plans were part of the worst case scenario of enemy invasion. Many people didn't want to even contemplate the possibility, but officials knew it would be irresponsible to fail to plan for the possibility. Of course, the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor brought the danger into fuller focus for many Oregonians. Reflecting the fact that Pacific Coast states were declared part of a military theatre of operations, military authorities required each state to develop detailed plans and submit them for approval.



The Red Cross was at the top of the list of organizations and agencies needed to "insure successful operation" of Oregon's elaborate statewide evacuation plan. (Image source: 1)

Overall State Evacuation Plans

Oregon's evacuation plan contemplated the removal of all civilians from the state who were not considered essential to the defense of the area. It ranged from "the new-born infant to the helpless aged," including planning for their transportation, health, medical care, hospitalization, food, registration and final resettlement.



If an enemy attack came, Marion County civilian defense officials wanted to be able to evacuate people from the affected area to emergency housing. A survey following Pearl Harbor looked for available housing across the county. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The plan anticipated three phases: the initial phase covered a war incident that caused damage to a limited area. For this situation, the affected people could be cared for at a local evacuation assembly center. The secondary phase foresaw the need to move a larger population after a widespread invasion. This phase required military approval to begin the evacuation and involved coordination with the Red Cross and government agencies related to transportation, medical services, health, public welfare, police and other areas of jurisdiction. A third phase predicted a voluntary movement of much of the population to inland states. **Draft evacuation plan [1] (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319028)**

Emergency Housing Surveys Ordered

(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319028)
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319028) The attack on Pearl Harbor triggered an urgent effort in Marion County to identify emergency housing for evacuees in the event of an attack by Japanese forces. Local civilian defense officials reasoned that if one community or town were hit by an air raid, its residents could move temporarily to another community. So, on Dec. 7, 1941, as Oregonians were absorbing the news of the devastating bombing of Oahu, the new chairman of the Marion County Housing Committee was hard at work composing letters to civilian defense workers around the county. He called for surveys of all available emergency housing..."just as our hour of darkest peril seems nearest at hand..." [2]



Marion County civilian defense volunteers fanned out across the county searching for potential housing in case of emergency. Two volunteers drove past this old school house near Woodburn and received offers for housing in shacks and barns that may not have looked much better. (**Photo no. 4165 courtesy Salem Public Library (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/max/id/1400/rec/2)**)

Accommodations Offered in Private Homes

The new chairman, Don Madison, asked for lists of private and public buildings that were available throughout the county as well as the number of evacuees each could accommodate. Building examples included private homes, hotels, apartments, warehouses, armories, factories, government buildings and convalescent homes. Workers fanned out across the county, often going door-to-door to survey residents. Mrs. Blaine McCord and Mrs. Ray Glatt drew the assignment of heading west along the Woodburn-St. Paul Road. Stopping at each farm house on the way, they made notes about the housing capacity of each. For example, Mrs. J.C. Claiborne had "no room - small house" while Bart Lavier could house two evacuees and also had a barn with hay in it, presumably suitable for sleeping on in an emergency. Anthony Sule's house had "no room (wife is blind)" while Mary Jobst's home also had "no room (mental case)." Many residents, it seems, were looking out for family first. Thus, Lee Muck of Gervais was planning on taking in two relatives while Fred Warner was "reserving room for 3 Portland relatives" and thus had no room for other potential evacuees. [3]

Some residents surveyed in private homes had problems of their own but were willing to help anyway. A. Engelhardt of the Gervais area was described as being "very old" but was willing to take in an evacuee. Charles Lackey apparently suffered from housekeeping problems - "dirty" - but volunteered to host six evacuees while the widow Margaret Shafer would host two. W.C. Rogers was down on his luck but still wanted to contribute. His house had burned down and he was living in a woodshed but yet he offered his barn to provide emergency housing. Despite the hardship it would cause in their homes, several of people were willing to provide housing to a large number of evacuees. F.E. Wehrman and Mrs. Harold Sargent each offered room for ten people while Blain McCord (husband to one of the housing surveyors) and Harris Nelson would put out the welcome mats for 12 people each. For others, the hardship probably would have been for the evacuees. C. I. Kropf offered to put up a small family in a tiny shack while E.S. Hayes would open up his "onion house." [4]

Space Available in Larger Buildings

Surveyors also canvassed the emergency housing capacity of collective and public buildings. Thus, in Silverton they found that the Calvary Lutheran and the Trinity Lutheran could each house 50 evacuees on cots as well as feed 100 mouths. The Anderson Hotel had six double beds for 12 people while the Silverton Hospital had 24 beds available. Numerous lodges and clubs had space for evacuees. The Woodmen of the World (W.O.W.) Hall had two floors with about 30 feet by 40 feet of space each. With a wide stairway, bathrooms on each floor, heat, and kitchen facilities, it would make a good temporary home for a large number of people. The "Commercial Club Rooms" had similar space but was hampered by a "high narrow stairway." Underutilized schools, such as the Washington Irving School in Silverton, could contribute unused rooms. Warehouses, such as the county-owned Fischer Brick Warehouse, were often large but in many cases lacked "sanitary facilities." [5]



Officials conducted a careful survey of the Silverton business district in search of emergency housing space. **Oregon Scenic Images Collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/63695#lg=1&slide=0)**



Civilian defense officials wanted to use state institutions for housing in the event of an emergency during the war. Shown above is the exercise yard at the Oregon State Insane Asylum in about 1905. (Photo no. OSH0023, Oregon State Hospital Records, OSA)

After Pearl Harbor, Carl Sumner Knopf, president of Willamette University, made a generous offer of space for emergency housing in the event of attack. He ordered workers to "clear a number of vacant rooms that have been used for storage.... However, our staff is small, and we may not be able to get them entirely cleared even by the end of the Christmas holidays." His big offer of space, however, came in the form of Kimball Hall. The university had vacated the hall and had been talking about what to do with it: "There was some thought of making it an emergency dormitory for men until after the war, when we could get materials to build a proper dormitory. Believing the hall could be an important component of the emergency housing plan, Knopf cautioned that the University did not have the staff or funds to prepare the building for evacuee use but "if your committee could thoroughly clean the building and take care of a few minor roof leaks and heat the unit, I see no reason why the University could not turn it over to you for the duration."

Knopf admitted some embarrassment about the condition of the hall but maintained that with work the building could contribute to the civilian defense needs of the county:

> **"Of course, in making this proposal we certainly are not offering you any Biltmore Hotel. We are almost ashamed of the building, and yet, it is a well-built structure. Properly painted, it would not be unattractive. It has much space in it. A good work crew could do much with it in a very short time. I believe it might constitute the largest single unit available in Salem. Would you be interested at all?"** [6]

No record of a response from the Marion County Defense Council to Knopf about his offer appears in the records, however, the Salem area was nevertheless able to muster considerable accommodations for emergency housing. While estimates varied, survey officials determined about 16,500 people could be maintained in state buildings and institutions in the area, including 2,000 each at the Oregon State Penitentiary and Oregon State Hospital and 1,000 each at the Oregon Fairview Home and the State Tuberculosis Hospital. Except during fire season, the Forestry Department could offer housing to 5,000 people while the State Fairgrounds "will accomadate [sic] 5000 for housing and they have available sufficient cafeteria accomadations [sic] to feed that group of people." One estimate concluded that Salem public schools had the ability to house up to 50,000 individuals but another pegged the number at about 10,000. Area churches could add hundreds more. A survey counted space for about 12,000 to 14,000 people in residences in the city, but officials cautioned that "the caring for evacuees in private homes would entail a great deal of detail and would likely by [be] the last place resorted to." [7]



The Willamette University president offered to house evacuees. **Oregon Scenic Images Collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/52501#lg=1&slide=0)**

Related Documents

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Three Letters: Letter from Mary Schannep to Don Madison, Jan. 23, 1942. Folder 52, Box 27, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from Don Madison to Irl McSherry, July 21, 1942 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151167). Folder 52, Box 27, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from Roy H. Mills to Don Madison, July 22, 1942. Folder 52, Box 27, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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Letter from Mary Schannep to Don Madison, Jan. 23, 1942. Folder 52, Box 27, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from Don Madison to Irl McSherry, July 21, 1942. Folder 52, Box 27, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from Roy H. Mills to Don Madison, July 22, 1942. Folder 52, Box 27, Defense Council Records, OSA.



Officials saw the Oregon State Hospital as a potential site to house evacuees. **Oregon Scenic Images Collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/60460#lg=1&slide=0)**

Beware the Bomb: Oregonians Discover New Ways to Die

"The Word 'Bomb' Sounds Unpleasant"

Oregonians watched news reels of the bombing of London and other devastated targets and wondered "could that really happen here?" Authorities answered with an emphatic "yes" and prepared the state for the worst. This included organizing tens of thousands of Oregonians who volunteered for the Aircraft Warning Service and served as air raid wardens. But to be effective every citizen needed to be ready to respond to a variety of terrible weapons that could fall through their roof. It happened in Britain; it could happen here.



Authorities told people to get inside if bombing occurred. If that were impossible, they were to lie down and "protect the back of your head." (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)

State Defense Council Coordinator Jerrold Owen acknowledged his challenge in a 1942 radio broadcast as he encouraged Oregonians to learn more: "...first I'd like to say right now that because the word 'bomb' sounds unpleasant is no reason to turn off your radio at this point. The more you know about bombs, the less they scare you. So let's not avoid the subject because it's unpleasant. Bombs are far more dangerous to you before you know about them than after." Owen went on to describe the three general classes of bombs: demolition, incendiary, and gas. [1]

Demolition Bombs

American entrepreneurial spirit came to the



The Practo-Bomb logo. (Folder 12, Box 31, Defense Council, OSA)

rescue of civilian defense trainers in 1943 when the Practo-Bomb practice incendiary unit hit the market. The War Department licensed the Rowland Manufacturing Company to "supply these units in any quantity desired at a very reasonable cost."

The bombs consisted of a metal container filled with incendiary paste which "on application of water, the fire begins to burn furiously, scattering burning particles for an area of about ten feet." The bombs would burn for 10 minutes dry and about 5 minutes when water was applied.

To avoid the need for purchasers to obtain an explosives license from the federal Bureau of Mines, all fuses and caps were eliminated. All the user needed to do was to drop a match into the incendiary paste. The bombs sold packed in a wooden case for the reasonable price of $12 per dozen. Prices dropped with larger quantities.

To help citizens prepare for the worst, officials described the characteristics of demolition or explosive type bombs. Because of their weight, often from 100 to 500 pounds, and the height from which they would fall, the mere impact of this type of bomb could cause considerable damage. The extent of the damage from the explosion would depend on whether the bomb struck a building or fell out in the open. The huge pressure blast developed by the explosion was enough to flatten lightly constructed buildings. Great hazard also resulted from flying or falling debris, glass splinters, and bomb fragments.

While much of the danger came from pure bad luck - being in the wrong place at the wrong time, authorities also gave instructions for how to reduce loss of life and injuries if a demolition type bomb fell in the neighborhood. Citizens were advised to seek "substantial cover" in designated bomb shelters, if possible. If not, they were told go to their home's "refuge room" or "throw a mattress over a strong table and get under the table." People were also advised to stay away from windows and doors and lie down to avoid being knocked down by the concussion and to lessen exposure to bomb fragments, flying glass, and debris.[2] And, they were cautioned to stay away from open areas such as streets or parks. As Governor Sprague noted in a radio interview, the British experience under the onslaught of German bombs taught a valuable lesson: "...it was found that a man within his own home, away from windows and outside walls, was ten times safer from injury than a man standing in the open."[3]

Officials expressed great concern about the hazards of unexploded bombs (UXB) or "duds." While the bombs could have originated from enemy forces, such as with the Japanese balloon bombs, authorities were most worried about U.S. military ammunition "on terrain formerly used by the War Department for training troops or in areas where such training is going on."[4] Several children were killed or injured in West Coast incidents leading Colonel Joe Leedom of the federal Office of Civilian Defense to note that "we all know the danger from a 'dud' and also know how the souvenir-hunting instinct of most of us might lead us to pick up



Thermite bombs burned with incredible heat and intensity as this demonstration shows. (Folder 12, Box 31, Defense Council, OSA)



Women display two "bomb-fighting gadgets" that inventors dreamed up in case of air raids. The "traps" were designed to scoop up incendiary bombs. The one on the right is asbestos lined. They were not recommended by federal civilian defense officials. (Folder 16, Box 37, Defense Council, OSA)

some such object, if it be small enough to carry away." [5] If an unexploded bomb were found, the local air raid warden was to cordon off an area of 50 yards and notify a control center that would dispatch a trained bomb reconnaissance agent to dispose of the bomb.

Incendiary Bombs

Incendiary or fire bombs struck the fears of Americans with particular force after the "all out" attack on London by German bombers in December 1940. As Governor Sprague described: "Incendiary bombs fell like rain and a fire of terrifying proportions consumed the entire district known as the old city of London. Hundreds were killed and the property loss ran into billions." [6] Several types of incendiaries posed a threat, including phosphorus, thermite and magnesium bombs. Phosphorus bombs were in ways less dangerous because they burned at only about 250 degrees Fahrenheit. Thus, for a fire to start, the material around it had to be very combustible. Thermite bombs, in contrast, burned incredibly hot, up to about 4,500 degrees Fahrenheit, and could melt metal or rock. This was made clear to Oregonians when a thermite bomb was dropped in September 1942 by a Japanese plane on a forest in Curry County. The resulting crater showed signs of intense heat, including fused earth and rocks that resembled lava. Sand and water were recommended to extinguish phosphorus and thermite fires.

Thermite bombs burned incredibly hot, up to about 4,500 degrees Fahrenheit, and could melt metal or rock.



According to Portland Mayor Earl Riley who also served as director of the Portland and Multnomah County Civilian Defense Council, magnesium bombs were the most widely used incendiary devices at the time "and the one which can and must be controlled by the civilian population."[7] The two pound

bombs were about two inches in diameter and about nine to 14 inches long with a steel fin. Inside the cylinder was the incendiary material and a firing fuse to be set off by a sudden shock. Once burning, the magnesium could get as hot as 3,300 degrees Fahrenheit.

In a demonstration, a woman pumps water from a pail while a man prepares to spray water on an incendiary bomb. (Folder 12, Box 35, Defense Council, OSA)

An air raid warden instruction booklet set the scene of a magnesium bomb attack: "Picture a large bomber carrying 2000 of these bombs, flying at 5000 feet and at a rate of 250 miles per hour. The bombs will be dropped in lots of about 20 each second. They will scatter over a length of some seven miles. The width of this path has been observed to be some 150 yards." That equated to about 20 bombs falling on each city block over a huge area. The drop of a bomb from the plane developed enough force to penetrate the average house roof, allowing magnesium to start burning in the attic or top story. As the bomb casing caught fire, it would throw molten metal over a wide area, up to 30 to 50 feet. The bomb would burn with high intensity for up to two minutes and more quietly for up to 15 minutes. Air raid wardens, it seems, had their work cut out for them.[8]

Portland defense coordinator Edward Boatwright put the situation in practical perspective: "There just isn't any fire department in the world that can be in a thousand places at one time. But incendiary bombs only start small fires and if the people can put out 990 of the 1000 fires while they're still little ones the fire department can take care of the ten that aren't caught in time and have become big fires."[9]

To help homeowners fight those 990 smaller fires, the Portland and Multnomah County Defense Council distributed the following instructions to residents:

Incendiary Bomb Control: Please Study These Instructions

METHOD NO. 1

EQUIPMENT: Garden hose attached to a water supply and equipped with an adjustable spray nozzle, or some form of force pump that will throw a stream of water, such as a pump tank, spray pump, or stirrup or bucket pump equipped with 20 feet of hose and an adjustable spray nozzle.Incendiary bomb cartoon

PROCEDURE: Approach the bomb in a prone position shielding face and hands with whatever is available and play a steady SPRAY of water on the bomb. Keep surrounding furniture, carpets, etc., wet. If fire starts in these, switch to a solid stream and knock down the fire, then switch back and SPRAY the bomb until it burns out.



Get rid of that bomb! (Image source: Folder 16, Box 37, Defense Council Records, OSA)

METHOD NO. 2

EQUIPMENT: 2 loosely filled bags of DRY sand (20 to 30 pounds), 1 bucket containing 3 inches of DRY sand and 1 additional bucket full of DRY sand; 1 long handled shovel, 1 garden rake and a hatchet, axe or hand axe.

PROCEDURE: Wait until the initial shower of sparks has subsided (requires from 30 to 60 seconds), then approach the bomb with a sack of sand or bucket of sand. Place the sack on the bomb or pour the sand over the bomb from the bucket. Then with the rake, pull the bomb and sand onto shovel and toss out the window. Or place the bomb in the bucket containing 3 inches of sand, cover the bomb with sand and dump outside. Wet gloves are good protection for the hands. Dark glasses should be worn if available. [10]

Air raid wardens were instrumental in training citizens on the block for how to fight the fires and an important aspect of this was to keep flammable clutter in homes to a minimum, especially in the attic. This could take diplomacy as many wardens learned: "It takes a most exceptional person to be able to tell a housewife that the trash in her attic constitutes an air raid hazard, and to tell her in such a manner that she likes it."[11]

Gas Bombs

Though they had been used in Ethiopia and China, authorities saw attacks coming in the form of poisonous chemical gases as less likely than those involving explosive or incendiary bombs. Yet they still planned for the possibility and tried to educate the public on the types of gas as well as protection and response measures. Part of the education was to remind citizens of the events of World War I as Chemistry Professor Thomas Thompson did in 1942: "Modern chemical warfare came into being on April 22, 1915, with a surprise attack at Ypres [Belgium] when the Germans on a four-mile front discharged 168 tons of chlorine gas. Within half an hour the Allies suffered 15,000 casualties, including 5,000 dead; with proper protection casualties would have been almost nil."[12] Effective gas masks and training lowered casualties from chemical gas attacks in World War I.

Use Your Sniff Kit!

One of the first steps in effectively combating a chemical warfare gas was to identify its presence. That was the idea behind the "Sniff Kit" produced and sold by the Northam Warren Corporation. The kit carried the recommendation of both the federal Office of Civilian Defense and the Chemical Warfare Service of the Army, which played a role in developing the product.

The kit consisted of imitations of the five main gases used in chemical warfare: mustard gas,

Experts classified gases by the length of time they remained on a target. Chlorine and phosgene were more prominent examples of non-persistent gases. These would linger for only a short time and could be carried away by air currents in less than 15 minutes. Persistent gases, such as mustard gas and lewisite, were actually liquids, often dispersed in mist form, that evaporated over a period of days and could be absorbed by cloth, leather, wood or other materials.
Some gases caused damage by irritating the lungs. Chlorine, a yellowish-green gas with a pungent odor, was an example of one that experts thought could be used in an attack. The first aid for this gas was limited: "Keep patient quiet and warm by wrapping in blankets. Hospitalize immediately." Phosgene, another lung irritant was colorless and had an odor of "musty hay or



phosgene gas, chloropicrin, lewisite, and tear gas. The 5 bottles came attractively packaged in a "case made of wood and pressboard, covered with serviceable quality of saddle tan fabric." Each bottle carried a label with the physiological effect of the active gas along with first aid steps and neutralization methods. The kit sold for five dollars.

Oregon officials made good use of the kits in their training. The federal government thought so much of them that they set up a program to distribute the kits free to accredited gas warfare instructors.[17]

decaying leaves." In smaller concentrations, experts recommended a cigarette test to warn of its presence since the phosgene would give the smoke a "somewhat disgusting metallic taste." First aid for phosgene was limited as well, consisting of not allowing any exertion and keeping the patient quiet and warm. If the exposure to lung irritant gases was of a long duration, permanent lung damage and death were possible. Pneumonia often set in as a complication.[13]

Mustard gas and lewisite were examples of blistering gases. Mustard gas smelled like garlic or horseradish and took the form of a dark liquid that could penetrate skin and clothing. The first aid emphasized the need to remove it within 3 minutes of contact by blotting the area with solvent soaked gauze. Mustard gas exposure could cause blisters and severe inflammation but no internal poisoning. Lewisite was more dangerous. The oily dark liquid had the odor of geraniums and acted like mustard gas. But the burns resulting from exposure could go through the skin and into the muscle leaving the victim badly scarred and often blind. First aid called for rinsing of the eyes quickly: "Delay may mean blindness." Skin was to be swabbed quickly with a strong solution of hydrogen peroxide or bleach.[14]

Along with educating the public about the dangers of gas attacks, State Defense Council officials wanted to hand out free gas masks to nearly every Oregon resident. In January 1942, the council coordinator, Jerrold Owen, explained that Congress had passed a bill to supply 50 million masks to people within the "target areas" that included most of Oregon. Owen predicted that "every resident of those areas would be required to carry a gas mask at all times."[15] In the end other priorities overtook the drive to put a gas mask on the hip of every Oregonian. After the war federal officials went to some effort to collect the approximately 15,000 training gas masks that it had distributed through the Oregon State Defense Council in 1942, but no mention was made of the effort to distribute masks on a massive scale.

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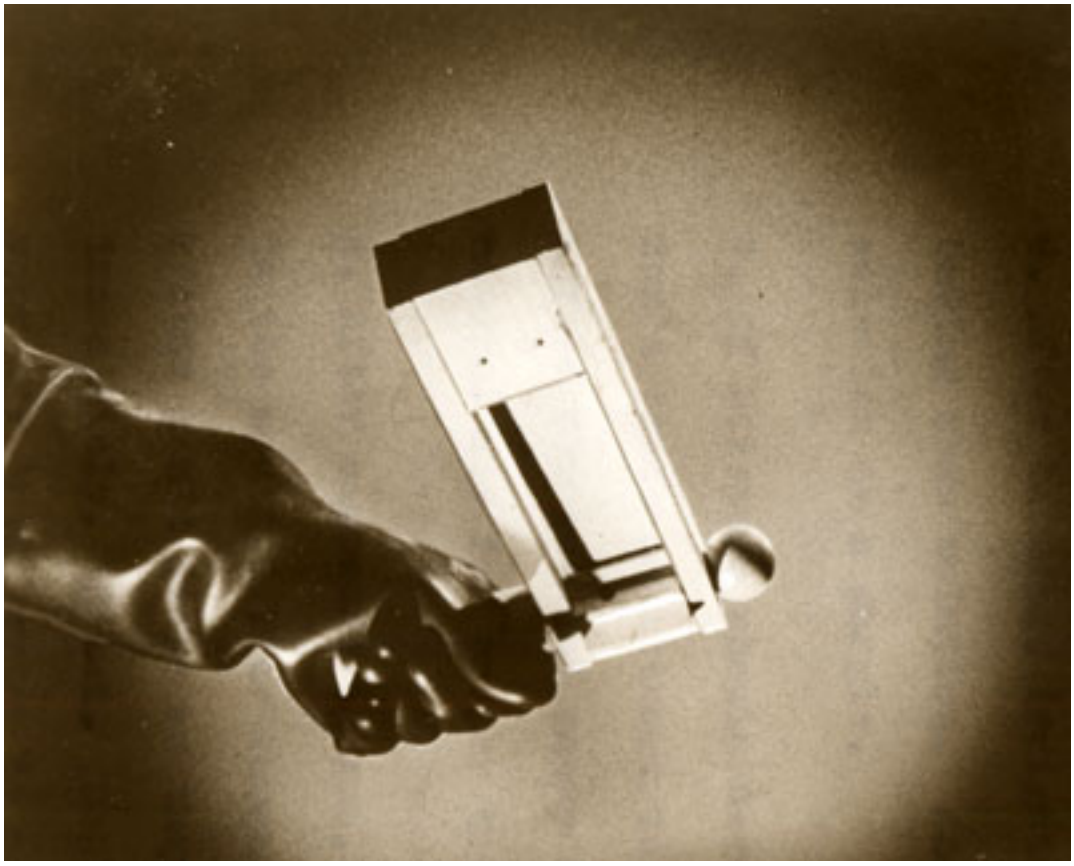
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"What to Do in a Gas Attack" Instructional Film Documentation, Folder 12, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Beware the Bomb: What to Do in a Gas Attack

The following photographs and captions offered viewers a taste of what they could learn by watching the Filmedia Corporation defense training film entitled "What to Do in a Gas Attack."



1.) "If gas should be dropped during an enemy air raid, a special alarm will be sounded. Learn what gas alarm has been chosen for your community. It will be a hand rattle or hammering sound like the beating of a stick on a dishpan."



2.) "If you are exposed to liquid gas, quickly remove as much of it as you can by carefully blotting the skin with a dry cloth or absorbent material. Do not smear or spread the gas onto fresh skin areas. Work fast. Liquid gas will cause blisters if not neutralized within a few minutes after exposure."



3.) "To neutralize any liquid gas remaining on the skin, use ordinary household bleaching containing sodium hypochlorite. Apply the solution with a saturated cloth. Do not rub, as rubbing might cause irritation. And for safety's sake, rinse the hands thoroughly with the same solution."



4.) "After using the bleaching solution, take a shower and pour buckets of water over yourself while standing in the tub. Use plenty of soap and wash thoroughly. And be sure to wash your hair. Keep the drain open so that the water can't spread the gas over your body. If no first-aid materials are handy, take a shower immediately after removing your clothing. Let the water run freely into your eyes."



5.) "Eyes should be irrigated within five minutes after exposure to the liquid gas or its fumes. Use a solution of one tablespoonful of baking soda to a quart of water. Fill an enema bag with the solution and have someone help you to irrigate each eye with a steady stream for at least two minutes. Alternate back and forth, one eye to the other. If an enema bag is not handy, use a tea kettle or pitcher."



6.) "After bathing, irrigate the nose with a stream of the same baking soda solution. And to treat the throat, use the same solution as a gargle."



7.) "If blisters should develop after exposure to liquid gas, don't touch or attempt to break them. Breaking them might spread the gas and cause new blisters. Have someone summon medical aid for proper treatment."



8.) "After exposure to gas, you may cough or have a brassy taste in your mouth. Your lungs may feel heavy and oppressed cigarettes don't taste as they should. If this happens, lie down immediately. Relax. Don't exert yourself in any way. Ask your Air Raid Warden to notify the Emergency Medical Service."

Women Save the Day for Oregon's Medical Services

"Let's Face the Facts!"

If the worst happened and enemy bombs left massive devastation and casualties in Oregon, officials knew they would have an uphill battle to respond effectively. Large numbers of rescue, ambulance, and medical personnel would be needed. But the need for these professions for overseas duty in the war had drained their ranks on the home front. For instance, about 30% of Portland's doctors had already left for active service. Civilian defense authorities recognized the size of their challenge: "Let's face the facts! For over a year now, we've told you Nurse's Aides are needed. With the military needing at least 3,000 trained nurses a month, we are facing a critical civilian nursing shortage. An enemy raid would cause wide-spread disaster, and there is nothing on which to base our complacency that some other emergency may not break out tomorrow, an emergency which we must be prepared to meet."[1]



Ambulances played a key role in civilian defense plans to respond to an enemy attack. This 1939 Ford sedan was converted to carry a 4-stretcher ambulance body.

Ambulance specifications in letter from Fred T. Foard, M.D., (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148349) Folder 8, Box 22, Defense Council, OSA

Coordinating Limited Resources



Rescuers had to work quickly after an attack to get victims to a hospital or casualty station. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)

State Defense Council officials coordinated with a range of groups, including the Red Cross, hospitals, doctors, nurses, and emergency services organizations to develop sophisticated response plans. Hospitals across the state undertook detailed top to bottom surveys of their facilities and staff to look for weaknesses and improve their capacity. Thousands of people volunteered to work in casualty stations designed in case of an attack to act as local shelters where victims could get temporary medical care before returning home or to emergency housing. Others outfitted and stocked medical supply depots in the vicinity of casualty stations. In case of gas attack, officials planned decontamination or cleansing stations near major hospitals. And the State Medical Disaster Division of the State Defense Council planned base hospitals located in rural "non-target" areas, mostly in eastern Oregon, where evacuees could be moved for safe treatment. **Base hospitals bulletin (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151054)**[2]

Coping With Staff Shortages

Doctors, nurses and other hospital workers put in long hours of overtime to cope with the staff shortages. To lessen the burden, the Oregon State Medical Society encouraged citizens to be responsible when asking for help from doctors and nurses. For example: "Don't ask for house calls by a doctor unless absolutely necessary." Patients were also asked to call their doctor instead of insisting on a visit in many cases. At the hospital, friends and relatives of patients were admonished not to "ask for guest meals in the patient's room, [and] don't sit on the beds - you soil them." They were also asked to take care of the flowers they brought, thus "freeing a nurse for the serious business of caring for the sick." [3]



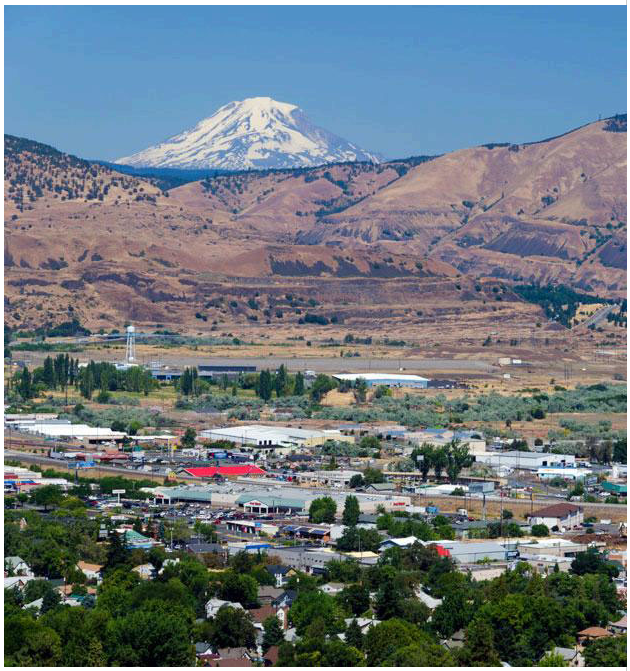
(Image source: Folder 5, Box 22, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Another way to help was to recruit and train more staff. This was a challenge since there were relatively high paying defense jobs available. Medical services recruiters also competed with other civilian protection or war services opportunities for volunteers, such as aircraft warning ground observers and war bond drive workers. Many potential volunteers confessed to being queasy at the thought of working around injured or sick patients. Still, with extensive publicity on the radio and in magazines and newspapers, officials managed to coax thousands of women to pitch in with questions such as: "Now honestly, which is the most important -- your pre-war standard of house-keeping, or that sick child?"[4]

The Oregon Womens Ambulance Corps

While men also volunteered, it was women who made up for most of the shortages in medically related services. Two important examples were the Oregon Womens Ambulance Corps and the expanded role of nurses aides. The Oregon Womens Ambulance Corps described itself as "a non-profit, and non-political organization of intelligent women who have banded together for training in the fields in which women could be most useful in any local or national emergency." The group, which assumed a quasi-military structure, was headed by Colonel Ann Schmeer, while its advisory board was populated by men. The corps accepted female U.S. citizens who were over 18 years old, provided they presented reasonable personal appearance, showed good moral character, and had a driver license. Mandatory training included military drill, first aid and litter drill, communication (signaling, short wave, Morse code, etc.), motor mechanics, and

A Tempest in The Dalles



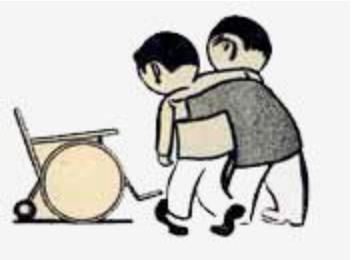
Partisan "outfits" in The Dalles each sought to "run the whole show." (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/51299#lg=1&slide=0)**)

A turf battle developed in The Dalles in early 1942 between the Oregon Womens Ambulance Corps and those in favor of the Red Cross over who would provide ambulance services in case of an attack. Personality differences came into play as Mrs. Joseph Stadelman pushed for the formation of a Red Cross Motor Corps in the area already served by the Oregon Womens Ambulance Corps. Colonel Schmeer, head of the corps, tried to calm the situation by telling Mrs. Stadelman that "we did not wish to compete with the Red Cross but to aid and supplement existing agencies."

fire fighting. Members were called on to earn a chauffeur's license as well.[5]

Training and Civic Activities

Corps members spent time training and drilling for emergency duties, but they also contributed to the community in other ways. Local units could be formed with the presence of 12 qualified women and by the middle of 1941 nine units were up and running. Some of these, such as in Portland, were massive. The Portland unit alone counted hundreds of members organized into dozens of categories such as drivers, truck drivers, standard, advanced, and medical first aid, nursing, teletype operators, typists, stenographers, clerks, firefighters, motor mechanics, seamstresses, cooks, beauticians and musicians. [6]



(Image source: Folder 5, Box 22, Defense Council Records, OSA)

In early 1942 these units reported significant civic activities: In Ocean Lake corps members carried out a paper drive and took part in a "24-hour vigil" at an aircraft observation post. Salem members organized the first bicycle first aid squad in the state and furnished instructors on chemical warfare and first aid. The Pendleton corps raised $300 toward a city ambulance while Eugene members took part in a civilian defense round table on the radio. The Portland contingent provided 5 first aid instructors to the Red Cross and reported that "two instructors alone teach more than 500 persons per week." The Portland report also called attention to their work on the "Americanization" program and noted that "Major Goble is instructing at Jantzen Knitting Mills in chemical warfare as it affects civilians."[7]



A driver stands next to a 1939 Ford sedan converted to carry a 4-stretcher ambulance body. (Folder 8, Box 22, Defense Council, OSA)

Apparently, the corps became entangled in local county intrigue as the head of The Dalles unit of the Oregon Womens Ambulance Corps educated the Portland Headquarters: "It seems each Department feels they want to run the whole show. The Sheriff and his gang are one factor, the Mayor and his outfit another, the Red Cross another and the American Legion Boys as well as several others. In my opinion these women in the Red Cross are causing the trouble as all the others are trying their best to co-operate." In the midst of the tempest, two of Mrs. Stadelman's nieces joined the Ambulance Corps, much to the delight of corps partisans.

Eventually, the controversy died down after one antagonist moved from the area. A relieved Colonel Schmeer reported that "Mrs Stadelman has apparently given up the idea of forming a Red Cross Motor Corps for the moment at least, all appears amicable in The Dalles."[14]

Working in a Man's World

The Ambulance Corps experienced a few rough spots trying to fit into the male dominated world of civilian protection. After a long period of trying to "get a place" for the Ambulance Corps' Portland Headquarters in the Portland and Multnomah County Defense Council offices, Colonel Schmeer reported that "the going has been pretty slow. Now, however, there seems to be some possibility of working out something -- if the girls will wear skirts instead of slacks. I personally think skirts are much nicer but for the life of me I don't see how they contribute to civilian defense. If the Portland girls are willing to

abandon slacks for skirts Capt. Keegan seems willing to make some kind of deal to use them." Schmeer was philosophical about their role: "We find much to inspire us and a great deal of progress, often made under the handicap of little public interest, and sometimes under actual ridicule or criticism."[8]

Nurses Aides Fill Staffing Gaps

Nurses aides played a vital role in filling staffing gaps in hospitals across Oregon. But the shift to using more nurses aides met resistance from traditional elements of the medical professions. One convert, Emily Heaton, the superintendent of Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland, described the change: "In the past, hospitals have drawn a circle around the patient and his bed. They have said, 'No one except the professionally trained may cross this line to care for our sick patients.' When the Red Cross proposed to train a group of volunteers to help with this care, we were skeptical. 'Patients won't accept them. We won't be able to depend on them,' was said. WE WERE WRONG! They are today accepted within this circle as no other non-professional worker ever has been. We welcome them! We depend on them! We wish there were more of them -- Bless them!"[9]



Nurses were recruited for both overseas and domestic service.

Uniformed nurse photo courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/a94567f4-f36c-44c4-b0fb-3ed7fb88414e)

Nurses aides filled numerous jobs in health care. In hospitals they made beds, took temperatures and pulse rates, assisted with dressing wounds, and helped apply casts, among other duties. This helped free registered nurses for pressing duties such as caring for more severely sick or injured patients. But volunteers quickly branched into other areas. In Marion County five aides did visiting nurse work under the public health officer. Others assisted the health officer at preschool, school, immunization, venereal, and dental clinics in the county. Ten more aides worked at a mobile unit of the local blood bank. And 56 nurses aides completed special training to work with polio victims while others volunteered to work in the state tuberculosis hospital.[10]

Meritorious Service to the Cause

The aides put in tremendous hours in their volunteer work. By the middle of 1944, Marion County's 164 nurses aides had contributed nearly 23,000 hours of service. In recognition, the Red Cross honored the Marion County chapter of nurses aides for having the best volunteer record of service on the West Coast and the 3rd best in the nation. Other aides garnered recognition as well. Laura Wilson of Portland singlehandedly volunteered more than 2,100 hours by September 1943. According to *The Oregonian* newspaper, which gave her their "citation of the week," Wilson's superiors said that she had "many of the most desirable qualities of a good nurse. She is soft-voiced and gentle; quietly competent; she is genuinely concerned about human suffering, eager to do what she can to ease it." The newspaper noted that "because she once mastered the intricacies of the Russian tongue, she has been particularly valuable in assisting in the care of Russian seamen who have been patients in the hospitals where she has worked."[11]

Displaying a "Sense of the Appropriate"

Nurses aides were responsible for following countless regulations, policies and procedures in their work. Some notable hospital regulations in Salem covered their appearance. Aides were expected to arrive with a starched cap, fresh blouse, and "spotless pinafore." They were to wear no jewelry other than wedding or engagement rings - "never ear-rings." Although no rule forbade the use of cosmetics while on duty, there was the expectation "that your own knowledge of the 'fitness of things' will direct you in using these discriminately and sparingly" so that the aide could display her 'sense of the appropriate.'"

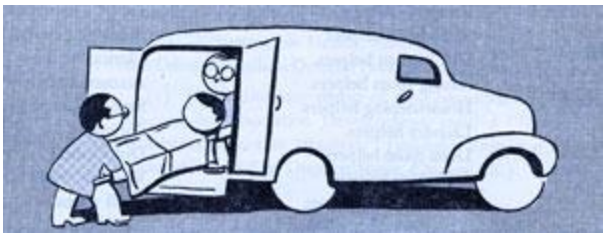
Among other restrictions, red fingernail polish was discouraged while pastel hues were okay. Perfume drew attention as the regulations noted that: "the pungent sweet odors of some perfumes are very nauseating to patients." Because of this, the nurses aide needed to "resort to other measures in keeping her body fragrantly fresh." The solutions offered were "bathing more frequently, the consistent use of a good deodorant, and cologne or toilet water sprays of lighter fragrances." Of course, smoking and drinking on duty were prohibited.[12]

The Natural Pecking Order

Professional ethics were part of the regulations for nurses aides as well. Many instructions described their role in the strict hierarchy of the hospital setting. For example, they were expected to never be insubordinate to a nurse: "If she gives you orders which are directly inverse to those which you were taught, never question her authority in front of the patient." The respect was due because of the training and experience nurses accrued: "A registered nurse has studied and practiced her profession eight hours a day for three years as compared to the ten eight hour days it takes to complete a Nurses Aide course." Likewise, the doctor took his place at the top of the pecking order: "Because of his many years of study and preparation for his life profession, because of his selflessness in his absorbing

Hospitals to Men: Apply Within!

Women filled the majority of volunteer hospital jobs, but men were sought as well. Officials looked to volunteers to solve what was becoming a serious problem. By October 1943, one large hospital saw 37 of its 40 orderlies drafted into the military and found no men available in the tight labor market.



Hospital Men Volunteers load a patient into an ambulance. (Folder 5, Box 22, Defense Council, OSA)

Many hospitals found a solution by setting up a "Hospital Men Volunteers" program. Publicity helped as appeals were made in newspapers and on the radio while speakers fanned out to recruit men at organizations such as church groups, fraternal and labor union organizations, and civic and service clubs.



Hospital Men Volunteers carry a patient on a stretcher. (Folder 5, Box 22, Defense Council, OSA)

The abovementioned hospital soon had 150 volunteers who each volunteered to work one 4-hour shift a week. They helped out in duties such as ward workers, pharmacy helpers, laundry helpers, carpenter helpers - and perhaps the most intriguing- odd-job helpers.

As a bonus, the men got to wear uniforms, the recommended one being a "three-

concern for the health and welfare of others..., a Doctor deserves the revered place he has in any community. This respect of higher learning we make known by a simple gesture. When a Doctor approaches the desk and you are sitting, simply rise."[13]

quarter length grey coat with Citizens Service Corps insignia on the left sleeve."

Hospital Men Volunteers (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151126)[15]

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Letter from Col. Ann Schmeer to Harold Peterson, Feb. 17, 1942. Folder 21, Box 15, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from Col. Ann Schmeer to Jerrold Owen, May 28, 1942. Folder 21, Box 15, Defense Council Records, OSA.



Recruiters promoted the stylish appearance of uniforms for nurses and female medical services workers.

Cadet Nurse graphic courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwest

"Oregon On Guard" Radio Transcript, Oregon State Defense Council, June 3, 1943. Page 2, Folder 19, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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The National Guard is Off to War: Who Will Protect Us Now?

Civilians in Military Drill

The War Department called up Oregon's National Guard to federal service on Sept. 26, 1940 as part of a larger mobilization in the wake of the collapse of western Europe to Nazi forces. This left the state without a force to respond to large-scale emergencies. Local police forces could be called upon, but their ranks would also be thinned during the war by large numbers joining the military. The Army could bring forces to the state in the event of an attack, but how long would it take for help to arrive? Would it be too late? These questions occupied the minds of many Oregonians before Pearl Harbor but the call for answers gained urgency after Dec. 7, 1941.



The War Department mobilized the Oregon National Guard in 1940, leaving a void in the state that was eventually filled by the Oregon State Guard after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Oregon National Guard's 41st Division went on to provide distinguished service in the Pacific theater. Shown above is the makeshift dental clinic of the division's Headquarters Company in New Guinea in 1943. (Image courtesy U.S. Army)

Debate Over a "Home Guard"

The debate over whether to form some sort of "home guard" or state guard carried on through 1940 and 1941 in Oregon. Even local posts of veterans groups such as the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars held differing opinions on the issue. The Hermiston Post of the American Legion was strongly in favor of organizing a home defense plan and pressed Governor Sprague to move forward in October 1940: "We feel a defense unit is justified at this point, as there are numerous ideal targets in this vicinity which would no doubt appeal to an enemy. A summary consists of irrigation reservoirs, grain ware houses, grain and oil docks, mainline railroads to the three compass points, railroad roundhouse and yards, and approximately four million gallons of gasoline and oil storage all within a radius of seven miles of our city and Legion Post." The group boasted 100 people in the vicinity, "all veterans of the last World War which should be sufficiently trained men to handle any size unit that you might wish to enlist at this point." [1]

Some groups mounted "an aggressive campaign" to force the formation of a state guard, prompting the Salem post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars to come to Sprague's defense. They decried the fact that "Governor Sprague is being daily submitted to unwarranted attacks and abuse, including aspersions upon his competence to pass upon this issue because he 'is not a military man'...." The Salem veterans condemned the "publicity seeking attacks" that "can only result in furthering the mass hysteria that is so destructive to the full exercise of sober thought and consideration...." [2] For his part, Sprague stuck to his guns. Early on he had outlined a state guard plan but "it will not be put into effect until the need therefor becomes apparent." [3]

Debate also centered on how the guard would be organized. Would it be a highly centralized force or localized? Mark Weatherford, an Albany attorney, counseled the governor to choose the local approach because of the speed with which local forces could respond: "There may be landing parties, there may be raiding parties, there may be parachute troops in any county in this state; we are in a combat area. What are the citizens going to do if parachute troops do land in Linn County or any other county? Certainly we do not plan to run or await the coming of an army thereby permitting the enemy troops to entrench, capture trucks and vehicles and become a formidable adversary." Instead, Weatherford suggested that every town organize its men into groups of four "armed with rifles, shotguns or any other equipment available." If the enemy attacked, each group would jump in a car to go to the scene: "An army of 3000 men could thus be assembled in Linn County in less than an hour and be on the spot where parachute troops were reported landing in the county, ready to combat them."



Salem veterans came to the defense of the non-veteran Oregon governor after critics assailed Sprague's failure to form a state guard in the months before Pearl Harbor. Oregon State Capitol in Salem. (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/26571#lg=1&slide=0)**)

Weatherford letter (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527726)[4]

Oregon State Guard Formed

Governor Sprague authorized the formation of the Oregon State Guard the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor but challenges remained. Congress had amended the law in 1940 to allow for state guard units to operate while the National Guard was in federal service. But it left it to the discretion of the secretary of war as to how much arms and equipment would be contributed to the states.



An Enfield Model 1917 shown with bayonet, scabbard, and 11 rounds of ammunition, which is one round more than the military was willing to sell to the Oregon State Guard for each rifle issued.

Worries and Headaches...

Ralph Cowgill, commanding general of the Oregon State Guard, pitched a plan to Governor Sprague in 1942 to establish a

The results were predictable and antique World War I era or earlier arms were offered as Oregon military officials lamented: "The Secretary of War has indicated thus far that the only

"women's auxiliary for semi-military service" within the guard. The plan called for two divisions, one administrative and the other focused on "Women's Activities." Many local units had already formed women's auxiliaries and Cowgill "thought it would be better for the esprit de corps if these women would be given noncommissioned ranks and required to wear a khaki uniform."



According to Governor Sprague, women could help out in the Oregon State Guard as long as it was on a typewriter.

The governor balked at the plan. He approved of enrolling small numbers of women "merely for use as clerical assistants," but cautioned that "I am afraid, though, if you get started you will wind up with a woman's army, officers and enlisted personnel as well. This would give you a lot of worry and many headaches." The governor's conclusion: "I do not feel at the present time that there is a need for a complete woman's army in Oregon." Women were needed, it seems, as long as they stayed at their typewriters. **Cowgill and Sprague letters to each other** [17] **(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151099)**

equipment available for issue includes the following: Rifle, Caliber .30, Enfield, Model 1917, with accessories; gun sling, Model 1907; bayonet, Model 1917; and bayonet scabbard, Model 1917." Furthermore, barely 2,000 of the rifles and accessories could be issued and Oregon would have to pay for the packing, handling, and shipping to get them here. No ammunition would be issued, instead states could purchase only ten rounds per rifle. The War Department also offered to sell antique mess kits, canteens, and other equipment as well but would provide no instructors to train the state guard. [5]

The Organization Takes Shape

Despite less than rousing support in terms of equipment and training offered by the War Department, Oregon forged ahead with organizing the state guard. Officials divided the state into 26 battalion areas, with the minimum company size set at 60 men and 3 officers. Demand for additional companies quickly rose causing officials to expand their maximum size to 217 men and 6 officers and make plans for subdividing into more battalion areas to accommodate the additional volunteers. Battalion areas included infantry units, cavalry troops, motorcycle troops, shotgun squads, and truck companies as well as units trained to handle bulldozers, tractors and other heavy equipment. Medical units were organized to provide first aid, field hospitalization, and base hospital treatment. And, "in response to many applications, we expect to appoint chaplains throughout the state to serve with the various units...." [6]

State guard members were all volunteers and legally could not be called up for federal service or serve outside the borders of the state. They furnished their own guns, clothing and personal equipment. Members received regular army training and were subject to army discipline. They trained in a subjects including first aid, chemical warfare, tactics and "other soldierly topics." And, they stood ready to respond to orders from the governor, who was the commander in chief. Authorities were expansive in

their interpretation of the authority of the governor to order the force to execute any "lawful command." Over time, the state guard assumed control of nearly all National Guard armories around the state. The exceptions were Ashland and Woodburn, which had no state guard units.

How to Use the State Guard

Generally, officials envisioned the guard to be used "to resist invasion, preserve internal order, or meet grave emergency beyond the capacity of the state and local police forces." [7]Officials described a scenario in which the state guard would be used: "In the event of invasion on the Oregon coast, the State Guard would rush to control all roads leading to the coast, would attack and harass the invaders, delaying the invading activity until such time as fully equipped regular army forces could reach the point and take over."



Members of the Bushwhackers of SE Portland pose proudly with their weapons. The group grew to 150 members who drilled in a church basement. They later sought to join the Oregon State Guard. (Image source: [9])

Authorities conceded that "the Oregon State Guard would never win a battle against well-equipped forces of an invading enemy - that would be the lot of the regular army."

At that time, guard forces would "retire to serve as snipers and serve as guerrilla-type soldiers concentrating upon the destruction of parachute and air-borne troops. In the event of sabotage, the guardsmen would surround any area threatened or subjected to sabotage." Authorities conceded that "the Oregon State Guard would never win a battle against well-equipped forces of an invading enemy - that would be the lot of the regular army." Still, officials insisted that they would be a "fast striking" force of "immeasurable value" by cutting communication lines, destroying supply depots, and delaying the enemy, thus destroying their morale. [8]

Taming the Guerrillas

The Oregon State Guard encouraged the independent local home guard organizations around the state to integrate with the state guard. Some groups, such as the Tillamook Guerrillas, were large and very zealous. The "Bushwhackers" of southeast Portland were another such group. Comprised of men from 20 to 60 years old, most members were in their late 40s. The group formed in January 1942 and counted 150 volunteers by April. Each Monday they met in the basement of the Laurelwood Methodist Church for close-order military drill and to "bang away at a series of targets." Army officials were not excited about the idea of numerous groups such as the Bushwhackers traipsing through the woods with loaded weapons so they asked the state to check the reliability of each group's leaders. The Bushwhackers planned to bring their ranks up to 240 men and apply to join the Oregon State Guard as four new companies. [9]

Governor Sprague also worked to bring these local forces into the fold, starting with flattery:

"One thing made clear in this war is the value of guerrilla fighting; and our local fighters, familiar with the terrain, can be of great value in repelling the enemy. They should be enrolled in a military body, however; otherwise they would not be entitled to the rights of prisoners of war, if captured, but would be subjected to immediate execution. They should also be regularized for training and for proper coordination with regular troops." [10]

The efforts of Governor Sprague and Oregon State Guard officials paid off. By the end of 1942, the guard numbered 464 officers and 8,486 men. By the middle of 1944, however, there was reason for concern when an inspection found that "a great number of the units, for all intents and purposes, ceased to exist except on paper." Officials blamed the situation on loss of many members to the armed services and to low morale caused by a "lack of interest due to the progress of the war, [and] the probability that the country would not be invaded by the enemy...," among other reasons. A reorganization was prescribed to address the problem. [11]

Portland's Veterans' Guard and Patrol Organized



About 2,500 members of the Veterans' Guard and Patrol of Portland stage a regimental review under Commander John Keegan. The full force of the guard numbered about 4,000 members. The volunteers guarded bridges, utilities, the harbor and other strategic sites. The groups' marching band played frequently in parades and other events. (Folder 5, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Just as the ranks of the Oregon State Guard were depleted by the constant drain of enlistment and draft into the armed services, so were local police forces. In response, many communities saw the formation of auxiliary police units. The largest was Portland's Veterans' Guard and Patrol, which was organized in April 1941 with 106 men. By spring of 1943 the group swelled to 4,000 members. Members had to be over 21 years old and have no criminal record. After a ten-week training course from police school, members had to pass an examination before earning their commission. They also received ongoing training in such subjects as wartime traffic, chemical warfare, military drill, self defense, weapons care and handling, and fire protection. Each company met once a week for instruction and training, which was compulsory. All told, the volunteers contributed 30,000 hours each month to the cause of keeping Portland safe. [12]

On the "Beat"

The founders of the Veterans' Guard devised a plan to help regular police authorities provide around the clock protection to an area with a population of about 400,000. They started by dividing the city up by population and setting up posts so most volunteers were within walking distance of their headquarters. Eventually, the organization comprised seven battalions, each headed by a major, and 36 companies headed by captains. At the heart was John Keegan, the commander who also served as chief of detectives

for the Portland Police Bureau. He oversaw the general headquarters in downtown Portland "where telephones jangle musically day and night...." [13]



A lieutenant with the Veterans' Guard and Patrol salutes a superior officer. Members carried weapons and had police power. (Image source: [12])

Out on the "beat" officers patrolled streets, helped with traffic control, guarded hospitals, enforced dimout rules, and kept an eye on juvenile delinquents and other "undesirables." While "doing a hundred and one other jobs to aid Portland's police force," the Veterans' Guard gained particular satisfaction from "making the business of prowlers a most hazardous one." Special groups augmented the street patrols, including a mounted patrol with 75 members to cover outlying areas, and a motorcycle patrol with 60 members who served as special messengers. A Veterans' Guard band consisting of 60 members played at parades and other events in the area. [14]

Playing the Part

Appearance and demeanor were important components of the respect they commanded from having full police authority. Members purchased and wore full uniforms complete with a blue police shirt, black tie, blue police blazer and white police cap with a civilian defense emblem. If that were not enough, "he has on a star, too, which gives him that authority he needs to make the gentlemen - and ladies - of the underworld step into line." A newspaper profile described a typical member of the Veterans' Guard:

> **"He's that husky fellow standing over there with a gun in the holster on his hip. He has a glint in his eye that means trouble if you happen to have second-story intentions or if you plan to plant a bomb down along the waterfront somewhere." [15]**

The group was proud of their work in protecting hospitals where nurses "arriving or going off shift late at night...were accosted by undesirables." After increased patrols, one guardsman proclaimed: "These cases haven't only thinned out. They've stopped." The safer environment made possible by the patrols led to this suggestion for skeptics: "Try driving up past one of the hospitals any of these fine nights, driving slowly and getting your most 'I-am-a-gangster' expression on your face. You'll be surrounded in a hurry by a bunch of flashlight-swinging patrol members...." [16]

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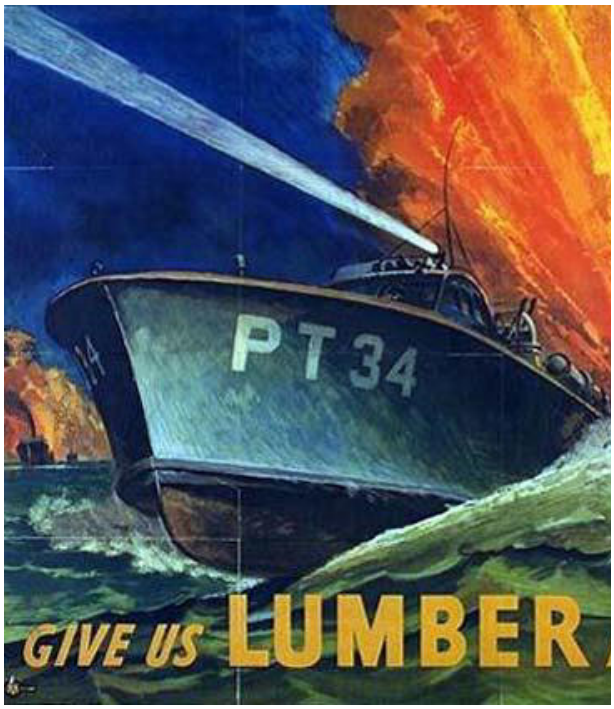
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Shielding Oregon's Vital Assets: Forest and Plant Protection

"The Saboteur May Be Sly and Furtive"

Wood products and Liberty transport ships comprised two of Oregon's significant contributions to the war effort. Their sources also represented two of the state's most vulnerable targets for attack or sabotage. Oregon's vast forest lands and sprawling shipyards and mills ranked high in the minds of military and civilian defense officials as vital assets in need of protection. But the Army couldn't supply the tens of thousands of soldiers necessary to guard forests that reached as far as the eye could see from fire or attack. And they couldn't spare enough troops to circle shipyards and other plants and factories that supplied the war effort. Even if they could, these facilities would still be vulnerable to infiltration by saboteurs and spies bent on destroying them from inside or stealing crucial secrets. Instead, civilian defense programs had to fight the threat by remaining vigilant and educating those who worked in the forests, shipyards and other vital state assets. The stakes were high - if forest and plant protection programs succeeded, production would be maximized and millions of Americans fighting in the war would have every advantage possible.



A Navy PT boat in the midst of battle dramatized the need for Oregon's wood products in this government poster. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/81a7cfb7-5c5e-4b69-9634-17df4aa91980)**

Forest Protection



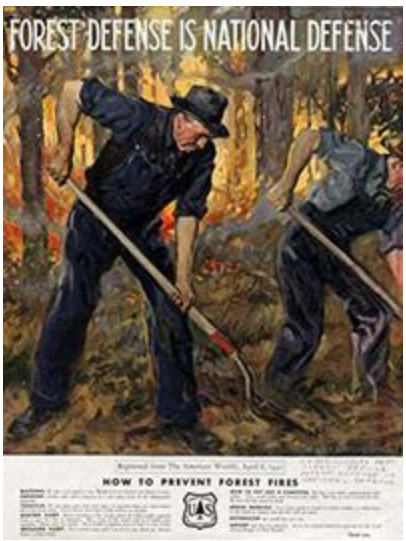
The need for ammunition boxes, pallets, and other wood products kept workers in Oregon's forest busy.

Protecting Oregon's forests from fire damage, already a priority, took on more importance after the federal War Production Board declared lumber to be a critical war material, thus sharply curtailing its use for any purpose other than defense. Wood from the forests of the Pacific Northwest, particularly Douglas fir, went into countless applications such as cantonments and defense housing and it was rapidly replacing steel in building warehouses, airplane hangers, factories, docks and other structures. Some of this was a result of a shortage of steel, but it was also made possible by engineering developments such as the "ring connector method of timber framing." Douglas fir was used as decking on battleships and airplane carriers, in patrol boats, in Navy mine sweepers and submarine chasers, and in fleets of inland and coastal barges. Moreover, five Northwest timber species found there way into American and British airplanes.[1] Even products as mundane as pallets and shipping

Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/54de1f2c-9e3f-4173-8824-77c94c4921ac)

crates, not to mention the countless reams of paper for the fast-growing military and civilian bureaucracies, relied on Oregon's forests.

Increased logging activity to meet the defense demand coupled with fear of sabotage or enemy attack caused officials to develop the Forest Fire Fighter Service (FFFS) in 1942. Augmenting the work of federal and state forestry agencies, the goal of the new organization was to prevent and control any fires that threatened forest land and timber resources. Operating under the federal Office of Civilian Defense, the service worked with state officials, who appointed coordinators. On the local level, coordinators appointed squad leaders who controlled working units of 8-10 fire fighters. Each member was required to complete a minimum of 12 hours of training to be certified, although this could be modified to suit local conditions since "many loggers, ranchers, and others because of past experience will be more useful than inexperienced persons with many times 12 hours of training." New fire fighters studied the forest fire control plan for their local area; common causes for forest fires; fire behavior as affected by topography, cover, and weather; safe use of hand tools; and other topics. As part of the job, they also passed along elements of their training to their neighbors, school children and the public. This outreach effort enlisted even more people in the cause of forest protection, providing more eyes and ears on the lookout for fire or suspicious behavior in and around the state's forests.[2]



This illustration shows civilians working on fire lines for national defense. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/15b93f85-d201-4fe4-8629-59d042977713)**

Certainly Oregon communities and towns adjacent to forest areas already had experience with fighting forest fires. In many cases it was custom for business and men from nearby towns to help control fires without the aid of any formal organization such as the Forest Fire Fighter Service. Hoping to build on this tradition of service, Arthur King, Oregon coordinator of the FFFS, wanted to recruit these individuals into the fold. He reasoned that the resulting effort would be more effective because of enhanced training and organization and at the same time would "give the volunteers the recognition of belonging to a national civilian defense organization." King targeted local sportsmen as well as members of the American Legion and service and fraternal organizations. He also sought older members of the Future Farmers of America and 4-H clubs along with older boy scouts.[3]

In addition to recruiting volunteers to work on the fire lines, state FFFS officials looked to develop forest protection specialists. These included emergency lookouts, patrolmen, bulldozer operators, power pump operators, truck drivers, tool repairmen and others. They also sought to enlist the service of women, albeit on a limited basis. Josephine County drew national attention in 1942 for organizing and training female "canteen crews" and state officials wanted to expand this to other areas of Oregon. They also hoped to interest women in other work related to forest protection such as timekeeping, warehouse duties, and light truck driving.[4]

Plant Protection

The concept of plant protection brought together strategies and lessons learned in civilian defense categories related to sabotage, fire prevention, and accident prevention into one unified approach for a particular factory, utility, or other entity. The result, if executed properly, would be a comprehensive plan followed assiduously by a well trained and loyal workforce.



Officials warned that saboteurs could ruin factory equipment while making it appear to result from natural causes. (Folder 23, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)



Photo identification cards were common in the defense industry. Many, such as this one for the Oregon State Defense Council, included fingerprints on the back side. (Folder 19, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The threat of sabotage and espionage resulting in damage to machinery, power stations, water supplies, and communication systems gave many civilian defense officials nightmares. They knew "the saboteur may be sly and furtive. He may strike when least expected, and attempts frequently to avoid suspicion by making his depredations appear to result from natural causes." In addition to saboteurs "throwing wrenches in the works," they worried about spies looking for improved production methods, specifications, plans, production rates and other sensitive information. They were on the lookout for suspicious characters who would infiltrate a factory or other strategic setting under the guise of being an employee, inspector, visitor, or some other authorized person. The key to battling these enemies was an educated and vigilant workforce. These ideal employees knew their fellow employees "intimately." They understood the dangers of talking business away from the workplace and of spreading unconfirmed rumors. And they were trained to understand the tactics of saboteurs and spies while remembering to avoid "suspicious" and "dubious characters."[5]

Aliens required a more thorough review and anyone making "doubtful statements" on the application warranted further scrutiny, possibly resulting in a report to the FBI.

In order to tell the good guys from the bad, plant security required carefully investigating and identifying employees. While variations existed depending on the strategic sensitivity of the work site, background checks on employees often called for detailed personal histories of applicants, complete with interviews of past employers and personal references. Aliens required more thorough review and anyone making "doubtful statements" on the application warranted further scrutiny, possibly resulting in a report to the FBI. Fingerprinting was essential for employment at any facility that was vital to the war effort. Other plants participated voluntarily in the program. The goal was to turn up criminal records. However, considering chronic labor shortages, officials did not want to be too particular and therefore were "not primarily concerned with the morals of the employees, and disregard criminal records unless they disclose tendencies that make their employment a risk." Once employees were hired, they received a "tamperproof" badge that often included a photograph and fingerprints.[6]

Considering chronic labor shortages, officials did not want to be too particular and therefore they were "not primarily concerned with the morals of the employees, and disregard criminal records unless they disclose tendencies that make their employment a risk."

A good plant protection plan included other components. For example, air raid instructions were posted and employees underwent regular drills. Perimeter fencing was to be strong and in good order despite the fact that the "present metal shortages require the use of ingenuity in designing suitable fencing from available material." Entrances were to be kept to a minimum and either locked or guarded at all times. Local police, fire, and emergency medical services departments were to be made familiar with the plant conditions. Officials asked plant managers about their blackout plans and how long it took to achieve blackout after receiving the signal. Moreover, authorities pushed factory managers to create shelter areas within facilities along with plans for protection against a gas attack.[7]

Unlike shipyards and factories, which defended relatively discrete perimeters, railroads and utilities contended with hundreds of miles of track and line crisscrossing Oregon. While it was not possible to guard every mile of track or line, Federal civilian defense authorities made recommendations for components of rail and utility protection plans and the State Defense Council set up committees to work on implementing the plans around the state. Alert railroad maintenance crews and utility linemen on the lookout for anything out of the ordinary formed the best defense.



Southern Pacific Railroad employees train to be part of the company's Klamath Falls bomb protection squad. (Folder 23, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

In addition to their regular work, these crews and other company employees trained in a variety of protection specialties. Some learned fire fighting, bomb reconnaissance and bomb extinguishing skills. Others trained in medical services and first aid. Not to be outdone by their husbands, in Klamath Falls the wives of Southern Pacific Railroad workers formed an auxiliary first aid committee of their own. And while railroad police already patrolled the railroad yards and lines, during the war officials stepped up the effort. The Klamath Falls railroad protection plan included an active defense police committee concerned with maintaining vigilance against possible saboteurs. The fear of this was highlighted by federal pressure on Governor Sprague to crack down on hobos catching rides on freight trains. Military

authorities thought saboteurs might pose as hobos to gain access to railroads or forests for destructive purposes.[8]

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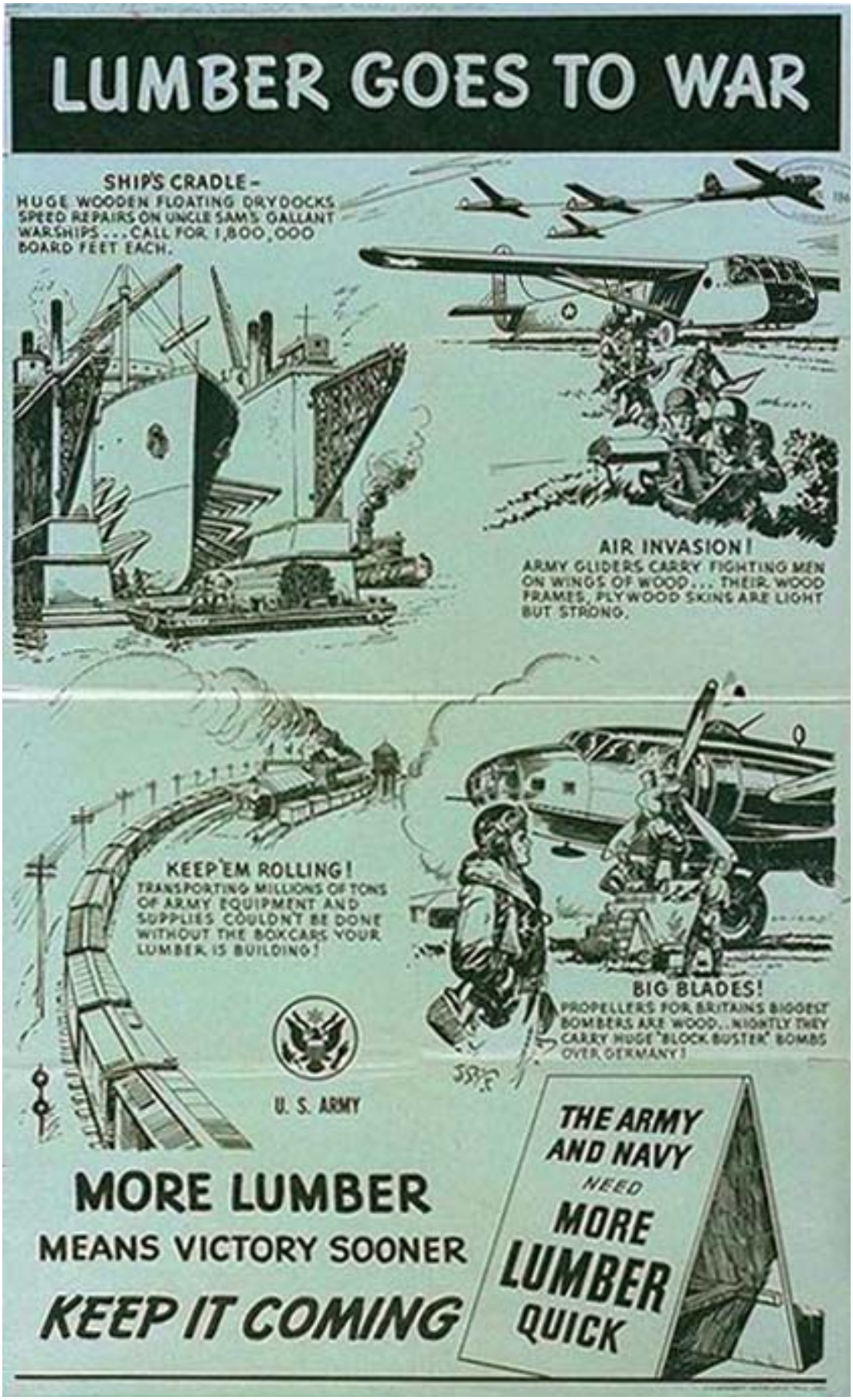
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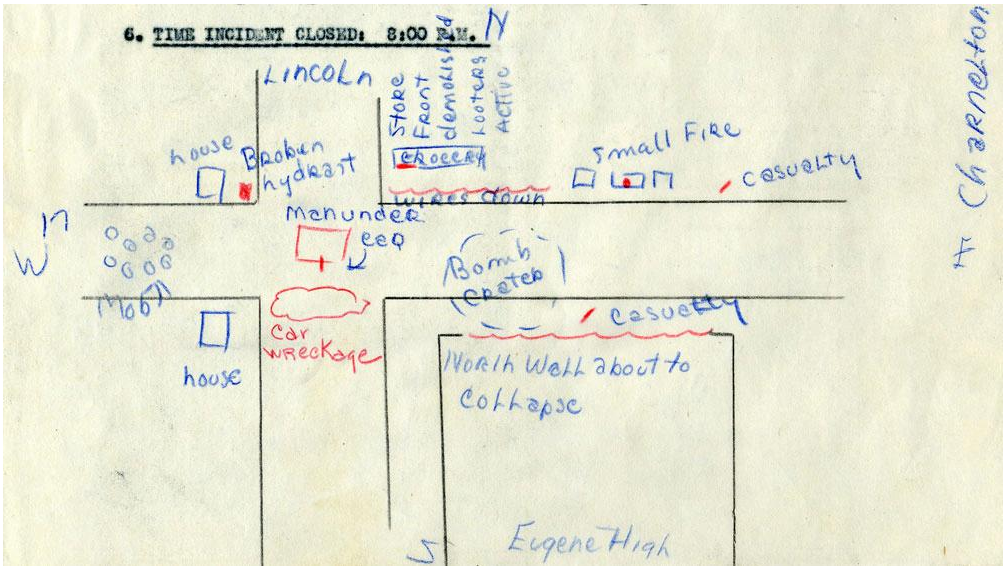


This poster shows ways "lumber goes to war." Image courtesy Northwestern University Library: https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/959c4ec2-ae5e-4c70-bfd5-5a50482d799f

Until We Get This Right: Incident Drills and Control Centers

In Search of a Coordinated Response

By 1942 authorities across Oregon had organized complex civilian protection programs staffed by tens of thousands of volunteers. But the work of these air raid wardens, auxiliary police and fire forces, fire guards, emergency medical teams, decontamination units, drivers, messengers, evacuation officers, public utility repair squads, and others (collectively known as the Citizens Defense Corps) had not been tested in any meaningful way to see if it was well coordinated and integrated. To address this, the State Defense Council worked with county defense councils to develop and implement incident drills to put the system through its paces in communities throughout Oregon. The council also set up the first state control center in the nation to coordinate statewide activities in the case of a widespread emergency, such as an enemy attack.



A diagram shows the aftermath of an imaginary bombing raid on West 17th Ave. and Lincoln St. in Eugene that was part of a training incident drill. (Folder 14, Box 18, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Incident Drills

With the approval of the Army and State Defense Council authorities, local officials prepared elaborate incidents, some with the flavor of street theater, to test volunteers. Jackson County staged four nearly simultaneous incidents in December 1942. One bomb attack scene took place in the middle of Medford at the intersection of South Oakdale with 11th and J Streets. The "props" included an old car on its side to simulate a wreck, old lumber to simulate a fallen wall, rubbish for a fire on J Street, ropes and wires for fallen power and phone lines, lime to mark a bomb crater, a keg to play the part of an unexploded bomb, a hose to simulate a leaking water main, and smoke bombs as incendiary bombs. The players, one truck driver and 16 people to act as casualties, set up the incident ahead of time. The carnage was as follows:

MEDFORD INCIDENT DRILL NO. 1 INJURIES



December 18, 1942

Four under wreckage, two of whom are unconscious but breathing. One other with fractured hip and one with crushed chest.

Four back of fire of which one has severe burns on face and hands. One unconscious not breathing, hair scorched and clothing smouldering, one severe burn on left thigh and one with bad burn on right shoulder.

Two near overturned car. One unconscious with broken neck, one dead.

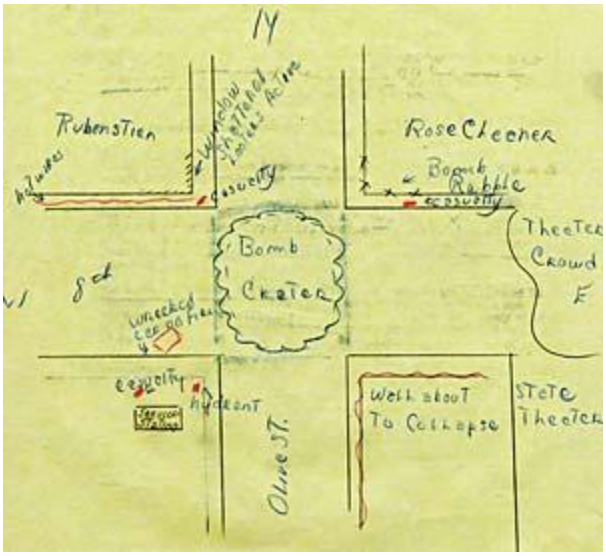
Two in stalled car. One severe arterial bleeding right shoulder. One dazed with cut on forehead.

Four in street. Two dead, one with compound fracture of right arm below elbow and unable to move legs, and one in contact with electrical wire unconscious, not breathing.[1]

Emergency crews arrived and swarmed the incident scene while trained observers took careful notes on the performance on each group and the effort as a whole. Reports from included comments such as: "Tourniquet placed on left leg of patient at 7:25 (it was first placed on right leg but the patient called attention to the mistake)" and "Auxiliary police arrived at 7:59 but failed to keep the crowd in place and failed to control traffic." A Corvallis incident drill featuring a high explosive bomb and three wrecked houses in October 1942 exposed a dispatch error among other problems when the "ambulance did not arrive for casualties. No police were dispatched. Wardens performed no first aid. Address given in report did not conform to that given in written incident." Still, other comments heaped praise on the participants: "Some of the first aid rendered by these wardens reached a degree of perfection...."

In addition to pointing out cases of error or efficient response, observers also provided broader suggestions to help integrate the effort. For example, after one incident in Medford, observer George Field suggested that "air raid wardens become more inclined to assume [the] responsibility of their position and more thorough in their direction of the work to be done by the service when they arrive at the scene."[2]

Lane County officials came under fire after significant problems surfaced during a June 1942 incident drill in Eugene. Communication with the control center was the primary complaint. From 6 p.m. to 8:20 p.m. 65 calls got through to the control center, but 94 calls went unanswered because the line was busy. In one case an air raid warden had to wait 23 minutes to get a call through to the center. James Olson, assistant coordinator for the State Defense Council, put the deficiency in pointed terms: "The city of



A bomb crater, part of an incident drill, sits in the middle of the intersection of West 8th Ave. and Olive St. in downtown Eugene. The diagram shows nearby businesses hit by looters and a crowd in front of the State Theater. (Folder 14, Box 18, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Eugene has an excellently planned and partially trained citizens' defense corps. Unless these various units can be integrated and dispatched through an adequate control center, the work done so far is largely wasted." Not to be outdone, Larry Duhrkoop, senior trainer for the State Defense Council, said that "the control center is perhaps the worst possible." Stung by the criticism, the Eugene City Council quickly passed a resolution approving more telephones for the control center to alleviate the bottleneck.

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But the critics were not finished with the handling of the Eugene incident drill. They also pointed to the fact that reporters, apparently trying to make the incident drill as realistic as possible, set off a fire cracker right in the control center. Their intent was to "illustrate the possibility of a saboteur setting off a hand grenade." As observers noted, no one was hurt but if it had been the real thing "the entire control center would have been wiped out." Critics also pointed out that the reporters had not been asked for their identification before they were admitted to the control center even though "they might well have been alien enemies." Jack Hayes, in charge of civilian protection for the State Defense Council, distilled the Eugene incident drill down to its essence:

"This is one of the best examples of plain and fancy confusion that I have ever seen."[3]

State Control Center

Even as State Defense Council officials castigated the performance of some local control centers, they had to acknowledge that they did not even have a control center at the state level. Oregon officials broached the subject of creating one with the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense in the middle of 1942, asking the federal office for plans to set up a "central agency to serve the state in a capacity similar to the control centers of local defense



councils." As Oregon State Defense Council coordinator Jerrold Owen recounted, the idea "was discouraged and [I was] rather curtly advised that the function of a state defense council was that of a planning agency solely, and it had no operative function in time of emergency."[4]

Officers of the Army's First and Fourth Fighter Command gather to inspect the new State Control Center in Salem. State Defense Council Coordinator Jerrold Owen in seated second from the right. (Folder 16, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Undaunted, state officials forged ahead with "pioneering" what would be the first state control center in the nation. The goal was to set up a station where, during enemy attack, key state officials would gather to follow the progress of events and order the distribution of aid to local defense councils that requested it. Examples of help included fire fighting apparatus, blood plasma and other medical supplies, as well as food, clothing, or additional personnel. The control center would be staffed around the clock and would immediately notify the governor and other executive officials if the enemy attacked. Joining the governor in the control center would be the commander of the Oregon State Guard, superintendent of the Oregon State Police, state fire coordinator, state medical officer, state evacuation officer, state highway engineer, state public utilities commissioner, state adjutant general, state Red Cross director, and several others, including State Defense Council staff. Army liaison officers would also be present.[5]



Jack Hayes, State Defense Council Director of Civilian Protection, explains the operations of the new State Control Center to staff members. (Folder 25, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

In fact, despite the lack of support from federal civilian defense authorities, military officials were quite enthusiastic when approached for cooperation. They saw the center as a potentially valuable source of information about enemy movements and actions. According to military officials, in the event of an invasion, "civilians may come into possession of many valuable facts before they are reported to army intelligence. An army liaison officer at your control center can evaluate this information and pass on immediately that of military value." Proponents argued that the military intelligence could piece together such unrelated incidents as "the theft of an automobile later found abandoned in the vicinity of the Bonneville Power installations, the appearance of swarthy strangers in rural communities, the theft of dynamite from a logging camp, [and] the reporting of strange lights in a desolate waste," into a more sinister plot.[6]

Officials furnished the control center in Salem with communication and emergency equipment. One end of the center was lined with maps of the state and panel boards for plotting information about enemy movements. Batteries of telephones were staffed by "telephonists with headsets ready for action." In case of power failure, gasoline lanterns, flashlights, and candles were kept in stock. Officials also were ready with an alternate location for the control center in case the main center were bombed.

Once the State Control Center was up and running in May 1943 it participated with the military in a command post exercise involving the entire Oregon coastal area. To keep state officials on their toes, the

military would provide no advance notice "except that 'D' Day would be within the next three weeks." Ten days later the exercise began. Within ten minutes key personnel arrived at the control center and 35 minutes later the "skull practice" attack moved forward. No actual personnel or equipment on the ground were used and officials, fearing an Orson Welles' "War of the Worlds" reaction, started and ended all communication with the word "drill." The attack included the bombing of military and industrial assets in Astoria, followed quickly by attacks on St. Helens, the Longview Bridge, the shipyards and bridges of Portland, and power plants at Bonneville Dam. Meanwhile, saboteurs destroyed a number of bridges near Oregon City.[7]

A "theoretical" Japanese plane dropped a bomb near the control center and disrupted all communication and power lines. While local fire fighters battled the flames, control center personnel kept working.



Telephonist Betty Barr receives an incident report while Defense Council Coordinator and State Control Center Commander Jerrold Owen reads a report. (Folder 16, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Responding to the crisis, the governor declared "theoretical" martial law, state highway workers blocked key highways to be used by the military, the Oregon State Guard patrolled the highways, fire pumpers were moved to stricken communities, and the mass evacuation of bombed communities was requested, which the military denied. Meanwhile, all of the lights went out in the state control center. Officials didn't miss a beat as workers grabbed the lanterns and flashlights to continue work: "Even the telephonist who was taking a message at the time of the unannounced blackout was not halted a moment but was able to continue writing the message being received, a flashlight in the hands of the Commander of the control center being beamed in her direction immediately [after] the lights were extinguished." Later, a "theoretical" Japanese plane dropped a bomb near the control center and disrupted all communication and power lines. While local fire fighters battled the flames, control center personnel kept working. All telephone messages were diverted to a State Police radio system and from there were relayed to a radio-equipped police car standing near the half-demolished building. A courier carried the messages from there to the control center.[8]

Jerrold Owen acknowledged that the theoretical attack was easier than a real one would be: "Had the flames been actual, the noise real, the danger acute, the operation would not have gone ahead so smoothly." Still, military officials, while making a number of suggestions, agreed that the control center was a success. They planned to recommend the control center plan to states throughout the West. And Owen summed up the experience: "Our first test naturally was not perfect and there are 'bugs' that we will endeavor to eliminate. However, as we started from 'scratch' with no specifications to follow, I feel that the first operation was quite successful."[9]

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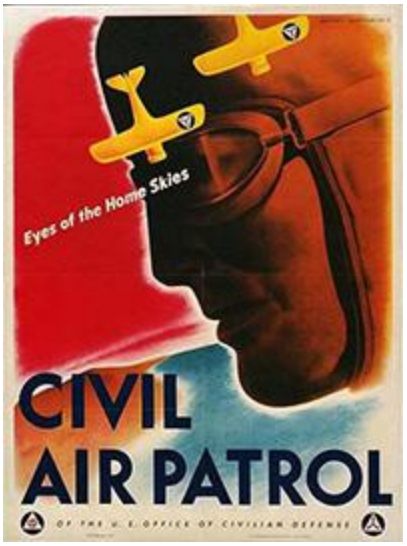
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"Oregon Activates Nation's First State Control Center," *Western City Magazine*, June, 1943. Page 27, Folder 16, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

So Much Work to Do: Other Civilian Protection Activities

Many Ways to Defend the State

In addition to the measures described in previous chapters, Oregonians worked in other ways to secure the state from enemy attack. Some civilian protection programs, such as the Civil Air Patrol and the camouflaging of strategic facilities, did not develop as fully in Oregon as in other states but still proved useful. Others, such as the civilian shore patrol, soon yielded to military patrol efforts. This page summarizes these programs and profiles two products from an inventor who pitched his fanciful designs for equipment to defend Oregon's coastline from attack.



Officials called the Civil Air Patrol the "Eyes of the Home Skies."

Illustrated image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d5e55ac4-8138-475d-9468-ae01146b5b67)

Civil Air Patrol

In December 1941 the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense created the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) in response to the threat from submarines, primarily German U-boats that were causing significant damage to shipping along the Atlantic Coast. While Navy and Army aircraft took the lead in the hunt for submarines, the Civil Air Patrol made use of pilots who were overage or otherwise not eligible for the military. Some 40,000 volunteers flew their own planes on submarine patrol and missions such as transporting military passengers. After CAP pilots bombed 57 submarines, including several kills, the Army was so impressed that in 1943 it took over the program from civilian jurisdiction.

In Oregon over 1,400 volunteers enlisted in the Civil Air Patrol but military authorities maintained restrictions on submarine hunting off the Oregon coast. In spite of this, squadrons across the state in cities such as Astoria, Bend, Salem, Ontario and Portland stayed busy with ground training, drilling, courier services and other activities. For example, the Bend contingent undertook several tasks: "Although beset by bad weather and several minor accidents, the Courier service has made numerous round trip flights to Walla Walla since its inception." The group also responded quickly to help search for a missing Army bomber near Burns: "Within two hours after receipt of the request we had lined up three planes and six pilots to make the trip to Burns." **CAP newspaper (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151084)**[1]



An entire fake town, complete with houses, lawns, and trees covered Boeing Aircraft's Plant 2 in Seattle. The design was intended to camouflage the vital defense plant from enemy attack. (Image courtesy www.boeing.com)

Camouflage Program

Plans to camouflage strategic facilities and operations in Oregon never really came to fruition. In the early days of the war, federal authorities anticipated the need to conceal vital assets from enemy bombers and in some states elaborate and ingenious camouflage of key defense factories was completed. For example, Seattle's sprawling Boeing Aircraft facilities, home to the B-17 "Flying Fortress" bombers, camouflaged nearly 26 acres of a plant. Workers covered Boeing's Plant 2 with a structure made of three-dimensional chicken-wire, plywood, and canvas. From the air, the resulting camouflage looked more like a town, with trees, houses, and schools, than an airplane factory.

Seattle's sprawling Boeing Aircraft facilities, home to the B-17 "Flying Fortress" bombers, camouflaged nearly 26 acres of a plant. From the air, the resulting camouflage looked like a town, with trees, houses and schools.

In Oregon a state camouflage officer was appointed to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to study the problem and undertake needed work. Each county in western Oregon also appointed a camouflage officer. Officials conducted a vigorous education program, with hundreds trained to be "camoufleurs." Still, the program never developed as hoped, leading Stanley Donogh, director of the Northwest Sector of the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense, to admit that "for some time I have feared that the camouflage program was bogged down." The program was "reorganized" to a lesser role by federal authorities in early 1943, prompting regrets from Donogh: "This puts us all in a rather bad light so far as our State councils are concerned. ...we went to considerable length to pursuade [sic] the Governor and

his representatives that this was a program to which they should devote their best efforts." The work of the Camouflage Committee of the Oregon State Defense Council also soon ended "without there ever having been any actual camouflaging of installations in this state." [2]

Shore Patrol

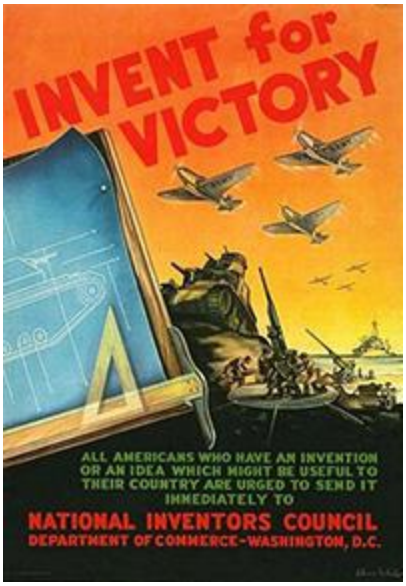
The Oregon Shore Patrol was organized by American Legion posts in coastal counties in December 1941 at the request of the Army. The volunteers helped patrol many of the cold, rainy, and windy beaches 24-hours a day in the weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Later, increased Coast Guard coverage of the beaches reduced the need for these patrols. By April 1942 an Army general assured volunteers "their services will not be called upon except in time of emergency and for very brief periods."



Day and night patrols of the Curry County coastline, such as here at Myers Creek Beach, led to frustrated volunteers who pleaded to Gov. Sprague for help. (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/52076#lg=1&slide=0)**)

Complications sometimes occurred, however, as when the Army called on the Oregon Shore Patrol for help at 2:30 in the morning on April 5. Most volunteers got the word 13 hours later that the situation had passed and they were "released" from patrol. Unfortunately, Curry County didn't receive the news. Days later a message came into the State Defense Council that "the boys down there were ready, willing and anxious to serve in any emergency but did not believe that they should be called upon to carry on a 24-hour beach patrol. Said they are still on the job down there since the call early Sunday morning last." Shore Patrol members in Port Orford were so frustrated by the long, dark hours of patrol that they fired off a resolution saying that "the American Legion and Citizens of Curry County, have maintained a vigilant Patrol, over a very extensive Coast Line to The California Border, Thru a Sparcely [sic] Populated Area, Necessitating extreme Sacrifice Of time and Money By all those participating in A Patriotic Service." The group asked Governor Sprague and Oregon U.S. Senator Charles McNary for "material and financial assistance" to help them. What they got instead was an apology along with assurances that it wouldn't happen again. [3]

Operation of the patrol shifted from the American Legion to the Oregon State Defense Council in the middle of 1942 but the program's days were numbered. As a result of improved Coast Guard patrols and Army installations along the Oregon coast, in January 1943 the commanding general of the Army's Northwest Sector directed that the Oregon Shore Patrol "be relieved of further responsibility" while expressing his appreciation for the "patriotic service of these veterans." [4]



The government encouraged inventors to submit their work.

Poster image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/9a6a9315-9a56-4cc3-8df3-d228656d7f0e)

Defense Inventions

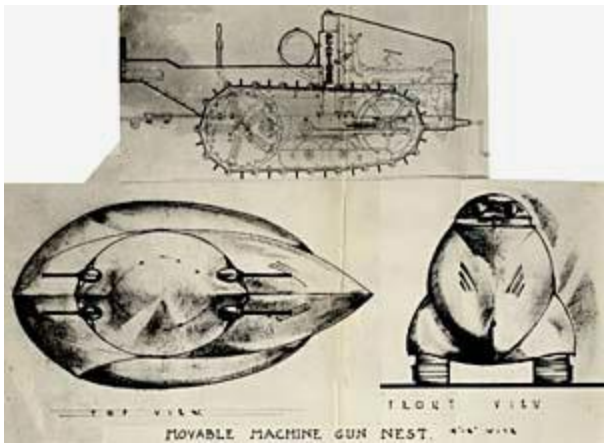
The federal government opened science research and development offices that eventually led to major advances in atomic energy, radar, and synthetic rubber - all critical to the war effort.

Much of America's advantage in the war resulted from sheer production capacity, but inventions also gave U.S. forces an edge. Recognizing this, the federal government opened science research and development offices that eventually led to major advances in atomic energy, radar, and synthetic rubber - all critical to the war effort. Some of these facilities, such as the atomic research center at Los Alamos, New Mexico, were vast and employed thousands. But the government also recognized the value of small amateur inventors tinkering at home in their garage or workshop. The U.S. Department of Commerce sought to tap into this resource by forming the National Inventors Council. The council encouraged inventors to send in their ideas. The council would evaluate the ideas and see that promising ones were studied further for possible production.

Some people, such as C. Stanley Bliss, combined their inventions with good old American entrepreneurial spirit. Bliss invented and marketed the designs for two defense related products to the military and Pacific Coast governors in 1943. The first he called the "movable machine gun nest." This was an armor plated cover with four machine gun ports designed to fit over a small orchard tractor. Bliss contended these "small and very light" nests could be loaded on trucks and transported on the coast

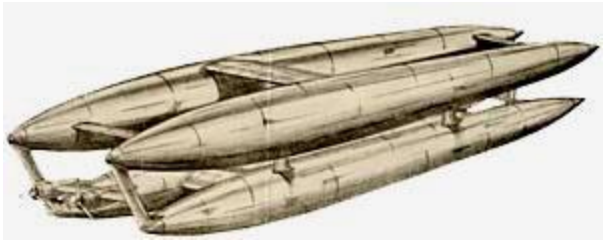
highway at 60 miles per hour to the point of attack. Their mobility would thwart enemy artillery because the machine gun nests could be moved quickly "to avoid most any big gun attacks because it takes time to get the range." He designed the futuristic looking nest to be streamlined "with angles so rifle and machine gun bullets will glance off." [5]

To Bliss the best part of the nest for local home defense applications was that it had a detachable armor covering: "the boys can be trained while doing farm work as a tractor, and upon the alarm being sounded, drive quickly into the shed and let down said armorplate, attach, and off you go to the point of attack." Bliss wrote that each nest could be produced for Oregon for "the low cost" of $2,500, which was cheap considering that "no one can now say, after our present year's experience, just what the crazy Japs would not attempt." [6]



An artist's conception of the movable machine gun nest. (Folder 6, Box 20, Military Dept. Records, OSA)

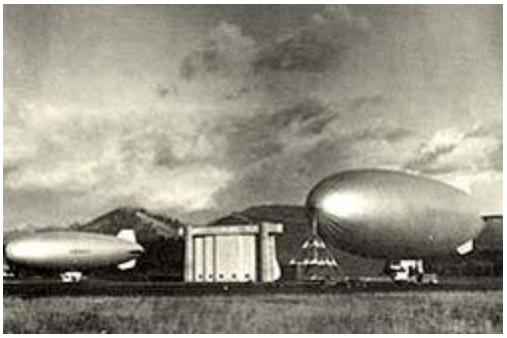
The second invention Bliss offered Governor Earl Snell was more ambitious. His "composite-type air ship" sought the best of all worlds: "Combine the four fundamental principles of flying..., the vertical lift of the helicopter, the surface and lifting power of airplane wings, the sustaining power of the dirigible, and the gliding and forward propulsion of the airplane...and you have the PERFECT FLYING MACHINE." It consisted of four long cylinders over a rigid framework. The cylinders contained "gas balloonets" that served to equalize the weight of the machine in air. This allowed it to be easily and accurately maneuvered using its propellers. Bliss envisioned numerous applications making the air ship infinitely more useful than "the old-fashioned Blimps" the government was building and stationing at Tillamook.


An artist's conception of the composite-type air ship. (Folder 6, Box 20, Military Dept. Records, OSA)

Military uses included "stationing one about every 500 miles between our Coast as the base of operations and the enemy wherever we wish to carry out a bombing attack. This mother ship could refuel our bombers in this way so as to extend their zone of operations...." The ship could be stationed "so far out from shore that we would have ample time to send our fighting planes out to meet the enemy before they would be able to drop their bombs on our cities." Bliss also contended the air ship could fly so high that it could drop bombs on the enemy while being "invulnerable" to anti-aircraft guns and fighter planes: "In this way it can pack a wollup [sic] on the enemy without risk to its own hide." Each air ship would cost the people of Oregon about $250,000. [7]

Bliss worked hard to gain Governor Snell's support for the inventions. While he might have hoped Snell would approve the purchase of a few of the relatively affordable machine gun nests, realistically he could not have expected a small state to pay the fortune required to produce the air ship. Instead, Bliss apparently wanted the support of Pacific Coast governors to pressure the military to look seriously at his product designs. He claimed that military and "Government Engineers" "have stated that it definitely has military value" yet no orders had come his way. Bliss wanted to use governors as leverage and believed

that "if the State takes action for defense of the Coast, the National Government will extend the same method up and down the coast in other states." Reminding the governor that he could "use his executive power and the treasury of the State for Home Defense," Bliss offered to visit Snell "so that 'Red Tape' may be cut and so that we can start manufacturing at the earliest possible moment." No evidence exists that Governor Snell or the Oregon Military Department responded to his offers. [8]



Blimps at the Tillamook Naval Air Station. Despite his best efforts, Bliss was unable to replace blimps with his air ship designs. (Image courtesy www.potb.org)

Meanwhile, the Navy erected two of the largest wood-frame buildings in the world at the Tillamook Naval Air Station as homes for eight blimps that comprised Squadron ZP-33. The 251-foot-long dirigibles moved out of these massive hangars and glided up and down the coast to patrol for enemy ships and submarines, often carrying depth charges to drop on enemy submarines. The blimps had a range of 2,300 miles at speeds of up to 40-50 knots. They could be stocked to keep a ten-member crew aloft for up to three days.

Related Document

Letter from C. Stanley Bliss to Governor Snell, May 12, 1943.
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151147) Folder 6, Box 20, Military Dept. Records, OSA.

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Letter from Stanley Donogh to James Sheppard, Jan. 22, 1943. Folder 7, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Report, Resolution, and Letter Re: Curry County Shore Patrol, April 5-10, 1942. Folder 16, Box 10, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Final Report Oregon State Defense Council," 1945. Folder 19 , Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from C. Stanley Bliss to Governor Snell, May 12, 1943. Folder 6, Box 20, Military Dept. Records, OSA.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Official web site of

Oregon Secretary of State

Civilian War Services

Americans shared a bond of sacrifice during World War II. Millions joined the armed forces to fight the enemy abroad while tens of millions stayed home and found other ways to help the cause. This section explores the ways people on the home front worked to support the war effort.



Clockwise from top left: A poster calls on citizens to carpool to save fuel for the war front; A swastika casts a shadow over American children; A poster encourages home canning; Mickey Mouse wanted people to plant Victory Gardens.

Holding the Line on Inflation: Price Controls Fight the Rise

Rationing: A Necessary But Hated Sacrifice

Making Do With Less: Shortages and Conservation

A Place of Their Own: Civilian Housing and Rent Control

Salvaging Victory: Scrap Drives for the War Effort

Cultivating for the Cause: Victory Gardens Till New Ground

Farm Labor Programs Work to Bring In the Crops

Food is a Weapon: Nutrition Programs Fight for Victory

With Mother at the Factory...Oregon's Child Care Challenges

The Trials of Travel: Transportation at the Bursting Point

Better Buy Your War Bonds: Savings Drives Fund the War

Sending Them Off to War: Pre-Induction Information Programs

Block Leaders: The Fabric of Civilian War Services

Childhood Memories: A Smaller View of World War II

Holding the Line on Inflation: Price Controls Fight the Rise

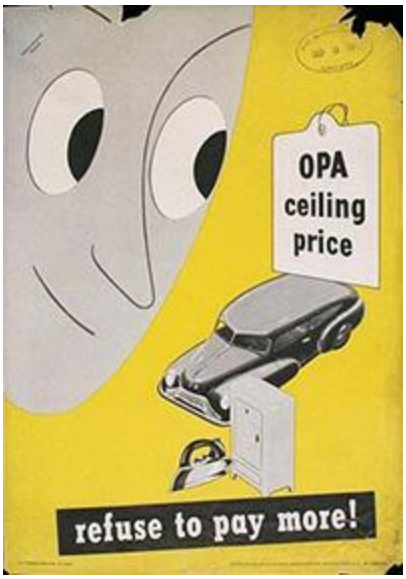
"Do Not Pay More Than the Top Legal Price"

"Inflation is nothing but a fancy term for rising prices. It is a complicated subject when professors start talking about it but it is simple for you and me." Thus read part of a suggested speech to be given by defense council workers. [1] But despite government efforts to keep it simple, the price controls designed to fight inflation led to confusing regulations and mixed results. Price stability tended to be an early casualty in most wars and by 1942 a potentially dangerous inflationary pattern had developed in the United States. Decreasing supplies of civilian goods conspired with mounting war expenditures and consumer incomes, in a classic wartime supply and demand cycle, to raise prices at an alarming rate. The federal government responded with a complex system of price control along with related rationing and rent control programs.



Posters challenged housewives to take a price control and rationing pledge. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/802b7a52-599e-4177-a3f7-2f32136fc94e)**

OPA Takes a Larger Role



OPA regulations covered numerous consumer goods. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/fa68beb5-d557-4a38-97f1-f99356a5250)**

The federal Office of Price Administration (OPA) took on the task of reining in rising prices in early 1942. In fact, the federal government had worked to control the cost of defense materials such as steel and aluminum for about two years following the defense build up in American industry after the outbreak of war in Europe, which had put the inflationary cycle in motion. A precursor to the OPA also engineered limited price controls on a number of products such as lumber, rubber and paper. But these measures proved inadequate and in January 1942 Congress passed the Emergency Price Control Act authorizing more stringent control of prices by the OPA. Three months later, President Roosevelt introduced a seven-point plan to control inflation. The plan, involving several federal agencies in addition to the OPA, called for heavier taxes, price control, stable wages, stable farm prices, war bond buying, rationing and less consumer credit. Part of the aim of the government was to siphon off much of the money going into workers pockets from the hot defense economy.

The imbalance was such that by 1943 Americans had more than 126

"wage increases put still more pressure on prices and push

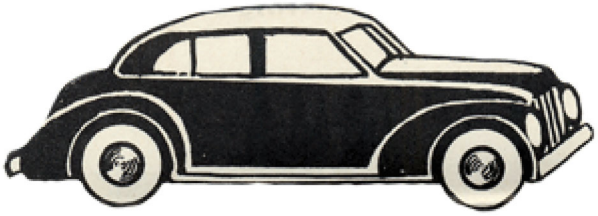
billion dollars after paying taxes to spend on only 89 billion dollars worth of goods. The difference, authorities reminded, was "37 billion dangerous dollars": "Industries which used to make things such as automobiles, radios, refrigerators and so on are now making tanks, guns, planes, and ammunition. So the things they used to make are not available for people to buy." At the same time, millions of workers left the labor market to join the armed forces, thus driving inflationary pressure on wages by causing a shortage. Officials pointed out that: "wage increases put still more pressure on prices and push them up faster still. And so on it goes, with prices and wages racing up the spiral. No one can ever quite catch up with the rising cost of living." [2]

them up faster still. And so on it goes, with prices and wages racing up the spiral. No one can ever quite catch up with the rising cost of living."

General Max

The price control component of the Roosevelt's anti-inflation plan set up a General Maximum Price Regulation - soon to be known in wartime parlance as "General Max." This initiative in April 1942 froze most prices at the highest level reached as of March 1942. In response to what was called the "certainty of galloping inflation," General Max met with only limited success, in part because farm prices and workers' wages fell outside of its authority. The effort also fell prey to "growing complexity and unworkability" according to OPA Administrator Prentiss Brown. Each time the OPA allowed a price increase "to afford relief to a seller, a new regulation had to be written or an old one had to be amended." The thicket of regulations quickly grew more tangled to the point that, as Brown noted, "...the simplicity and understandability of the controls steadily diminished." [3]

Inflation Comparison



Many materials, such as steel and iron, that had been used for cars and other domestic products, were shifted to war production. Price controls kept a lid on inflation despite intense pressure caused by shortages. The comparison below shows inflation for four key materials.

Item	World War I	World War II
Steel	334.6%	0%
Copper	170.4	14.3

Some manufacturers found ways around the restrictions by making small changes to their content or packaging, thereby allowing them to call old products "new" ones to avoid price controls. Others kept prices the same but reduced the quality. And still others eliminated traditional discounts or less expensive lines of products to keep profits high. [4] Yet, a year after its inception, the limitations of the program needed to be kept in context according to Brown: "Had it not been issued, the cost of living would have risen, not the 10 per cent it has increased since May 1942, but 10 times 10 per cent." [5] Statistics comparing the prices of controlled and uncontrolled retail food prices supported Brown's claim of partial success. Items controlled beginning in May 1942 rose an average of 5.4%, while those controlled as of October 1942 rose 28% and uncontrolled items jumped over 49%. **Price Bulletin (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148343)** [6]

Some Oregon farmers and businesses were squeezed by the ineffective controls on wages to counterbalance

Tin	223.7	6.6
Iron	303.6	14.6 [11]

price controls. While passing through Eugene on vacation, Mrs. E.W. St. Pierre, a State Defense Council official, got an earful about the problem from a store clerk: "'Sure we get a lot of business. Everybody goes through here on the way to Portland to get jobs. Price ceilings don't bother us any for when people want food they just go out and buy it. But we are all sold out of melons and we had very few berries or cherries because most of the farmers couldn't afford to pick them, wages are so high.' When I asked how he would solve the problem, he said: 'Well, they put price ceilings on everything else, I don't see why they are scared to put them on wages.'" Other employers faced similar problems as high wages in Portland's shipyards and elsewhere sucked the labor force out of local communities. St. Pierre described the case of the manager of an ice, fuel, and cold storage plant that employed 14 men: "In one week there has been a turnover of 12 men in this plant and he said this situation was typical of all such plants throughout that [Eugene] region." [7]



A little boy peers longingly through a store window at a $1,000 loaf of bread, a possible result of rampant inflation. (Folder 8, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Back to the Drawing Board

By April 1943 officials were forced to acknowledge that a more understandable and effective system was needed. Following Roosevelt's "hold the line" executive order on prices and wages to battle inflation, the OPA "embarked upon a completely new program of food price control, a program to replace one which you and I both know is badly in need of revision," according to its director. Armed with new authority, the OPA moved to directly controlling the cost of items as "the simplest and most effective type of price control we can possibly devise." [8]

Essentially the new price regulations set uniform ceiling prices for an array of foods in each of four classes of stores in a community. The classes differentiated by sales volume between small and large independent and chain stores in terms of the exact ceiling price they could legally charge for an item. Thus, a small independent store (OPA-1) could charge 26¢ for a pound of Crisco shortening while a chain store (OPA-3) could only charge 24¢. The price differences acknowledged advantages, such as economies of scale, that larger chain stores had over neighborhood "mom and pop" stores. [9] Critics complained that the price difference would put the smaller independents at a competitive disadvantage against the larger stores but OPA officials rejected this, citing "the most important [reasons of] the convenience of location and the personal relationship between retailer and housewife." [10]



Local price panels met regularly to monitor compliance. (Folder 8, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Along with other federal actions, such as gaining better control over wages and "the judicious use of Government subsidies," changes to the price control program proved effective. Overall from 1939 to 1943



Volunteers check prices at a Safeway store in Portland. (Image source: [14])

the consumer price index jumped about 24% while from 1943 to 1945 it climbed only 4%. A late 1943 comparison of inflation related to key defense materials showed a dramatic improvement from the World War I failure (see "Inflation comparison" sidebar above left).

Local Board System

The OPA developed a local board system to administer price control and its sister program, rationing, across the country. Eventually, about 5,600 local war price rationing boards formed with 8 to 20 members each, amounting to an August 1943 membership of over 72,000 volunteers. According to an OPA official, "every county and almost every city and town in the entire United States has at least one local board." [12] The price panels set up within local boards typically met once a week to keep programs running as smoothly as possible. The panel reviewed complaints from both shoppers and merchants and made adjustments for "fairness and satisfaction." They would give advice to merchants and try to answer consumer questions. And the panel planned educational activity to increase community awareness. [13]

"The Black Market is not a place...it is a transaction...a violation of the top legal prices"

Price panel assistants also went into stores to check compliance. These assistants had a list of four to seven nearby stores to visit and usually would get to each one about once every two or three weeks. A more systematic nationwide check occurred in March 1944 as part of an effort to visit every store in the country to check ceiling prices. After beginning the five-day compliance check in Portland, the district OPA director was pleased with merchant cooperation. While the teams of volunteers found few blatant price violations, they did note that "some dealers reported troubles in grading meat properly but showed a general desire to co-operate when regulations are explained." [14] Officials heard many excuses from price control violators: "Some were 'too busy to read regulations.' Others sheepishly professed ignorance of ceiling prices. And several butchers had obviously disregarded regulations because 'everybody else is doing it; why shouldn't I? OPA, with its limited staff will never catch up with me!'" [15]

Boards counted on reports from housewives about possible price violations and the OPA offered them shopping advice. Many community newspapers published the OPA's Market Basket Price Book that listed the top prices for various brands and grades of food. Housewives were encouraged to take the lists

with them shopping and compare the prices with those posted at stores. If prices were not posted, they were to report the fact to their local board. Above all, shoppers were advised: "DO NOT PAY MORE THAN THE TOP LEGAL PRICE. ...If a higher than legal price is asked, do not buy. The Black Market is not a place...it is a transaction...a violation of the top legal prices. When you find a higher than legal price, bring it to your retailer's attention. It may be an error. If he corrects it, well and good. If not, report the violation at once to your local Board." Since officials relied to a large extent on shoppers to make them aware of possible violations, they wanted to eliminate any fears of bad feelings with the neighborhood grocer resulting from reports: "You are assured that your name will not be used by the Price Panel in investigating the complaint."[16]



Unscrupulous grocers would try to entice shoppers into the illegal black market. (Box 5 of 28, Education Dept. Records, OSA)

Other Price Controls Kick In

Food stores were not alone as the focus of OPA regulations. Price ceilings were also set on clothing, services, household appliances, fuel and other items. Regional OPA offices had authority to freeze restaurant prices, roll back abnormally high prices, and set specific price ceilings. And the OPA took several steps to stabilize meal prices on trains. As with food stores, price control officials weren't afraid to get into details such as menu items:

NATIONWIDE STABLE PRICE RAILROAD FOOD

Economy meals are served on all but a few extra-fare all-pullman trains and are priced the same on all lines throughout the country. Here are examples:

BREAKFAST AT 85 CENTS:
A fruit or a fruit or vegetable juice; a choice of hot or cold cereals, eggs, plain or combination omelettes, or an egg with bacon, ham, or sausage, plus plain or toasted bread, butter, and a choice of coffee, tea, cocoa, or milk.

LUNCHEON AT $1.00:
A choice of entrees: meat, eggs, fish and shell fish, chicken, cheese and spaghetti dishes, vegetable plates, salad bowls and cold plates, plus bread and butter, and choice of beverage.



The OPA regulated the price of railroad economy meals and train vendor items. (Box 5 of 28, Education Dept. Records, OSA)

DINNER AT $1.10:
A choice of a casserole meat dish, fish, any cooked form of shell fish, poultry, omelettes, in addition to two vegetables, or cold or vegetable plates; coffee, tea, milk, plus bread

and butter.The failure of an operator to provide such meals in sufficient quantities to meet the usual anticipated demand will be considered a violation of the regulation. [17]

Trying to protect soldiers and civilians making short trips, officials also took steps to regulate sales of sandwiches, candy, and beverages made and sold by train "'butchers'" or vendors. In order to reduce these vendor violations, revised regulations required that "maximum prices be posted on the basket or affixed to each item of food or beverage." The OPA also worked to familiarize local military posts with the new train day-coach sales provisions related to vendors "so that men going on leave, furlough or other train travel may be fully aware of their rights and not be 'gypped.'" [18]



(Image source: Folder 10, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The OPA regulated prices in other areas as well, often leading to journeys into the intricacies of a particular business or trade. Sometimes, instead of raising prices, they allowed suffering types of businesses to offer fewer services for the old price. For example, the Portland office of the OPA issued an "amplifying fact sheet" in November 1943 entitled "Laundries and Dry Cleaners May Eliminate 'Frills.'" OPA officials recognized that these businesses, "faced with wartime problems of labor shortages, equipment and supply shortages, are having difficulty in supplying even the most essential service to the community." The relief meant that "laundries may eliminate, without reducing the prices, such 'frills' as: hand ironing or finishing, ...the use of shirt boards, envelopes, cellophane wrappings; sewing on buttons, and deliveries of more than once a week...." Dry cleaners were allowed to dispense with "untacking and retacking of trouser cuffs" and several other services determined to be "frills." OPA officials also tried to reduce any backlash against the businesses by conditioning customers to the need for the changes: "Housewives are cooperating with laundries and cleaning establishments by accepting these regulations as they have rationing and other wartime measures." [19]

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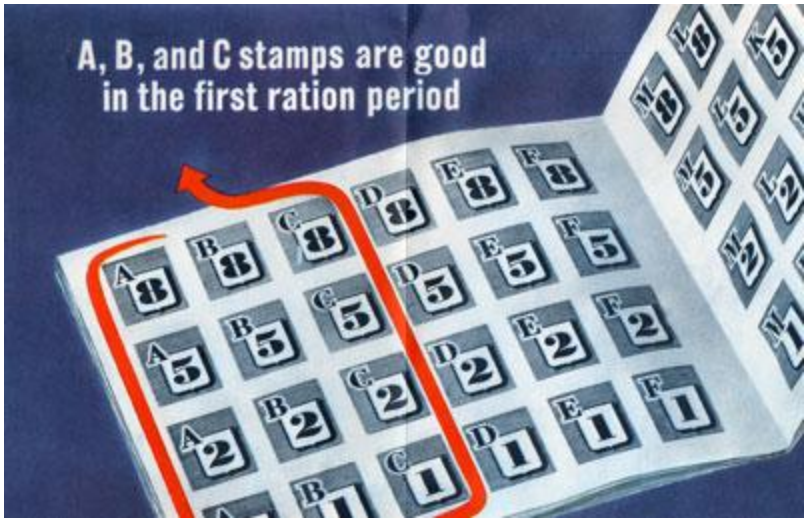
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“How to Shop with War Ration Book Two”

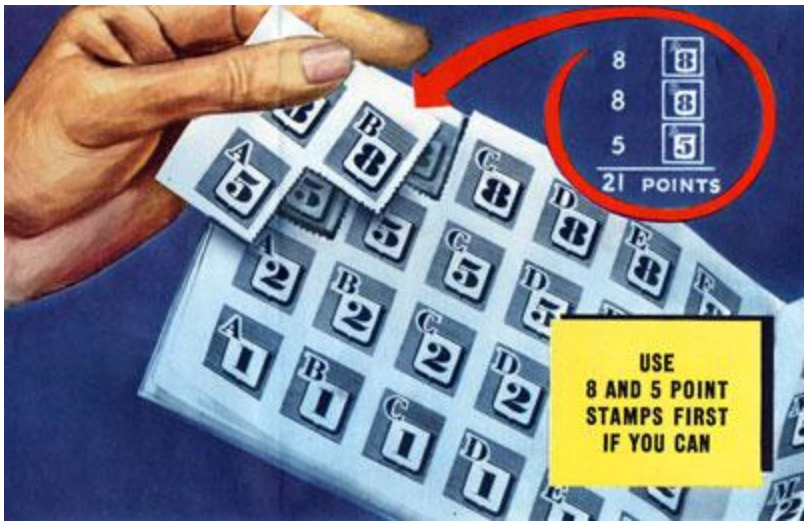
"...to Buy Canned, Bottled and Frozen Fruits and Vegetables; Dried Fruits, Juices and All Canned Soups. YOUR POINT ALLOWANCE MUST LAST FOR THE FULL RATION PERIOD. Plan How Many Points You Will Use Each Time Before You Shop. BUY EARLY IN THE WEEK. Foods are going to our fighting men. They come first! Your ration gives you your fair share of the foods that are left. BUY EARLY IN THE DAY." The following poster panels provided shoppers with advice on how to make the most of processed foods rationing:"



1.) "USE THIS RATION BOOK. You may use one or all of your family's ration book when you shop. You may not shop with loose ration stamps."



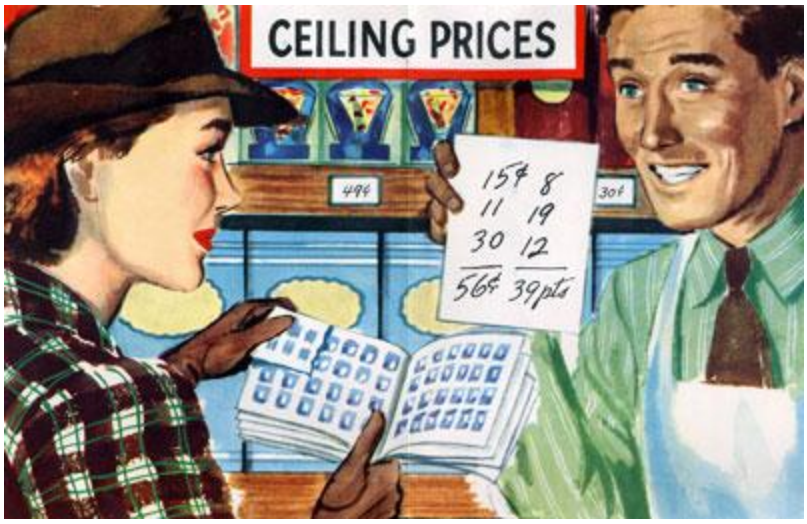
2.) "USE BLUE STAMPS ONLY. All blue point stamps marked A, B, and C are good during the first ration period. They add up to 48 points for each member of the family."



3.) "THE NUMBERS SHOW POINTS. You will not be able to get 'change' in point stamps, so save your low-value stamps for buying low-point foods."



4.) "LOOK AT THE POINT VALUES before you buy. Points have nothing to do with prices or quality. Point values will be the same in all stores."



5.) "GIVE THE STAMPS TO YOUR GROCER. Tear out stamps in the presence of your grocer - or tear them out in the presence of the delivery boy."



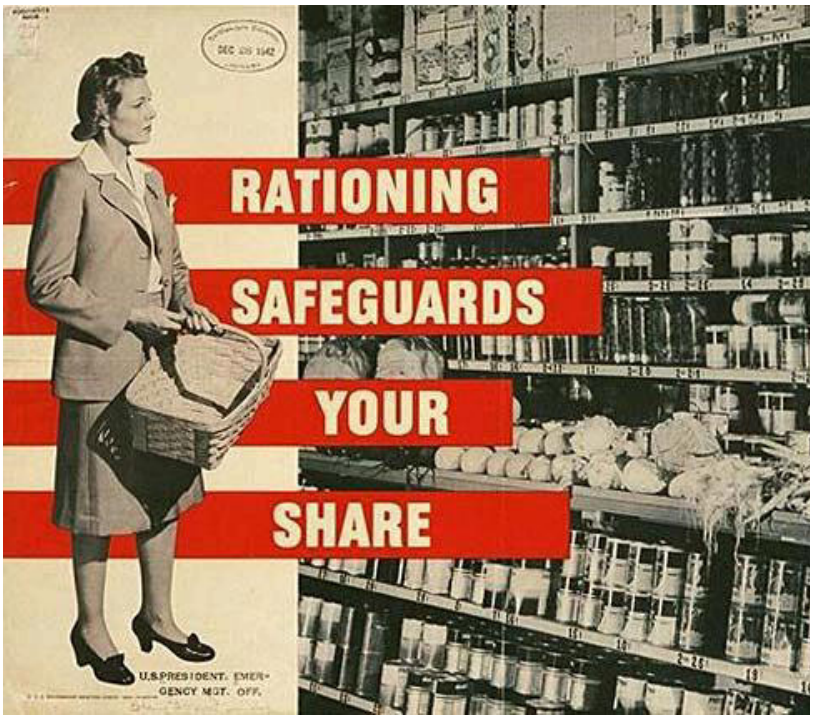
6.) "FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES are not rationed. Use them instead of rationed foods whenever possible. Try out recipes that make your rations go further."

(Text and image source: Rationing Poster, Office of Price Administration, February, 1943. Box 5 of 28, Education Dept. Records, OSA)

Rationing: A Necessary But Hated Sacrifice

"Do They Want This System...to Become a Useless Farce"

As if overseeing price controls weren't enough of a job, the federal Office of Price Administration (OPA) also presided over the bigger job of rationing. The OPA set up complicated rules for rationing everything from beef to bubble gum and from sugar to shoes. In the process, the office became everyone's favorite wartime scapegoat while black markets flourished. Despite the complexity and grumbling, most Americans grudgingly admitted rationing was a necessary part of the war effort.



Posters say rationing is the fairest way to deal with shortages. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/c78a31a2-932c-48ba-b9b4-8b40ea136778)**

A Matter of Fairness

While price controls aimed to keep inflation in check, rationing was designed to distribute scarce goods fairly. OPA official E.W. Eggen put the issue in practical terms while he was a guest on a 1943 KGW radio show in Portland: "Suppose the demand for coffee exceeded the supply (which it does) and there were no rationing. What would happen then is that the woman who got [to] the grocery store first would get coffee and the woman who arrived late would get none. That means that the woman working in a defense plant, with not much time for shopping around, would be coffeeless so that the woman who has little else to do but shop would have more. It means that the woman who has no children to tie her home would have plenty of time to stand in line and get coffee, whereas the mother of a family would not. The same principle would apply to towels, sheets, shoes, dresses, any other type of commodity in which shortages might develop."[1] Mrs. E.W. St. Pierre of the State Defense Council, put it another way: "Rationing is essentially democratic,...[it] protects the 'little man' who is unable to pay exorbitant prices for articles of which limited quantities exist."[2]

Even though thousands of items became scarce during the war, only those most critical to the war effort were rationed. Key goods such as sugar, tires, gasoline, meat, coffee, butter, canned goods and shoes came under rationing regulations. Some important items escaped rationing, including fresh fruit and vegetables. And, much to the relief of millions, whiskey and cigarettes went unscathed by regulations, although shortages appeared from time to time.



Patriotism was a selling point for rationing. **Image no. ww1645-73 courtesy Northwestern University (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/c86a6c3f-d166-499a-9ad1-f9d6024a835e)**

...much to the relief of millions, whiskey and cigarettes went unscathed by regulations, although shortages appeared from time to time.

A Complicated System Develops

The mechanics of rationing programs changed over time but remained replete with red tape, including coupons, certificates, stamps, stickers and a changing point system. Sugar, the first item rationed nationwide in May 1942, started the process, followed by coffee. Oregonians lined up at local grade schools staffed by teachers and volunteers who took depositions on how much sugar each family already had at home and then issued ration books containing coupons good for a year's supply. Over time the number of rationed items grew as did the red tape. Eventually three billion ration stamps a month, each less than an inch square in size, would be passed from the cluttered handbag of the consumer to the retailer, who passed them on to the wholesaler, who sent them to the manufacturer, who had to account for them to the federal government.[3]

Soon other items were rationed including processed goods such as canned, jarred, dried, frozen and bottled products, followed by meat, fish and dairy items. Two ration books were distributed to "every eligible man, woman, child, and baby in the United States." One contained blue coupons for processed goods while the other contained red coupons for meat, fish and dairy products. Each person started with 48 blue points and 64 red points each month. Thus, the shopper for a family of four had a total of 192 points for processed food and 256 points for meats, fish and dairy products. Each month brought new ration stamps as the old ones expired. Each stamp had a number on it designating the points it was worth and a letter showing which "rationing period" the stamp could be used. Each rationed product had a point value that was independent of the price.

The point value could fluctuate depending on scarcity and grocers were required to keep current "official point lists" posted. Thus, a scarce can of beans might have a point value of 14 while a more plentiful can of corn might have a value of 8. At the checkout counter, the shopper was to remove the proper amount of stamps in the presence of the clerk. Point management was critical to effective shopping since the number of points available was limited by the rationing period. Moreover, grocers could not make change so shoppers were advised to "use high-point stamps first, if you can."[4] By 1944 constantly evolving regulations resulted in a "simplified" plan that, among other things, introduced one point tokens to be given as change.



In an ideal world, everybody smiled thanks to rationing. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d621ed80-ad79-4bb9-a6f7-c230aa1bd0ba)**

The elaborate system of gasoline rationing caused more headaches. Each driver was assigned a windshield sticker with a letter of priority ranging from A to E. Cars used only for pleasure driving wore an A sticker worth one stamp redeemable for 3-5 gallons a week, depending on the region and the period. Commuters were assigned B stickers worth a varying amount of gas depending on their distance from work. E sticker holders received as many gallons as needed but this designation was reserved for policemen, clergymen, and similar professions. Farmers were granted as much gas as needed but faced a daunting amount of paperwork to claim it.[5] Additional systems developed for other rationed products such as car tires and tubes.

"They Can Cheat..."

As with price control issues, the mostly volunteer bureaucracy of local war price rationing boards had their hands full looking after the OPA program that had endless opportunities to cheat. OPA officials acknowledged they were at the mercy of the good will of the consumer: "Our rationing system can be made to work with simplicity and fairness if all Americans everywhere will cooperate and use their ration stamps properly. They can cheat — it is always possible to cheat on any set of rules. But do Americans want to? Do they want this system designed to be fair to all, to become a useless farce?"[6]

"They can cheat — it is always possible to cheat on any set of rules. But do Americans want to? Do they want this system designed to be fair to all, to become a useless farce?"

Officials published a list of violations related to how ration books were used, all while trying to combat a pervasive rationalization that said "I know I shouldn't do this, but I guess just this once won't ruin the

country...." The list of transgressions included trying to make purchases with loose stamps. These could have been lost or stolen and OPA regulations said the retailer was forbidden to accept them. Lending a ration book to a friend was also a violation. The reasoning was that some people who ate frequently at restaurants and didn't need all of their stamps often gave them to friends who would then "be getting double their fair share. This kind of neighborliness must be foregone for the duration." The solution? The frequent diners were expected to destroy any extra ration stamps instead--an unlikely option.[7]

A Flourishing Black Market



Black market grocers illegally offered "under the counter" rationed items to shoppers. (Box 5 of 28, Education Dept. Records, OSA)

In reality, large and small violations of rationing and price control regulations combined to form a flourishing black market. Typically, this consisted of consumers paying prices above the established limits or buying goods without the required coupons. Many customers, flush with money from high paying defense jobs, were willing to violate the law to buy a really good cut of meat for a special occasion or a rare pair of shoes that would go perfectly with a new dress. Retailers found a number of ways to work the system and customers were warned not to buy rationed items without coupons: "In order to replenish his stock from legitimate sources, your dealer must have your stamps to turn in. Otherwise, you know he is purchasing from a Black Market." In a variation on the theme, some retailers asked customers to give them their unused ration stamps, thereby allowing the retailer to purchase merchandise that could be sold during the next ration period without the need to demand stamps. Once again, consumers were asked to destroy any unused stamps rather than give them to a grocer.[8]

One study estimated that warnings about black market activities were issued to 20% of American businesses, while nearly 7% were charged with illegal activities. Still, few were prosecuted or convicted and those who were usually received small fines--hardly a deterrent.[9] While some social stigma existed, the rationing program was so unpopular and the black market so widespread that many people would "look the other way" as they had with alcohol use during Prohibition.



Caption: "Six million fighters are in training right now in the U.S. Each one gets at least 7

Hoarding became a mainstay of the black market. Many tried to "beat the game" by hoarding goods about to be rationed while using the ironic justification of "I'm just stocking up before the hoarders get there."[10]Portland office OPA official E.W. Eggen tried valiantly, if naively, to make hoarding look like a losing proposition, citing three reasons it wouldn't work: "First, it's unpatriotic, and public opinion would make the would-be hoarders very unhappy. Second, you will have to report your present goods on hand when you get your ration cards. Third, you can't possibly anticipate in advance exactly where shortages will develop. Just as a case in point, the greatest single run on a single item handled by

pounds of meat a week." (Box 5 of 28, Education Dept. Records, OSA)

department stores was the rush for all-wool men's clothing last spring. Yet, today [a year later] it is still plentiful."[11]

Organized Criminals Get Into the Action

Predictably, criminals soon produced counterfeit rationing coupons, which they then sold to gas stations and drivers.

More serious violations occurred, many at the hands of organized crime. Gas rationing, particularly disliked, fell victim to many schemes. The government claimed that "the gasoline black market involves, in many cases, experienced criminal rings, and is even drawing teen-age youngsters into its operations in dangerous numbers." Predictably, criminals produced counterfeit rationing coupons, which they sold to gas stations and drivers. The OPA estimated fake coupons accounted for 5% of gasoline sales in the country. Criminals also stole vast amounts of coupons. The Washington D.C. office of the OPA lost real coupons worth 20 million gallons of gas to theft while thieves in Cleveland stole coupons for five million gallons. Meanwhile, other crime resulted in connection with meat rationing. The so called "red market" involved selling low-grade meat for higher-grade prices or selling meat that contained more fat or bone than allowed by federal regulations.[12]

In Sympathy With Hitler or Hirohito?

Even if much of the population "looked the other way" or chalked it up to being a petty sin, others saw the potentially corrosive effect that could result from a prevalence of low-level crime such as rationing violations. Mrs. E.W. St. Pierre of the State Defense Council used her typical hyperbole in lamenting the situation as she saw it in an August 1942 bulletin:

> The American public is being rationed on sugar and rubber today, and tomorrow many more things may be added to this list. ...From this situation has arisen a genie which may undermine our whole war effort, unless an understanding American people lend a hand. It is obvious that there are not sufficient law enforcement officers in the land to detect all evasions of these regulations. A 'black market' has sprung up, bootlegging these materials to persons willing to pay the price. Buyer and seller are equally guilty; they are both disloyal, dishonest, and traitorous to their country. Great hidden stocks of materials, undeclared by their owners when the Government made its check of essential materials, are now finding their way into these markets.
>
> Only a person secretly in sympathy with Hitler or Hirohito would knowingly buy from such a source, for dealers in such hidden supplies are part of a great fifth column movement of the Axis powers. Every loyal American must be aware of this situation. Report at once any suspected infringement of these regulations. 'I know where you can get a tire' ... ---well, find out where and report it at once to your nearest Office of Price



Posters tried to enlist citizens in the fight against the black market. **Image courtesy Northwestern University**

Administration or War Production Board. The American people must keep eyes and ears open to defeat this attempt to undermine the war effort of our country.[13]

Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/4f1f8a31-0b97-4f2a-94a3-c54423009de2)

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Making Do With Less: Shortages and Conservation

"Use It Up, Wear It Out, Make It Do or Do Without"

In addition to rising prices, the incredible demands of building and supplying the U.S. war machine led to shortages, black markets, hoarding and calls for conservation. Rationing took center stage in the effort to address shortages but other measures such as conserving existing supplies played important roles as well. People took the wartime slogan of "use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without " to heart. They really had no choice since shortages developed in thousands of different items that were never rationed.



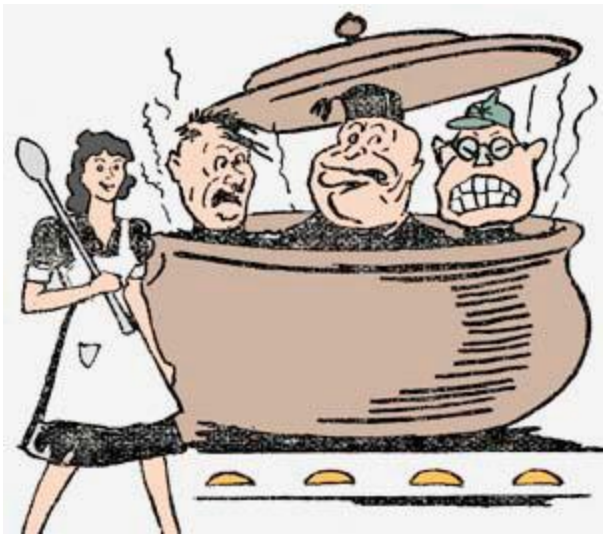
Critical shortages of rubber resulted in a big push for civilian conservation.**Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d88a56d1-d307-487d-a45e-4c5281776486)**

Mobilizing For War

Shortly after its creation in 1942, the federal War Production Board (WPB) sharply curtailed or banned the production of nearly 300 items judged "nonessential" to the war effort. The manufacturers of the targeted products could either choose to convert to the production of items deemed to be essential, or try to make do with substitute materials. Some of the banned items were near and dear to American consumers, who would soon learn the importance of conservation.

By late 1942 the mobilization of production to defense related items was reaching its stride. For example, mechanical refrigerator manufacturers switched to making airplane parts, ordnance and other defense products. A 280 million dollar industry before the war, the industry was projected to handle up to 750 million dollars in war contracts and double its workforce by April 1943. The electrical appliance industry, makers of toasters, waffle irons, coffee percolators and hair dryers, converted almost completely to production of bomb carriers, gas tanks, gun mounts and related items by May 1942. Golf club makers were now making rifle butts and submachine gun grips. Three-quarters of the vacuum cleaner manufacturing capacity was working on 60 million dollars worth of war contracts for incendiary bombs, bomb fuses, gas masks and related items. Production of toys was limited to those that used less than 7% critical materials, while much of the industry shifted production to army cots, ammunition boxes, flares and similar defense products. Other products such as electric fans, fishing tackle, musical instruments and radios were cut off by WPB mandate.

In addition to banned products, the WPB severely curtailed the output of a range of manufactured goods. By the end of 1942, this diverse collection of items included baby carriages, bicycles, caskets, hot water heaters, fountain pens, hairpins, light bulbs, jewelry, utensils, razors and sewing machines. [1] Another



The text with this cartoon reads: "LET THE AXIS STEW! Your Block Leader says: SAVE MEAT!. Our fighters and Allies need it." (Image colorized. Folder 13, Box 29, Defense Council Records, OSA)

household item, the alarm clock, was not available until 1943, when tardy employees drove factory managers to complain to the government, which responded by authorizing the production of a "Victory model" using less metal than previous alarm clocks.

Another household item, the alarm clock, was not available until 1943, when tardy employees drove factory managers to complain to the government, which responded by authorizing the production of a "Victory model" using less metal than previous alarm clocks.

For many, the inconvenience of not being able to replace even such a sweeping array of consumer products paled in comparison to learning they would have to make do without new cars for the duration. The decision was an easy one for WPB officials. The huge automobile assembly plants had become the heart of a mass-production system that would be central to any plans for victory. The fallout from the end of civilian automobile production spread broadly over the country but no business suffered more than the local car dealership. With no new products to market, most dealers were relegated to selling used cars along with maintenance and repair services, leading many to go out of business. Consumer frustration was heightened by the fact that they had plenty of disposable income from the wartime economy and they had weathered a decade of doing without during the Great Depression. Thus, in what must have seemed like a cruel joke to many, society's strong urge to consume was severely hampered by the lack of new products to buy.

Connecting Sacrifice to Victory

Meanwhile, officials tried to channel much of that frustrated consumerism into positive feelings for the collective war effort and for the millions of men and women serving overseas. A common way to accomplish this was to tie everyday home consumer products with vital defense products. For example, the Marion County Defense Council reminded citizens that tin was in short supply (the Japanese controlled 70% of resource) but was indispensable to the war effort: "TIN - 100% pure TIN - encloses the little individual morphine hypodermic syringe (syrette) which soothes the pain of a soldier lying wounded on the Battlefield." The council pointed out that tin also encased ointments needed to battle infections and soothe burns. Tin coated steel food containers went around the world with the armed forces: "Our Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast



These downed flyers were saved by a rubber lifeboat made possible by civilian conservation efforts. (Folder 8, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Guard are the best fed in the world. TIN makes that possible." [2]

Officials offered "fun fact" types of information to drive home their point about the connection of consumer goods to war products and the need to conserve and sacrifice. For instance, a set of golf clubs could make one .30 caliber machine gun. A refrigerator could make twelve .45 caliber machine guns while 61 refrigerators equaled one light tank. The aluminum used in one vacuum cleaner could supply enough for seven .50 caliber machine guns or 12 four-pound incendiary bombs. The zinc found in one washing and ironing machine could go toward the production of 20 rifles. Eleven washing machines could produce a half-ton truck. And, the big sacrifice, one automobile would equate to twenty-seven 20mm aircraft cannons. Officials reasoned that the burning need for a new car would subside a bit if the consumer knew their husband or son fighting overseas needed that rifle more than they needed that new car. [3]



Officials urged people to walk instead of drive to conserve precious resources such as rubber for the war effort. **Poster courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/3928e21d-23de-47c1-a7da-609f500474ec)**

M.L. Goldschmidt with the federal Office of Price Administration (OPA) provided two more examples to the listeners of KGW radio's "Oregon on Guard" program in March 1943: "What happens to the tires that are not manufactured? ...Why the rubber that we would use for them is employed for military purposes. Our 'Flying Fortresses' roll on rubber---they couldn't take off or land without their huge airplane tires. Still more dramatically, they make the greatest 'Life-Savers' ever turned out by the tire industry, the rubber boats that have already saved hundreds of gallant fliers who were forced down at sea." [4]

While communicating the demand side of shortages, officials didn't neglect the supply side. For example, sugar was in short supply because boats that previously brought it to America were now carrying supplies to troops and allies in Africa, Russia, Britain and elsewhere. And as the "War-Victory Bulletin" put it, tires were in short supply because "the United States, the world's greatest consumer of rubber, obtained all but a few shiploads of the precious material from Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Ceylon and the other lands of the Middle East in 1941. Rubber is slow growing. It grows slower than wars are won." Government efforts to produce synthetic rubber eventually paid off and by 1944 synthetic rubber accounted for nearly 90% of the total used. Still, the rubber shortage caused headaches for military and civilian planners in the first part of the war. As a result, officials decided to regulate the supply of gasoline even though it was not in short supply, reasoning that controlling the use of cars would save on precious rubber. [5]

The Car at the Center of It All

The month after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Mrs. Mortimer Hartwell of the Oregon State Defense Council was in high schools giving speeches about adjusting to life on the home front during the new war. She had strong comments and advice on the role of the automobile in society and how it fit in the need for conservation:

I said to someone the other day: "Nothing is going to hit us Americans harder than being curtailed in our automobile driving." We are spoiled and we also have built up our whole lives on the idea that we have a car. We must now learn to walk and patronize public conveyances; we must ride bicycles - we must do this cheerfully and ungrudgingly. We must take care of the car we have and use it for necessary driving. We are short on rubber, and though we have plenty of gasoline, it must be used in transportation of war materials and men and in other lines of endeavor vital to war service.

Here again you boys and girls can help. Don't beg for the car. My family was on its way to lose the use of its legs. The limit was arrived at when my two Scouts wanted to be driven half a mile to [a] Scout meeting! [6]

"The War Against Waste - Conservation"

Conservation was an important element of the strategy to combat shortages, and many measures were destined to be unpopular. One prescription called for the use of substitutes for items in short supply. Consumers were encouraged to use honey for sugar, corn oil for olive oil, cotton or rayon for wool, paper containers instead of tin; and wood furniture instead of metal. They were asked to simplify by eliminating the "frills in consumer goods." Examples included fewer models, sizes, colors and styles - even the "elimination of cuffs on men's trousers." So called "Victory suits" with several such features that conserved wool were promoted as patriotic fashion. [7]



People needed to learn to care for their rubber products, such as these boots, to make them last longer and conserve the valuable resource. (Folder 47, Box 27, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Since their refrigerators, washing machines, and cars could not be replaced with new models until after the war, citizens were asked to learn how to maintain and repair equipment to make it last and keep it running efficiently. For example, the "'handy man' about the house" was encouraged to keep the furnace clean and the hot water heater free of rust and sediment. The homemaker also got plenty of suggestions for stretching the life of short resources. She was reminded to vacuum rugs often because "dirt is the enemy of carpets and rugs." Moreover, she was told that "a pad, or even newspapers placed under a rug will lengthen its life." Officials gave sound advice in the kitchen too: "Don't use the oven to heat the kitchen unless you have to." Other words of wisdom included: "Don't overcrowd your refrigerator," "Don't open [refrigerator] door too frequently - always close quickly," and "never place the heating unit of any appliance in water." [8]

Girdles warranted special care and experts suggested "frequent, rather than hard laundering." Women were also cautioned to "use care in putting

Shortages spawned a small industry in advice on how to maintain and repair clothing, shoes and other items. And with the severe shortage of rubber, officials once more reminded citizens that "making rubber articles last longer is a real part of our war-time duty." The Better Business Bureau of Portland prepared detailed

on and taking off rubber undergarments. Stretch and strain will shorten their life."

care instructions for a range of common rubber products. They offered advice on the storage of rubber items: "Heat and sunlight shorten the life of rubber. Clean and dry thoroughly a rubber or rubberized article before storing it...." They also wisely suggested storing rubber "away from hot pipes or chimneys." Items such as rubber overshoes were not to be left outside while people were cautioned to "avoid bending, kinking and dragging garden hose[s] over rough surfaces of any kind." Girdles warranted special care and experts suggested "frequent, rather than hard laundering." Women were cautioned to "use care in putting on and taking off rubber undergarments. Stretch and strain will shorten their life." [9]

Going Too Far With Conservation?

Some thought the conservation effort was going too far. E.P. O'Neill, president of the Retail Trade Bureau in Portland, fired off a complaint to Governor Sprague about what he thought was outrageous advice given by state officials: Our Bureau's attention has been called, on several occasions, that a Mr. Eugene Burdick, speaking under the auspices of the Oregon Defense Council, appeared before the East Side Commercial Club urging citizens not to buy, among other things, any new clothing."...

"He admonished his audience that 'their government expected them to wear their clothes so long as they would cover the body and keep the wearer warm.' He further stated that 'he hoped it would very soon be fashionable to be shabbily dressed in Portland,' (He himself was nattily attired in a dinner jacket with the latest accessories.)" [10]



Conservation helped this blue-ribbon steer go to war...as meat. (Folder 13, Box 29, Defense Council Records, OSA)

O'Neill's complaint earned a sharp reply from the director of consumer interests for the State Defense Council, Mrs. E.W. St. Pierre. She just happened to have a transcript of Burdick's speech in her office and quoted from it to make her point that he had been "misquoted and misunderstood": "Mr. Burdick - 'If you are among the fortunate ones who have a large and adequate supply of clothing and some of the household necessities and gadgets, do not replace them. It is very difficult to ask those who have been unemployed for a long period and are just now beginning to be able to purchase much needed clothing and household equipment to stop buying. Denial and sacrifice must come first from those who have long enjoyed the comforts...Mend and care for your clothes and shoes as never before...'"

Government officials always had to balance the needs of numerous constituencies, such as the retail clothing industry, but St. Pierre wanted to be sure she put the issue in perspective for O'Neill: " I feel we are a nation fighting with our backs to the wall. All elements of personal profit must be subordinated to preservation of our way of life. The best blood of the nation cannot flow in rivers while we at home carry on business as usual and refuse to sacrifice so much as an extra Easter bonnet." [11]

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Letter from E.P. O'Neill to Governor Sprague, Feb. 16, 1942

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Letter from Mrs. E.W. St. Pierre to E.P. O'Neill, Feb. 18, 1942. Folder 6, Box 28, Defense Council Records, OSA.

A Place of Their Own: Civilian Housing and Rent Control

"Share Your Home!"



This elderly couple sits on the curb with all their possessions. The man holds a newspaper with the headline "Soaring Rents Evict Thousands." (Folder 8, Box 35, Defense Council, OSA)

Growing pains in cities with burgeoning defense industries led to a housing crisis in some areas of Oregon. Factories and shipyards built or expanded their facilities to accommodate huge war contracts and as a result attracted tens of thousands of workers to the state as part of what the National Housing Agency called an "epic migration." Some communities saw population decreases as people streamed out to join the military or take war production jobs elsewhere. But others, such as Hermiston, Medford and especially the Portland area, saw an overwhelming increase in residents from other parts of Oregon and from around the country. Some new residents worked in the factories running at full capacity around the clock. Others were family members of these workers or of the many soldiers stationed in places like Camp Adair. In response, officials used a number of strategies to increase the housing capacity of the affected communities. Measures such as building war worker housing, converting thousands of single family homes to accommodate two or more families, and imposing rent control all helped.

Government Slow to React

Unfortunately, the federal government reacted slowly to the housing shortage. Industry and labor leaders urged officials to build emergency housing and the government eventually responded. But they were limited by wartime material priorities that made it impossible to meet the civilian need "simply by unlimited construction of new houses." Federal authorities pointed out that materials such as lumber, steel, and copper that were needed to build houses were also needed for planes, ships, and tanks: "In the face of the tremendous demands of the war upon manpower and materials, there have not been enough of either to build new houses for all of the workers, let alone continue normal peacetime housing construction." [1]

Instead of an outright building boom to meet demand, authorities tried to focus on the demand created only "by essential migration of war labor." The strategy also called for the use of the existing housing supply to the greatest extent possible, such as converting existing buildings into additional apartments, thereby limiting the use of vital materials. When new construction was essential, the strategy called for "drastic economies" in the use of critical war materials. This meant temporary war dwellings were constructed with up to 80% less critical materials than prewar standards. Permanent structures saw reductions of 60%-70%. [2]



Tens of thousands of defense industry workers, such as those shown at Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation shipyards, streamed into the Portland area in need of housing. ("Record Breakers" Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation Promotional Booklet, Oregon State Library Holdings)

Housing Projects Spring Up

During the war the federal government produced about two million dwelling units as homes for more than five million people. Many units were converted into apartments from existing buildings, but a sizeable amount resulted from new low-cost housing projects such as those constructed at Vanport. This sprawling community sprang up quickly on Portland's northern outskirts to provide housing for workers at the massive Kaiser Shipyards. With street after street of rental apartment houses, almost overnight the community became Oregon's second largest city as well as the largest war housing project in the world. It quickly reached and maintained its maximum tenancy of 40,000 people. [3] One shipyard worker, Chauncey Del French, remembered Vanport in "its baby days" as decidedly unattractive: "Contractor's sheds, which housed offices, tools, supplies, and equipment, were scattered about the muddy streets that marked the entrance. The sidewalks were piled high with the debris of construction." [4] A number of federal housing projects were built across the country in war production areas such as Arlington, Virginia, Wichita, Kansas and South Portland, Maine, most sharing the characteristic paper thin walls and shoddy build quality of housing designed from the start to be temporary. Still, some new residents saw the move into government housing as an improvement in their standard of living, and most were grateful for the opportunity.

"Share Your Home"

Authorities knew they didn't have the resources to solve the housing shortage with projects such as Vanport, so the National Housing Agency launched a campaign titled "Share Your Home." As part of the campaign, authorities offered encouragement and inducements to families to "move over" and make room for the influx of migrants. Some of the effort involved conducting surveys to "make as careful an analysis of the existing or potential supply of housing as is possible and to encourage the use of all existing housing facilities and the sharing of homes in order to reduce as much as possible the amount of additional housing needed." Canvassers spread out over the Eugene and Springfield area in October 1943 after officials expressed the urgency of the need: "Due to the present pressure that is being exerted for

obtaining housing relief in the Eugene-Springfield area, it is highly desirable that we obtain a housing survey at the earliest possible moment." The questionnaire gathered information about the condition, furnishings, number of bedrooms, and presence of an inside toilet for vacant housing in the area. It documented data about occupied housing that had space available, including the number of male and female sleeping rooms, the number of housekeeping units with one, two, or three bedrooms, and whether or not remodeling was needed. [5]



A bird's eye view of part of Vanport, a massive housing project north of Portland that was home to 40,000 people. ("Record Breakers" Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation Promotional Booklet, Oregon State Library Holdings)

Portland Efforts



Hundreds of stately old Portland homes, such as this one in the Irvington neighborhood, were divided into apartments during the war to accommodate the growing population. (WW2 Web Exhibit Records, OSA)

Portlanders in particular were pressed to share their homes. Appealing to the patriotism of homeowners, officials blamed rising absenteeism at least partially on the lack of housing: "Many workers coming into this section for essential war jobs take almost any kind of accommodations they can find on what they expect to be a temporary basis. But with the critical shortage of housing here, it is almost impossible for these workers to find adequate quarters in their spare time, so the men continue to take a day or two off to hunt for decent housing, until they either are successful, or give up in disgust, quit their jobs and take their families elsewhere." More housing options, it was argued, would reduce the absenteeism and increase production for the war. [6]

Officials also applied guilt to the owners of Portland's numerous stately and very large homes built in the early decades of the 1900s: "Many of the larger homes here, now only in partial use, should be thrown open to these workers." While recognizing the reluctance of some families to accept paying guests in their homes, authorities chided that "this is not the time to indulge in personal tastes, when successful prosecution of the war, including vital production, is every citizen's responsibility." The welfare of children also played a role in the appeal: "If owners of some large old homes here would permit conversion of their property for use as apartments, and if others would take a war worker family into their homes as war guests, the children would have the benefit of large yards and nearby playgrounds." [7]

"If owners of some large old homes here would permit conversion of their property for use as apartments, and if others would take a war worker family into their homes as war guests,

Governments offered inducements beyond patriotism and relief from guilt to get residents to convert their large homes to apartments. The manager of the Portland war housing center pointed out that loans were available and that homeowners would qualify for a priority to obtain the materials needed to complete the conversion to apartments. Moreover, a steady stream of

the children would have the benefit of large yards and nearby playgrounds."

rent would come to those who provided much needed apartment space. [8]

Relaxed Building Codes Encourage Conversion

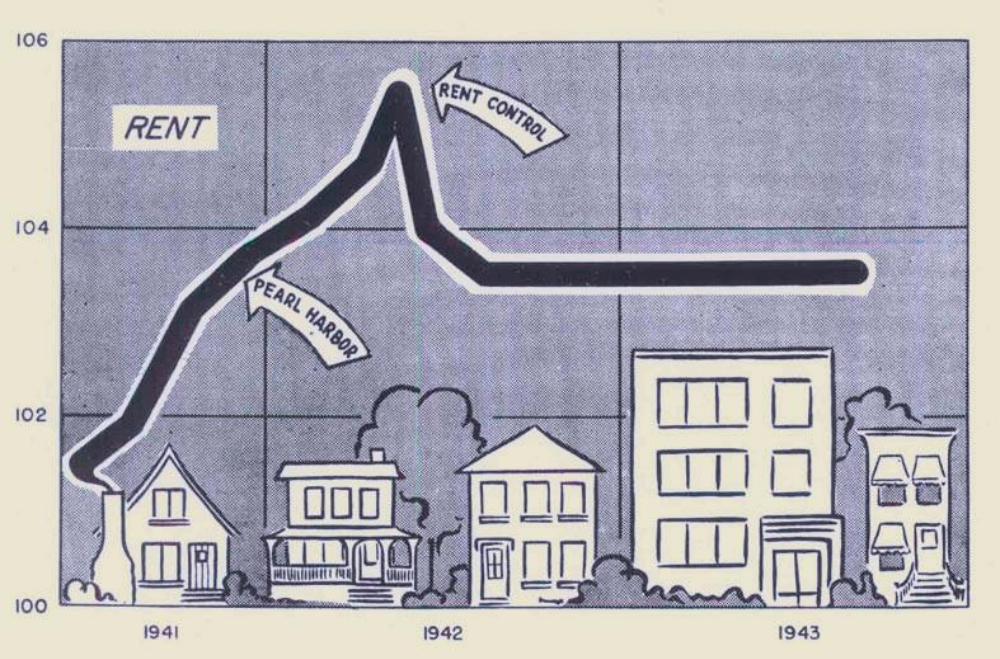
The City of Portland, like other defense industry cities, relaxed building codes to help spur the conversion of its larger homes to additional living space. In making the change, City Commissioner William Bowes hoped several thousand homes would provide at least one extra living unit. Of course, the devil was in the details since the ordinance contained the requisite amount of bureaucratic language. One catch was that the city planned to have the new regulations in effect only for the duration of the war. At that point, city leaders said that "the altered building must be changed back to its original occupancy or altered to conform to the housing code regulations." Those who chose to move forward with conversions found features such as sinks and toilets, which normally would be required for each housing unit, were now only required to be "accessible" to each housing unit. Other relaxations included allowing smaller kitchens and living rooms than before, although bedroom size restrictions remained unchanged. **City of Portland Housing Code Ordinance (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148341)** [9]



The City of Portland relaxed building codes during the war to allow smaller kitchens and living rooms. City leaders hoped this move and others like it would lead owners of large homes to divide them into apartments for the thousands of defense workers moving to the city. Hundreds of homes were converted, providing a valuable contribution to the community. (Box 4 of 28, Education Dept. Records, OSA)

Rent Control

Regulations also controlled rent in several Oregon counties, since having enough housing units would be of little value if few people could afford to rent them. High rents in war production cities such as Portland led to problems with maintaining a stable workforce and optimum production for the war effort. In the process, landlords were seeing big profits. One study of 40,000 housing units in 20 large defense industry cities showed that from 1939 to 1942 the operating income jumped 31% for an average apartment house unit and 45% for an average small structure. In response, the federal Emergency Price Control Act of 1942 gave the Office of Price Administration (OPA) authority to designate "defense-rental areas" throughout the country "where defense activities have resulted or threaten to result in an increase in rents for housing accommodations...." By 1943 the OPA had designated 370 rent control areas regulating some 11 million rented homes as well as 350,000 hotels and rooming houses. In Oregon these areas centered around activities in Astoria, Corvallis, Medford, Pendleton and the Portland-Vancouver metro area. [10]



This graph shows the stabilizing effect of rent control in key defense activity areas such as Portland and Astoria. (Folder 8, Box 35, Defense Council, OSA)

The OPA set up an "area rent office" in each defense-rental area to administer the new regulations. The most important provision was to freeze or roll back rents to a "base" date. In the case of the Portland-Vancouver area, the date was March, 1 1942. As officials at the local area rent office pointed out, the process was straightforward: "A tenant does not have to get approval from the rent director or anybody else. He simply reduces his own rent to the March 1, 1942 rent." Anticipating the need to keep landlords honest, the regulations required landlords to file registration statements with the local area rent office, including rent and other "basic facts" about each apartment. These statements were to be given to each tenant too. Tenants were told they "should receive the same essential services [such as heat, water, etc.] as are listed in the registration statement...," and they were encouraged to report discrepancies to the area rent office. Landlords were allowed to petition for the right to reduce services or increase rents "where special circumstances justify" and they could repossess an apartment to do extensive remodeling or to occupy the unit themselves. [11]

Housing Problems Nationally and Locally

Despite efforts to provide affordable housing for people working in war production industries, deplorable conditions and abuses persisted nationwide. Congressional hearings heard tales of two families with a total of 12 people sleeping in one room. The occupants slept in shifts as a witness testified: "They don't all sleep at the same time--it's a 'hot bed' up there." Children often suffered the most as landlords sometimes evicted families and replaced them with individual renters who, added together, paid more rent. Newspapers often contained classified advertisements for apartments that included the stipulation "adults only." One witness told a Congressional committee that "when I mention children they [landlords] don't talk to me



Mobile homes became homes for millions of people during the war, as they moved to communities without

anymore." The committee chairman observed that "it used to be an honor to have a large family, but now it seems to be a handicap." [12]

adequate housing. (Image courtesy Library of Congress)

> **"The enlisted men and officers to be stationed at Camp Adair for the duration of the war to train men going to the Pacific are now coming into town and are very anxious to find housing for their families. These men, most of whom have served overseas for some time, are desirous of having their families with them, inasmuch as this will be the first opportunity for many to have a home life. " [14]**

Oregon experienced housing problems around military bases such as Camp Adair. Officials with the Marion County Defense Council scrambled to find sleeping quarters for servicemen on leave from nearby Camp Adair. One weekend in February 1943 there were "approximately five hundred men in Salem who could not find any accommodations for staying over night. As a result, they were forced to stay in bus and railroad waiting rooms and such other places as were available." An official with the Federal Security Agency told the Salem mayor the only solution he could see was to "put in a curfew law which would automatically make the soldiers return [to Camp Adair] at a given hour." The mayor, likely reluctant to send soldiers with money in their pockets out of town, instead proposed repairs and changes to the USO (United Service Organizations) building in Salem. Related efforts added 120 beds for soldiers at St. Joseph's Church and 80 beds at the YMCA, both in Salem. Correspondence: **Roger Folgate and Brian Conley (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151100)** [13]

While these efforts added accommodations for soldiers, another round of problems arose in July 1945 after victory in Europe as soldiers streamed west to fight the Japanese in the Pacific. Saying they were "very concerned over the present situation," Marion County Defense Council officials sent an "urgent" plea for any vacancies in apartments or homes to meet the influx. Hazel Harper, the block leader chief for the council, described the reason for the housing crunch: "The enlisted men and officers to be stationed at Camp Adair for the duration of the war to train men going to the Pacific are now coming into town and are very anxious to find housing for their families. These men, most of whom have served overseas for some time, are desirous of having their families with them, inasmuch as this will be the first opportunity for many to have a home life. " [14]

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Salvaging Victory: Scrap Drives for the War Effort

"It Is Astonishing the Amount of Waste Being Gathered Up"

Even before America's entry into World War II, and stretching over four years, a parade of scrap drives kept citizens busy. The drives started by collecting aluminum before moving to products such as tires, paper, tin, household fats, silk stockings and even coats for Russian refugees. Through it all, Oregonians combined a strong community spirit with fierce competition to salvage tons of products vital to the war effort. Salvaging represented another way Americans could contribute to the war effort in concert with other wartime programs. The process was again driven by shortages of vital materials such as rubber, tin and steel. In the overall effort, the conservation movement worked to reduce the consumption of war related materials; rationing attempted to fairly distribute the scarce commodities; and the salvage effort aimed to hunt down every pound of material that could be used to win the war.

Driving the Drives



Americans integrated salvaging tin cans into their daily lives. The caption to this cartoon reads: "Just try an' remember dear, flatten 'em AFTER they're empty!" (Folder 16, Box 28, Defense Council, OSA)

Government public relations campaigns spearheaded the effort to educate and mobilize every American to participate in scrap drives. Like the calls for conservation of resources, officials persistently reminded citizens how their seemingly inconsequential contribution would be monumental when multiplied by the efforts of other citizens. Jack Bristol, a Portland public relations expert, offered advice to an Oregon State Defense Council official to "drive home to the individual that what HE saves is important. One discarded toothpaste tube is admittedly not worth a tinker's damn --- but if ALL the tubes that are squeezed dry and discarded in Portland every morning were gotten together, they would constitute a respectable poundage of pure tin." **Letter from Jack Bristol (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151157)**[1]

Comparisons drove home the value of salvaging materials. The amount of rubber salvaged from one tire could provide 20 parachute troopers with boots or make 12 gas masks. A thousand old galoshes collected during a scrap drive could provide the rubber to make a medium-sized bomber. And since the scrap drives would be weighing collected materials, officials provided weight comparisons to give people context for their efforts. For example, a light tank required 489 pounds of rubber--just the tracks alone consumed 317 pounds. And volunteers would have to work long and hard to outfit a battleship, needing 165,000 pounds to complete the job. **Chart of vital materials needed (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527734)** [2]

Officials didn't want people to destroy possessions that were still being used for their original purposes, but they made comparisons nonetheless: "How the beauty parlor goes to war; The iron that used to go

into a single hair dryer is enough for six hand grenades." and "The Lumber in two average desks would provide enough material to build a trailer for a war worker."[3]

Comparing the salvaging efforts of the enemy with those of Americans could also spur higher achievement. In May 1943 officials quoted famed war correspondent Ernie Pyle who described German salvage work during a retreat:

> The Germans leave very clean country behind them. Their salvage organization must be one of the best in the world -- probably because of desperate necessity. We've gone all over the Tunisian country from which they have fled and evidences that they have been there are slight. You see burned-out tanks in the fields, and some wrecked scout cars and Italian trucks lying in roadside ditches, and that is about all. Nothing is left behind that is repairable. Wrecked cars are stripped of their tires, instruments, and lights. They leave no tin cans, boxes or other junk.[4]



In relation to the German retreat, an Oregon State Salvage Committee official added the commentary that "when you're running like heck, with an Allied bayonet close to your pants and still have to stop for salvage, its' importance is more than obvious. Salvage committees don't have to work under that handicap. We are not retreating. We face no dangers here save public apathy and indifference. But salvage is no less necessary on the peaceful home front in order to adequately support our boys on the war front who have to face the bayonets."[5]

Organizing Salvage Efforts

Oregonians salvaged everything from rags to rubber to rope through a cooperative process involving the federal War Production Board (WPB) and the Oregon State Defense Council. Created in 1942, the 46 volunteer members of the Oregon State Salvage Board, under the WPB, planned programs and set policies and procedures for salvage efforts statewide. The defense council in turn was responsible for coordinating and mobilizing volunteer efforts in conjunction with local salvage committees.

By early 1943, every county in Oregon had a salvage committee and an additional 273 local committees were in operation.

Along with the highly publici zed consu



Conde McCullough had a bright idea about how to salvage more rubber. (Image courtesy *Oregon Blue Book*)

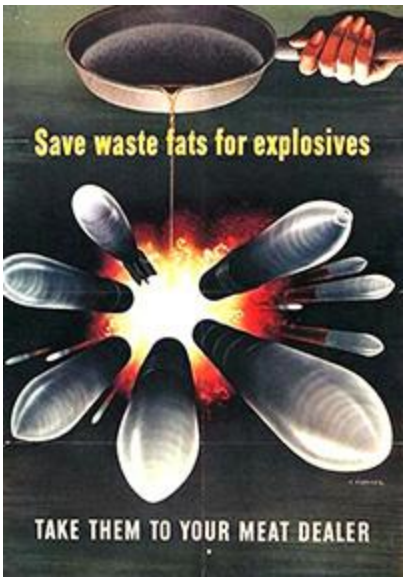
Conde McCullough, a top State Highway Department official and designer of a number of Oregon's most beautiful bridges, offered an idea to salvage scrap rubber from the mail posts lining the roads of the state.

In McCullough's words: "Last Monday I drove from Coquille to the California Line on Highway No. 101. I noticed that at practically every rural mail box there was a

mer scrap drives, WPB officials also sought out industrial scrap, old automobiles, and even special sources such as the rails from Portland's unused streetcar lines. Scrap drives came and went depending on the shortages of the moment. Rubber was urgently needed early in the war, leading to millions of old tires rolling into collection centers. Later, the need for rubber was less intense but the need for brass and bronze increased.[6]

Can Kitchen Fats Win the War?

While a variety of scrap drives occurred, those related to kitchen fats and scrap paper illustrated the general process involved. Kitchen fats and greases seem odd materials to be fervently collecting in the midst of a world war, but officials had their reasons. The fats contained a significant amount of glycerine that could be used in explosives. Glycerine was valuable to the war effort in other ways, including as an antiseptic, a medicinal solvent, in cellophane and glassine packaging, and as treatment for sunburn and other skin irritations. The need for salvaging kitchen fats was heightened by the "complete shut-off of our vegetable oil supply from the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies by the Japanese...." Despite drastic curtailment of the use of glycerine in civilian products such as soap, cosmetics, lotions, candy, and gum, shortages persisted and fueled the long running salvage efforts.[7]

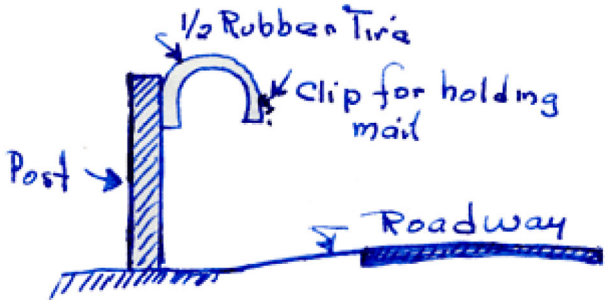


Posters made a dramatic connection between kitchen fats and the production of munitions.

As with other scrap drives, officials on the national and state levels set quotas for the amount of kitchen fats they expected to collect. The national quota for 1943, for example, was 200 million pounds. Oregon's share of the quota was 2,340,000 pounds, which averaged about 195,000 pounds per month. That was a tall order based on the state's past efforts that failed to top 64,000 per month. Still, state officials remained upbeat about their prospects of meeting the quota, saying that "despite the educational and promotional

device, consisting of a
half of an old automob
sort of a clip gadget wh
mouse trap, the purpo
I presume, being to ass
carrier in picking up ar

McCullough went on to sketch the device and praise it, saying that it "is devilishly clever and ranks with the incandescent light and the cotton gin among America's great inventions. If I knew who thought this up first I would recommend that he be decorated with the Croix de guerre and elected into Phi Beta Kappa...."



McCullough's drawing shows the piece of tire to be salvaged. (Folder 11, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

However, McCullough quickly shifted to recommending that all of this great engineering be yanked from the mail posts in the interest of the war effort: "...there must be nearly half a ton of old scrap rubber utilized in these various installations. I presume that the property owners will kick but it appeared to me that in the present emergency they might be induced to get along with some sort of a gooseneck or bracket constructed of timber, in lieu of the rubber tire."[18]

Graphic design image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/f39e9c5b-cc74-4154-8cae-0bae2af67686)

campaigns which have been carried on so splendidly by our county and unit salvage committees, the maximum available amount of fats has yet to be 'tapped.'" Even so, they acknowledged the challenge: "Needless to state, it's not going to be an easy job to attain these quotas, especially with the advent of meat rationing looming in the near future [presumably resulting in less kitchen fats]. BUT IT CAN BE DONE." There was no letup in the quota system--a later quota put Oregon's pride on the line for four million pounds a year.[8]

Salvage officials provided instructions, even quizzes, to help consumers save kitchen fats and greases and meet the quota: "You can help attain this quota, Mrs. Housewife, by saving your pan drippings, lard and vegetable shortening and all waste kitchen greases. Be sure to strain your fats, pour them into a wide-mouthed can, keep in a cool or refrigerated space and then, after you have one to two pounds of the materials, take them to your meat market. The butcher will pay you for them and start them on their way toward war industries." **Quiz about the need to save kitchen grease (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148350)** [9]

Transportation of kitchen fats, once collected, was a problem for remote communities such as Lostine in Wallowa County. Volunteers there collected a large amount of tallow that had gone rancid before it could be delivered for rendering. A state official sternly reminded a Lostine salvage volunteer that "the government, on this kitchen Fats program, must have clean, clear, free-from-water fats; and if this quantity of tallow has been standing for quite sometime in Lostine, where probably there has been no refrigeration, we doubt very much if it would have any particular explosive glycerine value." The official suggested a call to the Consolidated Freightways Inc. office ten miles away in Enterprise to try to arrange for future pickups.[10]

Paper Troopers March for Salvage

Paper drives were a common form of salvage during the war. A 1942 estimate found the nation needed over 20 million tons of paper for the war and associated uses, with a goal of seven million tons coming from salvaged paper. The versatile product found its way into "several hundred thousand items used by the armed forces" such as blood plasma containers, K-ration cartons, shell casings, vaccine boxes, and bullet cartons. Again, officials took steps to limit civilian use. For instance, the amount of newsprint allocated to publishers was reduced to 75% of normal consumption. Still, by 1944, WPB chairman Donald M. Nelson was warning that "the shortage of wood pulp and available waste paper at the paper mills is becoming increasingly critical. The demands of the mills for paperboard containers and paper products for shipment of supplies to all battlefronts is growing constantly."[11]



A Paper Trooper stands at attention, ready to salvage wagon loads of paper for the cause. (Folder 9, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

The WPB studied reports of school waste paper salvage campaigns across the country to put

Silk Stockings Go to War

In one of many unlikely pairings, ladies silk and nylon stockings played an

important part in winning the war. At the time, silk was the only material out of which powder bags could be made. Powder bags contained the charge of gunpowder used in firing the "big guns." Silk was completely destroyed during the firing, unlike other materials that left a residue, which required cleaning the gun between shots.



The caption to this cartoon reads: "If I can put up with painted stockings, what's wrong with having your socks mended likewise?" (Folder 5, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

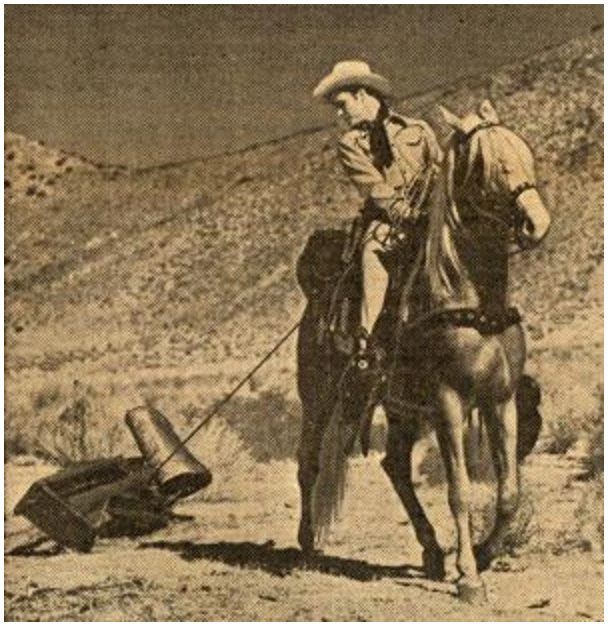
Nylon stockings could be melted, respun into nylon thread, and manufactured into war products such as parachutes. With their silk and nylon stockings drafted into the war effort, stylish women needed alternatives. Many used leg make-up, otherwise know as "bottled stockings," that could last up to 3 days assuming no baths were taken. Some women even used eyebrow pencils to paint faux stocking seams on the backs of their legs. Sacrifice, and ingenuity it seems, were boundless! **Question and answer about stockings (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151233)**[19]

Harnessing the Community Spirit

together a new program designed to enhance efforts by students. The program created "an army of paper salvagers" called "Paper Troopers." According to program literature, the name was no accident, since it had "a resemblance to the name Paratroopers, those daring raiders dropped from the sky behind enemy lines, and should, therefore, have a tremendous appeal to pupils. Boys nowadays live in terms of fighting adventure and the paper trooper emblem will make a strong appeal to them. It will appeal to girls, too." Students who excelled at paper collection could "advance in rank" and earn additional chevrons that served as "public acknowledgement of their achievements." They could also earn certificates of merit for themselves and their schools.[12]

WPB officials urged teachers to get involved too, saying that "almost every teacher can find some way of working the Waste Paper Salvage theme into his current classroom assignments." For example, in dramatics class the students could do a skit on "the story of waste paper and the war." Social studies teachers could highlight the role of paper in modern life and arithmetic teachers could have their students account for the paper received and the funds resulting from its sale, while shop teachers could challenge pupils to construct a paper baler. Because of "the rising rate of juvenile delinquency," officials also wanted to set up activities during school vacations. They reasoned that the continuing work would serve two purposes: it would add to the paper salvage totals; and it would help students "develop their competence as youthful citizens and turn their energies into wholesome constructive channels at a period when there is great pressure to divert them into non-constructive and even anti-social channels."[13]

Paper Troopers and other salvage programs harnessed cooperative and competitive instincts within communities. Each level, from the state down to the neighborhood or school, saw constant jockeying for bragging rights. Thus, all of the citizens of Oregon could be rightfully proud of the state's ranking of number two out of all 48 states in both iron/steel and silk/nylon stocking salvage on a per capita basis in 1943.[14] Tiny Powers High School, with an enrollment of 45, won acclaim for what was thought to be the national record for the collection of scrap by students in 1942, with each child collecting nearly 14,000 pounds. Meanwhile, Portland's Lincoln High School collected 200 tons of scrap making it the champion of total poundage. This sort of friendly competition continued throughout the war as "scrappers" of all ages vied for evidence of their prowess and patriotism.[15]



Cowboy movie star Roy Rogers hauls in scrap from the range for the salvage effort. (Folder 16, Box 28, Defense Council, OSA)

Meanwhile, "one thousand Klamath Falls kiddies, each bearing a batch of tin cans, bore down on a local theater" for another matinee, this time in conjunction with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Campfire Girls organizations.

State salvage officials fanned the flames of community rivalries by publishing local accomplishments. Readers learned that young people in Corvallis held a "scrap matinee" at a local theater and gathered a truckload of "much-needed" copper, brass and aluminum. Meanwhile, "one thousand Klamath Falls kiddies, each bearing a batch of tin cans, bore down on a local theater" for another matinee, this time in conjunction with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Campfire Girls organizations. By the end of the show, 5,250 pounds of cans had been salvaged. Clatsop County contributed over 12 tons of waste fats and nearly 1,000 pounds of silk and nylon stockings while Portland put up big numbers by filling 23 train carloads of tin.[16]

Local efforts, such as those in the La Grande area, proved inspiring as J.H. Bratton reported to the Oregon State Defense Council in 1942: "The salvage program is in full blast and the committees are obtaining splendid cooperation from the public. One wrecking concern informed me that they are turning in around 12 tons of old tires and that they ship a carload of scrap-iron every other day. All service stations are piled high with rubber salvage. I have met a number of farmers bringing in scrap-iron and rubber in pick-ups and trucks on the road. It is astonishing the amount of waste that is being gathered up."[17]

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Kitchen Grease Quiz, circa 1942. Page 1, Folder 13, Box 28, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from Mrs. C.W. Hayhurst to Mrs. Melvin Crow, Oct. 26, 1942. Folder 13, Box 28, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Use of Reclaimed Salvage" Memorandum, circa March 1942. Folder 13, Box 28, Defense Council Records, OSA; "Paper Trooper: A Manual for School Administrators and Community Leaders," U.S. War Production Board, circa 1944. Folder 9, Box 30, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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Kitchen fats were salvaged for the glycerine they contained. Glycerine was used in vital war products, most importantly explosives. (Folder 8, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

Cultivating for the Cause: Victory Gardens Till New Ground

"If It Grows a Fine Crop of Flowers or Weeds, It's Soil"

America had a reputation as a land of plenty, but World War II challenged the nation's ability to grow and distribute food. Millions of farmers and farm laborers streamed into the military or to high paying defense industry jobs, leading to a severe farm labor shortage. At the same time, the United States bore the additional responsibility of providing vast amounts of food to allies such as Britain, China, and the Soviet Union, hoping to prevent their collapse. To boost production and ease strain on the transportation system, Victory Gardens sprouted across the country, as many Americans learned the pleasure of getting dirty for a patriotic cause.



Officials reminded Americans that a well planned Victory Garden was not only patriotic, but could provide a family with nutritious and tasty food. (Folder 18, Box 28, Defense Council, OSA)

Why Victory Gardens?

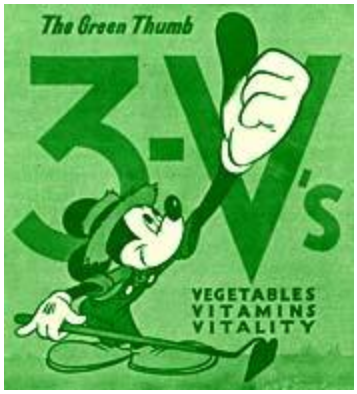
Officials cited several reasons why Americans should grow their own food. Even with boosts in farm production goals, the needs were "so great that every food production resource must be mobilized to meet the demand." About 25% of total food production in 1943 went to the armed forces and the allies, with each soldier needing a ton of food a year. Moreover, partly because of tin shortages and the military needs, canned food was in short supply and came under rationing regulations. This left millions of Americans habituated to eating canned foods looking at increasingly bare grocery store shelves. Fresh fruits and vegetables were not rationed but, according to officials, "the wartime burden on the Nation's transportation system will make it impossible to ship over long distances the normal amount of fresh vegetables and fruits, especially the more bulky vegetables. This will require production of more of the civilian supplies close to consuming areas." [1]

Do You Have a Green Thumb?

Among many efforts to promote gardening, the National Victory Garden Institute sponsored a Green Thumb Contest in 1944. The national grand prize winner in the adult category could take home a war bond worth $1,000, while a lucky grade school and high school winner would each get a $500 bond. State and local prizes were also handed out.

Authorities also provided citizens with selfish reasons to have a Victory Garden. Home gardeners wouldn't have to worry about crop failures in other parts of the country or transportation "bottlenecks" limiting supply. They would save money too since "even a small garden, if well planned and tended, will yield $25 to $50 worth of vegetables." People with Victory Gardens would be healthier since "there's nothing like exercise and better meals to

Contestants filled out charts recording their planting and harvesting information such as what was planted, the crop yield, and how it was used after harvesting. Additionally, contestants could write "short stories" about their gardens and send in pictures. Judges on the local, state, and national levels took into account neatness and originality, planting arrangement, choice of crops and varieties, crop yields, and how the crop was used to determine winners. Perhaps mostly for the bleary-eyed judges, children were advised that "since it is important to keep this Record Book clean and neat, it is suggested that you do not take it into the garden...." (**Green Thumb contest entry package (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151121)**) [9]



Mickey Mouse got into the act of promoting the Green Thumb Contest, which was open to both adult and young gardeners. (Folder 13, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

improve your health, which is doubly important in wartime." And, officials asserted, home grown food is tastier: "It's not only because you raised it yourself, with sweat and care. Vegetables and fruits do have a better flavor when they are really fresh, as they are when they come right from the garden." And for those suffering from wartime anxiety, "there isn't a better hobby for lots of people. It makes you feel good. It relaxes your nerves. It's a family enterprise that brings together father, mother, son and daughter." Even the community benefits of gardening could make the individual feel better since gardens "promote neighborliness, sociability, cooperation." With home gardeners providing 40% of the country's fresh vegetables by 1944, the individual could feel patriotic about the contribution. [2]

Where and How to Start

The U.S. Department of Agriculture promoted Victory Gardens in four major settings. Farms were obvious candidates. Farmers were encouraged to start or expand vegetable gardens and, where possible, plant strawberries, bush fruit, and suitable fruit trees. By 1944 Americans tended over six million farm gardens. Town and suburban gardeners were called on to plant in their back yards or any other "open sunny garden space." Suburban property owners, with typically larger lots, were asked to plant more fruit "wherever space permits." While some people living in cities, such as Portland, could plant in back yards or street right of ways, many relied on community gardens. These could be set up on vacant lots that were recommended to be 30 by 50 feet or larger and "accessible by bus or street car." Officials also called on schools to grow gardens, hoping to supply school lunches in the process. During the long summer vacation, schools could hire local boys to cultivate the gardens



A woman snacks on a carrot, part of a basketful of bounty from a Victory Garden. Americans grew over 20 million

"under the watchful supervision of the instructor or a gardener." [3]Overall, American's responded by tending over 20 million Victory Gardens during the war.

gardens during the war. (Folder 13, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

Officials also offered advice on who should grow, or not grow, a Victory Garden. Rex Putnam, Oregon Superintendent of Public Instruction, echoed the caution for fair weather gardeners: "Gardens will not grow on hopes and good intentions. A good garden will require space, fertile soil, and faithful care. Lack of the latter causes many gardens to languish. Anyone disinclined to care for the garden he plants should desist from gardening 'for the duration' as this is no time to waste precious seed, fertilizer, and insecticides." [4]

"Gardens will not grow on hopes and good intentions. A good garden will require space, fertile soil, and faithful care."



Families enjoyed planning their Victory Garden for the year. Experts offered advice to novices on how to get the most out of their plot. (Folder 13, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

Once they were sure they wanted to garden, citizens had access to a wealth of information about how to proceed. The literature ranged from basic to very detailed since it was designed to help everyone from the first time gardener to the long time gardener looking to increase yields or try new crops. Most advice told gardeners to choose the plot wisely but chemical soil analysis wasn't needed because "if it grows a fine crop of flowers or weeds, it's soil." Still, they were to be wary of "the usual kind of city lots where soil is mostly cinders and rubbish." Gardeners were admonished to avoid using too much seed and planting too much of one thing. Too much shade could also doom a location. Planning ahead was important so rookie gardeners were told not to let tall crops shade short ones: "Plant climbers, like beans, to the north; short ones, to the south." Of course, to be vigilant against weeds and insects they had to "be ready with spray gun and duster and the proper death-dealing ammunition." [5]

Victory Gardens proved popular with Oregonians, who soon organized around the state. The Oregon Victory Garden Advisory Committee formed in 1942, consisting of representatives from federal and state agencies as well as groups such as the State Grange, 4-H Clubs, State Federation of Garden Clubs, and the State Horticultural Society. The Oregon State College Extension Service also hosted conferences and supplied advice to new gardeners. During 1942, 16 counties held their own garden conferences with the help of county extension agents who issued garden guidelines customized for their local climatic conditions. Meanwhile, neighborhood leaders were charged with distributing Victory Garden information to individual homes and radio broadcasts filled the airwaves with related information. National and state goals aimed at increased



participation. For example, Oregon's goal of 59,000 Victory Gardens by the end of 1942 represented a 38% increase over the previous goal. [6]

Officials promoted Victory Gardens as a way to stretch valuable rations. As an added benefit, it was way for families to spend time together.

Victory Garden image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/af7b60e7-5491-4a2a-86b0-a5c26aa37c2e)

Local Experiences



Victory Gardens provided nutritious food for healthier meals. **Your Victory Garden image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d01e7cbd-7ab4-473f-9a4a-152840b3e9ea)**

While Victory Gardens grew around the state, they perhaps had their biggest impact in the urban setting of the Portland area. Thousands of new gardeners took to the plots. By May 1943, children alone were cultivating an amazing 135 acres of land, with more than 2,000 young people participating in the Victory Garden program. Schools took part by instructing 5th grade through high school students during class time. The actual gardening was done outside of school hours with each student registered for an individual garden area. "Important-looking" V-garden signs that included no trespassing warnings were also given to each student. Concerned with rising juvenile delinquency, school authorities thought it was "better for children to have gardens than to be entirely unoccupied when school is over." At least one teacher, Miss Maude Mattley, thought children made good gardeners: "...it is safe to say that most of these young gardeners were far better prepared to start out with a hoe and a rake than the average adult victory gardener." [7]

Meanwhile, adults streamed into Portland area classes to become better gardeners. The local victory garden committee offered free classes throughout the city. By May 1943, 12 classes were underway with more planned. While some children attended, most students ranged from 20 years old to over 70. Taught by experienced volunteers, the weekly classes took place in schools, private homes, or "wherever the requisite space is available." Lessons highlighted each class but question and answer sessions were a popular component. According to one teacher: "We try to keep the subject matter seasonal and very practical. What to do this week, what things to plant, how to care for the things already set out...just whatever is timely." While many classes were held in the evening, some daytime classes were offered for the defense industry workers on "swing shift," often from 4 p.m. to midnight. The classes were becoming popular in the defense housing areas and organizers wanted to "start a class for gardeners in Vanport City and Kaiserville, and have more than 200 names signed up for membership." [8]

"We try to keep the subject matter seasonal and very practical. What to do this week, what things to plant, how to care for the things already set out...just whatever is timely."

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Farm Labor Programs Work to Bring In the Crops

"Considerable Bungling Plus an Acute Shortage of Manpower"

World War II brought changes to farms across the country trying to cope with labor shortages and demands for higher production. Even though Congress authorized military deferments for farm workers in 1942, agricultural employment dropped by one million during the war. Among other things, this labor shortage spurred farmers to accelerate the use of mechanical equipment. It also contributed to the growing consolidation of small farms into larger, more commercial concerns, a trend that would continue after the war. But the most immediate result of the lack of farm workers was a raft of new federal farm labor programs that gave city and town dwellers the chance to bring in the crop for the war cause and get a taste of farm life in the process.

Watch Dupont's 1943 "Farming During World War II: 'Soldiers of the Soil'" (https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6lh4zi)



Posters showed a romantic view of farm work to entice town dwellers to help reduce the labor shortage.

Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/5652c7bf-09bf-4f42-ba49-ceb9fcbf11d5)

Federal Agencies Dither

While farm labor shortages varied by region, the Pacific Northwest felt the results acutely. Some of the problem derived from the welter of federal agencies with authority over aspects of farm labor. For example, the Selective Service System, National War Labor Board, and War Manpower Commission all played a role in labor issues. By 1943 James Sheppard, director of the regional office of the federal Office of Civilian Defense, was frustrated after "pounding Washington with all the force I possess for some two months, insisting that there come out of Washington a unified approach to this problem...." He confided his concerns to a colleague in his Northwest Sector office: "You are undoubtedly much more familiar with the crisis in agricultural production which we are now facing, which in my opinion is a result of considerable bungling plus an acute shortage of manpower. The information at my disposal shows that in every state in our region, we are faced with the possibility that less acreage will be planted this year due to the inability of the farmer to be certain that he will be able to have the facilities with which to harvest such crops as he plants."

Letter from James Landis and farming plan (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151158) [1]

Oregon Farm Labor Shortages

Oregon farmers felt the crunch in the summer of 1942, leading Governor Sprague to call on citizens to "combine patriotism and profit by spending their Fourth of July holidays aiding the state's hard-pressed



John Day, owner of the Blue Moon Ranch in the Medford area, pleaded with Gov. Sprague to find more farm workers. (Image no. jacD0016, Oregon Scenic Photos, OSA)

farmers." Sprague brought attention to the plight of western Oregon farmers: "I urge that every man, woman and child who can get away from usual occupations volunteer their services to help harvest cherries, strawberries, cane fruits and hay. More than ever in war time, we can not and must not let a pound of these valuable crops go to waste." Polk, Marion, and Clackamas counties were hardest hit. Along with calling on Oregonians to give up their holidays to work in fields and orchards, Sprague asked merchants and other city employers to "conduct their businesses with skeleton crews, releasing their employees for harvest work." [2]

Governor Sprague also received reports from embattled farmers and ranchers asking for help or advice. John Day, owner of the Blue Moon Ranch outside of Medford, told the governor in 1942 that he was contemplating curtailing his operations: "No man can properly handle 350 head of cattle and farm 500 acres, of which a good portion is garden, without skilled machine operators and experienced farm labor." Because of the labor shortage that summer, Day had sacrificed "several hundred tons of hay still stacked in the fields which should have been chopped into the barns as feed to fatten steers." He had only just returned with his wife, "along with one Army officer, one Naval officer, both on furlough, and two men from the ranch...[from] spending ten days riding in two feet of snow rounding up the cattle on a Government range. We were fortunate enough in finding most of them, but being late in the season there will be a few head which we cannot find and they will perish as the snow gets deep."

His frustration with the chronic labor shortage showed when he wrote: "So you see, Governor, there is just one darn thing after another."

Day lamented that local high school students couldn't learn quickly how to operate the intricate farm machinery and asked Governor Sprague if he thought there would be adequate labor for the next season. [3] Sprague replied that there were many reasons for pessimism, but he appealed to Day to not curtail his operation even though "it will mean a great strain for you and your wife.... You won't get any heroes medals but you should have the satisfaction of knowing that you carried on to the maximum of your ability in a time of need." [4]

There were many steps farmers and ranchers could take to reduce the impact of the labor shortage. The federal War Food Administration gave farmers 12 labor "short cuts" that included pooling machinery with neighboring farmers, getting portable fencing so it could be moved quickly, cutting unnecessary steps in farm chores, and using labor-saving devices. Medford rancher John Day took several steps to increase efficiency. Three years earlier he had foreseen a labor shortage and "began buying every labor saving machine that came within the proper bounds of economical operation." He also invented devices such as a tractor operated sugar beet weeder that took the place of 10 laborers and a sugar beet cutter and windrower, which combined to replace 35 laborers and drew attention from several farm machinery manufacturers who "sent their engineers to study and take pictures of this machinery, so possibly next

year there may be some produced commercially." Day also imported a "group of good Mexican agricultural workers" from California's Sacramento Valley but he still fell short of the help needed to run his operation properly.

Correspondence between John Day and Gov. Sprague

(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151096) [5]

Finally, Meaningful Federal Action

> **"You won't get any heroes medals but you should have the satisfaction of knowing that you carried on to the maximum of your ability in a time of need."**

By 1943 the federal government finally broke through its bureaucratic infighting to produce programs designed to help farmers such as John Day throughout the country. The creation of the U.S. Crop Corps and related programs helped stabilize the situation. The U.S. Crop Corps served as an umbrella for labor services such as the Women's Land Army and the Victory Farm Volunteers. If these sources failed to supply the necessary labor, farmers could ask for workers from other counties or from "surplus farm labor areas" that included Mexico. State agricultural extension services were given the job of coordinating the recruitment, training, and placement of laborers under the program. As part of this, the Oregon State College Extension Service established the Emergency Farm Labor Service, which operated from 1943 to 1947. The service helped place over 900,000 workers on farms throughout Oregon while managing 9 labor camps. The range of workers was broad, including urban women and youth, professionals, soldiers, returning war veterans, workers from other states, Mexican and Jamaican migrant workers, and German prisoners of war. Farmers in need of laborers contacted their county extension agent who coordinated the placement. [6]

Women's Land Army



Women were urged to contribute on farms to help reduce the labor shortage. This poster shows several tasks typically handled by women.

Image courtesy Northwestern

The Women's Land Army, a separate unit of the U.S. Crop Corps, ramped up operations quickly in 1943. It employed women both year around and for shorter periods. Farmers employed most of the women on a "day-haul" basis in which the workers were given rides to the fields in school buses, farmers' trucks or personal cars. These women typically picked fruit, hoed, weeded or harvested vegetables, and helped with canning and processing food. Some did household work at the farm house, freeing up the often more experienced "womenfolk of the farm" to drive tractors and do other work that required more skill. Other women worked all year and received special training for dairy farm jobs and "other continuous farm activities." All members of the Women's Land Army had to be 18 years old and show a doctor's certificate verifying that they were in good health and "strong enough to do hard farm work." Nearly 135,000 placements of women were made from 1943 to 1947. [7]

University Library
(https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/b3f07e0a-66ba-46ab-b6f7-cb1df9e3b5fb)

Victory Farm Volunteers

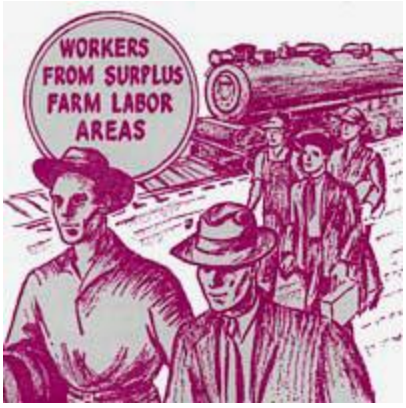


Over 270,000 youth placements were made in Oregon for the Victory Farm Volunteers. (Folder 13, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

The largest group of farm workers came from another unit of the U.S. Crop Corps called the Victory Farm Volunteers that employed youth from 11 to 17 years old. In Oregon youth committees composed of farmers and youth organization leaders formed in each county to anticipate labor needs and plan training to be given in local schools during the spring. Once out of school, the youths were organized into groups of from 20 to 50 individuals, after which they received more training. Farmers made specific labor requests to the emergency farm labor assistant in the county extension office. The youth platoons, often supervised by a member of the Women's Land Army, worked up to 6 hours a day on a day-haul basis. [8]

Parental consent and a physical examination were required to participate, but officials also looked for "those who are ready and willing to learn": "The recruitment of the youths is aimed at discouraging those who would be unable to adapt themselves to farm life and surroundings." Yet, at the same time they saw the program keeping at-risk youths out of trouble and having a "very direct and beneficial effect upon juvenile delinquency problems." Officials also had advice for farmers in their interactions with the young workers: "Whether you employ a member of the Victory Farm Volunteers or a member of the Boy Scouts or other patriotic organization that is urging its young members to work on farms this year, keep the youth's age in mind. Show him how to do things. Don't just tell him. He'll be anxious to do work that will harden his muscles. Don't let him do the heavy jobs all at once. A boy or girl of premilitary age is likely to want to overdo." Over the life of the program, more than 270,000 placements were made on farms and food processing facilities across Oregon. [9]

Migrant Workers



The Bracero Program brought over 15,000 Mexican workers to Oregon.

Migrant workers from Mexico also eased Oregon's farm labor shortages. Their entry into the United States was made possible by a wartime farm labor agreement between the U.S. and Mexico that created the "Bracero Program." By 1943 these contract workers were garnering praise from Oregon farmers. Pea growers at Umatilla said the braceros saved their crop from loss. Hood River apple orchardists were happy to have new workers to fill "jobs requiring grown men rather than women and children." One farmer's wife summed it up: "We sure like these new Mexicans. They want to work all the time." But the braceros also experienced discrimination, wage disputes, poor housing and other problems. Some observers thought the labor force should be changed yearly. Otherwise, they argued, the men could become "too lonesome for home to the point of becoming unmanageable and insolent." One camp

(Folder 13, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

manager said that braceros who stayed longer "developed a propensity to get drunk and absent themselves from camp and work." Despite the mixed reviews about the migrant workers, few could argue that the program didn't help ease the farm labor shortage in the state. From 1942 to 1947 over 15,000 Mexican men worked on Oregon farms, ranches, and orchards as braceros. [10]

Other Contributors

The last years of the war saw the arrival of prisoners of war (POW) to work on farms. From 1944 to 1946 farmers could request help from POW laborers held at 6 camps operated by the Army in Oregon. Jackson, Benton, Polk and Marion counties each had one camp while Malheur County had two camps. More than 3,500 prisoners, mostly Germans, worked in Oregon fields. In 1945 they harvested 3.8 million pounds of hops in the Willamette Valley and in Malheur County they were largely responsible for the planting and harvesting of 7,500 acres of potatoes, 3,000 acres of lettuce, and 3,500 acres of onions. [11]



Townspeople could be mobilized quickly in many communities to bring in the crop if needed. (Folder 13, Box 30, Defense Council, OSA)

In many cases, whole towns would shut down to allow merchants, bankers, gas station attendants, and others "go to the fields to save crops."

Many other groups toiled long hours in Oregon farm fields during the war. The U.S. Crop Corps, with the help of civic organizations nationwide, organized a campaign to mobilize nonfarm workers to help during local farm emergencies. In many cases, whole towns would shut down to allow merchants, bankers, gas station attendants, and others "go to the fields to save crops." Some communities used defense council block leaders to canvass door-to-door to enlist volunteers. Sometimes local schools would close for a few days to bring in the potato crop or whatever needed to be harvested quickly while teachers worked much of the summer in the fields or canneries. The state put penitentiary inmates to work on farms in 1943. And, individual farms in Tillamook and Coos counties played host to conscientious objectors who served as farm laborers in lieu of military service. Many Oregonians, particularly those in the timber industry, moved from place to place following the harvest schedule before many returned to their old jobs. Meanwhile, over 1,000 placements of Japanese American workers were made in Malheur County between 1943 and 1945. [12]

Related Documents

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Letter from John Day to Governor Sprague, Nov. 28, 1942. Folder 5, Box 1, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

Letter from Governor Sprague to John Day, Dec. 5, 1942. Folder 5, Box 1, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

"Do You Need Additional Farm Help," U.S. Department of Agriculture, June 1943. Folder 13, Box 30, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from John Day to Governor Sprague, Nov. 28, 1942. Folder 5, Box 1, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

"Do You Need Additional Farm Help," U.S. Department of Agriculture, June 1943. Folder 13, Box 30, Defense Council Records, OSA; "Fighters on the Farm Front," **Oregon State University Special Collection (http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/Fighters/topics/admin)**.

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Food is a Weapon: Nutrition Programs Fight for Victory

Can, Store, Dry, Freeze, Pickle and Then Eat Well

Farm labor shortages, localized food surpluses from Victory Gardens, and rationing of many types of food dovetailed to heighten the importance of nutrition programs to the war effort. Nutrition programs sought to use available foods more efficiently, through reduction of waste, preservation, and other means so more food would be available for the battle fronts and for allies. If successful, the program would require that much less from overworked farmers and commercial canners, while it would make sure that extra Victory Garden produce would find its way to local canning circles and reduce demand for scarce rationed food products. Certainly from a nutritional standpoint, healthy well-fed Americans would maintain a higher morale, be more productive, and miss less work because of illness. As with many other aspects of wartime life, good nutrition was promoted as every American's patriotic duty.



Food preservation played a big role in nutrition programs during the war.

Poster courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/8bd0f864-28d4-4c2d-ad0a-250f88bf6dd1)



A woman shows off a jar of canned beans. (Folder 18, Box 28, Defense Council, OSA)

The Oregon State Defense Council formed a State Nutrition Committee in 1941 to plan and promote nutrition efforts in the state. Chaired by the indefatigable Ava Milam, Dean of the Home Economics Department at Oregon State College in Corvallis, the committee was comprised of leading experts in the fields of nutrition, health and agriculture. Counties also formed nutrition committees to put the program in motion on the local level. The State Nutrition Committee acted as a conduit for information from federal agencies to the county committees and also coordinated statewide activities. Over time state and local program volunteers were involved in teaching nutrition courses, putting on food demonstrations, displaying nutrition exhibits, talking to civic and service groups, participating in radio programs, promoting school lunches, and taking part in national nutrition campaigns.

Food Preservation

Reduction of food waste was a national goal that nutrition committees in Oregon promoted through various forms of food preservation. Dean Milam led the cheerleading by saying "every individual homemaker in Oregon can help in the nutrition for defense program by canning, freezing, drying, and storing every bit of fruit, vegetables, and other foods that she can obtain and process." According to Milam, liberal interpretation of sugar rationing rules allowed fruit canners to use all the sugar needed up to a ratio of one pound of sugar to four quarts of fruit. She put canning in the context of the war effort: "If surplus fruit is going to waste or is easily available, it is not only the right but the patriotic duty of homemakers to obtain more canning sugar if necessary and put up more food for future use." This would not only "help Uncle Sam but help ourselves to meet the food budget problems for the coming months." [1]

In another missive to homemakers, Milam promoted the formation of "canning circles" to best utilize resources because "though the first peas are just beginning to poke their heads through the sodden soil, Victory gardeners are looking forward to the harvest and the problem of canning, drying and freezing surpluses." She implored people who owned pressure canners to share them with other families since "only a few canners will be available for purchase this year." Milam suggested six or more families share each cooker and even share the preparation of the fruits and vegetables for canning since "many hands make light work." [2]



Ava Milam chaired the State Nutrition Committee. (Photographs, Defense Council, OSA)

The federal Department of Agriculture promoted the value of canning and recognized the shortage of pressure cookers. In 1943 the department convinced another federal office to allocate more material to manufacture "a number of family size cookers, 7-quart capacity, which will be sold through the regular retail outlets." Still, would-be purchasers needed to fill out Form MR20A and submit it to their local county farm rationing board, which, if approving, would issue a purchase certificate--few things were simple in the wartime economy.

Nutrition newsletter (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148344) [3]

For those tempted to skip the bureaucracy and proceed without the proper equipment, nutrition experts

Eat More Patriotic Ice Cream!



Students line up for ice cream. (Folder 14, Box 29, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Ice cream lovers must have been pleased to discover at least one expert saw the importance of the frozen dessert to good nutrition. The expert happened to be Alice Cooley, the director of home economics for the National Dairy Council. Cooley noted that ice cream fit squarely in the middle of "group 4," the dairy foods section of the government's seven basic food groups. She cited several studies showing that "calcium is one of the food elements low in our daily meals." Ice cream just happened to be rich in calcium. And ice cream certainly had more food value than its competitors, those old enemies of good nutrition: "cookies, cakes and pies."

Cooley added that apart from its healthful qualities, "ice cream helps solve shortages" in a time of sugar rationing. She claimed that "food managers are able to use some other sweeteners in cooked

warned against "canning any vegetables other than tomatoes without using a pressure cooker, for danger of food spoilage and possible poisoning." [4]

Several other methods of food preservation were available to gardeners. Simply storing vegetables in basements, root cellars, or appropriate outdoor settings could be a cheap and easy solution. This worked for any "under-the-ground" vegetable such as onions and potatoes but also worked for apples, squash and pumpkins. Some variations existed for optimum storage. For example, potatoes kept best between 40 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit while sweet potatoes did better between 55 and 60 degrees. Smart food storers could tailor the precise storage location of different fruits and vegetables according to their individual needs. But they were forewarned: "Turnips should not be placed in the basement as they give off odors that penetrate through the house." [5]

desserts but do not find them interchangeable for sugar in all recipes. Therefore they realize that the frozen dairy foods which are now available are doubly important as a dessert item on their menus." The moral of the story? Eating ice cream was not only good for you, it was also your patriotic duty! [15]



Keen thinking while buying, serving, and storing food would avoid waste.

Fight food waste graphic courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/3258b60f-f533-4fb8-a5bb-a1cd053718d3)

Three other food preservation methods also proved popular. Officials promoted home drying of fruits and vegetables as patriotic "because it requires neither sugar nor the metals, rubber, or other scarce materials used in more common types of food preservation." Moreover, since vegetables were precooked before drying, they could be cooked for the table quickly. Wartime had a different effect on pickling as a means of preservation according to one Victory Garden book. Because some pickling ingredients could be in short supply, "sweet pickles may not be so sweet, nor spiced pickles so spicy" as prewar versions. Another government publication trumpeted that the "newest method of preserving foods is by quick-freezing. Many families throughout the country are now renting lockers at quick-freezing plants for storing their own vegetables, fruits, meats and poultry." [6]

Nutrition Education

In addition to promoting food preservation, officials provided information on other nutrition subjects. For example, homemakers were told it was a waste to improperly prepare foods since "much of the vitamin value...can be lost en route to the dinner plate." Experts advised that most vegetables should be

served raw when possible or cooked rapidly and "only until tender." Along with saving the vitamins needed for good nutrition, proper food preparation would also preserve the "fresh color, flavor, and texture" of the vegetables, thereby making the cook more popular in the dining room. [7] Experts also advised that homemakers carefully plan their meals to combine food groups into the most nutritious meals. Under the slogan "U.S. Needs US Strong--Eat the Basic 7 Every Day," government officials promoted the seven food groups that they thought should be in every daily diet. Each group corresponded with a color to make it easy to remember. Thus, white was for milk and milk products, brown was for breads and cereals, and green was assigned to green and yellow vegetables. The less understandable color choice of blue was apparently a catch-all assigned to "potatoes and other fruits and vegetables." [8]

Experts also advised that homemakers carefully plan their meals to combine food groups into the most nutritious meals. Under the slogan "U.S. Needs US Strong--Eat the Basic 7 Every Day," government officials promoted the seven food groups that they thought should be in every daily diet.



Shoppers were encouraged to buy nutritious foods, especially fruits and vegetables since they weren't rationed. (Folder 5, Box 28, Defense Council, OSA)

Representatives of nutrition committees went into local communities to gather information and educate residents. One committee focused on people living around the campuses of state colleges. For example, the Campus Nutrition Committee surveyed 53 Oregon State College campus living organizations and found deficiencies. Boarding houses and dormitories were not using enough enriched flour and bread and lacked enough raw fruits and vegetables, but seemed to have adequate meat and milk purchases. Armed with the results of the survey, members met with fraternity managers as well as "all housemothers and hostesses of sororities and women's cooperatives" to "explain the pattern for good nutrition in choice of diet and to assist them with any specific problems." Officials also met with 60 boarding house representatives, distributed "Eat the Right Food" posters, secured the promise of the publication of nutrition stories in the Barometer student newspaper, and distributed nutrition pamphlets. [9]

The State Nutrition Committee also made recommendations to hotels and restaurants. Among the suggestions was to highlight "protective" or nutritious foods on the menu, "perhaps in bold-face type or featured with a notation at the bottom that these are protective foods." The committee pressed restaurants to include educational information on the back of the menu that described nutritious foods to be included in the daily diet or gave advice on how to cook vegetables. Among other things, restaurateurs were asked to give diners the choice of tea, coffee, or milk with their meals, to use raw vegetables as garnish, and to cook vegetables in small quantities "so as to avoid holding on the steam table." No record appears to have been made of how many hotels and restaurants went along with the recommendations. [10]

Promotional Efforts

Officials used media to get the word out about nutrition issues. Early on the State Nutrition Committee was impressed with the support: "[The] press and radio of Oregon have been exceptionally cooperative in handling the material...and have easily more than doubled if not more than tripled their use of material on nutrition." The committee singled out *The Oregonian* for praise after the newspaper established a twice weekly food forum that featured nutrition stories and carried a weekly article under the byline of the chair of the State Nutrition Committee. Trade organization magazines, such as the Grange Bulletin, and radio stations, particularly KOAC in Corvallis, also drew appreciation from the committee. [11]

Play the Vita-Min-Go Game!



The game encouraged kids to learn about different kinds of nutritious food. (Folder 5, Box 28, Defense Council, OSA)

School children played a game called Vita-Min-Go to learn about nutrition during World War II. The game challenged players to eat a "Victory Diet" every day by playing the game to count the amount of vitamins and minerals they consumed.

The game provided players with six colored cards that included a "road to health" with 20 spaces. Each card pertained to a vitamin or mineral such as vitamin C or iron. Players used the provided score sheet to determine their points based on what they ate for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Thus, after eating "4 slices of enriched bread during the day, move 4 spaces on the red card, 2 on the purple, and 1 on the yellow." The winner was the first to reach the end of the road on all of the cards.

Play the Game!

Color cards, score sheet and instructions for Vita-Min-Go

Begun in 1943, the national nutrition campaign entitled "Food Fights for Victory" brought help from media outlets and businesses as well. The campaign, hoping to enhance public support, aimed to tie together several distinct but related programs, such as nutrition, price controls, and Victory Gardens, into one unified concept under the watchwords "Produce, Conserve, Share, Play Square." Langendorf Bakery in Portland commissioned 19 large outdoor panels advertising the campaign while S&W Foods sponsored two more. Meanwhile, the Pacific Railway ran 350 advertising cards inside their train coaches promoting the effort and Portland grocery stores Piggly Wiggly and Safeway ran related advertisements in *The Oregonian* and Oregon *Journal* newspapers. The radio waves also carried news of the campaign as Portland's KGW ran 55 announcements in less than a month while stations KOIN and KALE ran approximately 45 announcements but also had other coverage: "It has also been mentioned in news stories, and in addition there have been probably 30 mentions of one sort or another." [12]

Oregonians also took part in other national nutrition campaigns. The "Clean Plate" campaign sought to convince diners to not leave food on their plates, thereby reducing waste and making more food available for the war effort. In 1942 the State Nutrition Committee cooperated with the federal Office of Civilian Defense on the "Share the Meat" campaign. The



Officials promoted efforts such as the "Clean Plate" campaign to reduce

(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11319106) [16]

effort aimed to limit the amount of meat used by consumers so more would be available for the armed services and allies. After meat rationing took effect, state officials decided to end their activities supporting the campaign and instead focus efforts on education related to rationing.

food waste. **Don't waste food poster courtesy Northwestern University Library** (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/6d64a150-f762-4886-aa10-cb3bf22048b5)

Officials used other means of promoting and educating the public as well. One of the more unusual involved "rat feeding and plant feeding demonstrations." These were to be set up in schools to teach students proper diets. Presumably, one rat would be fed a good diet while another rat would get a bad diet, thereby becoming an object lesson to the children. Experts also recommended "market basket parties, where someone takes the group through a market and points out good buys" as a good way to study purchasing. And officials targeted college groups as being in need of further education, saying that "possibly too much money is spent on social affairs instead of food--'dances, not oranges.'" Nutrition promoters also showed films to spread the word. Oregon State College's Visual Instruction Department offered a number of educational offerings such as "Hidden Hunger," a 20-minute sound film in which the "need for complete feeding of the human body is presented in story form." A 40-minute film intriguingly entitled "Meat and Romance" showed viewers how to buy, cook and carve meats. [13]

Local Activities



State and local nutrition committee members gave talks to local civic groups. (Folder 8, Box 35, Defense Council, OSA)

Local nutrition advocates across Oregon worked hard to keep nutrition issues in the minds of citizens. Workers in Union County organized a speakers' bureau with nine members. The participants gave a "series of illustrated talks, and demonstrations" to organizations such as granges, parent teacher associations, and Rotary, Lion, and Soroptimist clubs. They also planned window displays, newspaper and radio publicity, and an extensive program in elementary schools that featured distribution of "all three Walt Disney Posters to each school" and giving each school a copy of the Vita -Min-Go nutrition game. Volunteers in Pendleton planned to set up a nutrition booth in a local place...maybe at the Safeway store. Lane County volunteers continued to promote the school lunch program throughout the county while Klamath County advocates put on a "marionette show, portraying good health habits in relation to good teeth." Noting that 70,000 pressure cookers were scheduled to be made by a cooker company, Klamath officials alerted locals to be ready to place their orders since the county seat's "Sears Roebuck will have 36 pressure cookers." Meanwhile, a Klamath County high school radio group was busy rehearsing their adaptation of a play about proper nutrition to be presented on station KFJI. [14]

Related Documents

"Nutrition Melodies" Sheet Music, Sarah Lawrence College, 1943

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With Mother at the Factory...Oregon's Child Care Challenges

Society Finds New Ways to Care for Children

As mothers with children moved into the labor force to fill the void left by millions of men going to war, they encountered many problems, including finding good child care. During the war the number of working women rose nationally by 57% and in Oregon it tripled during 1942 alone. The largest gains in employment were for married women over 35 years old, most of whom were not responsible for the care of young children. While the federal government discouraged mothers with young children from working, tens of thousands of these women still took jobs in defense industries, adding to the child care problem. Their movement into the labor force drew scorn from many observers who thought they should stay home with their children. But even though the government "frowned upon" the development, it still moved forward with plans to support nurseries, day care centers, extended school services, and related programs. Meanwhile, officials at Kaiser shipyards in the Portland area built innovative day care facilities that drew national attention.



Posters urged women to join the labor force during the war. Mothers of young children were discouraged but not prohibited from working.

Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d0bf42df-138e-47c7-b4f3-99a69686fae2)

Moving Into the Workforce



Women had many motives for going to work during the war. Government promotional campaigns using billboards and posters aimed to move public opinion to support women's war work with the message: "Do the job HE left behind." Meanwhile, magazines, newspapers, movies, and radio programs exalted "Rosie the Riveter" as a war hero. (

Listen to the Four Vagabonds sing "Rosie the Riveter" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CQoMowxoos)) But women saw more than patriotism to drive them into the workforce. Economic necessity caused many to take jobs, not surprising since nearly one in five American families was headed by women. Some mothers sought work to supplement low family incomes. Wives of servicemen, for example, often had trouble feeding their families on their government allotment checks of $50 per month plus $20 for each child. Some mothers, after a decade of austerity during the Depression, saw work as a ticket to a higher standard of living. And, despite society telling them they were doing their patriotic duty by staying at home to care for their children, some mothers wanted to make a more direct contribution to the war effort or simply wanted to be in what they saw as a more challenging environment. [1]

The federal War Manpower Commission recommended that women with small children be the last group called upon in labor shortages but did not forbid their employment. The resulting rise in their employment led to questions by some members of the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Child Care, Health and Welfare. In March 1943 the committee focused on the methods of unions supplying labor to shipyards in the Portland area. According to one committee member, the "unions do not make any inquiries as to whether or not women interested in employment have children." Another member of the committee who worked in the personnel manager's office of the Oregon Shipyards "made a study of women with small children employed in the shipyards and found that there are 830 mothers of children from the age of one to six years employed there."

> **"She pointed out that these women are hired through the unions which will not stand in the way of women who have to support their families." [2]**

Women were streaming into the Oregon defense workforce, particularly beginning in 1942. A.G. Johnson of the state child care committee, gave a report in February 1943 showing a steep rise. Portland's war industries employed about 7,000 women in November 1942 but was climbing at a rate that Johnson said would result in 40,000 women in June 1943. He went on to state that "a check of six shipyards reveals that the number of women employed in the shipyards has increased 25% in one month and that the number is going to increase more rapidly in the future." Other Portland area plants were showing significant gains as well. For example, at the time of the report "55% of the employees of the Columbia Air Craft industry are women." [3] The number of mothers also was rising according to the annual report of Council of Social Agencies: "Despite the recommendations of the War Manpower Commission..., thousands of young mothers in their twenties and thirties have accepted jobs in war industries and other businesses in Multnomah County. Of the 8,000 women employed at the Oregon Shipyards in January, 1943, 32% of them had children, 16% having pre-school children." [4]

Other defense industry areas such as Pendleton, Hermiston and Corvallis also reported growth in female employment. The Pendleton area was projecting a 25% increase in women workers in the next five months while in Corvallis, near Camp Adair, "the employment office manager has reported that additional facilities are needed to provide care for children of soldiers wives who are anxious to gain employment. The present facilities are not sufficient for the number of children who will need care in the near future and there are no facilities to care for children under two years of age." [5]



Women filled many jobs previously in the exclusive domain of men. Here a woman operates a piece of road building equipment on an Oregon Highway Department project. Moving into the labor force often left mothers in need of child care services. (Biennial Report, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

Coping With New Challenges

The rapid growth led to inevitable problems, both for new employees who were mothers and for employers. One state child care committee member tied some of the problem to

the shortage of housing. He knew of two families with a total of 13 children living in a 4-room house in Portland: "This is a situation in which a mother of six children, who is employed in the shipyards, invited a father of seven children from New York to share the home with them." One teenage girl looked after the children while the mother was at work. [6] Nationally, stories told of "latchkey kids" who were left alone at all-night movie theaters while their mothers worked eight-hour shifts at defense plants. Another story told of two brothers, only eight and six years old, who "were kept out of school about six weeks to take care of two younger brothers, ages 3 and 15 months." [7] Meanwhile, Mrs. E.W. St. Pierre, director of civilian war services for the Oregon State Defense Council, visited shipyards in the Portland area late in 1942 where:

> She talked to a number of women and found that the majority of them were mothers, many of whom had children under five years of age.
>
> Many had no relatives who could care for the children while they are employed and had been making their own placements in private homes.
>
> One mother stated that she had had to move her children eight times already, due to overcrowded or other unfavorable conditions. [8]



Women shipyard welders image courtesy National Archives (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/522890)

Officials also recognized the additional burdens borne by working mothers. Although fathers often shouldered some domestic duties, typically the grueling "double day" fell to the mothers who would do all of the housework, make child care arrangements, and work full time. Moreover, many families left behind their extended families when they moved to Oregon from other states and had not developed social networks that could help with child care. Therefore, it was not surprising that "women's absenteeism in the shipyards is four to five times as great as that of men due in large part to the breakdown of plans for the care of their children or the illness of their children, causing mothers to remain at home." [9]

New Programs Offer Help

A number of programs arose to address the child care problems. Although some federal aid for child care was distributed before 1943, the major government commitment came in the form of the Lanham Act. The sprawling act covered a variety of wartime community services and included money to fund child care programs across the nation. The resulting centers, also funded with matching money from state and local governments, quickly grew in enrollments. By their peak in 1944, 3,102 centers were serving nearly

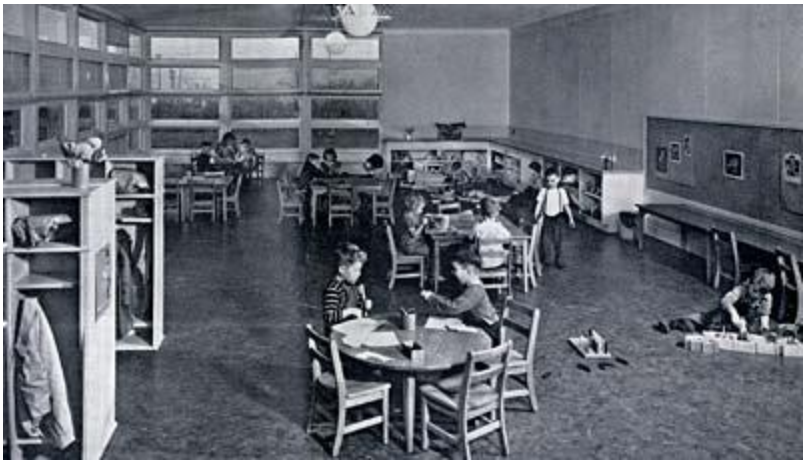
130,000 children. By the end of the war, Lanham Act programs had provided some care for up to 600,000 children. [10]



A drawing shows the wheelspoke plan developed for two large Kaiser child care centers in the Portland area. (Image source: [15]) **Enlarge drawing (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151077)**

A related federal program helped provide child care for school-age children. Started by the federal Office of Education in the fall of 1942, the Extended School Services programs helped to organize longer hours at schools to provide a "supervised environment." Many Portland area schools applied Lanham Act funds to care for thousands of children, usually age 5 to 14. By the middle of 1943, 40 Portland schools were open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. six days a week. The Portland Parks Bureau offered supplemental programs in the form of "26 recreational areas supervised by Park Bureau 4 housing areas, community centers, summer camps, etc." Vanport schools had school and after school programs for children from 5 to 14 years old. The program ran from 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. seven days a week with attendance averaging about 200 per day out of a school population of 550 students. [11]

The Kaiser Shipyards Think Big



One of 15 child care rooms in a Kaiser operated center. This room would be the home base for about 25 children. Here they would play, eat, and take naps during the day. (Image source: [15])

Neighborhood groups, civic groups, and communities developed their own programs for dealing with the child care problem, however none was more innovative or gained more national attention than the ideas implemented by the Kaiser shipyards in the Portland area. But the Kaiser plan drew significant opposition in large part because it intended to place huge day care centers right next to the shipyards. Many more traditional Oregonians believed that mothers with young children had no business working when they should have been at home providing the proper environment for their offspring. However, they argued that if the mother had to work, then child care facilities needed to be based in neighborhoods, not next to potential strategic bombing targets, and that the centers needed to be small, not huge government subsidized facilities reminiscent of the "communist" system.

Saidie Orr Dunbar, chair of the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Child Care, Health and Welfare, argued strongly against the plan in May 1943: "We are devoting much time and careful planning to the sudden announcement of the Kaiser Shipbuilding Company that they propose to build three huge nurseries in connection with their three plants. The announcement stated that children would be accepted from six months to six years of age. None of us believe that manpower shortage actually demands the services of mothers of six month's babies. Child care standards are brushed aside and great damage will be done if we begin to industrialize six month old babies." [12]

The Salem Statesman newspaper looked at the politics of the issue in an April 1943 editorial entitled "Nurseries At Kaisertown":

> Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt finally had her way. Down at Kaisertown (nee Portland) the government is going to spend a million dollars building nurseries for children of mothers who work in the shipyards. Real authorities in the field of child care wanted nothing of the kind. They preferred, and rightly, that mothers with small children stay home and take care of their babies, leaving welding and wiring to those without such responsibilities; and if special provision for children was required, that small nurseries close to home be provided.
>
> But Eleanor with her zeal for social reform at public expense backed the big nursery plan, so now Portland is to have three of the nation's "largest" nursery and child care centers, so the Portland paper says. This means the expenditure of a million dollars, the use of critical materials such as lumber, plumbing, wiring, the employment of scores of workers who are needed elsewhere. The state committee on child care opposed this plan, but Eleanor prevailed with the maritime commission, so the job is ordered. This has been the Russian system of child care; and we don't like it. [13]



Some Oregonians questioned First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt's motives related to child care. (Image courtesy voanews.com)

Operation of the Kaiser Centers

Despite the objections of critics, child care centers at Kaiser Company's Portland Yards and the Kaiser operated Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation moved forward from planning to completion in 1943. As the critics lamented, the centers were located "right at the entrance to the shipyards, convenient to mothers on their way to and from work." And, the centers were large, with each one of the 24-hour facilities caring for up to 1,125 children between 18 months and 6 years of age. While the federal government paid for the construction and most of the operation, through cost-plus contracts, the management of the centers was left to Kaiser employees. Although intended primarily to serve Kaiser's women workers, the centers were open to the

A Day in a Kaiser Child Care Center

This description from a Kaiser shipyards booklet takes the reader through a day at one of its child care centers:

"6:15 a.m. Arrival health inspection: To protect all the children, each is examined by his teacher. A runny nose, a red throat, a rash, tiredness- anything suspicious and the child is taken to the Infirmary. Here a registered nurse, always on duty, gives him special care.

7:15 a.m. Breakfast: This is a typical breakfast: Baked apple, scrambled eggs, whole wheat toast, milk. When children eat in a group, it is easy for them to learn to like new foods, to eat full meals, and to feed themselves.



8:00 a.m. Play indoors: A chance to learn how to get along with others and to try out new

children of any shipyard employee. Parents were to pay $5 for a six-day week for one child with a charge of $3.75 for each additional child. [14]



The design of the centers featured a wheelspoke plan with a large grassy courtyard at the hub. This area had swing sets , teeter-totters, slides, monkey bars, sand boxes and a wading pool for play time. Surrounding the hub were 15 rooms, each measuring 30 by 15 feet and equipped for 25 children. The classrooms boasted large windows, many of which faced the shipyards so children could see where their mothers worked. Every classroom had its own bathroom with a personalized touch since "each child has a low hook for his towel, with his name or picture to mark the hook as his own. The Centers provide each child with towels, bibs, a toothbrush and a comb." Moreover, the child-size toilets and sinks made it "easy for children to keep clean, to be self-reliant and to learn how to do things for themselves." [15]

An infirmary was available for children who were "mildly ill or below par physically" to receive care while their mothers remained on the job. Mothers with seriously ill children or children with communicable diseases were "called from work." Kaiser officials reasoned that "when parents know that there are well-equipped and professionally staffed facilities available at the Centers in case of illness or accident, they are less apt to worry about their children." The things to do: Block-building, for example, with hundreds of blocks; playing house; painting; clay work; carpentry; music. This all helps language grow.

Child-size sinks and toilets helped children learn to take care of themselves. (Image source: [15])

9:15 a.m. Toileting and dressing for outdoors: Child-size toilets and wash basins; lockers with hooks low enough for the child to reach - all build independent, competent young people who learn how to manage for themselves.

9:25 a.m. Fruit juice and cod liver oil: A morning 'bracer' for added energy is one more way in which the Centers help build strong, healthy children.

9:30 a.m. Outdoors: Tricycles, packing boxes, and blocks for big building, jungle-gyms and teeter-totters are popular outdoor equipment. They help children learn to share and to take turns. Things that must be used together are good medicine to prevent 'spoiled' children.

11:15 a.m. Rest: Comfortable cots where the child can relax and rest provide a good balance to vigorous play and insures a happy, well child.



Nap time helped to balance the active day. (Image source: [15])

11:30 a.m. Lunch: A story first, and then this as a typical lunch: Liver loaf, creamed onions, buttered potatoes, crisp raw carrots, milk, and for dessert, a creamy rice and fig pudding.

12:15 p.m. Sleep: Every child has a nap. Being in a group makes it easy for children to learn good habits in sleeping and dressing.

2:30 p.m. Outdoors: More play. Another chance to practice getting along well with people - and to have fun doing it.

3:00 p.m. Snack: A high spot in the afternoon and one that the children look forward to is 'snack' time -

infirmary also provided immunizations against diphtheria, whooping cough, and tetanus along with inoculations for smallpox. This offering had the dual benefit of reducing absenteeism while promoting community health. [16]

milk, a sandwich, and a slice of apple to help keep energy high.

4:00 p.m. Home: With memories of a full, happy day; with things to talk about; with tomorrow's fun to look forward to." [19]



Each center had a large kitchen that provided every child with "all the food he needs during his stay at the Center, including his daily requirement of cod liver oil." The children ate in the "familiar atmosphere of their play rooms. A child nutritionist planned all of the meals including those made for the "Home Service Food" program. This effort provided pre-cooked packaged take-home meals for 50¢ each that included enough to feed a mother and one child. These also contained directions for reheating and for "supplementary salads and vegetables to make a full dinner." The meals would be ready for the mother to pick up along with her child at the end of her shift and went a long way in reducing the stress of planning, shopping, and cooking meals for already overworked women. [17]

Children and mothers responded well to the program that Edgar F. Kaiser, son of company founder Henry J. Kaiser, championed. The children liked "coming to work" with their mothers and the convenient location of the centers were reassuring to parents because they knew their children were close at hand. From opening day in November 1943 until June 1945 the two centers provided a total of just under 250,000 child care days. Officials calculated that the centers made it possible for mothers to work almost two million hours in the shipyards, the equivalent amount of time needed to build six Liberty ships. Contrary to their critics, the centers proved to be cost effective. Considering the resulting productivity gains, supporters declared they were patriotic as well. [18]

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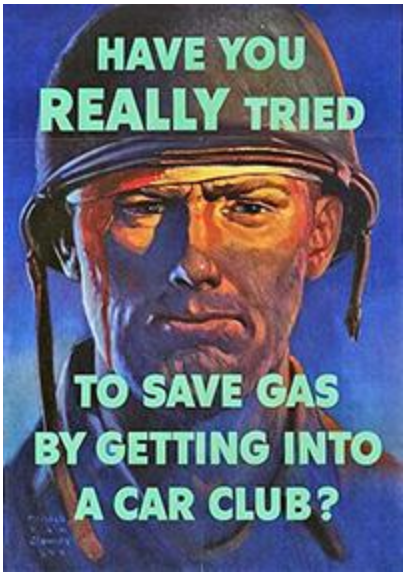
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The Trials of Travel: Transportation at the Bursting Point

Travel Less to Win the War

The need for increased war production, with many defense plants working around the clock, led to transportation capacity bottlenecks across the country. Moving staggering amounts of material and workers across town and across the country in a time of shortages required greatly increased efficiency along with the sacrifice of long held habits, especially related to the use of cars. Officials decided to whittle away at the problem from a number of angles. Some solutions included ride sharing, staggered work hours, and pleas to limit far-flung vacations.



Car clubs, or ride sharing, helped the troops at the same time it helped drivers get the most of rationed resources, such as gas and tires.

Poster courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/73945885-fa06-490c-b414-a1b2217a451a)

Factors Contributing to the Problem

Several factors contributed to limit the potential of several transportation modes, particularly the nearly 30 million passenger cars in the country. Americans fell in love with their cars in the decades before World War II as people embraced the freedom to go anywhere anytime they chose. This growing dependency on the automobile caused many streetcar and trolley lines to fall into disrepair or close as William Crawford, director of the Oregon Economic Council, recounted: "Mass-transportation was then a very sick industry, crying out for business." Many of these lines would require significant effort to rehabilitate.[1] Oregon's War Transportation Board noted in 1942 that "mass transportation companies simply do not have sufficient rolling stock to take care of the increased traffic" in part because "there were approximately 5,000 undelivered transit vehicles on order." Production restrictions, while later eased, were the culprit.[2]

Meanwhile, other shortages and priorities exacerbated to the problem. The extreme shortage of rubber resulting from Japanese control of 90% of the rubber producing areas caused significant fallout throughout the transportation sector. Moreover, employment was increasingly concentrated in defense production areas such as Portland, Seattle and Los Angeles. This overtaxed every part of the physical and social infrastructure including housing and schools. The concentration especially took its toll on existing local roads and mass transportation facilities while creating demand for new roads and transit lines to cope with the traffic jams and crowded buses and trains.[3] At the same time, shortages of labor, truck parts, lumber, asphalt and other vital resources even made it difficult to maintain existing roads and bridges, let alone contemplate large scale expansions.[4]



If the troops could ride share, so could home front workers as this graphic shows. (Folder 9, Box 14, Defense Council, OSA)

The government's war production solutions to shortages of materials such as steel and rubber caused new practical and social problems for the average citizen. New car production was severely curtailed and purchases were off limits to the public for the duration of the war. Soon both automobile tires and gas were rationed in an effort to make the rubber supply last as long as possible. Along with problems finding tires and gas, those cars on the road faced increasing difficulty finding replacement parts. As a consequence, officials promoted the wisdom and patriotism of ride sharing, staggered work shifts, and other measures designed to wring efficiencies from the transportation system. On top of it all, new calls came for an end to any unnecessary travel such as vacations far from home, a blow to an overworked public with plenty of war economy money in its pocket.

Ride Sharing

Since experts estimated that "about 85% of us normally get where we are going by automobile," it was only logical that car sharing would be a key element in the effort to get the most out of the transportation system. The federal Office

Top Speed of 35 Miles Per Hour?

Desperate to make supplies of natural rubber last, hopefully until a viable synthetic alternative could be developed, the federal government instituted a nationwide 35 mph speed limit in 1942. Officials said "this will double tire life over what it was at pre-Pearl Harbor speeds." As a side effect, they also found a drop in automobile accidents.



The government went to great lengths to save rubber. The 35 mph speed limit was one of the less popular steps.

Poster courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/df51e8af-76b5-4208-99ac-e0ecc3d4ce3d)

But "keeping a lid on speeders" was easier said than done. The Oregon State Police recorded the license numbers of speeders and compiled a "black list" for the federal government. However, State Police Superintendent Charles Pray said that as of June 1943 the feds had failed to "'follow through' insofar as any definite action being taken with regard to the violators...."

Maybe the government felt guilty because many offenders were in Army and Navy vehicles. In fairness to the Army, State Defense Council coordinator Jerrold Owen noted that "it has been his observance that Navy vehicles were more flagrant violators than were those of the Army."

Another official commented on a related problem by saying it "was his observance that on 99E between Salem and Portland busses traveling in excess of 35 miles per hour exerted a bad influence on passenger cars, the operators of which...would probably observe the 35 mile-per-hour edict except for the bad example set by bus operators."[16]

of Defense Transportation spearheaded efforts to get more Americans car pooling. The office noted that the average number of passengers per vehicle stood at less than two in 1942, which meant that "where one automobile and its tires could serve 5 persons, it is actually serving less than 40% of its capacity." Officials reminded citizens that "failure to participate in group-riding plans is to waste rubber, and wasting rubber in the light of today's conditions is nothing short of disloyalty to the war effort."[5]



Image source: "Car Sharing Club Exchange and Self-Dispatching System" Publication, U.S. Office of Civilian Defense, 1942. Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA

In addition to the patriotic aspect of ride sharing, officials wanted to convey other benefits. Catchy slogans such as "Carry More to Win the War," "Share and Spare Your Car," and American Legion's nationwide "4 in 1" campaign would only go so far. And, as the Oregon Economic Council director noted: "Rationing will automatically bring many riders into groups, but this business must be better organized." Potential riders needed to be convinced that participation would not be too inconvenient. Here, the easiest sell was to workers in big industries or office settings. State employees, many of whom worked around the State Capitol in Salem, quickly organized their own ride share committee. Industrial plant groups formed to save money, tires and time by helping to reduce some of the choking traffic jams, especially around huge defense plants such at the Kaiser shipyards. But according to officials other types of drivers were more problematic: "Women and drivers going on errands are sharing their cars the least; they are likely to be driving all alone. Businessmen and white-collar workers are not doing nearly as well as the factory workers."[6]

Issues such as lateness, bad manners, or personal hygiene deficiencies could lead to friction, or worse, since "failure on the part of anyone to assume his responsibility will introduce complications that may doom the plan to failure."[7]



Traffic jams, such as this one at the exit to the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation shipyards, prompted officials to stagger shift times to even traffic flow. (Biennial Report, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

Several methods of organization arose, many focused on subgroups such as store and office workers, mothers taking children to school, and suburban commuters. One method sponsored by the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense was called the "Car Sharing Club Exchange and Self-Dispatching System." Anyone wanting to participate would fill in a card at an exchange office that included particulars such as address, commute hours, and phone number along with whether he was seeking a ride or passengers. A member of the transportation committee operating the exchange would place the card in the appropriate zone that represented the area in which the person lived. Riders were free to look through the cards to find rides or passengers that best suited their needs. All ride sharing arrangements and possible fees were made between the individuals, not the exchange. Of course, officials encouraged participants to be deliberate about spelling out the responsibilities of each member of the car

pool. Issues such as lateness, bad manners, or personal hygiene deficiencies could lead to friction, or worse, since "failure on the part of anyone to assume his responsibility will introduce complications that may doom the plan to failure."[7]

Staggered Hours

Officials also looked to alleviate transportation bottlenecks by promoting staggered shift starts and stops. But the process could become complicated quickly and planners were warned that "ill-advised staggering of hours may create more severe peaks than now exist." Planners were advised to complete detailed surveys of the shift starting and stopping times of major industries, schools, and businesses and then create graphs that showed the peak hours of travel. Officials used a simplified example to illustrate the next step:

> Assume two plants about a mile apart, each discharging 1,000 persons, one plant stopping at 4:30 and the other at 4:45. While this appears to represent a balanced load, it actually does not. Suppose the travel time from the first plant to the critical point [area of congestion] is 20 minute. The passengers will arrive there approximately at 4:50 p.m. Assume the travel time from the other plant, located closer to the critical point is only five minutes. They would then reach the same point at the same time, producing a very undesirable overloading. By advancing the hours of work in the first plant so that employees stop at either 4:00 p.m. or 4:15 p.m., this peak can be eliminated. A later closing at the second plant would have the same effect.[8]



Officials wanted to know if this man was planning to travel for necessary business or to work on his golf game. They set guidelines for travel to help people decide. (Folder 5, Box 15, Defense Council, OSA)

Of course, the planning process could be more complicated in real world settings. Planners had to take into account how one shift change would affect not just one other plant, but potentially many plants, schools, businesses, mass transit systems and roads. And each of these entities in turn could affect the others. Some plants, especially related to defense industries, needed to change schedules quickly to fit the ever-changing production demands of the war effort, adding a further layer of complexity. Officials chose to portray the system as more of a "living" organism and acknowledged that "imperfections in the plan may develop which will require review and adjustment." They recommended that planners secure approval of any plan from representatives of industry, labor, schools, transportation companies, and other stakeholders before setting it in motion. And, experts underscored that a potential loss of production, not to mention the frustration of thousands of commuters, could result from a poorly planned effort: "Extreme caution is necessary and expert guidance should be sought before any attempt is made to shift hours."[9]



Because local stores didn't have fashions to suit her style, this well dressed shopper claimed she needed to travel to distant cities. (Folder 5, Box 15, Defense Council, OSA)

"What is Necessary Travel?"

Shortages of labor and equipment brought stern lectures about the nature of necessary travel. By late in the war, more than 300,000 railroad workers and an undetermined number of bus line workers had entered the armed forces. There were also shortages of railroad cars as Office of Defense Transportation officials explained: "In peacetime, Christmas travel usually fills all of our 7,000 sleeping cars and most of our day coaches as well. But today, half of our sleeping cars and over 15 percent of our day coaches are needed to carry troops on duty." If people hoping to see relatives or just get away from the grind of work traveled as much as they wanted, the system would overload and cause military disruptions. This would inevitably trigger rigidly imposed travel priorities that nobody wanted so officials appealed to "everyone's conscience" in guiding travel decisions.[10] They described three types of travel:

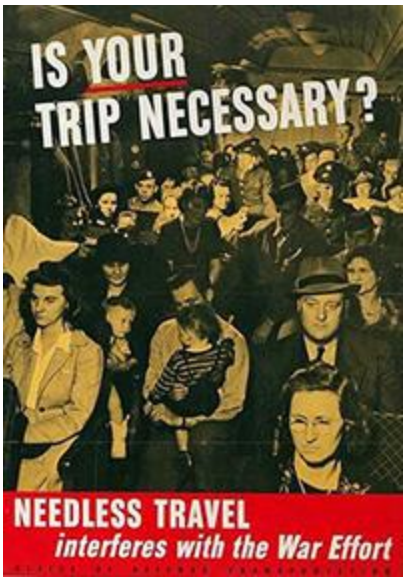
> **NECESSARY**
> Travel that will help win victory at the front and keep us efficient at home. Necessary travel includes: military travel, including furloughs, official and company business, urgent family business, family emergencies, and trips to doctors, dentists, hospitals.
>
> **PERMISSIBLE**
> Travel that may sometimes be necessary to keep the life of the country going efficiently. Permissible travel includes: visits to service men, necessary shopping trips, and vacation travel from home to the place where one spends his holiday, and home again.
>
> **NONESSENTIAL**
> Travel that cannot in any way help us to win the war. Nonessential travel includes: social visits, trips to sports events, theaters, fairs; unnecessary shopping trips; tours, including vacation excursions; and trips to conventions, trade shows.[11]

To make room for the armed forces and those traveling on war business, officials called on pent up travelers to "stay at home in crowds."
Some organizations, such as the American Bankers Association, gave up their large annual conventions and instead published a "convention in print" containing speeches and resolutions that would have been heard if the meeting had been held. Officials also implored citizens to do more with the resources in their own community instead of demanding outside speakers or entertainment, saying that "local speakers have a lot to say and rapidly develop the skill to interest and please an audience." People were told to use their imaginations and self-reliance since parks and resorts were often too far away and "many sources of education and amusement are drying up." Instead, why not do something in "that big shaded vacant lot up the block...?" Or, turn the attic into a game room, or fix up that "outdoor play equipment lying neglected in somebody's yard."[12]

The Vacation at Home Program

Travel crunches became especially bad late in the war as hundreds of thousands of troops redeployed to the West after the defeat of Germany, gearing up for the assault on Japanese forces in the Pacific. Oregon was just one state swamped by the "transport of more troops than the West has ever seen." Moreover, War Department officials anticipated the discharge within a year of 1,300,000 men "who deserve prompt

transportation home." Other large movements included "battle-weary men returning from the Pacific areas for recuperation leaves" and thousands of American prisoners from Japanese-held areas. The Army Surgeon-General also reported that 30,000 casualties were reaching the mainland every month, adding to the urgency of the problem.[13]



Train travel was often crowded and hectic. **Poster courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/1a62942f-8037-4145-8125-7cf47800f642)**

In response to the added strain on the transportation system, and because they were "compelled to re-emphasize facts about wartime travel," Office of Defense Transportation officials highlighted the "Vacation at Home" promotional campaign in 1945. They urged communities to form Vacation at Home committees consisting of representatives from entities such as municipal government, churches, labor unions, radio stations, theaters and restaurants. Authorities envisioned local activities that would be limited only by the imagination of the community. But, just in case, they offered suggestions. For example, radio stations could conduct "Our Town at Home" broadcasts from backyards and porches that highlighted "interesting 'stay-at-home' families in the community." Movie theaters could offer "special 'Vacation-at-Home Nights,' with amateur stage acts. Labor unions could sponsor functions including picnics, rollerskating parties, United Nations dances, and folk-song parties. Cities could stage parades, sandlot baseball leagues, and pet and hobby shows. They could also promote the further deferment of vacations with promotions "along the lines of 'Stay at Home this Summer - Buy Extra Bonds with the Money You Save and Plan a Real Vacation After the War.'"[14]



This man made vacationing at home look downright relaxing. **Poster courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d9ce6696-e2f3-408f-8801-7f6bd3c958d7)**

While government efforts convinced a large number of Americans to vacation at or near their homes, travel skyrocketed nonetheless. In 1944 railroads logged three times the number of passenger miles as in 1941 while intercity buses saw their mileage double over the same period. Along with the two million military passengers on duty or furlough each month, vacationers crowded into the train cars. Conditions were likened to cattle cars as many times people were thankful even for standing room. A black market flourished in Pullman car reservations. Scalpers capitalized by selling tickets at $10 to $50 markups while travel agencies tacked on $20 "service charges" to reservations. In concurrence with government campaigns, one railroad ran advertisements telling potential travelers: "You'll be more comfortable at home."[15]

The conditions were often likened to cattle cars as many times people were thankful even for standing room.

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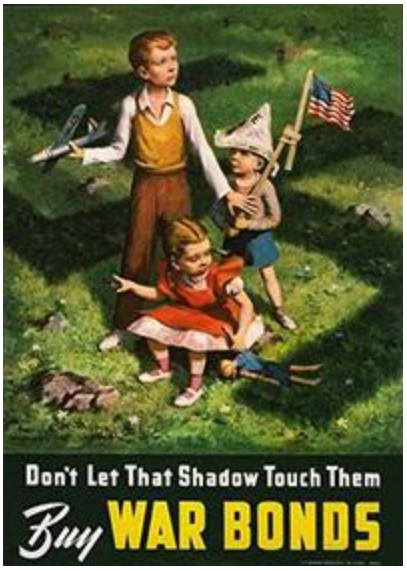
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Better Buy Your War Bonds: Savings Drives Fund the War

Drumming Up New Ways to Borrow Money

The federal government spent over 300 billion dollars on World War II, a staggering amount by 1940s standards. That's twice as much as the government spent in its entire existence before the war. As another indicator of the growth in spending, the federal budget ballooned from nine billion dollars in 1939 to 98 billion dollars in 1945. The U.S. Treasury needed to come up with a lot of money fast to meet the expanding financial demands. President Roosevelt settled on two major means of raising money: increased taxes and borrowing, through the sale of massive amounts of war bonds. Besides paying for the enormous costs of war, these measures would remove excess wages and other spendable money in a time of shortages, helping to keep a lid on inflation.

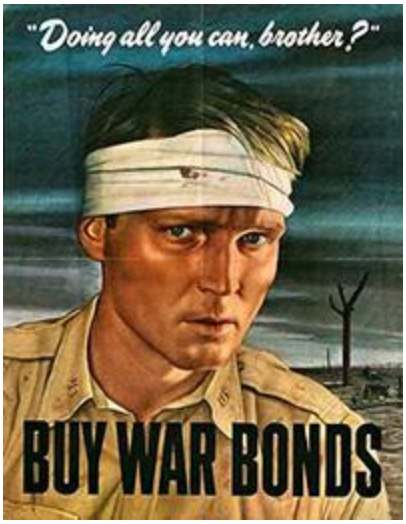


Buying war bonds would help parents protect children from Nazi oppression. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/57211c09-3b10-427d-989e-f025419b6292)**

New Tax Laws Bump up Revenue

With the passage of key legislation, such as the Revenue Act of 1942, the federal government made historic changes to tax policy. For one thing, the government began to collect taxes from a greatly expanded number of people. Fewer than 4 million people filed taxable individual income tax returns in 1939 but more than 42 million people filed in 1945. The amount of individual income taxes grew even more, from one billion dollars in 1939 to 19 billion dollars in 1945. This was helped by average annual earnings for full-time workers that nearly doubled during the period. Many of these people were earning between $1,500 and $10,000 a year and because of their numbers, they would pay most of the individual taxes. However, those with higher incomes were expected to chip in a higher percentage of their personal income since they were "few in number and already subject to tax rates running from 25% at $10,000 to 90% at $1,000,000." [1]

An important driver of the increased collection was the implementation of the "pay-as-you-go" plan that required employers to automatically deduct a percentage of wages from workers' paychecks as income tax. The government saw several advantages to the deductions. By taking the money out of the hands of consumers up front, they wouldn't be tempted to spend it, which would help keep inflation low. Taxpayers would no longer have to budget a large amount to pay taxes at the end of the year. And, important to the Treasury, "very few people would even be tempted to avoid paying taxes." The increased cash flow from the withholding tax was augmented by what the government euphemistically called the "Victory Tax." This was a 5% surcharge on taxes that was also taken out of wages up front. [2]



Compared to the sacrifice made by this wounded soldier on a bleak battlefield, buying war bonds appear to be the least home front workers could do for the cause. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/0e8ae3d2-5b7b-497f-9eeb-e936a50ba614)**

By taking the money out of the hands of consumers up front, they wouldn't be tempted to spend it, which would help keep inflation low. And, important to the Treasury, "very few people would even be tempted to avoid paying taxes."

National Strategies for Selling Bonds

While greatly increased tax revenue helped fund the war, the government still needed to borrow more than half of the money for wartime expenses. Many worried about the size of the new deficits resulting from the massive expansion of borrowing. The largest deficit during the depths of the Depression in the 1930s, even with all the New Deal programs, was about 4 billion dollars a year while during the war these numbers skyrocketed to about 50 billion dollars each year. Still, after raising taxes, the government saw no choice but to move forward with huge bond sales. Many advisors urged President Roosevelt to force individual citizens to buy bonds. They argued that compulsory bond purchases would avoid some of the vicious excesses of World War I during which society stigmatized those who failed to buy bonds, even to the point of painting their homes and barns yellow. In the end, proponents of voluntary purchases won the day, arguing that it would "give people an opportunity to do something" more for the war effort. [3]

The Treasury Department spared no effort devising campaigns to sell bonds. The best Madison Avenue advertisers were recruited to design promotions. Posters played a big role in pushing bond sales. One showed a wounded soldier on a battlefield asking the question: "Doing all you can, brother?" Another poster showed an anti-aircraft machine gunner who had just shot down an enemy plane with the caption "You can't afford to miss either! Buy bonds every payday." Another showed a proud pilot in flight with several U.S. fighter planes in the background and the caption: "You buy 'em We'll fly 'em!" Other posters aimed at promoting the automatic payroll deduction savings plan as a painless and patriotic way to buy bonds while children were encouraged to save with the caption: "Even a little can help a lot - NOW." While posters created in World War II were not nearly as negative as those of World War I, some did use

While posters created in World War II were not nearly as negative as those of World War I, some did use scare tactics to sell bonds. For example, one poster showed a Nazi officer leering at three young girls.

scare tactics to sell bonds. For example, one poster showed a Nazi officer leering at three young girls. The caption read: "A high honor for your daughter" implying that by failing to buy war bonds, the reader's daughter could be victimized by the barbaric enemy. [4]



All home front Americans had to do was buy the planes, this pilot and his fellow flyers would take care of the rest. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/5d6d4bed-4184-4eb3-8f63-a15b54db239d)**

The brightest stars in Hollywood were recruited and responded by participating in promotional efforts. Film star Hedy Lamarr offered to kiss anyone who purchased $25,000 worth of war bonds. Her press agent reported that one buyer was so overwhelmed by the anticipation of the kiss that he fainted before he could collect. Singer Kate Smith got pledges from listeners for almost 40 million dollars worth of bonds during a 16-hour network radio marathon. Auctions brought in big pledges to buy war bonds too. The stockings that had graced actress Betty Grable's famous legs fetched top dollar as did the horse shoes from Triple Crown horse racing phenomenon Man o' War. Meanwhile, Gimble's bargain basement auctioned off stage, radio, and film star Jack Benny's beloved, but screechy $75 violin for one million dollars. Imaginary heroes joined the effort, including comic book stars Superman and Joe Palooka. [5] (

Watch Bugs Bunny cartoon for a bond drive campaign (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_TUPUbvOoeU))

Oregon Bond Sales Efforts



Officials emphasized how easy it was to buy war bonds by using the

While huge rallies with stars such as Bing Crosby or John Wayne made the headlines, much of the local work of bond drives fell to volunteers going door to door making sales.

David Eccles, the executive manager of the Oregon War Finance Committee saw statewide bond work falling into four major categories, which he recommended as a framework for county level organization. The industrial division consisted of volunteers charged with installing and maintaining payroll deduction savings systems for employees of businesses and factories. These workers concentrated first on larger sites with hundreds of employees but later, with the help of more female volunteers, began setting up the program in firms with fewer than 25 employees. The banking and investment division focused on bond sales to banks, corporations, trust funds and other large institutions. This was

automatic payroll deduction plan. Local war finance committees worked to install the deduction systems in businesses and factories. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/81544a22-264b-489d-94a7-2be2476f189a)**

an important assignment because despite the publicity barrage aimed at individual bond purchasers, about 75% of the value of all war bonds were sold to banks and financial institutions. The promotional division developed special events such as rallies and provided publicity for the entire war finance organization. Finally, the community division implemented activities such as operating bond booths, stamp sales, and other on-the-ground work. [6]

While huge rallies with stars such as Bing Crosby or John Wayne made the headlines, much of the local work of bond drives fell to volunteers going door to door making sales. Officials had plenty of advice beyond the common patriotic pitches for winning in the sales game. Canvassers were urged to get the name right: "If there is a 'foreign' or unusual name be sure you know how to pronounce it (when in doubt ask a next door neighbor)." Volunteers should also be able to "size up" or "estimate what amount a given household should be asked to buy." If canvassers saw a "service flag" (denoting a family member in the armed services) in the window, they should ask the parents to talk about it and then say: "'I know you have been backing them up by buying War Bonds, but in this War Loan we are all trying to dig a little deeper and buy extra bonds.'" [7]

Appealing to community pride also worked. Quotas were set up on the national, state, county and town levels for the sale of bonds. Sales volunteers reminded competitive people how bad their town would look if they failed to reach their quota but the rival town exceeded theirs. If nothing else, bond sellers could appeal to selfish reasons since bonds were a vehicle for personal investment. As volunteers reminded, some types of bonds would pay nearly 3% per year and were backed by the U.S. Treasury. The money put into bonds could be drawn out in case of emergency, or to fund postwar dreams such as buying a home or paying for education. [8]



Even small amounts of savings would add up to big benefits for families and the country. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/99e7520c-4701-43c5-9edf-a882c9b218d8)**

Bond booths were another way to sell war bonds and women were key to the effort. The booths were kiosks set up in prominent locations with plenty of foot traffic such as hotel or theater lobbies. The booths required a large number of volunteers to keep them fully staffed as was the case in Portland during the Fifth War Loan Drive in 1944. A total of 561 volunteers worked in 13 hotel, theater, and store booths including 64 who sold war bond stamps at the Multnomah Hotel and 53 who work the booth at the Benson Hotel while 52 staffed the New Heathman Hotel booth. The booth at "Woolworth's Five and Dime Store" kept 65 volunteers busy while 14 worked the Meier & Frank booth and a dozen sold bond stamps at the "Penny's [sic] Store." [9]

Booth workers also received advice on pumping up sales. For example, competitions between booths in the same community or between booth volunteers who worked different days could spur sales. Highly publicized quota drives featuring sales "thermometers" that showed current sales relative to the quota could help push sales too. Motivated



Posters reminded workers how important it was to buy bonds regularly. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/994dd6ea-f089-486b-bb70-d650bb282fcd)**

booth volunteers would conduct "pre-sales canvasses" of friends and neighbors as officials noted that "the most successful booth saleswomen are those who 'drum up trade' before seating themselves at the post of duty." This could entail calls to friends or placement of advertisements saying "won't you stop in when you're down town and give me some business?" [10]

Local Experiences

Local communities in Oregon rose to the challenge of financing the war with enthusiasm, but results were mixed as a 1945 report on the seventh war loan bond drive by the Department of Treasury's Portland office revealed. Counties competed with each other to reach and exceed their sales quotas. Baker County did exceptionally well by reaching 116.4% of their "E bond quota." Along with house to house solicitations, the local "Soroptomists took charge of bond booths during presentation of 'This is the Infantry,' and Venture Club girls sold bonds through the crowd." In an example of the levels of competition, the Oregon City Public Library "won first place in the Library War Bond Campaign with a comfortable lead over the Woodburn County Library (second), and the Deschutes County Library (third)." In Seaside about 80 grandmothers bought bonds in order to have seats at a breakfast attended by a national figure. Columbia County only reached 76.4% of its quota but officials were understanding since so many of its residents commuted to defense jobs in the Portland where they had bond purchases deducted from their paychecks. [11]

Other counties reported a variety of experiences with bond drives. For example, the Elks Lodge in Deschutes County gave two $50 bonds to the girls selling the most during the drive while another group in the county staged a "charm contest" to raise support. Volunteers in Douglas County discovered the effectiveness of a "bond wagon" according to one participant:

> **"We fixed up a loud speaker which could be heard half a mile, ...and, believe me, we made ourselves heard through town and countryside. In almost every**

case whole families would come dashing out from the barn, house, etc., and wave and holler and needless to say there were grand turnouts at night for pie and coffee at bond rallies." [12]

Hood River County proudly sold more in the national "Bonds for Babies" campaign than any Oregon county except Multnomah. Jefferson County officials praised the "promotion by the Warm Springs Indians, many of whom lost sons or brothers or husbands in the World War." Meanwhile, the Beta Sigma Phi organization in The Dalles "popped stove pipe hats like Uncle Sam's on their heads, and canvassed the town in the evenings with a sound truck." The members did so well that they raised 250,000 dollars and helped Wasco County go way "over the top" of its quota at 169.5%. [13]

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Sending Them Off to War: Pre-Induction Information Programs

Answers For Nervous Inductees and Their Families

The federal government faced the challenge of mobilizing millions of men and women for service in the armed forces during the war. Well before the U.S. entry into the war and despite strong isolationist sentiments across the country, Congress passed the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 authorizing a draft. By October 1940 all men between the ages of 21 and 35 were required to register with their local draft board. During the first few years of the draft, information about the induction process, life in the military, and related topics was not given to potential inductees in a unified and comprehensive way. Many times inductees learned important information by word of mouth or discovered things they should have done after it was too late. The resulting apprehension, confusion, and family hardships led the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense and other federal agencies to promote pre-induction information programs across the country.



An Army poster promotes patriotism and tradition. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/99d205f6-d8f4-4847-b20d-86be6296f454)**

Overview of the Draft

The implementation of America's first peacetime draft went relatively smoothly. In Congress, the argument for conscription after the collapse of western Europe and the fall of France earlier in the 1940 overcame the bitter opposition of the anti-interventionists. On Oct. 16, 1940 over 16 million men registered for the draft at one of nearly 6,500 selective service boards across the country. Each registrant received a draft number from one to 9,000. A national lottery later determined the order in which each of the numbers was called and, by extension, who would be drafted first. [1]

Local boards, staffed by prominent or influential volunteers, oversaw the draft process. The federal government gave these boards authority to make judgments based on the standards and mores of their communities as well as civilian production needs. While this freed the process from some of the chokingly detailed regulations that would have arisen, it also resulted in favoritism from time to time. The local draft boards, augmented by hundreds of appeals boards, oversaw the registration process, received deferment or conscientious objector status requests, and heard appeals.

The boards could classify a potential draftee into one of a number of classifications ranging from 1-A, meaning "available for military service," to 4-F, meaning "physically, mentally or morally unfit for service." Anyone classified other than 1 was considered deferred but an individual's classification could change depending on the situation. Deferments were available based on medical, psychological,



The Navy filled its ranks completely with volunteers until early 1943.

Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d1c4b45b-5475-4254-9a50-981e93d7a956)

educational, family, or occupational status. In all, about 10 million men received exemptions or deferments, with about 4.5 million of them appealing their classification. At first the system did not draft married men, which led to a "marriage boom." Fathers were not drafted until late 1943 and then only over the opposition of one U.S. Senator who insisted that "slackers in the government bureaus" should be inducted "before American homes are broken up." Others favored first conscripting "those unmarried men who shun work and are found in pool rooms, barrel houses, and on the highways and byways." Eventually about four million men received deferments based on a growing list of "essential" occupations, mostly in agriculture and industry. [2]

Some favored conscripting "those unmarried men who shun work and are found in pool rooms, barrel houses, and on the highways and byways."

More than 5 million potential draftees were rejected for medical, educational, or mental reasons. This was despite relatively low standards for acceptance. For example, the Army would accept draftees who were at least 5 feet tall and 105 pounds, provided they had correctable vision, half of their natural teeth, no hernias, flat feet, or venereal disease. As evidence of the crippling effect of the Depression on public education, hundreds of thousands of men signed their draft registration forms with a mark because they could not sign their own names. Before the end of the war the Army was so desperate for men that it set up special schools to bring illiterate draftees up to a 4th-grade reading level. Meanwhile, about 3 million men were rejected because of "emotional instability." Some experts blamed this on "Momism" and a War Department consultant commented that many women "had failed in the elementary mother function of weaning offspring emotionally as well as physically." [3]

At its peak in 1945, the military counted more than 12 million GIs on active service while about 16 million served at one time or another during the course of the war.

The attack on Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war in December 1941 brought a significant expansion of the draft. At its peak in 1945, the military counted more than 12 million GIs on active service while about 16 million served during the course of the war. During that time, the Selective Service System registered about 50 million men from 18 to 64 years of age while it drafted over 10 million men from 18 to 38 years of age. In addition, about 5.7 million men and 350,000 women volunteered for service in the armed forces. In fact, until early 1943, the



About 350,000 women joined military programs such as the WACs,

Navy and the Marine Corps relied solely on volunteers before their needs required tapping the draft. [4]

WAVES, and SPARs during the war. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/d36b6924-bb65-4ba6-a41f-9d0382c4ca50)**

Organizing Pre-Induction Information Programs

By 1943 federal officials had seen enough apprehension and fielded enough complaints about spotty information for inductees and their families. The U.S. Office of Civilian Defense and other federal agencies developed a program that offered answers to common questions brought by inductees. In turn, the federal government sought to enlist the help of state defense councils to implement the program around the country. Government officials reasoned that "if a prospective inductee knows what the Army expects of him, what tests and training he may expect to go through, what kind of life he will live, and what kind of war we are fighting, he will enter the service with greater confidence and assurance. He will adjust more readily to the new situation and probably develop more quickly into a good soldier." [5]



Many remote areas of Malheur County needed their Oregon pre-induction informational broadcasts via a Nampa, Idaho radio station. Shown above are the county's "Pillars of Rome." (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/21744#lg=1&slide=0)**)

In Oregon, the State Defense Council got the program running in early 1944. The council settled on orientation meetings, which would be given in cities and towns across the state. Before implementing the system, however, several test or rehearsal meetings were held with groups of inductees to experiment with presentations. A plan evolved that typically included the participation of a range of experts from the armed forces, Red Cross, selective service, state bar association and social agencies. The meetings generally would include a film describing life in the military followed by short talks and question and answer sessions. (**Oregon Pre-induction program (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11527727)**) [6] Federal authorities recommended that meetings start with band music or group singing to set the right tone. Their sternest advice concerned long-winded presenters: "The most common criticism of the meetings is directed at the number and length of the speeches. If the films are used, and if the leaflets are distributed during or at the close of the meeting, very little speech-making should be necessary." [7]

More remote communities, especially in eastern Oregon, were served by radio program transcriptions. To accomplish this, the State Defense Council "engaged a group of radio players on the staff of radio station KGW, Portland, to produce three 15 minute programs patterned after meetings with members of the panel.... The program is built around the March of Time style with fanfare music in the opening and is an excellent piece of work." To further "this ingenious radio meeting plan," the council enlisted local newspapers to carry a front page box to promote each broadcast. This worked well except for in Malheur County where "it was discovered that their best radio reception comes from radio stations located in Nampa and Boise, Idaho." A flurry of letters to the Idaho State Defense Council and Idaho radio stations eventually secured the broadcast of the programs on a Nampa station. [8]



After going to the induction station for a day, draftees had at least 21 days at home to take care of business and say goodbye to friends and relatives. Making sure paperwork was in order for family members to receive allotments was a key task. (Folder 2, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA.)

The pre-induction information program in Oregon moved forward quickly during the spring of 1944. Multnomah County was drawing in an average of 300 inductees and family members to weekly meetings. Marion County typically saw a crowd of from 30 to 50 people at its meetings, which were held twice a month. Most participating counties held monthly meetings or "on draft calls." These meetings usually brought from 15 to 75 people depending on the size of the county and the draft call. Even though some counties were still in the process of organizing meetings, by July 1944 one State Defense Council official was confident of full statewide coverage either in open forum meetings or by radio broadcasts, saying that "as recently as last week, ...on a trip through the state, [a State Defense Council employee] lined up three counties hitherto only lukewarm on the idea." [9]

Draftees Get Their Affairs in Order



Men with 3 months before induction could enroll in pre-induction training courses that could help them get a desirable job in the military. (Folder 2, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA.)

While presenters in pre-induction meetings tailored answers to local situations, much of the material they used conformed to information provided by the military and federal and state civilian defense organizations. Many questions centered on what the inductee needed to do before reporting for service. For instance, after a one-day stint at an induction station, draftees were sent home for at least 21 days to clear up personal and business affairs. Officials urged men to arrange for the settlement of their current financial obligations such as taxes, loans, credit debt and mortgages. The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act included relevant provisions, so getting legal advice was recommended. Inductees often needed to secure allotment checks for dependents such as wives, children, and parents to provide for them while in the service. The allotments weren't much money but they were better than nothing - $50 for a wife or other adult dependent ($22 of that was to be deducted from the serviceman's paycheck) and more money for each child. Other tasks such as purchasing life insurance and transferring power of attorney also came into play. [10]

On to the Army Reception Center

A Portland Induction Station officer "warned the men that if they don't trust their wives, they are not to give them powers-of-attorney. There are cases on record where a man had given his wife power-of-attorney and she sold him out." [11]

After getting affairs in order and saying goodbyes, draftees were sent for 3-5 days at a reception center. Men were cautioned not to "celebrate on the night before you have to leave for the Reception Center" since they would be given a battery of tests and "you'll want to be on your toes." They were also told to travel light: "Don't pack a trunk. Take along a small overnight bag with razor, toothbrush, change of underwear, extra handkerchiefs." After swearing in, the new soldiers (in the case of the Army, although Navy training centers were similar) would get a stark reminder that they were no longer in the civilian world for as officials noted: "There's no privacy for the private." In the company barracks, the soldiers would "eat and sleep, work and play, toilet and dress right along with a whole bunch of other fellows who are doing the same thing." The Army supplied clothing and shoes that were "carefully fitted by tailors and shoe experts" along with toiletries. New soldiers were warned to keep track of their clothing since "you will have to pay for any articles you may lose." Aptitude and classification tests were followed by interviews in which Army staff weighed various skills and other criteria along with military needs to arrive at an assignment for the new soldier. [12] Personal preferences for job assignments were part of the decision process but no promises were made:

> An artist, quite naturally, would think he ought to be put to use in the camouflage department, or into some department where they would use his artistic ability. A lawyer would feel like he ought to be put in the Judge Advocate General's office. A movie producer... feels he ought to be put in the Signal Corps and given the job of producing some of these Army training films.
>
> Machine gunners, tank drivers and automobile mechanics are worried, and frequently resentful, until they are told why the Army has had to put them there.
>
> The answer is simple. The Army does not need so many artists, movie producers, lawyers. They need machine gunners, tank drivers and automobile mechanics. [13]

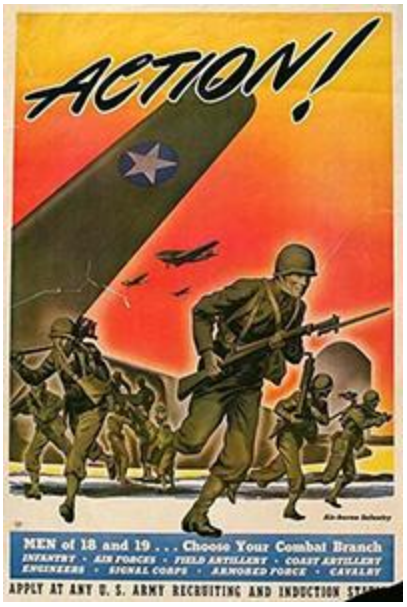
Basic Training

Soldiers next landed for 17 weeks of basic training where, according to pre-induction education literature, they gave up their minds and bodies to a ritual of calisthenics, close-order drills, military indoctrination, and Army discipline. Soldiers learned methods of self-protection, camouflage, care and use of weapons, and how to be part of a combat team. Sailors learned a variation on the Army theme with training in elements of seamanship, gunnery, signals and Navy language. For those in the Marine Corps, "'Boot Camp' will probably be an ordeal for you. It is not easy. The day begins at 4:45 and when it ends at 8 P.M. you will greet sleep with pleasure." Officials noted that 90% of marines on duty were combat troops who would likely see battle and while they were "taught to consider your rifle the best friend you ever had," it was fighting battles together that would build lifelong comrades in the Marine Corps. After

basic training, many soldiers, sailors and marines were sent to their assigned duty. Others, depending on their specialty, required further training that could last up to a year. Most served for the duration of the war plus six months, unless the military chose to discharge them early. [14]

Food, Pay and Recreation

Pre-induction meetings also described other aspects of life in the military. For example, claiming "no soldier or sailor in the world is better fed than the American soldier or sailor," officials described a sample menu for soldiers and sailors that weighed about five pounds per person per day: Breakfast: fruit or juice, cereal, milk, eggs, bread and butter, coffee; Dinner: roast or chops, 2 vegetables, salad, bread and butter, dessert, tea or coffee; Supper: soup, meat dish, 2 vegetables, bread and butter, dessert, coffee. In the field, soldiers often had to rely on packaged emergency meals known as K rations with the following sample contents: Breakfast: chopped beef and egg white, biscuits, fruit bar, coffee powder, sugar, cigarettes, chewing gum; Dinner: American cheese and bacon, malted milk and dextrose tablets, biscuits, lemon powder, sugar, cigarettes, chewing gum; Supper: bouillon powder, corned pork loaf, biscuits, chocolate bar, sugar, cigarettes, chewing gum. Servicemen held decidedly less appreciation for the quality of the meals than their superiors. And to add more suffering to the experience, many had to take part in kitchen patrol or KP duty during which hours were spent washing dishes, peeling potatoes, or "slinging hash" for fellow troops. [15]



A poster urges young men to get in the action in the Army, and ways to do it. Another branch, the Marine Corps boasted that 90% of members saw battle. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/c7aa31e9-cd11-48b1-bd81-387f9afa762a)**

The pay was small but, according to pre-induction meetings, it was decent compensation if all the benefits were calculated. Buck privates and apprentice seamen earned a paltry $50 a month. The highest noncommissioned officers, master sergeants in the Army and chief petty officers in the Navy, earned $138 a month. But Office of War Information officials said people should include room, board, and other benefits in the equation "to show what a private or apprentice seaman really gets" per year: Cash - $600; Food - $576.50; Shelter - $120; Equipment - $170; Health care - $100; Life insurance savings - $63.40; Cigarettes savings - $10.95; Laundry savings - $32.50; Postage and barber savings - $26.65. The optimistic total rose to $1,700 per year. [16]

If the serviceman would not get rich, at least he could look forward to recreation. While in camp, most soldiers and sailors had evenings and Sundays as free time. Pre-induction meeting presenters described company day rooms equipped with books and easy chairs and often had pool or ping-pong tables. More enjoyment was available at recreation halls and post exchanges (PX) "where you can gather around for sodas and conversation." Men were encouraged to organize teams to play baseball, basketball, football and other sports. Officials boasted "you will be able to see the latest movies, sometimes even before they hit the big cities, for only about 20 cents." Moreover, stage, screen, and radio stars sometimes performed for troops at the recreation hall. Talent shows and post dances rounded out the camp entertainment. Many servicemen really looked forward to the recreation available away from the camp. And, many towns offered special dormitories and canteens in conjunction with the United Service



Pre-induction informational literature showed servicemen enjoying recreation halls in military camps. (Folder 2, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA.)

Organizations (USO), Red Cross, local churches and civic groups, not to mention the many illicit options related to gambling and prostitution. [17]

Related Documents

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"Pre-Induction Meetings" Chart, State Defense Council, May 30, 1944. Folder 10, Box 15, Defense Council Records, OSA; "Oregon Pre-Induction Program" Press Release, State Defense Council, July 17, 1944. Folder 10, Box 15, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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Block Leaders: The Fabric of Civilian War Services

Weaving Together Countless Programs

By the fall of 1942, most Oregonians were feeling less concerned about a large-scale Japanese attack on the state. Civilian protection services such as the Aircraft Warning Service and the air raid warning system grew and matured rapidly during the last year and the offensive capability of the Japanese appeared to diminish. Gradually, more people began to turn their attention away from protecting themselves and to ways they could help the war effort. Much of this was imposed on them through price controls, rationing and other measures. But there were many voluntary ways to contribute to the cause through war services such as conservation, salvage, buying war bonds, and donating Victory Books. As these programs took on a more prominent role, officials implemented a hierarchical "block plan" to systematically organize and communicate information about the range of war services. By the middle of 1943, more than 15,000 block leaders and neighborhood leaders were knocking on front doors around Oregon putting the block plan into effect.



Many block leaders were conflicted about selling war bonds. They recognized the need but worried about wearing out their welcome in neighborhoods. **Cartoon image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/f2b6e2e1-bf59-405d-9753-262f2b4926a4)**

Block Leader Duties



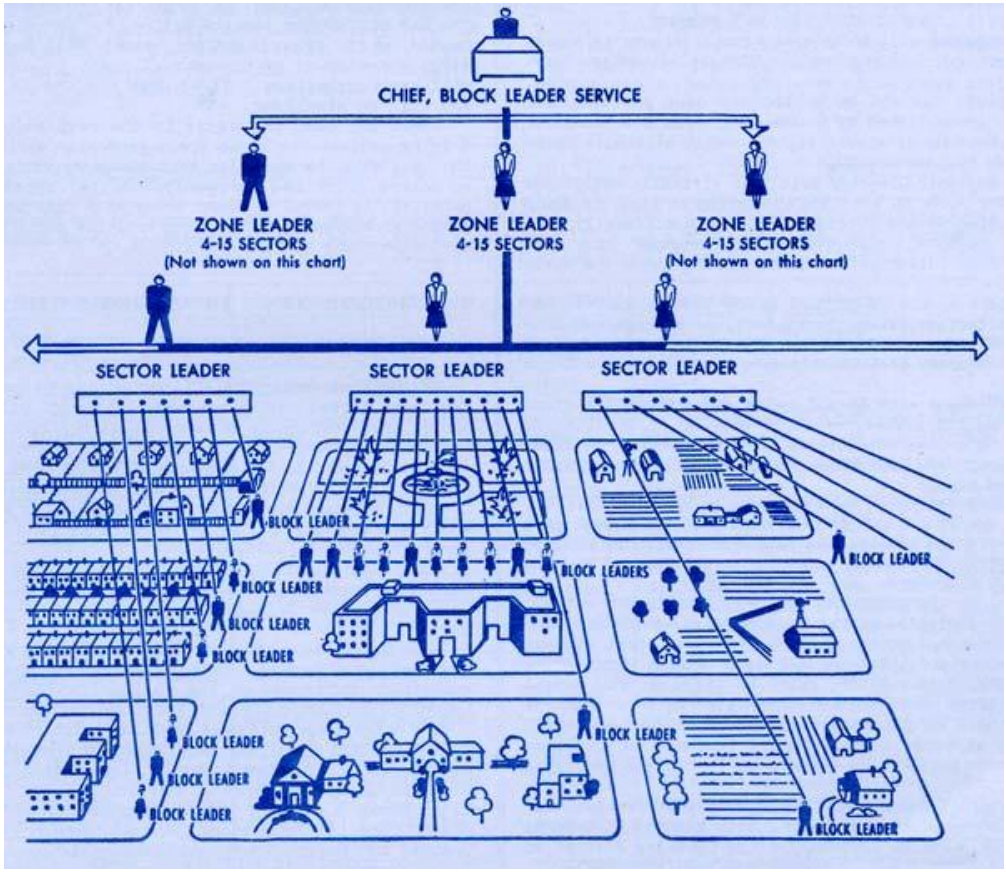
A stylishly dressed block leader heads off

Block leaders filled a role similar to that of the air raid block wardens, only in relation to war services instead of civilian protection. According to the Portland and Multnomah County Civilian Defense Council, block leaders functioned to develop a cooperative unit through "block discussion meetings, rallies, car sharing plans...and any other activity of the committee's war services." Specifically, they were to explain how households could participate in community programs such as salvage and Victory Gardens; gather survey data needed to develop war services efforts such as those related to child care and housing; promote participation in war programs such as blood donations and immunizations; and assist the local volunteer office in recruiting volunteers for defense council programs and recruiting for paid positions in critical jobs in war industries, professional nursing, and women's branches of the armed services. Block leaders were "supposed to have the confidence and goodwill of the people in your block; you are the morale builder; an information bureau; a solicitor; a salvage worker and many other things rolled into one." [1]

to share information with neighbors. (Folder 2, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)

Organization of the Block Plan System

The U.S. Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) organized and promoted the block plan to states in 1942 to be patterned after the familiar air raid block warden plan. It was suggested, for the sake of simplicity, the war services plan be overlaid on the existing geographical boundaries of the air raid plan. The government asked cities with a population of 2,500 or more to set up the block plan. The federal Agriculture Extension Service helped develop a similar system for rural areas that included neighborhood leaders. As part of the plan, a typical city hierarchy was devised to reach every home. At the top was the chief of the city's block leader service, followed by zone leaders who had jurisdiction over 4 to 15 sector leaders. These volunteers in turn would manage the efforts of a number of block leaders. Each block leader had responsibility for about 15 families. Because of varying housing facilities, a typical neighborhood block with single family detached homes might have one block leader while a more high density block with large apartment buildings might have three block leaders. While the program saw variations to meet local circumstances, officials wanted to avoid overloading block leaders with too many households. [2]



Block leaders served as the "tip of the spear" in a hierarchy designed to transfer information to and from every home. (Folder 25, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)

Portland's block plan grew directly from the existing air raid warden plan. It started before Pearl Harbor "when those women who are now leaders first volunteered as air raid wardens. On their replacement by men in this job they became assistant wardens, and later were absorbed into the Block Plan, of course, retaining their same geographic jurisdiction. Since this made to order group was at hand to take over the Block Plan it was never necessary to call residents together for an election of leaders, either block, sector or zone." [3] Directions for a campaign or drive came from the defense council to Portland's chief block leader and down the hierarchy to "six district chairmen, then to 55 area chairmen, then to the precinct chairmen, and finally to the block leaders themselves - women who work only in their own neighborhoods, and know the local conditions to be considered [in] any type of appeal or activity." [4]

Training and Advice



Block leader insignia. (Folder 25, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)



Officials said block leaders strengthened bonds between neighbors. (Folder 4, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)

State Defense Council officials stressed the importance of preliminary instruction for block leaders even though "such training meetings may seem non-essential and time-taking to the busy housewife who is Oregon's typical block leader." If a block leader wasn't educated in the basic information about the programs and campaigns, she was at risk of becoming a "mere messenger for the distribution of literature." If she fell to that level, the job might as well go to "some of the willing junior organizations," such as scouting and youth groups that offered messenger services. State officials reminded the block leader she was obliged to provide "the valuable personal message and interpretation of a mature spokesman." In addition to attending lectures or training courses, block leaders were asked to be familiar with the literature they distributed, understand how a particular program contributed to the war effort, and be prepared to answer arguments against programs. [5]

Block leaders got advice about how to interact with neighbors as they made house calls. They were advised to learn the names of everyone in the household and, if possible without "sleuthing," find out about interests and backgrounds. They were to listen attentively to criticism and get answers from their superior if they couldn't respond to questions immediately. Considering so many defense workers worked various shifts, block leaders were to find out the best time to call: "You wouldn't want to ring the doorbell of a graveyard shift worker at ten in the morning. And you couldn't expect a good reception and response more than once if you did." While it was important to be upbeat, officials noted that "your job is not to arouse patriotism, but to show every family you will be contacting how they may demonstrate their patriotism by cooperating with the campaigns you will be telling them about." [6]

"Don't ask personal questions.
Don't gossip; respect confidences.
Don't snoop; don't argue or coerce.
Don't give orders; ask co-operation.
Do be cheerful and resourceful.
Don't talk about politics or political leaders.
Don't talk about religion, race or color.
Don't ask questions you

Officials offered a list of what to do and not do when contacting households, probably much of it based on reports of real experiences by block leaders: "Don't ask personal questions. Don't gossip; respect confidences. Don't snoop; don't argue or coerce. Don't give orders; ask co-operation. Do be cheerful and resourceful. Don't talk about politics or political leaders. Don't talk about religion, race or color. Don't ask questions you wouldn't want to answer. Do be neighborly and sympathetic. Do be a 'leader.'" [7]

wouldn't want to answer.
Do be neighborly and sympathetic.
Do be a 'leader.'"

Touchy Subjects

In addition to educating neighbors, block leaders were asked to gather information for the government. Often that consisted of asking set survey questions but it also involved a more controversial element: "By passing along your neighbors' reactions to your sector leader, who will in turn hand them to your block plan chief, and so on down the line to Washington, the Government may well be kept in closer touch with its people." But officials were quick to downplay any ominous overtones to the request for information about the neighbors: "When we say that you will be bringing back the people's response, it is never meant in a 'Gestapo' or policing sense." Instead of reporting on individuals, block leaders were asked to provide a sampling of the "general feeling" but they would "never be policing or reporting infractions." [8]



Each block leader was urged to get to know all the families on the block and share information. Many block leaders also solicited during war bond drives. (Folder 25, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)



While officials asked block leaders to gather information, they denied looking for data on individuals, wanting instead to learn the "general feeling" of a neighborhood. (Folder 25, Box 34, Defense Council, OSA)

Block leaders expressed reluctance about direct involvement in solicitations for money that came with the big war bond drives. Federal officials were torn on the issue. They were hearing that block leaders were resisting calls to sell bonds, wanting instead to continue their education and survey role. To be sure, they were active in recruiting volunteers but that was different from what they saw as more crass solicitations for money. Many feared that soon "the role of the block leader as a friendly neighbor who calls on his fellow neighbors may be jeopardized...." On the other hand, the block leaders were perfectly positioned to pull in huge sums to fund the war effort and potentially shorten the war. In typical fashion, the government split the baby. Under a revised policy, it set up conditions under which block leaders could solicit funds. The rules were designed to provide separation of the two roles, even to the extent of calling for a moratorium on all block plan activity while a bond drive was underway. As such, the revised policy stated that "under this plan, the worker is not soliciting as a block leader, but as a volunteer for the particular plan." [9]

A Myriad of Campaigns

With or without bond drives, block leaders had plenty to keep busy. In 1943 the OCD released a list of 100 different types of campaigns that had been conducted locally around the country. State officials said

the list "included a variety of projects...for which we in Oregon have felt no need." Still, by the end of 1943 after little more than a year of work, Oregon block leaders had participated in 27 different types of campaigns covering a wide range of war services. They helped with a call for cannery labor; promoted fuel conservation, health education, Victory Books, and Victory Homes; found cots for soldiers to sleep on over weekends; assisted neighbors in interpreting the rationing program; educated people about Victory Gardens; conducted surveys about child care, working women, and nursing; and solicited for war bond drives and war chest drives. [10]



Block leaders across the country encouraged Americans to grow Victory Gardens. These church members responded by breaking ground on their garden. (Folder 13, Box 36, Defense Council, OSA)

Portland's extensive block leader service was particularly active. During a six-week period in the spring of 1943, the volunteers participated in a range of activities. They delivered bulletins, pamphlets and publications related to price control, fuel conservation, and other topics. They went house to house to give out information on a war bond drive but were reminded that there was "no soliciting or selling in this job, just information." As with any of their efforts, they were not to leave the information in mailboxes or on porches: "It is to be delivered in a personal and friendly call." The first week of May was salvage call week for the Portland block leaders. This meant going door to door asking for discarded silk and nylon stockings. And, in case they collected large amounts, they got a tip to make their job easier: "Knotting the foot of a stocking, turning it inside out and stuffing it with other hose is a handy way to carry them." [11]

"When we say that you will be bringing back the people's response, it is never meant in a 'Gestapo' or policing sense." Instead of reporting on individuals, the block leaders were asked to provide a sampling of the "general feeling" but they would "never be policing or reporting infractions."

Many block leaders went the extra mile to make a campaign successful. One Portland block leader told of her household fat salvage efforts: "All the people in my block are elderly couples. They accumulate such a little bit of fat at a time in these small households that before a regulation pound tin [the smallest amount to be turned in] could be filled some of it might be spoiled. So I've made it my business to collect what they do have regularly and combine these into one larger tin for the whole block's contribution." Another block leader found a household that included a permanent invalid. Upon seeing that the nurse attending the invalid had no opportunity to get out of the house because of her duties, the block leader arranged to come over to relieve the nurse occasionally. Meanwhile, *The Oregonian* newspaper saluted Mrs. Evans Armstrong with its "Citation of the Week" for her "energetic, enthusiastic and tireless work" on campaigns. She had just completed a "painstaking house-to-house canvass" for a war bond drive, but she had participated in over 24 campaigns overall since volunteering and totaled nearly 1,300 hours of work in the process. [12]



Mrs. Evans Armstrong put in long hours in the Portland block leader program. (Image source: [14])

Thousands of Oregonians volunteered to be block leaders during the war and in the process helped to pull dozens of programs together in a more efficient and effective plan. By the middle of 1943, Multnomah County totaled 6,800 block leaders serving 108,000 urban homes. Another 635 neighborhood leaders in the county were in contact with over 6,500 rural homes. Marion County saw nearly balanced efforts by block leaders and neighborhood leaders with just over 1,000 volunteers serving the county's cities and nearly 800 serving in the countryside. Of course, some counties didn't have any cities with populations of 2,500 and relied exclusively on the neighborhood leaders for coverage. For example, Jefferson County in Central Oregon reported no block leaders and only 14 neighborhood leaders. Regardless of numbers, these volunteers contributed in countless ways to help neighborhoods stay focused on the war effort. **Statistical chart (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151057)** [13]

Related Documents

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Childhood Memories: A Smaller View of World War II

One Woman's Reminiscences of Wartime As a Child

While vicious battles raged around the world and the home front economy and society retooled to support the war effort, children had a unique vantage point to the historical changes. Many saw the war through a lens of war services such as defense housing and child care. They saw their mothers leave traditional roles in the house to work in shipyards and factories while their fathers fought overseas. If these children didn't have a keen understanding of events, they did sense the profound and historic nature of the times, which cemented their memories decades later.



Judie Wood (right) stands next to a Parkside Homes defense project house with two children who shared a house with her during World War II. Romona stands to the left while Merlyn wears a fedora hat and "man of the house" clothing. Judie's mother and Romona and Merlyn's mother shared the house and both worked at the sprawling OSC shipyards. (Image courtesy Judie Silcox)

Judie Silcox's Reminiscences

Judie Silcox still had strong memories in 2015 of her life as a young child in Portland during and after World War II. She was born Judith Andrea Wood on Feb. 1, 1942. Her father served in the army until his death in April 1945. Her mother, Lucille E. Fink Wood, worked as a welder at the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation (OSC) shipyards. The facility was one of three in the area built by industrialist Henry J. Kaiser to supply ships for the war effort.

The new family moved to St. Johns Woods, a 967-unit Housing Authority of Portland project located in north Portland. The walls were thin and the insulation was poor, making for cold winters.

Judie and her mother shared defense housing at Parkside Homes with another woman, who also worked at the shipyards, and her daughter and son. Parkside Homes, near Pier Park in north Portland, was one of many housing projects built by the the newly-created Housing Authority of Portland in response to the flood of war industry workers moving to Portland. Judie lived there until late 1946 when her mother remarried.

The new family then moved to St. Johns Woods, a 967-unit Housing Authority of Portland project located in north Portland. According to former resident Jim Cole, this large development consisted of small single homes built in clusters of four or six units. The walls were thin and the insulation was poor, making for cold winters. [1] Judie's stepfather adopted her in 1947 and she became Judith A. Smith. The family lived at St. Johns Woods until the early 1950s.

In Her Own Words

Judie's reminiscences are presented below in her own words with minor edits. She focuses on key aspects of her life during that period: the Kaiser OSC child care center, her mother's role as a welder, and life in the defense housing projects. The text is illustrated with images she submitted to the Oregon State Archives with her memories as well as additional images.

Kaiser OSC Child Care Center

I vividly remember my first day at the Kaiser OSC child care center. I was not a happy camper. Placed in the infirmary—a large white room with nurses in white—I then had to suffer the indignity of being placed in a white crib! At home, my mother and I shared a bed so I thought the crib was an insult—a crib was for babies. And that first day included shots—I particularly remember my small pox vaccine—so I let my mother know in no uncertain terms that I did not want to return—and probably let the nurses know too. I remember my mother explaining that the crib situation was only for a few days and then I was going to get to go school with lots of children. Apparently, I accepted this condition and have nothing but fond memories of the center after being “sprung” from the captivity of the infirmary. Years later I asked my mother how old I was when I started the child care center, and she said “22 months”...so you see, the child care center was a very impressive place!

I think I realized even as a small child how lucky I was to be in a place that felt so safe and secure—and so very much fun. As an adult I know how important this early intervention in my development was and how it contributed to my attitude towards education and my sense of independence. The only negative that I take with me is that I still can taste cod liver oil when I slice an orange—the cod liver oil served with orange juice was a daily routine in the center, which my mother continued for years!

Child Care Center Memories



Girls at a child-size table at a Kaiser child care center. (Image source: [2])

Judie's Memories

1) The wading pool (although, in my mind it was a swimming pool like rich people enjoyed) and the time we all ran around the pool in only our underwear and teachers sprayed us with hoses.

2) My third birthday party celebration—Each child’s birthday was celebrated. I seem to remember sitting in the center of a table that was in front of the room. For some reason, I remembered the table on a low-rise dais, but I think this is a distorted memory. Probably, just felt elevated at that moment.

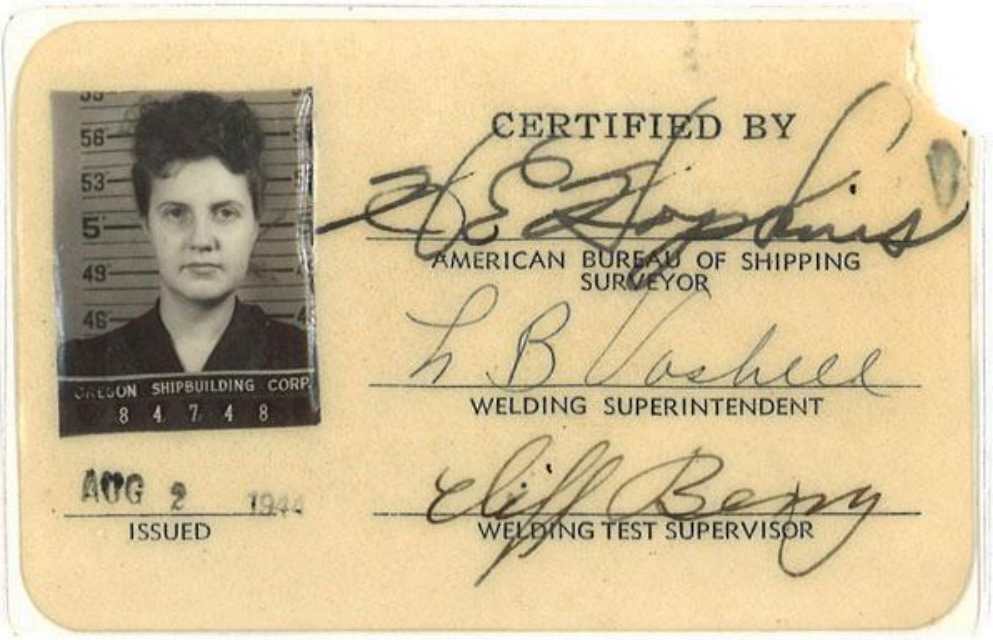
3) Art easels, books, books, and more books, and those wonderful, caring teachers.

4) Those very special small toilets. [Later, when I went to kindergarten at Sitton, there were large toilets with overhead flush systems which scared me to death.] During my Kindergarten

year, the Shipyard child care center was converted it to a public school which I was able to attend for the first through third grade. I do believe the return to small toilets was my favorite memory of the return my school.



Child-size sinks and toilets helped children learn to take care of themselves. (Image source: [2])





Welding certificate card for Judie's mother, Lucy Wood. (Image courtesy Judie Silcox)

My Mother the Welder

Mom and her friends seemed to have a lot of fun as well as work hard at the OSC shipyards. I remember her leather overalls and the pungent odor. They may have been my grandfather's as he owned a small bronze factory. One time Mom came home laughing because she no longer had eyelashes and eyebrows—there was a flash fire under her hood. She probably had a couple of beers on the way home to take care of any pain. I know she was always proud of the work she did—but was also happy to stay home after the war ended.

Defense Worker Housing

My father was in the army in Europe so my mother and I shared a defense house (more like a cabin) with another woman and her two children, Romona and Merlyn. Merlyn was a year and half older than me and my very best friend as well as partner in mischievous activities. Merlyn attended the Kaiser OSC child care center too, but I think Romona was in school—she may have attended an after school program.

Our two bedroom, living room, eating space and kitchen was quite small but adequate.

Both our mothers worked at the OSC shipyards and I believe the defense housing project was called Parkside. My father had a silver "dog tag" made for me so I know our address was 8509 N. Commando. Our two bedroom, living room, eating space and kitchen was quite small but adequate. My mother loved the woodstove in the kitchen—she said it cooked better than an electric stove. I loved the wood (coal?) shed outside in our front yard. I would play by the hour on its roof and thought of it as my castle.

A chore we children shared was to draw the black curtains to meet the blackout requirements since we were so near the shipyards. Somehow it just made us cozier rather than fearful, although we children were always aware of the war and the sacrifices being made by others. We were probably reminded most often of these sacrifices when we "begged" for more things—as children always do!

Our house was located on a short street and I remember there was a manned military guard station nearby. One time Merlyn and I found a dime and "post haste" asked the guard to call us a taxi to take us to St. Johns so that we could buy an ice cream cone. The guard called our mothers instead. Merlyn and I had many good plans foiled by caring neighbors and guardsmen! But we always tried to be helpful. One time we ran out of gas, but while our mothers left to get some, Merlyn and I "fixed the car." When they returned with gas we proudly proclaimed we fixed it by putting "sugar" [nearby sandy dirt] in the gas tank. I am not sure how our mothers managed to get the tank fixed during war time, but Merlyn and I were definitely "underappreciated" for our effort.

Uncle Mac, a neighbor who worked the night shift at the shipyards worked in his victory garden by day and it was his generosity that left me with a lifelong love for those tiny cucumbers. Other neighbors shared shoe rations with us because as children our feet grew so fast. These were just some signs of neighbor's generosity.



Glamour Express **Proof of the pudding is the collection of choice plums shown above from the Welding department. Oldtime OSC male welders claim that Oregon Ship now has more beauty per crew than any yard on the coast and selected the following girls during one lunch hour to prove it. The lovely lassies are, left to right:** Front row, Maxine Anderson, Charlene Stratton, Loretta Peterson junette Heckard, Lay Spani, H. G. Chastain, "Zipper" Button, " Tex" Montgomery, Gloria Mitchel, Vicky Wheelock, Mary Jackson, Lucy Wood, Pauline Peterson, Dorothy Morgan and Peggie Simpson: middle row: Caroll Hansen, Pauline Redmond, Elenor Grenfell and Hazel Simms: back row: :Honet" Moitke, " Peaches" McAtee, Lucille Campbell, Sybil Harshaw, marjorie Stump, Marjie Ross, Doris Estes, Pat McGuire and Florence Ostgard. By the truck is Viola Thiesen.

Judie's mother, Lucy Wood, is shown in this newspaper photo of the "choice plums" in the Welding Department at the Oregon Shipyards. (The Oregonian newspaper clipping courtesy Judie Silcox)



"Mom and soon to be Daddy—taken at Parkside Defense Housing—Glad the War is over!" (Image courtesy Judie Silcox)

The war barely ended when an oil tank (or more than one) near the shipyards exploded. Merlyn's mother grabbed me under one arm and Merlyn under the other and headed for the car. We were all frightened that we were being bombed when cooler heads prevailed and my mom realized it was probably not a bomb—and we had nowhere to go anyway!

Another post war memory sticks in my mind. Soon after the war, my mother managed to buy me a new blue Schwinn tricycle and it was delivered in a huge wooden crate. The entire neighborhood uncrated it in our front yard. Uncle Mac took some of the wood to make pedal adjustors—it was so exciting for everyone, because no one had been able to get new toys made from metal during the war and this was a symbol that the war and all its sacrifices was starting to be behind us.

My father died during the war and my mother remarried a WW II veteran when I was almost 6 and we went to live in St. Johns Wood. We lived there until 1950-51.

During the Vanport flood, my father was deputized and he brought home several people who slept on our living room floor and couch. Our neighbors also took in many victims of the flood.

During the Vanport flood, my father was deputized and he brought home several people who slept on our living room floor and couch. Our neighbors also took in many victims of the flood. Portland also had a major earthquake during our time in St. Johns Woods. I was on my trike, and watched my Mom come running and yelling at me. I did not “feel” the earth move, but I remember wondering why her knees appeared to be touching her chin while she ran.[3]

Notes

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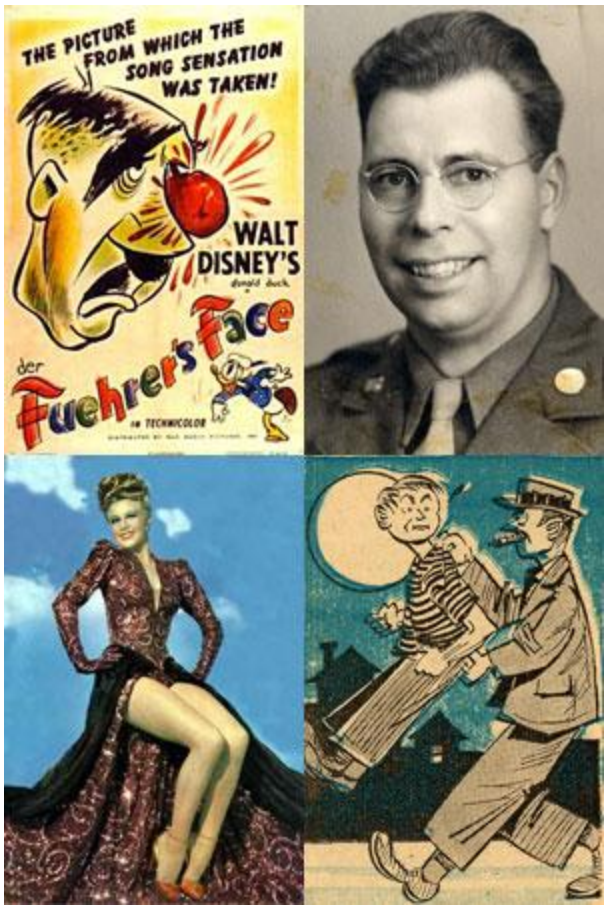
Written memories by Judie Silcox provided to the Oregon State Archives in March 2015 and presented with minor edits. We appreciate her sharing these reminiscences and images so others can gain a better understanding of home front life during World War II.

Official web site of

Oregon Secretary of State

Oregon Home Front Life

Everyday life continued unabated during the war. Yet people knew they were living through a truly historic time and war permeated nearly all aspects of life. This section examines how the war brought out both the good and bad in people on the home front.



Clockwise from top left: A poster for a Walt Disney movie pokes fun at Adolf Hitler; Oregon auditor Don Griffith stationed stateside; Juvenile delinquency was a big problem during the war; Movie star Ginger Rogers helped with war causes near Medford.

Popular Culture: Everyday Diversions in Extraordinary Times

Enormous Lies Founded on Half-truths: Rumor Control Efforts

An Arsenal of Words: Victory Speakers Spread the Word

Books Join the Battle: The Victory Book Campaign

One Thing Leads to Another: Juvenile Delinquency Rises

Keeping Them on the Straight and Narrow: Youth Strategies

Here Come the Servicemen: Oregon Military Facilities

Oregon Vice: Prostitution and Venereal Disease Vex Officials

More to Life Than Wages and Patriotism: Recreation Programs

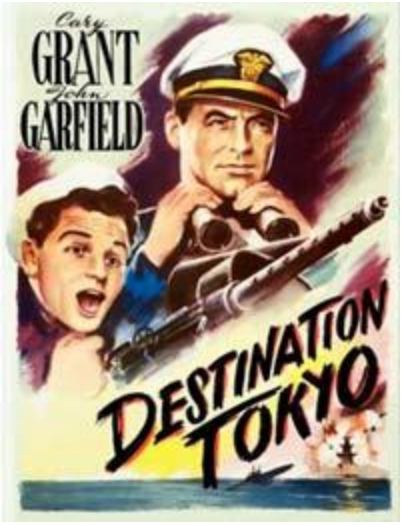
A Matter of Color: African Americans Face Discrimination

State Auditors Go to War: Letters from Servicemen

Popular Culture: Everyday Diversions in Extraordinary Times

Escaping to a Shared Experience

Most Americans worked long hours at their jobs and put in more time with volunteer work or other responsibilities during the war, but they still found time to escape into popular culture. Yet, in many cases, they couldn't escape since references to the war permeated magazines, movies, radio programs, comics and cartoons. Rather than providing an escape from the trials of home front life, many cultural outlets instead built a sense of community and shared experience. They proved that Americans were all in it together, struggling with rationing, worrying about loved ones fighting overseas, or adapting to a new job. Tapping a deep well of idealism and often laced with a bit of therapeutic humor, popular culture helped strengthen the bonds of what it meant to be an American. For most, it was not simply a feeling of "misery loves company" but of living in historic times and fighting an epic battle of good against evil.



Destination Tokyo was one of many action movies produced by Hollywood during the war. The movies were patriotic and drew record attendance to theaters across the country.

Movie Theaters

Particularly in the early years of the war, a trip to the movies would have plenty of war references. A theater ticket usually bought access to two full-length feature movies, previews, a serial, cartoons and newsreels. About 75% of newsreels showed military, naval or other war-related activities. For many, they were the only view of the air, land and sea battles that punctuated the war. The combat footage, expertly shot and shown in the distinct style of *The March of Time*, *Fox Movietone*, and *News of the Day*, brought the war home for audiences across the country. At first, the coverage was heavily censored. For example, footage of the Pearl Harbor attack was not released by the government for a year. But by 1943 officials reversed course based on fears of waning civilian morale and allowed the release of films that showed the real carnage of war. Their hope was to shock Americans into strengthening their commitment to the war effort. [1]

Teenage Slang 101

Teenagers during World War II developed their own popular culture including a colorful slang component. Here is a glossary of a few terms:

"**Cider stuke** - the old candy store that becomes a meeting place where the youngsters sit around and drink soft cider.

Horse opera - a western movie.

Honky-tonk - a dive; a low class, cheap drinking place.

Juke joint - a cheap eating place containing a jukebox; may or may not

allow dancing; no supervision.

Khaki-wacky - soldier crazy; uniform struck.

Pantie-waist - a sissy

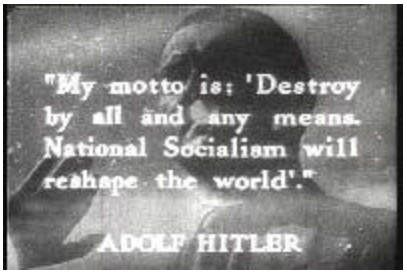
Pantry party - unsupervised party held in the home while parents are away.

Piccolo joint - small room with a nickelodeon and a concession stand.

Swish - swell-elegant; glamorous.

Taxi-dance hall - a dance hall where girls are supplied as partners, and each dance number costs so much for so long. Patrons purchase rolls of tickets at the door." [12]

Government Documentaries

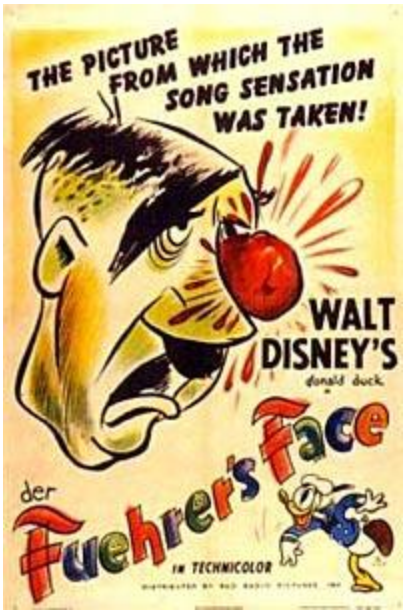


Director Frank Capra quoted Adolf Hitler in the OWI propaganda film series *Why We Fight*, which drew a stark contrast between the values of Nazi Germany and America.

The government also funded documentary films about the war by talented and famous Hollywood directors. Among them was the 1942 John Ford film *The Battle of Midway*, which covered the Japanese attack of American ships at Midway atoll that proved the pivotal naval battle of the war in the Pacific. Comprised mostly of authentic footage from the battle, it was dramatically narrated by actor Henry Fonda. The next year John Huston directed *Report from the Aleutians*, a film that showed the daily life of American soldiers serving in the strategically important, but cold and barren, chain of Alaskan islands. In the film Huston looked closely at life on the island of Adak in the wake of the Battle of Dutch Harbor and showed a first-person perspective of an American bombing run against the Japanese. Another striking documentary was *Memphis Belle*, directed by William Wyler in 1944, which dramatized the story of a harrowing B-17 bombing raid over Germany. In the process of showing the dangers, the film's narrator told the story of the ten crewmen as examples of simple average American boys doing a tough job. Meanwhile, Frank Capra directed a series of propaganda films for the Office of War Information (OWI) entitled *Why We Fight* that, among other things, portrayed the Allies as partners in a struggle against evil. [2]

Feature Films and Cartoons

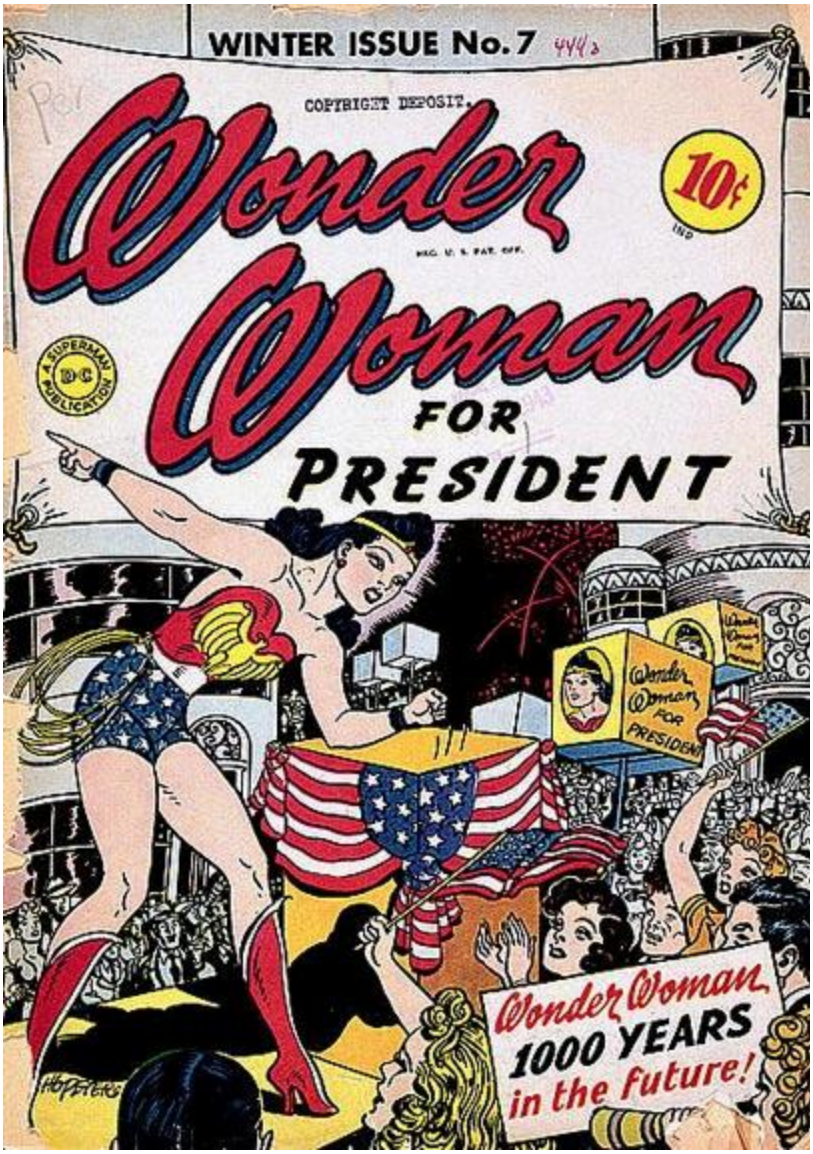
Mainstream movies evolved during the course of the war. Early on, heroic and romantic war stories drew crowds and captivated audiences at the movie theaters with films such as *Casablanca* starring Humphrey Bogart, *Flying Tigers* with John Wayne, and *Destination Tokyo* starring Cary Grant. Later, Hollywood executives sensed Americans were growing tired of war movies, resulting in the production of comedies, westerns and musicals. These included such films as the romp *Girl Crazy* with Mickey Rooney



Disney character Donald Duck starred in a government sponsored animated film about wartime Germany that yielded a hit song based on flatulence. (Image courtesy Disney Online)

and Judy Garland; the western *Tall in the Saddle*, starring John Wayne; and the musical *Anchors Aweigh* with Frank Sinatra.

About 25% of the 1,500 Hollywood movies released during the war were combat films. Along with the full-length features, viewers watched cartoons, some of which were government sponsored. Walt Disney produced some of these, including *Out of the Frying Pan and into the Fire* starring Minnie Mouse as a housewife who saved bacon grease for the war effort. Meanwhile, Donald Duck got into the action in *Der Fuehrer's Face*, in which he had a nightmare about the horrible life of working in one of Hitler's munitions factories. [3] Regardless of the subject matter, Americans flocked to the theaters. By 1942 attendance reached 100 million people out of a total population of 135 million. As a result, box office receipts doubled from 1940 to 1945. [4]



Wonder Woman, shown here on the cover of a comic book, also starred in a movie serial. (Image courtesy Library of Congress)

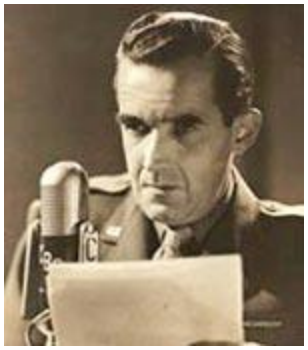
Movie Serials

Much of the allure of going to the movies for children came from their excitement about movie serials. Despite questions from parents about what effect this had young minds, children were insistent about not missing the weekly installment of their favorite heroes. The Spider, Batman, Captain Marvel and Spy Smasher joined other freedom fighters to fight arch villains and agents of evil. Many of these heroes were based on the Superman theme. Among the adventures, in 1942 *Batman* began his pursuit of Dr. Daka, the Japanese superspy who was conspiring to seize control of America. The next year *The Masked Marvel* went on the hunt for a Japanese spy named Sakima who was plotting to sabotage defense industries in the United States. And in 1944 the Nazis came face to face with superhero *Captain America*, outfitted in red-white-and-blue tights. Even a female superhero got into the act of fighting the enemy. *Wonder Woman* was wise, strong, fast, and beautiful in her red-white-and-blue costume as she

fought Axis spies. Along with her superhuman skills, she employed fantastic gadgets such as bulletproof bracelets and a golden magic lasso. As if these weren't enough, she flew on her missions in an invisible plane that doubled as a time machine. Many movie serial superheroes also starred in comic books, which were wildly popular during the war. [5]

Radio Programs

Children's radio programming carried the familiar good versus evil theme that employed a moral tone similar to the righteous children's movie serials. In the end, good confronted evil and justice always prevailed. Along the way, children learned practical lessons in how they could help and be part of the action by planting Victory Gardens, buying war bonds, or collecting scrap metal. For example, listeners to the *Dick Tracy* radio adventure program took a five-point pledge vowing to fight waste. Their assignment was "to save water, gas and electricity, to save fuel oil and coal, to save my clothes, to save Mom's furniture, to save my playthings." Participants saw their names placed on the Victory Honor Roll that the show's announcer promised would be read by General Dwight Eisenhower at his headquarters. Likewise, western hero Tom Mix fought spies and saboteurs every week during the war on his radio show and he implored his fans to keep up their home front efforts after Germany surrendered in May 1945: "We've shown Hitler and his gang that we know how to lick bullies and racketeers, but we've still got a big job to do...fighting the Japs." [6]



Radio news reporter Edward R. Murrow gave Americans eyewitness accounts of events such as the German bombing of Britain. (Image courtesy PBS)

There was more to radio than children's programming. Radio news programs delivered reports from the battle fronts and from the centers of power. News pioneers such as Edward R. Murrow, William L. Shirer, Eric Sevareid, Robert Trout and Walter Cronkite brought moving stories of brutality, hardship and heroism to the living rooms of millions of Americans. Radio stations broadcast local programs educating neighbors how to use ration books or why they needed to grow a Victory Garden. National war bond drives and other campaigns brought big stars like Jack Benny, George Burns and Bob Hope to the radio. Big band music wafted through the airwaves with Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey and Benny Goodman. Many solo singers made it big after stints with big bands, including Frank Sinatra, Perry Como and Dinah Shore. The smooth sounds of Bing Crosby contrasted with the verve of Ella Fitzgerald and the power of Kate Smith. Of course, soap operas and melodramas couldn't be forced from the radio dial, even by war. Stalwarts such as *Stella Dallas*, *Ma Perkins*, and *Portia Faces Life* kept housewives entertained while tending to the endless chores. [7]

Don't Touch That Dial!

Before the advent of the Internet and even before the widespread use of television, radio played a central role in the cultural life of America. Here is a sample of what Americans heard during World War II:

Music

Glenn Miller (shown at right) was a leader of the big band sound. The music was a favorite with home front Americans.

Listen to to Glenn Miller's "Chattanooga Choo Choo" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3gsPBTmbRo)



Comedy

Meanwhile, Bobe Hope was a favorite at the movies and on the radio. He also performed for U.S. troops around the world.

Listen to Bob Hope's Christmas Eve at the front in 1943 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT3DyAu9Rqc)

News

And, journalists such as Eric Sevareid and Edward R. Murrow kept American radio listeners informed about actions on the battle front.

Listen to Edward R. Murrow's radio news report from 1940 describing German attacks on London (https://youtu.be/eVXmJC6mPEk)

Newspaper Editorial Cartoons

Newspaper editorial cartoons poked fun at home front hardships such as conservation and rationing. One cartoon showed an earnest looking boy carrying his tricycle over his shoulder as he passed two women, one of whom says: "Here comes Junior--conserving rubber." Another one showed a desperate looking man asking a stern looking gas station attendant standing next to a gas pump: "Can't I just sniff around a little?" A third cartoon showed a boy standing in front of the an irate teacher and a principal holding the boy's sling shot while saying: "You get five demerits for plinking your teacher, and you are expelled from school for wasting rubber." [8]



"Can't I just sniff around a little?" (Folder 5, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Many cartoons sympathized with the G.I. experience and explored the role of the expansion of women in the working world, particularly in factories. Thus, two astonished G.I.s looked on as a headless soldier walked by and one of the men said: "Frankly, I think they're overdoing these G.I. haircuts." Another showed two soldiers relaxing in a mess hall as one confided to the other: "I'm looking forward to the furlough, but I hate to think of eating my wife's cooking again." In another cartoon that displayed the shifting family responsibilities during wartime, a woman prepared for a factory job as her upset daughter held up a dirty towel and chastised: "Mother! Just look at what you did to one of our best guest towels!" Proving women were a match for men, a cartoon showed a group of energetic women standing in front of a number of exhausted and sobbing men in a munitions factory as the women told their boss: "We just settled a little argument about women's ability to turn out ammunition."[9]

Other cartoons ridiculed the enemy and pleaded with Americans to maintain their commitment to the cause. For example, one drawing showed sweating German and Japanese leaders lashed to a gigantic stick of dynamite with "Invasion" written across it as the caption implored: "Back the attack on the home



The Pendleton Round-Up, shown here in 1940, was one of many popular events that closed for part or all of the war. (Photo no. 1320, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

front!" Another showed Hitler contemplating suicide as he stood over a table with a revolver on it and a reinforced door strains against the power of the "coming invasion" while the title reads: "Opportunity knocks." The perils of overconfidence and the resulting problems of absenteeism and production delays were portrayed in one drawing of two workers, one hung over and one drunk and holding a case of liquor, saying: "Whoopee, we just took Sicily and the war's over! Time to celebrate, pal!" Overconfidence also hit civilian protection efforts as one cartoon showed one civilian protection volunteer saying to another: "Aw! I'm going home-nothing's gonna happen now!" Behind the fence stood a huge criminal looking Axis agent holding a club with "sabotage" written on it as the title read "Just what he's waiting for." [10]

Oregon Popular Culture Offerings

Oregonians augmented national popular culture with more of the local, homegrown variety. They participated in the pageants, contests, concerts, recitals, plays, speeches and other entertainments, many designed to promote war efforts such as selling war bonds to collecting Victory Books. Throughout the war young people flocked to juke joints and teen canteens to dance to their favorite tunes.

Oregonians also celebrated at local fairs, parades, festivals, circuses and carnivals, though many were curtailed during the war. For example, in 1942 the State Fair was scaled back to include only 4-H displays, livestock exhibits and 27 county displays. The next two fairs were suspended entirely, with the grounds leased to military units as a bivouac site. The Portland Rose Festival court carried on, as did the Pendleton Round-Up, with the exception of 1942 and 1943. Other events or attractions, such as the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland and Timberline Lodge at Mt. Hood, went on hiatus for most or all of the war. Despite gasoline and tire rationing, many Oregonians found a way to get to the beach to drink in the scenery and the popular culture of the coast at places such as Seaside. Others headed to the mountains to celebrate the winter culture romanticized by Bing Crosby's hit song White Christmas, with sleigh bells, skis, and hot apple cider. [11]

Notes

William M. Tuttle Jr., *World War II and the American Home Front: Part Two* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 2004), Page 73.

Various Internet Film Description Sites.

Ibid.

William M. Tuttle Jr., *World War II and the American Home Front: Part Two* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 2004), Page 74.

Ibid., Page 75-76.

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Ibid., Page 76; Various Internet Radio Program Description Sites.

Various Newspaper Editorial Cartoons, *Civilian Front* Newspaper, 1942-1943. Folders 5-8, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Ibid.

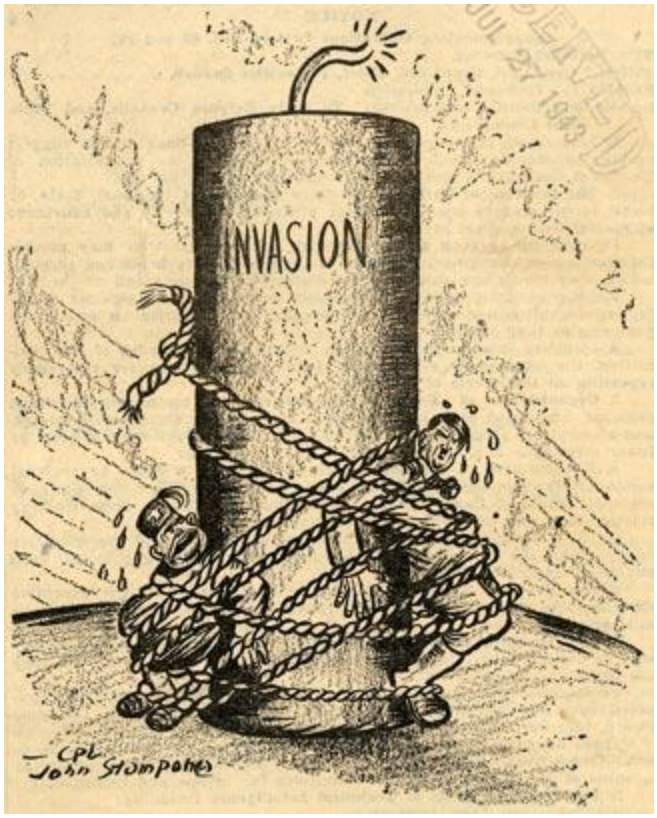
Ibid.

Various Internet Institution and Event History Sites.

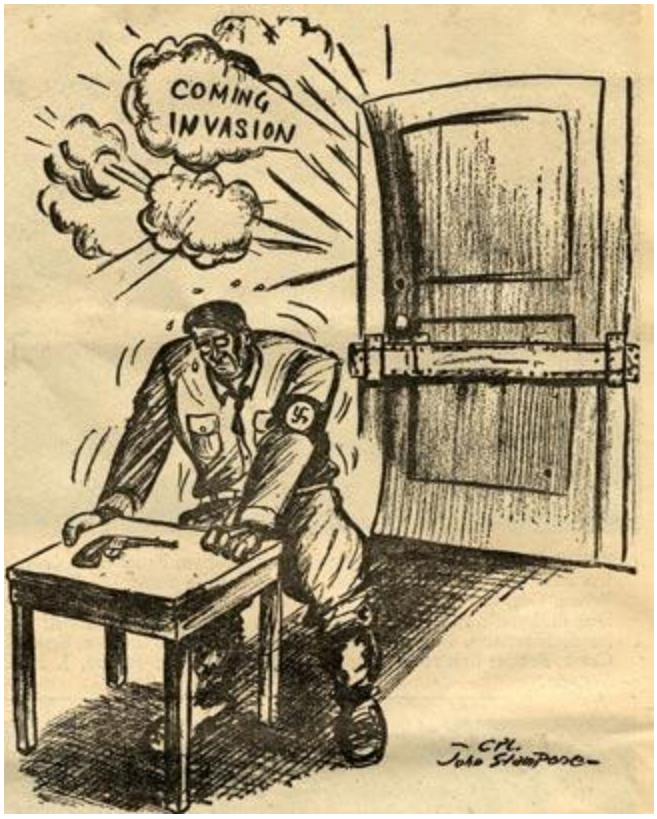
"Teen Trouble: What Recreation Can Do About It" Booklet, National Recreation Association, 1943. Page 4, Folder 5, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Popular Culture: Enemy and Overconfidence Cartoons

The following editorial cartoons related to lampooning enemy leaders and warning against home front overconfidence are from the *Civilian Front* newspaper, which collected them from newspapers nationwide.



"Back the attack on the home front!"



"Opportunity knocks."



"Just what he's waiting for."

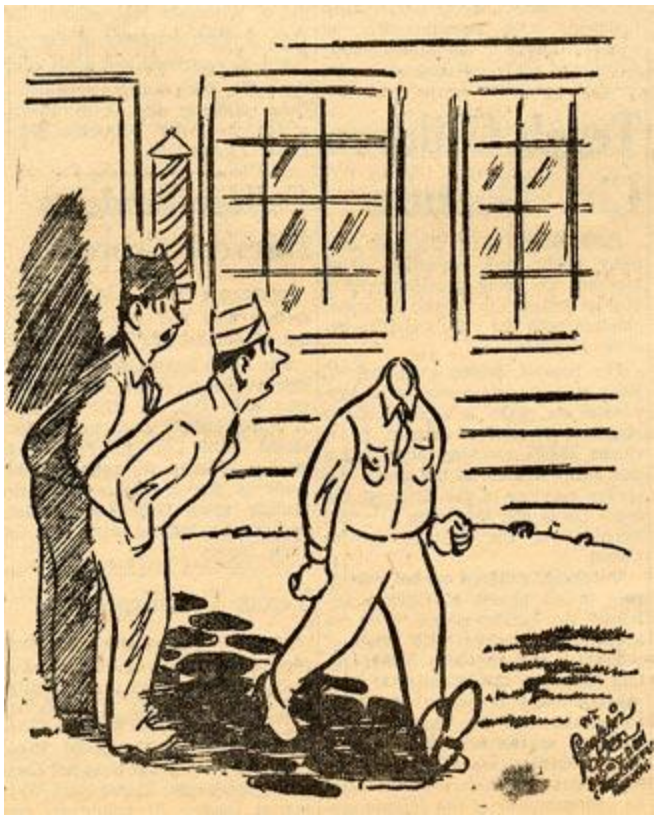


"Here's that man again: Whoopee, we just took Sicily and the war's over! Time to celebrate, pal!"

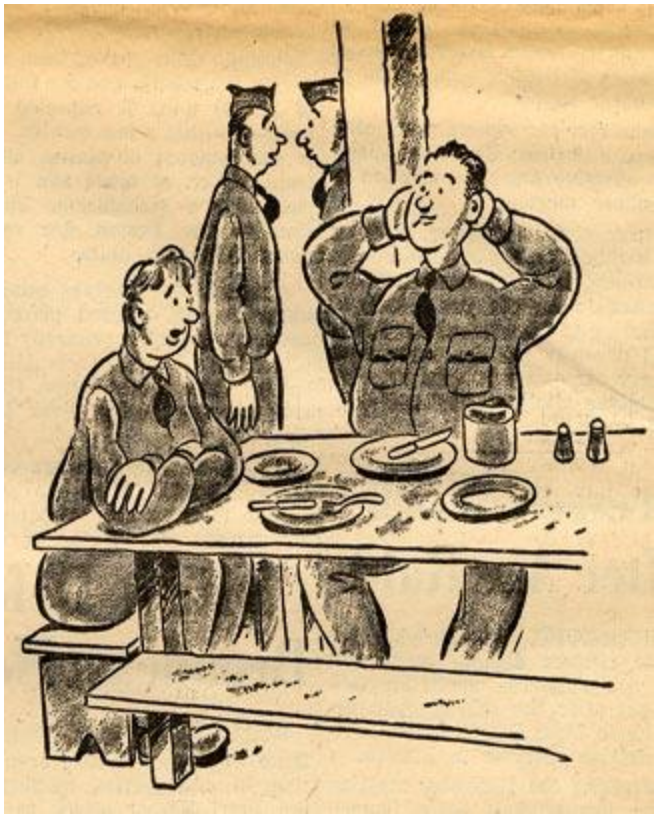
(Image and caption source: Various Newspaper Editorial Cartoons, *Civilian Front* Newspaper, 1942-1943. Folders 5-8, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA.)

Popular Culture: G.I. and Women's Role Cartoons

The following editorial cartoons related to G.I. life and the changing role of women during the war are from the *Civilian Front* newspaper, which collected them from newspapers nationwide.



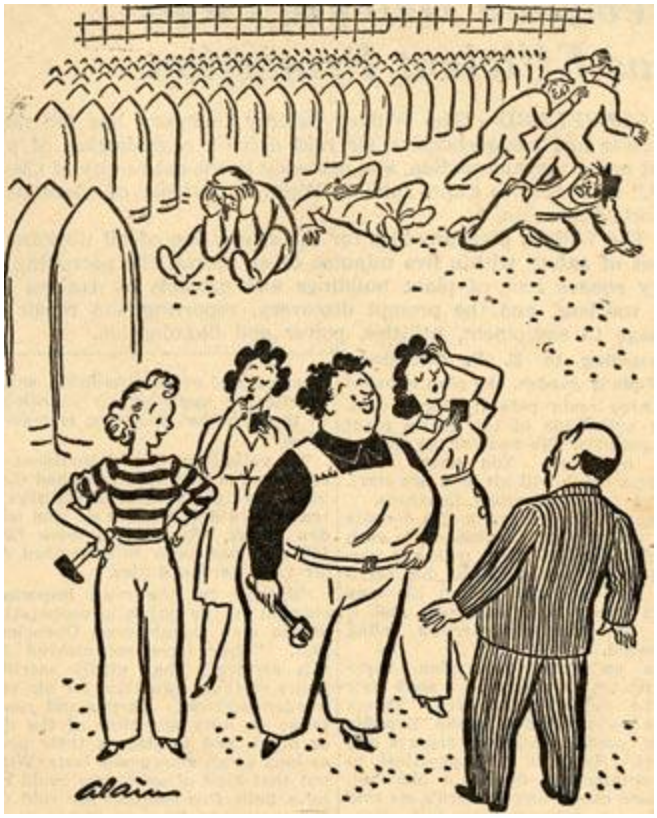
"Frankly, I think they're overdoing these G.I. haircuts."



"I'm looking forward to the furlough, but I hate to think of eating my wife's cooking again."



"Mother! Just look at what you did to one of our best guest towels!"



"We just settled a little argument about women's ability to turn out ammunition."

(Image and caption source: Various Newspaper Editorial Cartoons, *Civilian Front* Newspaper, 1942-1943. Folders 5-8, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA.)

Enormous Lies Founded on Half-truths: Rumor Control Efforts

"We Are Being Invaded With Lies and Propaganda"

Federal officials knew they had to control messages during the war to keep morale high on the home front. They did this in a number of ways, such as establishing guidelines for "voluntary" media censorship and influencing the content of Hollywood films. The government also produced its own films, radio broadcasts, pamphlets, posters and propaganda in an effort to portray the nation and its war efforts as favorably as possible. Along with getting the message out, federal officials also sought to squelch "an amazing new anti-war 'rumor factory'" run by the Axis nations that aimed to flood the United States with "enormous lies founded on half-truths." Oregon officials followed suit by founding the Rumor and Propaganda Division of the Oregon State Defense Council, designed to hunt down rumors and kill them with facts.[1]



A drawing portrays the destructive nature of the rumormonger. (Folder 48, Box 25, Defense Council Records, OSA)

National Propaganda and Rumor Control Efforts

President Roosevelt wanted to avoid the excesses of the Committee on Public Information, formed during World War I to control public opinion through propaganda. Its efforts fueled the passions of Americans, both good and bad. To be sure, the committee reminded the nation that it was fighting for democracy and freedom. And its propaganda helped sell war bonds and promote positive actions such as reducing absenteeism in factories. But its releases also raised hysteria and led to repression and violence by portraying Germans as Huns, evil creatures perpetrating atrocities as part of their greedy aim to conquer the world. The committee hinted that German spies were hiding around every corner; that any work stoppages were tantamount to treason; that any dissent was unpatriotic; and that socialists and pacifists were secretly sympathizing with the enemy.[2]

Instead, during World War II, the federal Office of War Information (OWI) took the lead in shaping and disseminating approved information with a more subtle approach. The OWI worked with Hollywood studios to release movies that showed people working together for a successful outcome, both on the battlefield and in home front efforts. While the studios agreed with this approach, they also knew the government could withhold their licenses to export films. Government officials also withheld and released photographs depending on their predicted effect on home front morale. Thus, photographs of dead Americans and other graphic subjects were deemed to be too damaging for morale and not released until 1943. With Allied war successes, OWI officials switched positions and released the graphic photographs in a bid to reduce overconfidence and keep home front war efforts high.[3]

The OWI also tracked and investigated alleged instances of German and Japanese propaganda efforts in the United States. One rumor that officials considered particularly heinous concerned a Minnesota mother who purportedly "received by parcel post from Japan a box containing the eyes of her soldier son captured in the Philippines." OWI officials investigated and said that "no such mother could be found and none of the rumor peddlers knew where the story started." However, officials "learned the 'fear rumor' had been beamed to South America by Radio Tokio and passed along by Axis agents...." They also combated other rumors around the country. For instance, someone in North Carolina said that "Atlantic Coast beaches were closed to swimmers because so many of them bumped into bodies of drowned American soldiers." Other rumors, such as one from New York, sought to weaken the country through prejudice: "Jewish boys get doctors to pep up their heart beats to dodge the draft." The OWI claimed to "trace most of this stuff to 'Radio Station Debunk,' a powerful Berlin shortwave outfit purporting to exist somewhere in the American Midwest as a United States station 'telling the truth' about the war."[4]



Nailing or spiking a rumor meant to not repeat it and to tell the rumormonger to stop spreading it too. (Folder 16, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

"Make Yours a V-Home!"



The caption to this cartoon reads: "A V-Home refuses to spread Axis rumors. 'Don't be an unwitting Nazi agent' cautions OCD. 'If it's a secret, keep it; if it's a rumor, kill it!' Refusal to spread Axis propaganda is one of five qualifications of a V-Home. Your Air Raid Warden or Block Leader will tell you about the other four. Make yours a V-Home!"

An official placard describes a V-Home (Victory Home): "We in this home are fighting. We know that this war will be easy to lose and hard to win. We mean to win it. Therefore, we solemnly pledge all our energies and all our resources to fight for freedom, and against fascism. We serve notice to all that we are personally carrying the fight to the enemy in these ways:

This home follows the instructions of its air raid warden in order to protect itself against attack by air.

This home conserves food, clothing, transportation, and health in order to hasten an unceasing flow of war materials to our men at the front.

This home salvages essential materials in order that they may be converted to immediate war uses.

This home refuses to spread rumors designed to divide our nation.

This home buys war savings stamps and bonds regularly.

We are doing these things because we know we must to win this war."

(Placard text: COMBAT Library; Image: Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Oregon Forms its Own Rumor Clinic

Oregon officials formally got into the rumor control business in September 1942 with the formation of the Rumor and Propaganda Division of the Oregon State Defense Council. Work began under the direction of prominent Portland attorney, David Robinson, who was "formerly national chairman of the German Boycott League, and as such, familiar with propaganda methods of Germany." A committee, which oversaw the work of the division, included members from the Oregon Mental Hygiene Society, *The Oregonian* and *Oregon Journal* newspapers, and radio stations KGW-KEX and KOIN-KALE as well as a noted psychiatrist and a Reed College professor. The division established contacts with federal agencies but noted that "neither the FBI nor Military Intelligence would in any way officially be connected with the Rumor and Propaganda Division." By October, the division set up shop in Portland with a "full-time secretary" and a "mainline telephone," ready to take calls from concerned citizens and meet the challenge of rumors head on.[5]

The division needed to develop a strategy and publicize its efforts to Oregonians. For publicity, it relied on newspapers, radio programs, and advertisements to spread a message centered on the concept that "we are being invaded with lies and propaganda." The division claimed that:

> **"most rumors are Axis-inspired...by short wave radio...by enemy agents. Some are based on slim threads of half-truths...some are out-and-out lies...but most are plausible sounding, clever, insidious."[6]**

The strategy aimed to convince Oregonians to take three steps when confronted with a rumor: First, they needed to "spot" the rumor by determining if it casted suspicion on U.S. allies, discredited the government or leaders, fomented hatred and suspicion against racial or religious groups, or more generally hurt morale. Second, they needed to "spike" the rumor by making sure it stopped with them: "Don't repeat it to a soul - not even at home!" Spiking also included asking the person for the source of the rumor and telling the person to stop spreading it. Third, they needed to "report" the rumor by immediately contacting the Rumor and Propaganda Division with the pertinent information. The division then pledged to thoroughly investigate the rumor, publish the "true facts," and pass along relevant information to the FBI.[7]

Shipyard Rumors

Once telephone calls and letters began to arrive, patterns of rumors became clear. Not surprisingly, many rumors centered on activities at the shipyards in the Portland area. Rumor #19 claimed that "the

Sheriff's office was informed that a bulkhead at the Oregon Shipbuilding corporation over turned several nights ago killing 17 people. That great numbers of men are being killed and that the news is being suppressed." Meanwhile, rumor #22 said "three women welders and eleven men were killed at the Oregon Shipbuilding corporation on or about September 30, 1942." The informant, L.F. Rose, "was indignant over the rumor and upheld the safety precautions of the Oregon Shipbuilding corporation." Other rumors about the shipyards claimed that "practically 95%" of the workers from other states were ex-convicts, many from New York. Rumor officials investigated and found that of the 2,500 workers from the New York area, "only one [was a] parolee and that this one man had not been guilty of any kind of heinous crime." Officials blamed enemy propaganda designed to "create friction between the new workers and other workers and the local populace thus retarding shipbuilding purposes."[8]



The SS *Davidson Victory*, launched by the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation in Portland in 1945, was one of many Victory ships built in area shipyards, which were natural sites for rumors. (Image courtesy Wikimedia)

Salvage Drive Rumors

Many rumors targeted salvage efforts, making drives appear to be a waste of time. According to rumor #53, a wife accidentally gave her husband's golf clubs to a scrap metal drive and later found they had been resold by Goodwill Industries. Goodwill denied obtaining items from scrap drives. Rumor officials said if people believed that items given to scrap drives were then resold at stores, it would discourage them from donating scrap, thus slowing the war effort. Numerous rumors centered on salvaged scrap metal or household fats being buried or dumped. Rumor #165B claimed truck loads of tin cans were being hauled to the city dump. Officials tracked the problem to a garbageman, who may have been either uninformed or simply lazy. They lamented that "if this story is believed it will cause Portland men and women to figure - what's the use of going to the trouble of cleaning, pressing and saving tin cans when they are to be thrown away anyhow[?]" Rumor #259, spread by an Oregon State College student, claimed that "hundreds of thousands of pounds of grease and fats were buried in large pits around Camp Adair." State officials asked the college president to refute the rumor on campus to combat the impression that "it is just a waste of time for housewives to save grease and fat." Meanwhile, rumor #287 said that salvaging household fats was only a ploy to "keep the housewife busy." It claimed that hotels and other businesses simply disposed of fats: "Union Pacific Railway just throws the fat along the tracks." An investigation found that "troop trains seem to have no containers in army kitchen cars for saving grease." After the rumor division wrote a letter of complaint to President Roosevelt, an Army representative replied that they had changed their operational instructions to require the use of grease containers.[9]

Enemy Attack Rumors

Numerous rumors claimed enemy attacks had occurred or were imminent. Some showed how nervous some people were after two real aerial bombings of Curry County forest land in September 1942, which resulted in little damage. Rumor #11 claimed that "Port Orford was wiped off the map night before last." Officials noted the date of the second bombing was correct but that it caused even less damage than the first bombing. Word leaked out about the bombings and the county saw reporters and photographers

from *Life* magazine, the Associated Press, state newspapers, and others but "it had become a closed military area and all these people were sworn to secrecy, and no information released so the Japs won't know the damage done." Rumor #85 upped the ante when a hitchhiking sailor claimed that a bomb containing "bubonic plague germs" was dropped on Curry County. Rumor #285 in the summer of 1943 claimed the Japanese had established a landing on the Oregon coast south of Bandon. It said that "a number of landing barges from several troop transports off the coast" placed enemy soldiers in a position to take over two Coast Guard stations. The rumor also claimed a Japanese soldier was shot south of Roseburg on Highway 99 and that three bridges near Coos Bay were blown up. An investigation concluded "the rumor that 'something' happened is still very persistent around Roseburg, and felling [feeling] against the authorities is running quite high over the fact that the truth has not been released."[10]



According to officials, any talk that divided America by race, ethnic group, or religion helped the Axis strategy. (Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Rumors Against African Americans

Rumors against African Americans betrayed underlying racism in Oregon. Rumor #58 stated that defense housing units on McLoughlin Blvd. near Portland were to be "occupied by negroes." The rumor claimed "all property owners in the nearby vicinity are up in arms." A check with the Clackamas County housing authority found that out of 600 housing applications, none were from African Americans. Many rumors claimed African Americans posed a physical threat to white people. One rumor, #137, claimed that "all negroes who are brought to Portland carry knives presumably of a forbidden type and for unlawful purposes." This was refuted by John Keegan, captain of detectives for the Portland Police Bureau, who said "'this is a damn lie.'" Keegan added "we have had very little trouble with the colored workers who were brought in. Only two colored boys gave us any grief and they are in custody and being tried." Rumor # 297 in October 1944 claimed a riot between "Whites and Negroes" erupted in Vanport and had "assumed serious proportion." A call to the Vanport school superintendent found that the incident "had been exaggerated beyond all semblance of truth." Apparently, it was simply a school ground fight between a white boy and an African American boy with classmates standing around watching. Still, the rumor escalated to include an "assault on a pregnant white woman by negroes."[11]

Rumors Against Jewish People

Many rumors resulted from discrimination and stereotypes against Jewish people. Some flatly advocated violence, such as the Wolf Creek man who allegedly stated "that we should kill off all the Jews." This prompted a letter from the rumor division to the

"Many of these, of course, are more the grumblings of thoughtless people, than rumors of malicious intent;

FBI, which responded with a letter saying the matter would "receive attention." Some rumors implied Jewish men were shirking military duty. Rumor #135 asked if it were true "that the Jews are not enlisting in the armed forces of the United States?" A woman apparently heard the rumor from men in her family who worked at the shipyards where "a lot of this kind of talk was done while the men were riding in the trucks back and forth to work." By far the most rumors centered on the stereotype that "the Jews control all the wealth of the world" and exploited their power for selfish reasons. Rumor #141, circulating in the Bend area, claimed that "this rubber business makes me tired, the Jews are just making a big profit out of it and the scrap drive." The manager of radio station KBND in Bend told state officials about the rumor and remarked that: "many of these, of course, are more the grumblings of thoughtless people, than rumors of malicious intent; nevertheless, I think they should be nailed as false. They certainly don't aid in building morale."[12]

nevertheless, I think they should be nailed as false. They certainly don't aid in building morale."[12]

Rumors Against People of Japanese Descent

People of Japanese descent also drew rumors, many related to their lives in the internment camps. Rumor #33 claimed that "the Japs are getting $50 a month plus board and room in the Internment Camps." When rumor division officials could not immediately provide an answer, two Portland women were "quite indignant," saying "they wanted to know whether such an amount was paid the Japs when so many of our old folks could only get twenty or thirty dollars a month pension." A call to the U.S. Employment Service established that the top pay, even for doctors and other professionals, was only $16 per month, exclusive of room and board.[13]



Recruitment literature promoted the social benefits of joining: "Certainly WAVES can have dates--with officers, enlisted men or civilians! This pretty WAVE is stepping out for an evening's fun with a friend." (Folder 2, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Along the same lines, rumor #95 said "first grade hams and meats are being furnished to the Jap Camp near Klamath Falls [Tule Lake] when it is almost impossible for American citizens to get this same grade of meat." Officials couldn't give a precise answer to this rumor but noted it had been "reported that dealers in Klamath Falls when asked for ham say that it is all going to Jap camps." One theory held that a "crooked deal" had been made with high prices charged but lesser quality meat delivered. A variation of the rumor claimed bacon and ham were scarce because so much of it was sent to Tule Lake. Rumor #127 distilled the antipathy down to one sentence: "It's a G_____D_____ outrage to place American citizens on short rations and at the same time permit those yellow B_____ to enjoy ease and plenty at our expense."[14]

One rumor focused on the condition in which Japanese Americans left their farms when forced to relocate. Rumor #100 stated that "the ground of Japanese farms out toward Oregon City has been poisoned by Japanese evacuees before they left so that any thing planted there would be just too bad for the persons eating it." Officials noted that the purpose of the rumor was to frighten people "thus lowering morale" and referred to a professor who said that "scientifically it is absurd. Any poison of the character described would probably destroy all plant life."[15]

Other Rumors

The Rumor and Propaganda Division collected many more rumors throughout the rest of the war. A number of them reflected a suspicion that unfair practices were at work in rationing. Others claimed war bonds would be worthless. Still others claimed massive waste and fraud within the Red Cross while some looked for shadowy conspiracies in the corporate ranks. Rumor #72 stated that "the WAVES [a Navy women's service] are considered by the Army officers as their property and they can do as they please [with them.]" Officials concluded the purpose of the rumor was to "make relatives of both men and women in the service unhappy and apprehensive, thus lowering morale." Rumor #21 put forth another strange claim, saying that "in most Nursery Schools the children are doped to keep them quiet." The Portland woman who told of the rumor was worried because she had been offered a good job and needed to put her four-year-old son in day care. He had overheard her talking about the doping and cried: "I don't want to go to school and be shot in the arm." The state health board investigated and found no facts to support the rumor but did admit to allowing seven unlicensed day care centers to continue to operate because "all the day nurseries were full and their [sic] wouldn't be any place for the children to go."[16]



Rumor #72 implied the stylish uniforms offered to recruits in the WAVES made them a bit too attractive to Army officers. (Folder 2, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)



Billboards reminded Americans they were fighting for freedom of religion. Disparaging talk and rumors hurt the cause. (Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Related Document

Rumor Book (Report #s 1-30), Rumor and Propaganda Division, Oregon State Defense Council, 1942-1945 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11318768). Folder 48,

Box 25, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Notes

"'Rumor Mill' Floods U.S. With Axis Lies," *Civilian Front* Newspaper, Oct. 10, 1942. Page 8, Folder 5, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Oregon at War, World War I and the Oregon Experience," Oregon State Archives Web Exhibit.

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"'Rumor Mill' Floods U.S. With Axis Lies," *Civilian Front* Newspaper, Oct. 10, 1942. Page 8, Folder 5, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA.

"Report of Oregon State Defense Council," 1942. Pages 8-9, Folder 18, Box 11, Defense Council Records, OSA; Letter from Jerrold Owen to H.P. Everest, Sept. 29, 1942. Folder 50, Box 25, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Ibid.

"'The Enemy is Getting Across Our Frontiers" Flyer, Blitz-Weinhard Brewing Company, circa 1942. Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Rumor Book, Rumor and Propaganda Division, Oregon State Defense Council, 1942-1945. Folders 48-49, Box 25, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Ibid.

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An Arsenal of Words: Victory Speakers Spread the Word

"Speaking "Straight From the Shoulder"

Newspapers, radio programs, pamphlets, posters, movies and other media carried the government's message calling on citizens to join the war effort. But none had the immediacy of the messages carried by the civilian army of 100,000 Victory Speakers across the country during the war. These volunteers brought information about the war's most vital issues directly to millions of Americans in meetings, forums and luncheons right in their own communities. Inspired by great speakers of the day such as President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, they sought to provide "trusted and familiar voices" to "help to stir the American people to the enthusiastic cooperative action this war is demanding."[1]



Since Victory Speakers were trusted and familiar voices in the community, they were seen as highly effective at communicating the government's message. (Folder 16, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

In the Footsteps of the "Four Minute Men"

Much of the planning for Victory Speaker Bureaus was inspired by the "Four Minute Men" of World War I. During 1917 and 1918 local volunteers would stand up in theaters and speak on war topics for four minutes, roughly the amount of time it took to change a reel of film. These speakers came from backgrounds such as government officials, businessmen, and war heroes. Speaking topic titles included: Why are We Fighting?, the Liberty Loan, the Red Cross, Food Conservation, What Our Enemy Really Is, Unmasking German Propaganda, and The Nation at Arms. The program became so popular that it expanded beyond theaters to churches, civic groups, colleges and other venues. By the end of the war, more than 7,500 branches were sending out 75,000 speakers across the country. Oregon's Four Minute Men organization began in June 1917 and grew quickly. During the three weeks of the Fourth Liberty Loan Campaign in the fall of 1918, the Oregon Four Minute Men sent out 800 speakers and reached 400,000 people.[2]

Early Program Goals

Although officials during World War II embraced the value of other media, they contended nothing compared to the uniquely persuasive appeal of a Victory Speaker: "Neither the press, nor the radio, nor the mass meeting with its roaring amplifier - though each is vitally important in spreading information - is any substitute for this multitude of small meetings in which men and women are addressed face to face by Speakers whom they know to be men and women of character." As a testimonial to the power of the lectern, officials pointed to one county defense council that appealed over the radio and through the press for volunteer civilian defense workers and only got 3,000 responses. After they organized a Victory Speakers Bureau and fanned out across the county spreading the word, they had "every one of our 9,000 defense jobs filled, and 6,000 on the waiting list."[3]

A Victory Speaker "need not be his community's wealthiest or most prominent man or woman, but--banker or carpenter, salesman or clergyman, housewife or school teacher--he or she must be an individual whose character is outstanding."

Officials cast a wide net in search of Victory Speakers, stressing a person "need not be his community's wealthiest or most prominent man or woman, but--banker or carpenter, salesman or clergyman, housewife or school teacher--he or she must be an individual whose character is outstanding." In fact, officials claimed to value personal reputation more dearly than ability as an orator. Victory Speakers would be providing leadership and shaping public opinion, which were heavy responsibilities. And since the program accepted people of "all parties, all creeds, all backgrounds," speakers were required to leave their personal views at home and stick to the government message. Expressing political opinions, bad-mouthing ethnic or racial minorities, or other inappropriate actions would earn a quick ticket out of the program.[4]

Early efforts in Oregon to create a Victory Speakers Bureau centered in the office of Bob Smith, who ran a Portland advertising company and worked in the Information and Public Relations Division of the Oregon State Defense Council. He saw the job of running the state bureau as a clearinghouse, organizing speaking engagements from lists of speaking volunteers and lists of organizations looking for speakers. In August 1942 he foresaw a big role for the Rotary Club in the process, since the organization already had a functioning statewide speakers operation: "I conceive of your using the members of the Rotary Club Speakers Committee as our speakers committee in every town.... You may want to seek out other organizations in other towns, but the Rotary membership is large enough to give us a 95% job."[5]



Tens of thousands of Victory Speakers talked to community groups across the country during the war. (Folder 16, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Oregon Coordinates With the Federal Plan

Meanwhile, the federal Office of War Information (OWI) and Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) joined forces to develop and promote a nationwide Victory Speakers program in 1942. Noting the spotty nature of state speaker programs, federal officials urged western states to cooperate with the new federal plans. Of course, this made it incumbent on states to conform to federal requirements such as lengthy and frequent reports, leading to considerable grumbling by Oregon officials. State Defense Council Coordinator Jerrold Owen gave voice to the complained:

> Local defense councils are being driven into open rebellion by the insistence of the OCD on report in detail of every activity entered into by volunteers. It would take a large paid staff on every defense council merely to answer questionnaires and appeals for information from OCD offices, information which is of little practical value and merely enables some bureau head to get out a pretty report to justify his or her salary.

We would like very much to see reports cut to the very minimum. We can see no reason why the Sector Office in Seattle, San Francisco, or Washington D.C. should know anything about who talked to who and when and what about. It appears to us that at the very most the only information which should be required would be the number of talks made and the approximate number of people reached.[6]



Victory Speakers tried to convince more people to serve as nurse's aides. (Folder 16, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

With integration into the federal program, state officials discovered there was more to running a speakers bureau than just matching up lists of speakers and organizations. In addition, they were expected to set up local bureaus in the counties, print and distribute information releases and other materials for use in the program, organize conferences throughout the state, and regularly collect local reports and submit state reports to federal officials. Among numerous other duties, local Victory Speaker Bureau directors were obliged to keep card files on local groups and organizations, build a roster of trained speakers, coordinate with local civilian defense programs such as salvage and war bonds to provide speakers, and "promote and arrange unusual opportunities for speakers before special groups." They were also required to "keep a record of reaction, response to, and ability of each speaker," as well as "to constantly observe, by editing, that no speaker allows his imagination to carry beyond the rules of censorship, to give credence to rumor, or to unknowingly spread misinformation." Meanwhile, each Victory Speaker was urged to "accept whatever speaking schedule the Director of your Bureau prepares for you," study the content of programs to be covered in speeches (e.g., salvage, war bonds, etc.), and be on the lookout for new speaking engagements.[7]

Training and Outfitting Victory Speakers

Speakers could come from many backgrounds but they needed to be matched properly to the audience. Officials recommended the formation of local advisory committees to search for volunteer speakers. The new speakers could be recruited anywhere, but churches, labor groups, fraternal organizations, and civic clubs were good starts, "and most definitely, do not forget the women's groups." However, these speakers had to be well matched to their audience to be effective, as a training manual admonished: "Never use an office worker or professional person for a laborers' group. A welder or shipfitter has his own particular appeal and method of reaching his own type and group. Use a housewife to speak to housewives or a business or

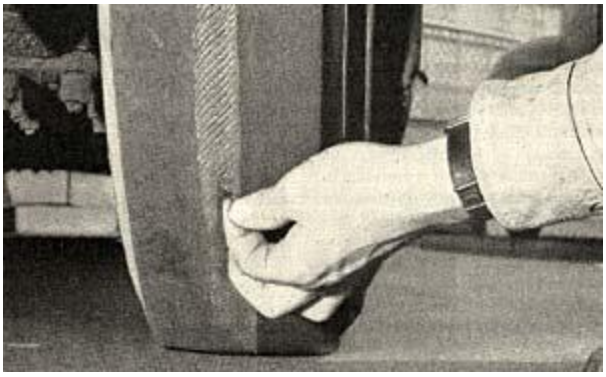
The Victory Speakers Manual distributed by the OCD listed 4 "don'ts" to be avoided by Victory Speakers:

"1. **DON'T** shout, "Be calm." Emphasize instead how we can prepare for the blows when they fall. Then we won't



The emblem of the Victory Speaker program. (Folder 16, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

professional person to speak to a like group." In areas with large foreign language groups, such as some defense plants, the manual urged local bureau officials to "use one of 'Their Own'" Moreover, since many plants ran 24 hours a day, officials were encouraged to select speakers to give talks at different shifts, even to accommodate the 4 a.m. union meetings of shipyard workers.[8]



Victory Speakers heralded new federal programs. For instance, when the government began to require tire inspections, speakers explained that the tire above could have been saved by recapping it. As shown, it was "ready for the scrap pile." (Folder 16, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Eight training meetings were suggested to shape a fledgling volunteer into a seasoned Victory Speaker. Ideally, under the direction of a "qualified teacher of speech," the training provided "friendly, objective, and constructive criticism," along with strict reminders of speech time limits enforced by a timekeeper wielding a gong or alarm clock. During the course of the eight meetings, participants progressed through a series of exercises and lessons as well as practice speeches on topics such as rationing and conservation. Students were taught to use facts and illustrations while speaking from experience as much as possible. They were told that "actual cases of what real people are doing will drive home the speaker's message." And, speakers were to tailor their talks to the audience. Thus, at a women's club in a small, informal group, speakers should be conversational and "talk from the housewife's point of view, but avoid any suggestion of 'masculine condescension.' Women like to be addressed by men on a basis of mutual respect." Service clubs called for a different approach that included "good fellowship, informality, anecdotes, and 'punch.' Talk 'straight from the shoulder.'"[9]

Speakers benefited from real world advice as well. One suggestion was to "get your back to the wall" to not "let anyone behind you steal attention from you." Thus, if the chairman "sits behind you, the audience will watch him to see how he's taking it. If he doesn't listen with rapt attention, why should they? If he lights his pipe, that's a show and they watch without regard for what you are saying." Speakers were told to "keep your props [visual displays] under cover" and therefore keep the element of surprise: "If you don't, the boys and girls may read it and get a partially baked idea of its meaning." Moreover, speakers were reminded not to "promise to do something in a minute: Don't say 'I'll cover that in a few minutes.' The boys and girls hope to adjourn in a few minutes. If you plan to talk about

need pep talks abo

2. **DON'T** anticipate exaggerated horrors --yet be realistic. Show how the British and Chinese have withstood total war for years and have come through stronger and more determined than ever.

3. **DON'T** state, 'We must exterminate the German, Japanese and Italian beasts.' Fanatic hatreds can make us unnecessarily suspicious of our foreign-born fellow patriots and even promote the divide-and-conquer program of the Axis. Preach instead a firm, intelligent resolve to crush and abolish forever the Axis plan of tyranny and aggression.

4. **DON'T** fall to rumors. Our democratic government is engaged in a strategy of truth, but we must remember, in the words of President Roosevelt, 'We are not going to provide information which will give aid and comfort to the enemy.' Only totalitarian governments are forced to lie to their own people."(15)

something after a while, keep it a deep, dark secret. Take it up in its turn without any advance ballyhoo." Finally, speakers were told not to send an assistant out in the audience to set up a projector while the speech was in progress: "Remember, always, that anybody doing anything is more interesting than a speaker."[10]

Federal authorities provided sample speeches, outlines, and talking points to Oregon Victory Speakers but state officials sometimes judged them harshly. Jerrold Owen betrayed his frustration in July 1943 in a letter to the director of the state Victory Speakers Bureau, the contents of which he then summarized to federal officials:

> Mr. J.C. Stevens, Director
> Speakers' Bureau, Oregon State Defense Council
>
> I am in 100 per cent agreement in believing, with you, that there is absolutely no point in sending to our local speakers any tripe which can be of no possible value, either directly or indirectly, in winning the war. Just as our office endeavors to screen out the non-essential and boondoggling programs which come to us from Washington, D.C., we are relying on you to do the same sort of job with the mass of material sent to us from various sources for the use of speakers. Such supplies of pamphlets mentioned in your letter as are received here will be confined to the waste basket.
>
> Jerrold Owen
> Administrator, Oregon State Defense Council[11]

The Life and Times of Ivan Jacobsen

In addition to the sometimes routine speeches given by Victory Speakers, from time to time special speakers made the circuit of large and small Oregon cities. One such speaker, Ivan Jacobsen, made an impression on tens of thousands of Oregonians during an extended tour of the state in May and June of 1943. Jacobsen, a native of Morton, Washington, graduated from the University of Washington and planned an ill-advised bicycle tour of Europe in 1939. He was in Norway in April 1940 when the Germans invaded. Jacobsen joined the staff of the American embassy in Oslo and helped evacuate American citizens from the war zone. In December 1940 Nazi Gestapo agents arrested him and threw him in a jail designed for 150 people but holding about 350 Norwegians. During four months of solitary confinement, Jacobsen resolved to escape. He faked a case of appendicitis, was taken to a Norwegian hospital, and fled. He returned to the prison on his own "when the Nazis threatened to take reprisals on some innocent Norwegians in whose home he had hidden." His next escape plot came when he deliberately broke his arm and was again sent to a hospital. Before he could escape, he heard he would be sent to Berlin, and in his mind a "concentration camp." But, his luck turned for the better when American authorities arranged to exchange him for a German agent. After returning to the United States, Jacobsen embarked on an ambitious speaking tour of the country, spreading the word about Nazi crimes.[12]

Oregonians responded strongly to his story and came in droves as he made dozens of speeches across the state, while assuming near celebrity status. Fred Arnold, president of the Portland Realty Board, said the speech "drew the largest attendance we have had in months at our luncheon meeting today." He judged



Victory Speakers often referred to core American values like those portrayed in Norman Rockwell's series of illustrations on basic freedoms. (**Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/a4191a26-206c-4db7-92bf-f2f39e65f436)**)

that Jacobsen delivered his tale "in a masterly, finished manner" and added that the audience "listened utterly silent and absorbed as he told his story, and upon conclusion the prolonged applause echoed to the ceiling." The 22-year-old delivered his speech to packed halls across Oregon, usually to crowds of more than 100 people. On May 10 he drew an audience of 920 at the Milwaukie High School. He packed in 700 at a Forest Grove town meeting on May 6 and saw 550 in the audience at the State Theater in La Grande on each of two separate days in June. The largest crowds recorded for his tour came in Lebanon where he pulled in 1,100 people at Lebanon High School in the afternoon of May 21, took a break, and drew an audience of 800 for an evening town meeting.[13]



Ivan Jacobsen, broken arm in a sling, relaxes after his harrowing experience in the hands of the Nazis in Norway. He told his story to packed houses throughout Oregon in 1943. (Folder 3, Box 13, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Watching a Good Program Just "Fade Away"

Despite its successes, by the summer of 1944, the Victory Speaker program had run out of steam in many parts of Oregon, a victim of competing interests and confidence about the coming end of the war. While speakers in the Portland area and much of the Willamette Valley remained active, according to program director J.C. Stevens, "in the remainder of the state the Speakers Bureau seems to have relapsed into innocuous desuetude [disuse]." Stevens displayed his weariness in a letter to the acting administrator of the State Defense Council when he wrote that "perhaps it is just as well for as the war draws to a close these activities will naturally fade away. In spite of the kidding, cajoling, and coaxing, and flattering I've been unable to get reports from more than three counties outside of Multnomah."[14]

Related Documents

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"Victory Speakers Manual," U.S. Office of Civilian Defense, 9th Civilian Defense Region, circa 1943. Pages 5-6, Folder 16, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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Ivan Jacobsen Speaking Tour Advance Flyer, Royal Norwegian Information Services, 1943. Folder 3, Box 13, Defense Council Records, OSA.

Letter from Fred Arnold to Jack Hayes, June 18, 1943. Folder 3, Box 13, Defense Council Records, OSA; Attendance Reports Re: Ivan Jacobsen Oregon Speaking Tour, May-June, 1943. Folder 3, Box 13, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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Books Join the Battle: The Victory Book Campaign

"Reading is Even More Popular Than Poker..."

Servicemen pursued various types of recreation during the war, but no form was more highly recommended than reading. The activity would not only expand the mind, distracted the reader from the ugliness of war during lulls on the battlefield, from the otherwise drab military camp surroundings, or from many of the tempting, but forbidden, forms of recreation often available in nearby communities. And the Victory Book Campaign to supply the millions of servicemen with wholesome and educational reading material would be yet another way Americans could contribute to the war effort.



The Victory Book Campaign aimed to raise the morale of servicemen and others in the war effort. (Folder 42, Box 29, State Library Records, OSA)

The Need to Read

Officials knew from the experience of World War I that providing plenty of books for servicemen during war could boost morale and the need showed itself soon after the United States began mobilizing large numbers of troops in 1940. The Oregon State Library excerpted a "letter received from a lad in an Oregon Camp" dated Dec. 10, 1941 in which the serviceman wanted to "find out the possibilities of getting some kind of a start for a library here at camp. As you know the fellows are very much in need of any positive outlet for pent-up emotions & energies." One camp librarian went so far as to say that "reading is even more popular than poker, no matter what the people at home think." In fact, Private Charles Woodbury, who was stationed at Camp Adair near Corvallis but worked as a reference librarian in civilian life, noted on the regular "Ask Your State Library" radio program that reading was second only to watching movies as a recreation according to a War Department survey.[1]



Victory Books found their way to all corners of the earth, giving servicemen a satisfying diversion. (Folder 42, Box 29, State Library Records, OSA)

It wasn't only stateside servicemen who sought out reading material. The soldiers, sailors, and marines fighting overseas often saw long periods of boredom punctuated by the horror of battle. Many wanted something to fill the down time and take their minds away from the inhumanity of war. One Victory Book campaign brochure showed a soldier reading a book while resting under a palm tree with the caption: "When the fighting slackens and the quiet rest hour comes...then a book is a real companion."[2]

A National Book Campaign Forms

Efforts to collect books for troops began after the start of the military draft in late 1940 that lead to millions of men coalescing in camps around the country. Many state and local libraries conducted book drives to help nearby military camps, but it wasn't until the formation of the National Defense Book Campaign in 1941 that a unified nationwide approach came together. The campaign was sponsored by the American Library Association, Red Cross, and United Service Organizations (USO) and was led by director Althea Warren. She wrote to Oregon State Librarian Eleanor Stephens just days before the attack on Pearl Harbor: "Like most of the librarians in the country during the past year, you have probably felt the pangs from your own conscience or been urged by high-minded library users to start a drive to collect books for the camps." Warren noted that previously Army and Navy libraries had received "appropriations from Congress to buy books and feared these funds might diminish if gifts seemed too plentiful." But the camps had grown so much that the need had become overwhelming, prompting military authorities to give the "go ahead" for a national book drive. Before long, the National Defense Book Campaign operated under the more catchy name of Victory Book Campaign (VBC).[3]



Women sort and package Victory Books at the Oregon State Library for shipment to servicemen. (**Photo no. OSL0023, State Library Records, OSA (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/347/rec/3)**)

The campaign sought to collect books suitable for servicemen and to supplement library services already maintained by the military in libraries at camps, posts, and on ships as well as company "dayrooms" and similar settings. Moreover, books could be packaged and sent in small groups as "Traveling Libraries" to remote military positions. The campaign also would provide reading materials to fill shelves at libraries that the Red Cross and USO maintained for servicemen at clubs and centers in the vicinity of military camps as well as those maintained by the American Merchant Marine Library Association. Any surplus books would be given to libraries near industrial defense plants where population growth had left their resources wanting. Books not suitable for servicemen would be donated to the appropriate body or become part of paper salvage drives.[4]

Oregon Quickly Organizes its Campaign

Oregon library officials quickly organized to implement the campaign statewide. Eleanor Stephens won a vote to act as director of the Oregon VBC. She assembled a state executive committee consisting of one representative each from the Red Cross and USO as well as a number of prominent librarians from around the state. Local directors and committees formed and armies of volunteers were recruited. An

entire distribution system with collection sites, sorting centers, and regional depots needed to be developed to handle the flow of tens of thousands of books in and out of the program. Because of the probability of receiving unwanted books, national campaign officials suggested that "trained librarians with the capacity for ruthless discarding should supervise these depots." Books with only "feminine or juvenile appeal" needed to be farmed out to an appropriate distributor. Standardized paperwork, labels, and cards had to be created to deal with tracking and shipping the books. Careful inventories of the number of books collected needed to go onto weekly report cards that could then be used as "ammunition for the campaign committee." Publicity was key so volunteers mounted major efforts to develop special events and drives along with cultivating the local newspapers and radio stations.[5]



Actress Katharine Hepburn (left) and comic actor Chico Marx (center) were two of many stars of stage, screen and radio who helped with the national Victory Book Campaign. (Folder 42, Box 29, State Library Records, OSA)

Volunteers and assistance came from wide range of entities in addition to the Red Cross and USO. Among the groups offering help were the American Federation of Teachers, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, Catholic Library Association, League of Women Voters, and the National Education Association. These were joined by countless other groups such as churches, granges, 4-H clubs, labor organizations, fraternal organizations such as the Elks, Masons, and Knights of Columbus, merchant groups, veteran groups such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, women's clubs, schools, and service clubs such as the Kiwanis, Rotary and Lions. These entities helped by providing volunteer staff for all aspects of the process from planning to publicity to distribution as well as providing financial support, space for collection centers, or even window displays to promote the campaign.[6]

Major Drives Come Together

While work continued year around, much of the publicity centered on major national drives early in the year. Local volunteers planned promotional efforts to support the campaign. Much of the work went into planning events for the opening and closing days of the drive. For example, the 1943 campaign covered a two month period from January to March. On opening day local workers were encouraged to "dramatize" the festivities by inviting the mayor or other dignitaries to donate the first book during a public ceremony. During the course of the campaign, events such as special luncheons or dinners honoring authors or servicemen could be held. Contests for the best campaign slogans, posters, essays, or collection totals could be held. Libraries could put on exhibits of rare or interesting books that had been donated. Local entertainment venues could be coaxed to accept donated books as the price of admission. Factory personnel offices could collect pledges from employees to donate a certain number of books with "section captains" appointed to make sure the books actually were donated. Offices were encouraged to install a "Five Foot Victory Book Shelf" to be filled weekly and were asked to hold inter-departmental competitions and authorize roving "volunteer book collectors."[7]

Across Oregon many local volunteers, such as Clatsop County Librarian Glen Burch during the 1942 campaign, worked hard to get the word out:

Dear Miss Stephens:

The Victory Book Campaign has been launched with a flourish with excellent cooperation from the newspapers and the radio. I've plugged it on every broadcast for the past three weeks, and am devoting practically all of this week's broadcast to it. In addition the station is putting announcements of the campaign on the air at regular intervals throughout each day. We've plastered the signs all over our windows and I'm distributing the placards. I think we could use more, if you have them to spare. The Budget [newspaper] will run by-lines on the campaign every day in the paper this next week, and use what stories I can cook up. My only trouble is finding time to do all that can be done.

Cordially yours
Glen Burch[8]



Volunteers transfer donated books from a van to the Oregon State Library for packaging. (Photographs, State Library Records, OSA)

Campaigns relied on large and elaborate networks of collection centers serviced by bookmobiles and other vehicles. Public libraries provided the most obvious collection centers but there were others. School, college, and special libraries participated as did a wide array of locations that drew both foot and car traffic. Suggestions included beauty parlors, drug stores, factories, hotels, theaters, grocery stores, office buildings, oil stations, post offices, railroad and bus stations, and schools. Committees enlisted manufacturers and schools with shops to volunteer to build containers to collect books. Local "motor corps" were formed to clean collection sites on a regular basis and move books to the local collection center, usually the public library. Boy scouts, girls scouts, members of the Junior Red Cross, and similar groups made house-to-house collections as well.[9]

Not Just Any Book Requested for Donation

The campaign didn't want just any book. State director Eleanor Stephens asked every Oregonian to give at least one good book, but she admonished the reader not to go "to the attic for these books. Our boy's don't want musty cast-off volumes. Give the books that you yourself like - give books that are worthwhile,

books that are desirable." While most donations were valuable, many were not. Ruth Stratton, who succeeded Eleanor Stephens as state director, described finding "such things as the Ruth Fielding series, old college catalogs, Women's club directories, books on obstetrical nursing [surely not a favorite with the troops], as well as many books in bad physical condition." Private Charles Woodbury echoed the need to be selective as he decried fiction from 1912 that servicemen saw as old fashioned. When asked on a radio program if he would want to receive such a book, Woodbury replied: "Definitely no, a thousand times no, in fact!" Even though some of these books had been best sellers in their day, he claimed that "the plot and the stilted conversation are as out-dated as the illustrations." The radio host agreed:

> **"Yes, those illustrations showing 'the little woman' all done up in a high-necked, long skirted number, certainly wouldn't make me want to read the book either!"[10]**

In addition to describing books they did not want, campaign officials spared no effort talking about those they hoped to collect. Among the most sought after according to Army and Navy surveys were current best sellers such as those featured as Book of the Month, Literary Guild and other book club selections. They also wanted popular fiction and non-fiction books dating back to about 1930. Adventure, western, detective and mystery fiction proved popular. Servicemen studying for promotion or those looking forward to new careers at the end of the war wanted access to technical books, but only if they were less than 7 years old since information became dated. Popular topics included architecture, aeronautics, chemistry, mechanical drawing, mathematics, military science, navigation, radio and physics. As a counterpoint to the dry technical books, servicemen also asked for joke books and books with humorous stories, anecdotes, cartoons and games. Pocket books were popular since they were portable and could be taken into the field.[11]



Victory Book Campaign graphic. (Folder 42, Box 29, State Library Records, OSA)

Anecdotal reports of preferences supported the rankings made by larger surveys. According to one report, two categories of adventure/westerns and detective/mystery fiction were most in demand. Some military post librarians commented that "the horse as a means of escape ranks ahead of murder and that Zane Grey is the American Army's No. 1 author." One librarian, Louis Nourse, noted that "one book that seldom stays long on the shelves is Steinbeck's 'The Moon is Down.'" He went on to remark that books about Germans, Japanese, Chinese and Russians were popular. The librarian claimed there was little interest in novels about World War I. Instead, the servicemen had "a great curiosity about the Napoleonic campaigns and the length of tomes like Tolstoy's 'War and Peace' does not daunt them." Nourse claimed foreign language books were in demand while "interest in biography has slacked off in favor of books on current history." He noted interest in classics such as Shakespeare was high as was the demand for poetry since servicemen were searching for "an understanding of the universe" that poetry, philosophy, and religion could provide. Not just any poetry would do, however, since according to Nourse "they don't much care for poetry by little-known authors or material of the erudite university-thesis type."[12]



Readers browse books donated to the Victory Book Campaign at the Oregon City Library. Some of the more interesting and unusual books were placed in an exhibit to generate more interest in the campaign. (**Photo no. OSL0022, State Library Records, OSA (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/346/rec/2)**)

Officials Praise the Campaign

Oregon's Victory Books program proved a success over its approximately two-year run during which just under 127,000 books passed through the doors. Most libraries in the state collected books that were sent to the Oregon State Library for distribution. Military forces stationed in Oregon had first crack at getting the books, with the remainder shipped to other locations. Most books collected in Multnomah County were distributed to the merchant marines. By June 1943 about 44,000 "carefully selected books" found their way to "all Army Camps, Posts and Stations in Oregon. This includes many general



Soldiers participate in the Oregon Victory Book Campaign. (**Photo no. OSL0021, State Library Records, OSA (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/345/rec/1)**)

collections for Army hospital libraries, many Traveling Libraries for isolated detatchments [sic], books for Negro troops, for day rooms, and many requests for specific books by individual soldiers."[13] About 4,000 books from Oregon were sent to people of Japanese descent held at internment camps located in Idaho, California and Arizona.[14]

By 1944 the national campaign ended after having met the bulk of the need for books for servicemen. Looking back on the effort, the USO office in New York tallied impressive totals. Over the two-year life of the Victory Book Campaign, Americans donated nearly 18.5 million books. Of that number, about 10.2 million books, or 60%, were found to be "suitable in context and condition for distribution." Overall, the Army received most of the donated books, totaling over 5.8 million volumes of which nearly 4.5 million were for use in the United States. The Navy got 1.7 million volumes while the merchant marine received over 650,000 books. USO, Red Cross, and related libraries accepted about 1.5 million volumes and about 45,000 books were set aside for "war prisoners." Officials expressed pride in the lean operation, saying that "the low cost of 2.07 cents per book for collecting, cleaning, repairing, and distributing this vital reading material to our fighting forces is final indication of the campaign's success."[15]

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One Thing Leads to Another: Juvenile Delinquency Rises

"Youth: A "Perplexing and Troublesome Period"

Wartime social changes led to a rise in juvenile delinquency across the country, an unwanted but not unexpected phenomenon. Social scientists noted an increase in delinquency during World War I and Britain reported a jump of 50% during the first year of World War II. But anticipating the problem did little to untangle the web of complex issues that caused some "alarming" symptoms to surface. Despite the wholesome portrait of unity, sacrifice, and patriotism painted in movies and on posters, shocking and lurid behavior drew the attention of newspapers and government officials. Both wondered how so many youths could seemingly careen so out of control.



Statistics showed rising numbers of juvenile delinquents in Portland during the war. Vandalism and burglary followed increased numbers of youth on the streets late at night. (Image source: [3])

Statistics Point to the Problem

Statistics, while not unanimous, supported the concern. Nationally, during 1942, the first full year of the war, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover reported that arrests of "young boys and men" actually dropped as much as 10%. But arrests of minor girls increased a staggering 55.7%. More detailed numbers showed arrests of girls under 21 years old for prostitution rose 64.8%; arrests for other sex offenses jumped 104.7%; arrests for vagrancy shot up 124.3% arrests for disorderly conduct increased 69.6%; and arrests for drunkenness rose 39.9%. Another source measuring the "rate of juvenile delinquency" saw an increase over the same period of 8% for boys and 31% for girls. [1]

Some Oregon officials saw plenty to worry about. Portland's acting mayor, William Bowes, wrote in October 1943 that "Portland's problem may be seen very clearly in the report of the Bureau of Police. This shows a 500 per cent increase in delinquency in 1942-43 when compared with the 1940-1941 report. Also it is noteworthy that the age of delinquents has dropped from 16 and 17 years a few years ago to 13 to 15 today." The city's emergency hospitals reported a 400% increase in juvenile cases in February 1943. School attendance officers saw truancy cases double in 1943 over prewar averages and one of Portland's truancy or "hookey cops" asserted that "juvenile crime has gone up by one-fourth." [2]

However, a closer look at statistics for Multnomah County, home of Portland, revealed a more subtle and somewhat less frightening view of the problem, according to Multnomah County domestic court judge, Donald E. Long. He stated that boys delinquency cases rose 14% to 898 in the county during 1942 while



Many probation officers went into the armed forces or higher paying defense industry jobs during the war, leaving fewer people to keep track of at risk youth. (Image source: [3])

girls cases jumped from 103 in 1941 to 216 in 1942, a rise of more than 100%. He "tempered the sobering statistics" by saying that of the 216 cases, 57 were runaways and 69 were classed as "ungovernable." Most of these came from other counties or states seeking relief from an intolerable home life or looking for a job. Among the remaining delinquent girls, Long counted 34 for stealing, 35 for sex delinquency, 17 for persistent truancy, 12 for curfew violations, four for intoxication, four for malicious mischief, and two for traffic violations. Eight had become pregnant and four had venereal disease. The chief county probation officer echoed Long's thrust by claiming that the rate of delinquency had remained the same in the county from 1940 to 1942. His contention was that the "population has gone up 38 per cent in that period, but the thousands of newcomers apparently are contributing only their proportion of juvenile delinquency." [3]

The judge counted 34 girls for stealing, 35 for sex delinquency, 17 for persistent truancy, 12 for curfew violations, four for intoxication, four for malicious mischief, and two for traffic violations. Eight had become pregnant and four had venereal disease.

Despite the nuanced reading of statistics by Multnomah County officials, by October 1943 Governor Earl Snell had seen enough. Saying that "statistics and information reaching my desk indicate that juvenile delinquency is rising to an alarming rate," the governor appointed a statewide committee to "secure the absolute facts concerning this problem" and to recommend actions. Governor Snell acknowledged that "several agencies, groups, and individuals have been actively concerned with the delinquency problem and doing commendable work," but he flatly declared that "there should be more." In setting the blue ribbon panel in motion, Snell was prepared to do whatever it took, including signing new or amended legislation, to "alleviate the present alarming condition." [4]

Some Causes of Juvenile Delinquency

Officials recognized varied causes for the rise in juvenile delinquency, but some of the problem boiled down to teenagers "having a tough time--at a tough time." In other words, it was difficult enough for anyone to go through the developmental challenges of adolescence, without the complications of war thrown in. A National Recreation Association booklet noted that youth has always been a "perplexing and troublesome period" consisting of "restlessness; of revolt against, yet dependence upon, authority; of being girl-crazy or boy-crazy; indolent or violently active in turn; of 'crushes'; of vague daydreams about the future; of being very grown up one day and very childish the next." War, according to the booklet, served to intensify and aggravate problems and make solutions more difficult to find. [5]



Beyond the intensification of the usual teen angst, officials cited other causes, with lack of parental supervision high on the list. Fathers were often separated from their families by either working in distant war industries or, beginning in 1943, being drafted into the armed forces. Mothers often took full time jobs, sometimes working evenings or nights. Many officials were highly critical of what they saw as a lack of responsibility of parents towards their children. They noted that many parents returned home from work "too tired to pay attention to their children; or they go out and leave them alone." Dr. Thomas Meador, health officer for the City of Portland, saw a bargain with the devil in the making: "Many mothers apparently prefer $60 a week now to good health and behavior for their children later." Problems of parental neglect frequently were exacerbated by the absence of older brothers and sisters in the household, many having joined the military or gone off to work in defense jobs. [6]

"There's nobody at home anymore. Pop and Bud joined the Navy. Mom's on the swing shift." Large numbers of youth had to fend for themselves during the war, often in less than ideal homes. (Folder 4, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)



With both parents working, some youth fell into bad habits such as shooting craps. (Folder 4, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The widespread migration of families to crowded war industry centers, such as Portland, added to stress. Children and youth were often uprooted from friends and familiar surroundings only to be placed in crowded communities where resources and services were already overtaxed by increased population. Many lived in trailer camps, hastily built shacks, or other "unwholesome" places, which often lacked privacy, safe places to play, and regular sleeping and eating routines. Officials claimed overcrowded housing led to increased disease, which, in addition to causing more absenteeism at work, also resulted in children returning to class too soon after illness, thus aggravating the health problem. Moreover, the strain of family illness could lead children to develop bad habits. One Portland school principal cited a case in which a "mother was in the hospital and the father working night shift, so the children were going out after he left for work" and getting into trouble. [7]

School overcrowding caused similar problems. In 1943 Portland's grade schools had to make room for 7,000 new students. The crunch was felt particularly acutely in North Portland near major shipyards where three schools went on "double shifts" to cope with the influx. This meant "thousands of youngsters, particularly in the 9 to 12-year range, suddenly had all morning or all afternoon off. Hundreds of these must spend long and idle hours on the streets because no one is home to look after them." This led to predictable mischief and worse, including an incident in which a "gang of eighth-grade 'keyhole kids'--those with keys to their unattended homes" took a female schoolmate to such a house and "staged a party that later shocked their elders." [8]

Young people also worked more during the war, drawn by the high pay. Much of the work was at night and sometimes included exposure to health and accident hazards, along with "unwholesome influences that make the path to delinquency an easy one." Officials noted many youth jobs carried too little adult supervision or too much responsibility. A federal report claimed that "employment of younger boys and girls in places where liquor is sold, in dance halls, 'honky tonks,' 'juke joints,' on the streets, and so forth, often brings them into undesirable surroundings or into association with persons who contribute to their becoming delinquent. When they leave their jobs late at night, tired and unprotected, it is hard for them to withstand the tempations [sic]." Young girls likewise migrated from rural areas to cities to "seek

employment without adequate guidance," often finding themselves stranded without money or a place to stay, a very dangerous situation. [9]



"'Course, I'm working myself, after school. I've got lots of money to spend, and don't forget it. Heck--why shouldn't I have some fun?" With more money and less supervision, more youth abused alcohol. (Folder 4, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The money earned from jobs led to problems as well since many young people dropped out of school to go to work. With their paychecks, it was common to develop "exaggerated feelings of self importance and attitudes of defiance toward parental control." As a delinquency booklet put it: "Because seventeen-year old Bill is able to earn $30 a week we assume that he will know what he ought to do with it--Bill, who never had more than $2 in his pocket at one time in his life! Is it any wonder that Bill begins to step out, high wide and handsome? Or that he takes a girl friend along with him? ...Bill is no pantie-waist and has money that is burning a hole in his pocket." [10]



"You used to be able to get a good game out at school--but the coach went in the Army and that new one is sure a drip." Many experienced teachers and coaches left school during the war, leaving students less connected to positive routines. (Folder 4, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Experts pointed to other causes of juvenile delinquency as well. Schools and youth services agencies lost many of their best trained employees to the armed forces or higher paying war industries. One city reported a great lack of men teaching in junior high schools, especially in the physical education departments: "In some of the junior high schools there wasn't even a man on the faculty." Teachers could earn several times their old salaries by taking jobs in shipyards or other war industries. Multnomah County suffered chronic staff shortages in the boys department of the probation office just at a time when more services were needed. Likewise, the Portland health office was operating in 1943 at 80% of its peacetime staffing levels. Other deficiencies added to the problem. Youth services programs lacked coordination. Churches and education boards were failing to do enough to provide healthy outlets for "youth's energies." Many communities lacked organizations such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Experts also cited a "spirit of excitement and adventure inspired by war, coupled with tension, anxiety, and apprehension on the part of the parents" that led to problems for young people. [11]

Shocking Stories of Youth Run Amok

Whatever the causes, symptoms of juvenile delinquency were undeniable. Boys, often as young as 10-years-old, increasingly were caught vandalizing parks and other public property and wandering the streets in the middle of the night. Others were stealing everything from bottled beer to automobiles. One city reported that "many of the boys hang around on the street corners, make ribald remarks to women who pass by and shoot craps brazenly in the open." In Portland authorities broke up several gangs of teenagers, some under 16-years-old after a string of burglaries and hold ups. A 14-year-old boy was shot by a tavern owner after an attempted burglary. Police caught an 8th-grade boy with his fourth stolen car.

Oregon State Defense Council official Harriet St. Pierre lamented that "from all sides one hears a note of alarm over the 'gangs' of young people on the streets late at night, attending the late movies, the late dances and night 'joints' of one kind or another. The Portland public schools are now in session and yet this morning at ten o'clock enroute to my office I ran into half a dozen young people of grammar school age." [12]



"Betty May--she was my girl friend. But now all she does is run around with soldiers." Khaki-wacky girls left boys without attention. (Folder 4, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Nationally, the term "khaki-wacky" joined the language, referring to girls who hung around drugstores, bus depots, and other places where servicemen on leave congregated. The most promiscuous of these became known as "Victory girls."

Girls were finding themselves in even worse situations. Nationally, the term "khaki-wacky" joined the language, referring to girls who hung around drugstores, bus depots, and other places where servicemen on leave congregated. The most promiscuous became known as "Victory girls." According to one observer, these girls had a misguided sense of patriotism leading to the belief that having sex with servicemen was contributing to the war effort. Some Victory girls became aggressively promiscuous, leading the Navy to build a fence around an armory in Detroit to keep them out. Meanwhile, New York City social workers reported that more than 60% of venereal disease cases among soldiers were contracted from girls under 21 years old. Another major city reported that 70% of cases came from girls under 21 and 35% came from girls under 18. [13]

Officials noted other alarming behavior by ever-younger girls, many 11 to 16 years old. The trend was for the young girls to dress and wear makeup to look older. They would then "frequent night clubs and taverns and have promiscuous and loose relations with men in uniform. Taverns and bars claim they cannot tell their age, and therefore sell them drinks." High school and junior high school girls were becoming more brazen out in broad daylight too, according to reports:

"They walk down city streets, six or seven abreast, breaking as they pass civilians, but holding on to each other's arms as they approach a soldier or a sailor, forming a very flattering net around him. As the walk progresses, the line gets shorter, as girl and boy pair off and leave the group. It's a childish, very effective get-your-man plan used by girls around fourteen and fifteen years old!" [14]

One young girl, commenting on her behavior of going out with older men, declared defiantly: "Sure, I knew it was wrong! But...he took me to a good hotel, and we had a swell dinner, and some drinks, and we danced, and I never had so much fun in my life!" [15]



Portland officials found plenty of troubled youth. (Folder 5, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Oregon authorities also reported increased inappropriate behavior by young girls, including "sex delinquency." The Portland Women's Protective Division reported "increasing scores of young girls can be seen on the streets late at night." The 13- and 14-year-old girls "sometimes stay away from home for several nights in a row, some of them at good hotels where they seem to have enough money." And the problem was not restricted to Portland. Tillamook County officials, reporting on "social protection" in September 1942, noted "there is some concern with regard to the morals of the young girls of the town, both married and unmarried. It seems that many girls of the 14, 15, and 16 year old group have become very much interested in the soldiers. Also there are quite a number of young married girls in town whose husbands are in the Service. Many of them have been married but a very short time. Some of both groups are suspected of having rather loose morals." Meanwhile, the February 1943 *Cosmopolitan* magazine ran a story that referred to two Oregon girls, ages 12 and 13, "who ran away to San Francisco and for three long months cut a lurid swath across the city's night life." 16

Related Documents

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Keeping Them on the Straight and Narrow: Youth Strategies

RX = School, Healthy Jobs, and Wholesome Recreation



Most young people stayed involved in society and the war effort, such as these members of the High School Victory Corps collecting salvage material. (Folder 18, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

A casual observer during the war could get the impression from newspapers, magazines, and other sources that an entire generation of youth was stampeding off a cliff into an oblivion of delinquency, debauchery and criminality. Certainly, juvenile delinquency was on the rise but sensational stories fueled a misconception that the majority of the youth generation was on the wrong track - that listening to Frank Sinatra was a ticket to delinquency or that dancing the jitterbug was "emulating sexual foreplay." In truth, while some youth captured the headlines with scandalous behavior, most were helping their families cope with the burdens of the home front while staying in school and often volunteering for various tasks to further the war effort. Government authorities, wanting to do everything possible to maintain well adjusted and productive young people, developed policies and programs to keep them in school, working in healthy jobs, and taking part in wholesome recreation.

Educational Efforts

Although education leaders devised ways to accomplish the goal, most efforts to get young people to stay in school centered on the need to make the curriculum challenging, involving and relevant. By doing this, they hoped to stem the tide of decreasing enrollment nationally during the war, and by extension reduce juvenile delinquency. By 1944, officials recorded an enrollment drop of one million students since the beginning of the war, a loss of almost 14%. At the same time, they wanted to prepare high school students, particularly juniors and seniors, to be productive in the war effort after graduation, either in the armed forces or civilian defense or community service jobs.[1]

Navy Pleads for Model Airplanes

The High School Victory Corps required that each member participate in wartime community service. This included a range of programs such as salvage and war bonds, but one that really appealed to thousands of Oregon youth was the opportunity to build model airplanes for the Navy.

Early in 1942 the Navy urgently asked the youth of the nation to build 500,000 model planes. The goal was to

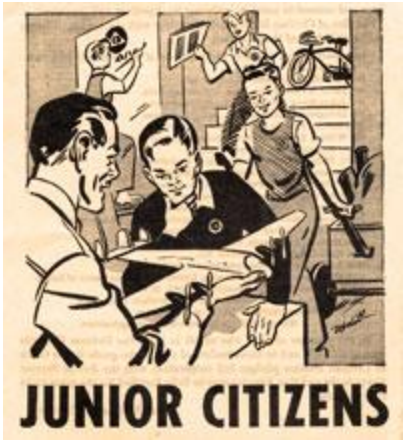
Federal officials developed plans for a High School Victory Corps to be administered by schools around the country such



The High School Victory Corps emblem included symbols representing the five major occupational divisions of study.

construct 10,000 copies of models for each of 50 types of aircraft, both Allied and Axis. These models would be used by Army and Navy air corps and civilian defense units to help with aircraft identification, range and gunnery needs, and other training.

The Navy issued plans for the planes and the Oregon Department of Education coordinated the effort with schools across the state. As usual quotas were set. State officials emphasized that elaborate shop equipment wasn't needed to construct the models. However, schools were asked to have "one or more instructors who understand the reading of blueprints and the demands of precision work which this project requires." The Navy emphasized the need for ;both speed and accuracy since "all models must pass a rigid inspection with no detail omitted."



Building model airplanes helped keep young people involved and helped the Navy too. (Folder 4, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Plans called for a range of sizes. The smallest model would have a wingspan of 5.5 inches while the largest measured 25 inches across. Most planes averaged less than 12 inches across. They were to be made of wood such as white pine and poplar with the only other ingredients being glue and paint.

The Navy saw the program as a winner on two fronts. It provided them with needed models for training. But at the same time it "should arouse a great deal of interest on the part of pupils and parents in aviation...." Just the ticket to entice some of the most talented youth into a career in naval aviation.[15]

(Folder 18, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

as the Portland school district, which distributed its own guidelines in 1942. The program's objectives centered on school-based training of high school boys and girls for active participation in military service, war production, and essential community service occupations. Training included physical fitness, military drill, science and mathematics, and other subjects. It usually guided students into one of five divisions: air service preparation for aviation cadets or aircraft repair; sea service for the Navy or Merchant Marine; land service for the Army or Marine Corps; production service for trades and war industries; or community service for professional positions such as engineer, doctors, and nurses. Each division had its own set of required and optional classes catered to the needs of the chosen occupational path.[2]



Members of the High School Victory Corps, wearing uniforms of the service divisions, stand at attention as a flag is raised. (Folder 18, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Participation by schools and students was voluntary, but an American Legion survey conducted early in 1943 found significant activity and plans across the state. The Legion sent the survey to 250 Oregon high schools, of which 232 responded. Of those, 86 schools already had set up a Victory Corps program with another 96 schools planning to implement it the following semester. Schools diverged significantly in what components they offered. Thus, 78 schools offered a "general membership" in the corps, with varying offerings for the five divisions: 41 schools offered air service training; 28 provided sea

service; 39 offered land service; 44 provided production service; and 53 gave students training in community service curriculum. Schools were split on offering military drill, with 47 offering it and 46 not providing it as an option, according to the survey.[3]

By 1944 officials were still disappointed with the ongoing drop in school enrollment nationwide. To attack the problem, they launched the National Go-To-School Drive of 1944-45. Typical of wartime campaigns, the effort sought to educate and mobilize students, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, and others to think about the importance of staying in school. Although the effort acknowledged that some students need to work, both for financial support and for war production, officials wanted to limit the type and amount of work so it would not damage educational goals. The program suggested "action ideas" such as radio programs and posters targeted at community groups. It enlisted quotations from leading generals and educators about the importance of staying in school. And it even resorted to scare tactics by cataloging accidents frequently caused by "immature, reckless, and irresponsible young workers." For example, a campaign handbook recounted the story of a "15-year-old boy on the night shift in a laundry [who] tried to extract a tangled sheet from an operating mangle. He was drawn into the mangle. His right arm was torn off above the elbow."[4]

Youth Work Programs and Regulations

The National Go-To-School Drive and other efforts to keep students in school saw the need for balance in the approach to work and school. Too much of any kind of work was damaging, as was the case of one youth who was putting in 73 hours a week on school and work; the wrong kind of work clearly was a recipe for disaster, either physically or morally; and too little work reminded one Oregon State Defense Council official of the old saying: "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." Along these lines, the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense created the Junior Citizens Service Corps for young people under the age of 16. Patterned as a junior branch of the U.S. Citizens Service Corps, the program enlisted volunteers for unpaid work in a range of activities from collecting Victory Books and salvaged materials to working in hospitals and canvassing for war bond drives.[5]



Volunteers in the Junior Citizens Service Corps could serve in ways such as war bond drives and hospital work. They were expected to tend to personal responsibilities, including school work, first. (Folder 4, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Although the designers of the program encouraged local groups to adapt it to their particular needs, there was a basic pattern to the Corps. Boys and girls needed to meet three conditions to claim membership. Foremost was their obligation to be good citizens. To do this, a Corps handbook noted, "a young citizen [needed to be] doing his best in school work, home responsibilities, and to safeguard his personal health." Underscoring the need to fight what many saw as the moral drift into juvenile delinquency, officials reminded potential Corps member that "personal responsibilities as a good citizen are not to be neglected for community services." In addition to that fundamental condition, participants needed to be in training for a particular community service project and they needed to pledge to do Corps work at least one hour a week.[6]



While many young people worked in factories, officials preferred they do their part by helping with war services such as salvage or growing Victory Gardens. (Folder 4, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Beyond volunteer work, officials recognized the reality of large numbers of young people entering the paying job force and tried to steer the results to limit the damage. By 1944 nearly three million people under 18 years old were working full or part time. Almost one million of these were only 14 or 15 years old, about 20% of the children of that age. During the summer the ranks of employed youth swelled with work in agricultural programs such as the youth unit of the U.S. Crop Corps called the Victory Farm Volunteers. Federal Department of Labor (DOL) officials pressed for strict limits related to hours of work. For instance, labor officials warned employers to not work 16- and 17-year-olds more than 28 hours per week during school sessions and 48 hours otherwise while 14- and 15-year-olds were to be limited to no more than 18 hours per week during school and 40 hours otherwise. Officials frowned on late night work also, saying that the older group was to quit by 10 p.m. and the younger group by 7 p.m. Actual observance of these limits varied wildly according to local circumstances, both nationally and in Oregon.[7]

By late 1944 conditions had changed enough that the U.S. Department of Labor lobbied states to establish a basic 16-year-old minimum age for employment in manufacturing or during school hours. Officials looked forward to the postwar period when millions of veterans would be streaming back to the domestic workforce. Noting that many returning veterans were uneducated, disabled, or in some way "physically below par," planners didn't want them to have to compete with 14- and 15-year-old youths for low skill jobs. This problem was sure to be exacerbated by the "inevitable reduction in manpower needs that will accompany the termination of hostilities and the curtailment of war production..." Thus, officials promoted the plan as a win-win proposition: young people would be allowed to have "better mental and physical development" while veterans would be rewarded with jobs instead of unemployment lines. According to DOL research, 33 states still had a basic age of less than 16-years-old for employment in manufacturing or during school hours. Oregon was one of 28 states that set the bar at 14-years-old.[8]

Wholesome Recreational Outlets

Along with engaging young people with a relevant education and moderate work opportunities, most experts advocated for a robust recreational program to stave off juvenile delinquency. The youth of America were clear about their recreational preferences according to a survey by Fortune magazine in November 1942: "Ahead of any specific sport came dancing and movies for both boys and girls. After these the favorite pastimes are running around with friends, gab sessions, and the like." Officials saw advantages to staging events such as dances and socials on a local basis, saying that "the object is to keep the boys and girls in their own neighborhood with their own neighborhood group." This would discourage young people from "wandering around on the streets in the afternoons and evenings" and hopefully keep them away from "places of doubtful recreational value and at the same time will satisfy their desire for gaiety and amusement."[9]



Youth canteens provided supervised, wholesome settings for dancing and other popular activities. (Folder 5, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Many communities met the need for healthy social outlets by setting up canteens designed for young people. The national Associated Youth-Serving Organizations, Inc. (AYSO) promoted canteens as part of a well rounded program of youth services by schools, churches and other entities. The AYSO emphasized that young people needed to be involved planning and managing local canteen programs to get the best results. Yet, they also stressed the need for oversight in the form of adult matrons or hostesses, saying that "competent professional adult leadership skilled in the supervision of young people is urgently recommended." The key was to provide guidance in a wise and "unobtrusive" way that didn't alienate young people and cause them to leave in favor of less savory places. Officials never lost sight of why the canteens needed to be co-recreational: "There is no doubt but that this is one of the chief desires of youth - for boys and girls to be together."[10]



Radios and juke boxes helped create a festive and lively mood at youth centers. (Folder 5, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The ideal teen canteen would have several popular features that mimicked the canteens designed for servicemen. According to AYSO officials: "Youth likes to feel that it has a place similar to that of a soldier or sailor and with the same types of activities. Anything in the form of decoration or program that is like those in the servicemen's clubs will be helpful." Of course, the opportunity to dance was first on the list. Lacking this, many young people would simply ignore a canteen. Centers also featured juke boxes to go with the dancing and to set the mood. These coin-operated record players had an added advantage of providing money needed to operate a canteen. Officials also suggested that small orchestras could be brought in for special events to add to the attraction. Likewise, snack bars could bring in money to keep a center afloat, but experts recommended that prices be kept as low as possible to not drive patrons away. In design, these snack bars often imitated a "cocktail bar" with milk, soft drinks, and other non-alcoholic beverages served. A game room could be a good resource to bring in the youth of a neighborhood. Many of these offered such pastimes as badminton, table tennis, checkers, Monopoly, chess, and other games as well as pianos, magazines, and other offerings.[11]

Though much of the reason behind teen canteens or centers was to keep young people away from the temptations that led to juvenile delinquency, some experts saw a real benefit for the quiet and well-behaved boys and girls, a "group which does not get very much publicity." They said that "hang-out rooms" at teen centers could provide an "informal and pleasant" place for these young people to interact without their normal self-consciousness:

> Because this group is usually quiet and well-behaved, it is very often neglected and these boys and girls are allowed to grow up shy and ill at ease with each other, easily embarrassed and self-conscious. In this group the foundations of unhappiness and maladjustment are being laid for adult life.
>
> Recently a study was made of thirty-three Wisconsin high schools. [T]wo out of every five girls, said that they never had any dates, and of these 1/3 said that they really cared.

> Half of the girls confessed that they were shy with boys. Half the girls did not get much chance to meet boys.[12]

Oregon officials also saw the wisdom of expanding recreational facilities targeted at teenagers. A blue ribbon committee formed by Governor Snell met in December 1943 to explore ways to improve the offerings. One member, Warren McMinnimee of the State District Attorneys' Association, highlighted how far the state had to go: "Only eleven counties out of thirty-six have places for children to go, other than commercialized recreation centers. I would strongly recommend opening schools and churches for recreational purposes."[13]



Portland and other Oregon cities developed centers for teens to recreate or just hang out together. (Folder 5, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA)

In fact, the Portland school board recommended that six schools be opened on an experimental basis during the next month for a program of weekend recreational and craft classes. The city parks bureau volunteered to furnish trained supervisors while members of the parent-teacher organization offered to act as chaperones. The plan was to make the facilities open to any student or school drop-out "who conforms to the correct social standards." The parks bureau also teamed up with the Portland housing authority to provide neighborhood recreational programs in church, community and school buildings throughout the city. The centers typically were open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. but were stretched to the limit in terms of supervision, with a program official revealing that "more staff workers are needed desperately." Other schools were singled out for offering successful recreational facilities for young people. The Dalles and Grants Pass had centers patterned after USO canteens and they reported "quite satisfactory" results.[14]

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Here Come the Servicemen: Oregon Military Facilities

Growing Pains Follow Military Build Up in Oregon

The military build up before and during World War II profoundly affected Oregon communities as military cantonments and bases brought tens of thousands of soldiers, sailors, and marines to the state. The influx of people heated up the economies of communities long in the doldrums of the Depression as servicemen streamed to local towns in search of entertainment and services. Yet, growing pains followed for several cities as local populations mushroomed, not only with servicemen, but also with civilians filling new service jobs in the private sector and in the camps. Housing became scarce and expensive, schools were overcrowded, and crime rose as formerly sleepy communities buzzed with the frenzy of wartime boom towns.



Military leaders talk at Camp White in the summer of 1942. Pictured are ADC Brigadier General Percy W. Clarkson, CO Major General Charles H. Gerhardt, and Brigadier General Edward S. Ott, Division Artillery Commander. (Image courtesy Camp White Museum)

Examples of Significant Military Facilities

Oregon played host to numerous military facilities during the war. The Astoria area was the home of Fort Stevens, Camp Clatsop, and the Tongue Point naval station while down the coast at Tillamook, the Navy built two of the largest wood-frame buildings in the world to house a fleet of blimps to patrol the coast. Large air bases were located at Portland and Pendleton. In fact, the daring pilots of the 1942 Doolittle Raid over Japan trained at the Pendleton facility. Marine barracks grew up on the edge of Klamath Falls while the Hermiston area became the site of the sprawling Umatilla Ordnance Depot with hundreds of bunkers designed to store a massive amount of munitions. But the largest impact resulted from the growth of three large training cantonments near Medford, Corvallis, and Bend, each dwarfing nearby towns.

Camp White ballooned to 77 square miles and nearly 40,000 people at its peak, more than 16 times the area and three times the population of nearby Medford in 1941. By October 1942 the camp was ready to serve as a training center for the Army's 91st "Powder River" Infantry Division (and later the 96th "Deadeye" Infantry Division), with two ranges at the heart of the action. The Beagle Range was used to practice infantry drills such as taking enemy strongholds. It included concrete pillboxes, designed to simulate Nazi fortified coastal regions of Europe, that troops practiced manning and capturing, often with live ammunition. The Antelope Range included existing farm buildings and other specially constructed buildings to form a "Nazi Village." Troops practiced combat skills in a realistic setting as they stormed the town. According to military officials: "Realistic training means that a man who may



From top to bottom: Insignia patches of the 91st Infantry Division; 70th "Trailblazer" Infantry Division; 104th "Timberwolf" Infantry Division; and 96th Infantry Division.

soon face death in combat comes as close to it as he dares in training so that he may know what death looks like, how it sounds, how it smells." [1]

"Realistic training means that a man who may soon face death in combat comes as close to it as he dares in training so that he may know what death looks like, how it sounds, how it smells."

Camp Adair, consisting of 65,000 acres mostly in Polk and Benton counties north of Corvallis, was chosen in August 1941 after officials considered other locations in the state. The site was selected because of its proximity to railroad, water, and electric supplies and its mix of flat land and wooded rolling hills for training. Four divisions trained there: the 104th "Timberwolf" Infantry Division; the 70th "Trailblazer" Infantry Division; the 96th Infantry Division; and the 91st Infantry Division. The camp had 1,800 buildings, including barracks and mess halls, numerous office buildings, five movie theaters, seven churches, stores, a hospital, and a bakery capable of producing 35,000 loaves of bread a day. Training grounds, artillery ranges, and wooded hills covered almost 75% of the camp's area and included a simulated Japanese village where soldiers practiced for a possible future assault on Japan. [2]

Military officials established Camp Abbot, about 11 miles south of Bend, to serve as an Engineer Replacement Training Center (ERTC) in 1943, with soldiers first arriving for training in March. As many as 10,000 men could train at a time at the camp, with 90,000 men trained over its 14 months of operation. The typical 17-week combat engineering training cycle included three phases. The first focused on hand grenades and anti-tank grenades; defense against air, mechanized, and chemical attack; and rifle marksmanship. The second phase concentrated on demolition training to blast bridges and other structures. The final phase consisted of three weeks of field maneuvers carried out under combat zone conditions. [3]

The Umatilla Ordnance Depot had a striking influence on Hermiston and nearby towns after the government announced the contract in December 1940 to build the world's largest munitions depot. Almost overnight Hermiston grew from 800 people to a boom town with 7,000 workers. They came from all over the country to build its magazines, shops, and warehouses and to drill deep wells and construct a 241 mile network of railroads and macadam roads to transport munitions. Construction went quickly as workers set world records pouring concrete. By the end of 1941 many construction workers left the area, replaced by those shipping, receiving, and storing munitions and other war related items on round-the-clock shifts. [4]



Workers celebrate at a party thrown by the contractor after they broke a world record by pouring concrete for 24 igloos in 24 hours at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot in

Boosterism and Dislocation

Sept. 1941. (**Library of Congress, image no. fsa 8c22730 (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8c22730/)**)

Boosters and town leaders were delighted at the thought of the increase in business that could follow the siting of a major military facility near their town. Restaurants, movie theaters, dance halls, bars, and shops would experience land office business from tens of thousands of servicemen, regular paychecks in hand, flowing into their downtowns. Farmers and ranchers knew vegetables, milk, eggs, beef, and other products would be in high demand. Local sawmills saw the potential for big orders of lumber and wood products to construct the hundreds of buildings such as barracks and mess halls that made up a camp. Construction workers would be needed in the early phases and various laborers would be needed later to work in camp laundries, bakeries, and related facilities. [5]



Neighbors gather at a farewell picnic north of Corvallis after 60,000 acres of agricultural land was taken in 1942 for development of the Camp Adair military cantonment. (**Image 8123 courtesy Salem Online History (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/max/id/4640/rec/20)**)

But, not everyone was happy about attracting large camps to the area. Families and communities affected by the property condemnations needed to acquire the vast amounts of land for the camps suffered while business leaders rejoiced. Tight-knit rural communities such as Beagle with its modest farms and ranches north of Medford had little recourse. They were destined to lose family homes, incomes, and a way of life but couldn't complain for fear of appearing unpatriotic. Lawsuits brought by landowners against the government over the amount of compensation dragged on for much of the next four years. In the end, the small rural community was no match for the needs of the military and the enthusiastic support of local business leaders. The Army destroyed most of the farm and ranch buildings under the justification of "national security." Many were obliterated by bombardments that were part of artillery training. [6]

Similarly, condemnations for Camp Adair uprooted and scattered about 6,000 people and wiped the community of Wells off the map. Many displaced land owners banded together to "protest the unfair and unjust treatment accorded us and other residents of this area in connection with the acquirement of the properties and the dislocation of the residents." Their chief complaint was that "the prices being offered do not represent fair market values plus the added consideration of being 'unwilling sellers.' Owners cannot relocate similarly with money received or offered." Other protests centered on the lack of advance notice to vacate, delays in payment, and unfair appraisal and inadequate payment for crops and farm improvements. [7]



The barracks and the parade ground at Camp Adair as the cantonment was nearing completion. The camp had a profound effect on local communities like Corvallis, Albany, Monmouth and Independence. (**Image 8105 courtesy Salem Online History**

Boom Towns

(https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/max/id/2844/rec/23))

Once the farmers and ranchers had been removed from the land, the boom town atmosphere was set to begin as construction workers and the first waves of servicemen streamed into camps. According to Army descriptions of the effect of the Umatilla Ordnance Depot on Hermiston, "men who came and got work [had] $100 a week to spend. Their attempts to spend it made this peaceful village overnight into an overgrown carnival working a 24-hour shift. Hastily-erected lunch rooms and hot dog stands, soft drink and beer establishments, a movie, grocery stores, shoeshine stands, and meat markets played to long waiting lines." Camp Adair had a big influence on nearby communities too. Even early on, in August 1942, Albany, Corvallis, and Independence saw a 50% increase in business volume. Local restaurant and entertainment centers experienced 100% growth over a short period. More distant cities, such as Salem, 24 miles away, and Eugene, more than 40 miles away, also "felt the tide of Army arrivals." [8]



Housing conditions became so acute at Hermiston that authorities at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot experimentally converted igloos into housing quarters.

(**Library of Congress, image no. fsa 8c22746**

(https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8c22746/))

Camp White caused explosive growth in the Medford area as the city's streets became "a sea of government green." In addition to nearly 40,000 soldiers at the camp, Medford drew a considerable influx of new civilian residents. Many worked in service jobs at the camp while others worked at the new businesses sprouting up to cater to servicemen. By late 1942, Medford's population grew to over 17,000, an increase of more than 50% over its 1941 population. Most took the changes in stride, accepting the confusion and crowding as a welcome change from the dark days of the Depression and proud to be a part of the nation's war effort. But the pace could be too much for some frazzled residents, such as the lunch counter waitress wildly rushing from customer to customer who exclaimed: "That cantonment! I'd like to never see another soldier. They're in here so thick I never get a second's peace." [9]

Crowding Problems

Housing proved a major problem. Living space became a luxury in Hermiston as longtime residents rented spare rooms in their homes as well as front lawns and vacant lots for trailer space. One farmer turned his 160 acres into trailer space to capitalize on the demand. The Umatilla Army Depot built barracks for 1,700 men but married men and their families needed space too. Even after many of the construction workers left town, Hermiston still experienced problems with high rents. A federal government report from May 1942 said that "at the present time the rent situation in Hermiston is a serious problem. Tar paper shacks with almost no conveniences are renting for $18. Anything approaching a cabin in quality will rent for $25."

A federal government report from May 1942 said that "at the present time the rent situation in Hermiston is a serious problem. Tar paper shacks with almost no conveniences are renting for $18. Anything approaching a cabin in quality will rent for $25."

Towns near Camp Adair encouraged residents to share or remodel their homes into space for the newcomers. Corvallis and Albany developed programs to build 100 new homes each, while Independence also added homes to cope with the influx. In Medford, construction workers typically lived in tents or trailers and then moved on after the camp was built. Soldiers, however, often brought their wives and families with them and needed more permanent housing as did the large numbers of civilian service workers streaming to the area. Creative property owners responded by building rooms in attics, basements, barns, and chicken coops. Many charged high rents before the federal Office of Price Administration developed controls implementing Congressional passage of the Emergency Price Control Act of 1942. [10]

The crowding sometimes brought friction between longtime residents and their new neighbors, both military and civilian. Some locals grew tired of waiting in long lines for services or crowding into movie theaters with hundreds of servicemen. In Medford, one serviceman recounted how he was "neatly crowded from a revolving stool at a cafe counter and sharply told, 'Soldiers should eat at Camp!'" [11] One wife of a construction worker in Hermiston complained to Governor Sprague that her daughter was denied admittance to the local high school because of discrimination against newcomers:

> The Honorable Governor
> Sept. 2, 1941
>
> Dear Sir:-
> This is positively unnecessary. It is a matter of not crowding or making things a little tight for the children of the old residents here. There are two churches very near the school and the library that could be used - and then it is not unusual that two children sit in one seat, on portable chairs - and the shift system.
>
> It is purely a matter of selfishness and partiality. The folks in Washington and other states don't treat the newcomer this way. It is purely a case of refusal to find a way to take care of the situation for the outsider. It is inexcusable and I pray you will write the Superintendent here, that he make more generous steps to give our children an education. It is unadulterated defiance, and unheard of in any part of our "land of the free."
>
> The old timers here are benefitting greatly, financially, by filling their homes, woodsheds, chicken houses, pastures, front yards, with families working on the project, and charging plenty for the "shelters" and the merchants can't keep merchandise on their shelves in order to supply the demand of the workers, but they won't turn a hand to make life for our children a natural one.
>
> Most Respectfully
> Mrs. Joseph Swanson
> Box 273
> Hermiston, Oregon [12]

Governor Sprague responded by essentially blaming the federal government. Apparently, Hermiston was running out of funds to pay teacher salaries and other operating expenses because of the influx of students. Congress made provisions for such situations and Hermiston had applied for help months earlier. "Unfortunately," Sprague wrote, "the matter appears to be badly bogged down with bureaucratic red tape in Washington." He lamented that "this delay is inexcusable," but assured Swanson he would "do everything in my power to facilitate this matter to the end that the children in Hermiston will be able to get the education that is the rightful heritage of every American child." [13]

Criminals Come to Town



Students crowd the halls at Hermiston High School in September 1941. (**Library of Congress, image no. fsa 8c22714 (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8c22714/)**)

Big payrolls associated with large construction projects and camps could also attract undesirable people to the booming communities. The prime contractor project manager for the Umatilla Ordnance Depot, C.L. Fry, reported to Governor Sprague that "there is a definite increase in the daily number of strangers in Hermiston streets, not the working man type, but more of the questionable variety...." Some of the local businessmen were "of the opinion that the place is a good spot for a hold-up or robbery...." In fact, Fry wrote that some local businesses had seen their robbery insurance policies cancelled as a result of recent mail and service station hold-ups in Hermiston. The project generated a huge payroll of about $340,000 each week, with about 80% of the money handled by the local bank and other businesses. Worried this money would fall prey to criminals, Fry wrote to the governor that "it is our belief that a special squad of not less than six men [state policemen] should be assigned to duty at once to prevent further outbreaks of crime in this vicinity." [14] The president of the First National Bank of Hermiston, F.B. Swayze, also wrote to Governor Sprague calling for state action to control traffic and crime problems in the booming city:

THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK

Charles A. Sprague, Governoer [sic]
October 3, 1941

We went through the payday for this week today. We had the bank full and a line on the sidewalk so we have a real necessity, whether we get protection or not. This afternoon two small children were hurt with a truck in front of the bank and were taken to the doctor's office. I have not heard how seriously. Right this minute, which is exactly eight P.M. I look out my window and the street is

full of honking cars on the highway stopped for some reason of a traffic jamb [sic] or something that has happened in the next block down Main Street.

These men who have been attracted here by publicity are not local. They come from far away as well as near. They came to see how the rich picking looks and unless they are taken care of, they are not going to pass up as easy a proposition as this one here is. They are not scared away. They are still here and no one knows who they are plotting against all the time and when the next job may be pulled.

Very truly yours,
F.B. Swayze [15]

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Oregon Vice: Prostitution and Venereal Disease Vex Officials

Strong Words and Token Raids

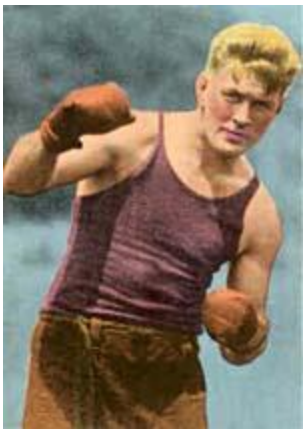
With the influx of tens of thousands of servicemen into Oregon to train for war and perform other military work, officials had to contend with the predictable rise of vices such as prostitution and gambling. Efforts were made to minimize the problem, but no vice could be completely eradicated. The rise intensified ongoing debates about how to best combat vice, particularly prostitution, from a social health standpoint. Were efforts at complete suppression most effective, or was it better to contain prostitution so it could be monitored and inspected?



A prostitute carrying venereal disease consorts with Axis leaders, all enemies of the American war effort. (Image source: [18])

World War I in Oregon

Experts knew prostitution and venereal disease were integral to military buildups. Both problems rose during the Civil War and World War I. In fact, during World War I the Portland based Oregon Social Hygiene Society went to great lengths to work with the Army to reduce the problem in Oregon and at Fort Lewis in Washington. The Army detailed a medical officer from Fort Lewis to lecture all conscripted men in the state while the society made the arrangements and picked up the tab. Meetings were held in every county seat except Gold Beach with attendance reaching 40,890.



Former boxing champion Gene Tunney tried to convince young men to abstain from sex to keep men "at the peak of physical force" and further the war

But the Hygiene Society also aimed to stiffen law enforcement in the civilian community, hiring an attorney to work with the state and cities to propose and pass effective laws and ordinances. It targeted health laws with particular focus on the "better control of prostitution and its ramifications." The results included the passage of a number of ordinances by Portland and smaller cities in the state. Meanwhile, Oregon Governor James Withycombe used the bully pulpit to reach young men before entering the service. He wanted to dispel the myth that sexual intercourse was "necessary to preserve good health," and to remind boys that there is "a nobler purpose than promiscuous indulgence with immoral women." Despite these efforts and a strong stance by military leaders, experts estimated that the Army lost seven million man-days of service to venereal disease, second only to battle wounds that led to the loss of 17 million man-days of service. [1]

effort. (Image courtesy The Card Mine)

Reducing the Demand for Prostitutes

Oregon was not alone in confronting problems with prostitution and venereal disease. Tawdry honky-tonk districts sprang up around nearly every major military training camp in the country. The districts took such names as "The Strip" or "Bug Town" and included garish clusters of sleazy hotels, bars, dance halls, and brothels. Ironically, some of the worst were in the "Bible Belt" of the South. Phoenix City, Alabama, just across the river from the massive Fort Benning in Georgia, soon earned the name "Sin City" based on its notorious brothels and brawls. Albany, Georgia, near the Turner Field air base, was so wide open that the women in one of its brothels used neon lights to advertise their names. [2]

Despite the persistence of the problem, clergymen and other protectors of public morality fought the good fight, both to shut down the demand and the supply. Preaching abstinence to young and lonely servicemen was a hard sell, but one former heavyweight boxing champion of the world was willing to try. Lieutenant Commander Gene Tunney, who served as the chief of the Navy's physical fitness program, wrote an article for *Reader's Digest* magazine titled "The Bright Shield of Continence." Tunney, a widely respected sports hero, claimed abstinence from sex helped to keep men "at the peak of physical force." He challenged men to remain chaste for the duration of the war, derisively insisting "any man above the level of a tomcat must realize that the professional's embrace is not only a menace to health but a shameful desecration of ideal love." [3]



Dance sensation Ginger Rogers owned a ranch near Medford and helped with efforts related to the troops. (Image courtesy Texas National Press)

One way to reduce the demand for prostitutes was to keep servicemen busy with wholesome forms of entertainment. United Service Organizations (USO) centers, more than 3,000 of them across the country, provided servicemen with a variety of diversions and a relaxing clublike atmosphere. Some centers established special features to help lonely GIs. A Medford USO center featured an "Adopt-a-Soldier" program in 1942 during Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays in which a local family would invite a serviceman from nearby Camp White to "a real honest-to-goodness home cooked meal as the neighbors next door." Families adopted almost 500 men during Thanksgiving alone. Locals also chartered the USO Cookie Club. During its peak the Medford area club numbered over 800 members who baked more than 250,000 cookies for Camp White soldiers. [4]



Critics decried judges for being too lenient on prostitutes. (Folder 14, Box

Meanwhile, countless dances and socials were staged by local USO volunteers, drawing female dance partners from as far away as Grants Pass and Yreka, California. The scale of their service was evident by statistics generated by just one of four USO facilities in Medford. The center at 6th and Riverside served nearly 175,000 men in its first full year. During that time, its volunteers dispensed over 210,000 cups of coffee. Entertainment stars also visited the Medford area from time to time during the war. Boxing stars Joe Louis and Sugar Ray Robinson entertained soldiers from Camp White, as did Hollywood actress Ann Sothern, who ate alongside the delighted men in the mess hall. Actress Ginger Rogers, famous for her series of dance movies with Fred Astaire, owned a

35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

ranch in the Medford area and chipped in on many causes related to the troops at Fort White. [5]

Attacking the Supply

While shutting down the demand for prostitutes proved elusive, officials also found little success in attacking the supply end of the equation. The federal May Act of 1941 gave the Secretaries of War and the Navy power to create prostitution-free zones around military facilities. Military officials were authorized to "take such steps as they deem necessary" to shut down brothels. The threat of federal action spurred 700 municipalities to close their red-light districts by 1944. But along with the clampdown came a sharp increase in venereal disease, as prostitutes moved further into the shadows. This phenomenon, taken with the shocking rise of khaki-wacky young girls spreading venereal disease, led some health experts to call for supervised brothels for soldiers where prostitutes would be inspected regularly by licensed doctors. [6]

A federal report in July 1941 asserted that in Pendleton, "the police department exercises no control over gambling or prostitution. The police say that the 'weak-kneed judges' make the task more difficult."

Experts also called on courts to be more strict with "practiced offenders," since simply arresting prostitutes did not change their behavior. Federal officials cited a study in which 221 prostitutes in a large city were followed over a three year period. During that time, 150 of the 221 women or girls were arrested for prostitution related charges from one to ten times. One woman was arrested 92 times. Overall, the women were arrested 2,168 times during the three years but 1,986 of the arrests resulted in release or the payment of a small bond. Only 182 arrests led to convictions. Experts claimed that if sentences were long enough, rehabilitation programs could turn around the harmful behavior. However, they cautioned that "the habits of a hardened prostitute cannot be changed overnight." Blaming the courts could also be used to divert scrutiny from a lack of enforcement by police forces. For instance, a federal report in July 1941 asserted that in Pendleton, "the police department exercises no control over gambling or prostitution. The police say that the 'weak-kneed judges' make the task more difficult." [7]



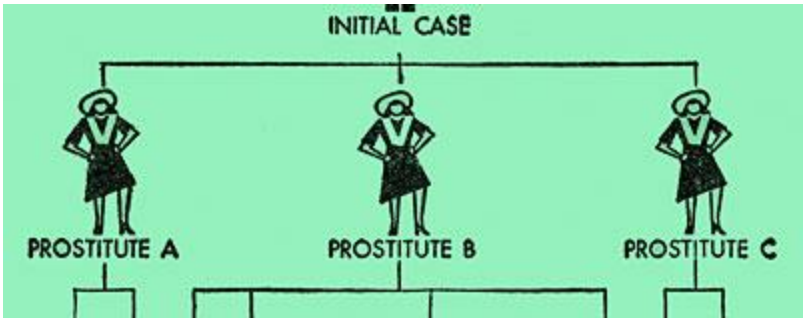
Statistics seemed to support the existence of the so-called revolving door for prostitutes. (Folder 14, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Prostitution in Oregon

Oregon cities varied in their experiences with prostitution and venereal disease. An early 1942 report on alleged houses of prostitution in Oregon showed some trouble spots. The problems were bound to grow worse as more servicemen were sent to training camps, swelling the ranks of "johns." Moreover, some of the reporting could have been tainted by denial or cover-ups on the part of local police, some of whom may have been paid to look the other way. Despite these caveats, Pendleton ranked high as a center for prostitution with 12 houses listed. An earlier report claimed:

> There are thirteen known houses of prostitution which are licensed by the city as rooming houses. There is no segregated district for prostitutes and there is no legal recognition of prostitution. These houses operate unofficially in Pendleton and are said to house twenty women. It is said there are not many prostitutes outside of recognized houses. [The] venereal disease problem is quite acute, [with] the greater part of infection said to come from infected prostitutes. [8]

Walter May, chairman of the Recreation Committee of the Oregon State Defense Council, which was charged with helping to reduce prostitution in Oregon, cited a confidential report on commercialized prostitution in Pendleton to support his March 1942 call for more investment in wholesome recreation: "Apparently all roads lead to Pendleton for those seeking recreation. Soldiers claim that the community lacks facilities which would counter the efforts of the prostitution underworld." [9]



Officials warned that a few prostitutes with venereal disease could wreak havoc on small communities. (Folder 14, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Other Oregon cities wrestled with prostitution and venereal disease problems. A report on Klamath Falls listed 7 houses alleged to be for prostitution, including the Iron Door with 4 prostitutes, the Palm with 3, Irene's with 4, and Blond Marie with 2. Astoria was said to have 6 or 7 houses while Medford had 4 to 6 alleged houses. The Albany chief of police took a pragmatic approach to the problem. He claimed there was only one house in his city, with 3 professional prostitutes. He reported that he had received no complaints about the house as a source of venereal disease, but just in case "a plan has been worked out between the Health Officer and the police department whereby any prostitutes given as the source of infection will be quarantined at the town jail while treatment is being given by the County Health Officer." [10]

The Portland "Situation"

Not surprisingly, Portland had the most prostitutes in the state, considering its large population and defense industries as well as nearby sizable military facilities housing thousands of servicemen. Portland served as a recreational magnet for troops in transit and servicemen on leave from military facilities in Oregon. An early 1942 report lists dozens of alleged prostitution houses in the downtown area. Officials traced numerous cases of venereal disease to many of these houses. For example, on Nov. 26, 1941 a serviceman who contracted syphilis reported contact with a prostitute at the "Green Hotel" while on Dec. 11, a man reported contact with a prostitute at the "West Hill Rooms," resulting in gonorrhea. Other manifestations of vice, such as pick-ups in bars, taverns, and dance halls or street walking by professional and semi-professional prostitutes, were too dispersed to document. [11]

According to *The Oregonian* newspaper, until 1941 commercialized prostitution was tolerated in Portland within a restricted district: "Women known to the police as professional prostitutes were required to submit regularly to inspection, either by a licensed physician of her own choice or by a

physician in the old city clinic." But Lieutenant General J.L. DeWitt, head of the Army's Western Defense Command, put pressure on Governor Sprague to clean up vice in Oregon. DeWitt wrote that "unless rigid control is exercised by the State and Municipal authorities, [it will] inevitably result in there being established in these areas vice resorts of all kinds designed to attract the patronage of military personnel." He also raised the specter of national security, saying "in addition to the usual impairment of military efficiency which the presence of such resorts create, there is the constant danger that these places may be employed as agents of subversive and disloyal elements in our midst." Governor Sprague sent letters passing along the warning to all towns with populations of 5,000 or more as well as smaller cities frequented by servicemen. Later, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, put pressure on Sprague and other governors, calling for the "closing [of] segregated districts and ending the farce of periodic examinations of prostitutes...." [12]



Prostitutes often moved to street corners or bars when prostitution houses closed. (Folder 14, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)



Federal officials pressured state and local governments to clamp down on prostitution. Many questioned the efforts of the Portland police and accused them of mounting only token raids. (Folder 14, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Portland Mayor Earl Riley acted to placate federal and state officials and local groups decrying the toleration of prostitution. In January 1942 he announced "all known houses of prostitution would be closed and that the police had been instructed not only to effect rigid closing but to arrest on sight any woman engaged in 'street walking.'" Portland Police Chief Harry Niles ordered the operators of 32 "known" houses of prostitution to "close indefinitely." He claimed "police will watch closely to prevent reopening of any of the known bawdy houses." [13]

But Portland's efforts at limiting prostitution and venereal disease were destined to drift over the war years, periodically causing political discomfort for the mayor. In March 1944 the military announced that servicemen were 6 times more likely to contract venereal disease in Portland than in Seattle. Mayor Riley was forced to admit "we have been wrong on this problem" as he promised to begin a campaign to "rid Portland of the venereal disease menace as nearly as possible." The effort included staffing a detention center in which women with venereal disease would be held from 30 days to 12 weeks, or until they were non-infectious. Meanwhile, an attorney for "Portland hotel men" said the hotels would help to suppress vice but that "servicemen often lied about the sources of their infection, blaming 'places' in an effort to protect a 'girl friend.'" [14]

Portland Mayor Earl Riley was forced to admit "we have been wrong on this problem" as he promised to begin a campaign to "rid Portland of the venereal disease menace as nearly as possible."

One year later the situation came to a head again as a citizens' committee, fanned by federal authorities, demanded action to suppress prostitution. On the heels of a scathing City Club of Portland report on the issue, Federal Security Agency anti-prostitution official John Sears turned up the heat on Mayor Riley, saying that police action should have been automatic. Instead, he claimed: "Each flurry of enforcement

you have had represents the results of pressure from the army, navy, or federal security agency." Sears claimed even casual visitors to the city have reported that "Portland is wide open." He said that one year after the mayor had assured the public he had shut the prostitution houses down, they were back in business and thriving despite "token" raids. Sears said federal authorities were clear about what was needed, but that:

> **"In return we have received only lip service and the superficial kind of co-operation that takes action only against those places that are pointed out by the federal authorities." [15]**

Sears went on to accuse city officials of giving a wink and a nod to a network of prostitution houses that were highly organized. An undercover investigator hired by the City Club went to 5 prostitution houses in Portland where he talked with the madames about the girls and prices. The next day he was met at the door of a prostitution house by a madame he had talked to the day before at another house. Being business oriented, she quickly informed him "that she had wasted an hour of her time talking to him then and this time he could not 'see any girls unless he put his money on the line.'" Sears noted that "the significant thing here is the evidence of organization--the fact that the girls are rotated among a chain of houses." He went on to charge that "it is well known that organized houses of prostitution cannot operate without the knowledge and tacit consent of the police department..." and he threatened that if city officials would not clean up the problem, the federal government would intervene using the May Act of 1941. [16]



Newspapers and civic groups periodically applied pressure on local governments to crack down on prostitution. (Folder 14, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Encouraged by the words of federal authorities, the anti-prostitution citizens' committee demanded that the city take four steps: that the prostitution houses be closed once and for all; that "clandestine" prostitution be controlled by better patrolling in bars, taverns, and other haunts of prostitutes; that only policemen who "themselves believe in the vigorous enforcement of all laws, and particularly those dealing with prostitution" be chosen for the mission; and that more police be added if their ranks were inadequate to complete the job. Despite the threats, demands, and promises of action, prostitution continued to pose social and health problems for the duration of the war and beyond in Portland, just as it did in other cities across the country. [17]

Related Documents

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(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151163). Folder 3, Box 30, Defense Council Records, OSA.

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"Alleged Houses of Prostitution in Portland, Oregon" Report, circa 1942 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11148354). Folder 5, Box 7, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

"**Cases of Venereal Disease Traced to Prostitution in Portland, Oregon July to December, 1941 (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151066)**"Report, Jan. 7, 1942. Folder 5, Box 7, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA.

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More to Life Than Wages and Patriotism: Recreation Programs

Blowing Off Steam Can be Good for the Cause

"Recreation is a hard-boiled necessity in these times, an investment in our Number One asset - human resources." This statement from the Federal Security Agency recognized the stress brought by war, even on the home front. Civilian defense industry workers toiled in high intensity, quota driven and sometimes dangerous settings; they frequently lived in overcrowded housing; and many commuted long distances to work extended schedules, often swing or graveyard shifts. On top of this, they were bombarded with pressure from the government, civic groups, and neighbors to volunteer as aircraft ground observers, war bond workers, or other worthy jobs. Many who failed to volunteer were labeled unpatriotic. On the military side, tens of thousands of men and women in the armed forces were either stationed in Oregon or passed through the state and needed to "blow off steam" on a regular basis. Moreover, officials were battling rising rates of what could be called the four horsemen of the home front: prostitution, venereal disease, gambling, and juvenile delinquency. In response, government agencies, along with other organizations, put together recreational offerings in an effort to keep morale high and hold "un-social" activities at bay. [1]

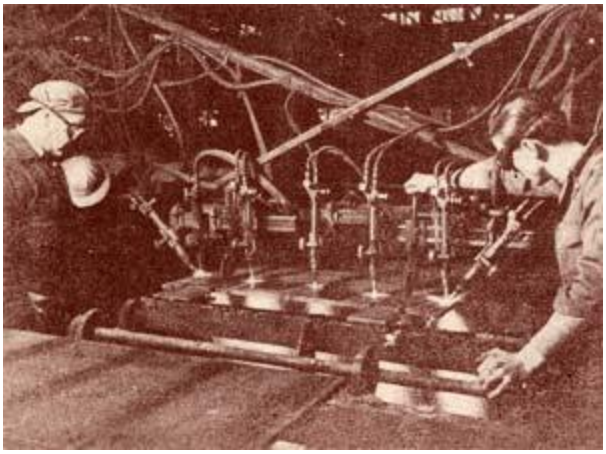


Getting enough recreation was as important as getting plenty of sleep and good food to maintain the energy needed to stay productive. **Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/4c13f8b1-2554-47e4-933f-52c97a40c55c)**

Problems in Home Front Life

Officials recognized the stress carried by many workers who were new to the highly mechanized factory settings prevalent in defense industries. Many employees at factories had migrated from the hard working but more organically paced life of the farm, to find themselves in the middle of a war production line: "machines whirring, spinning; electric hammers pounding; pulleys moving and giant cranes swinging; tools cutting, punching, polishing to the thousandth of an inch - life and death hanging upon the turn of a hand." Not surprisingly, many workers were "still shy of the monstrous machines, the roar of noise, the Vulcan fires of the furnace." [2]

Authorities also noted that life didn't stop at the plant gates. Instead, another type of stress dogged many people after they laid down their tools for the day and started their commute home. A large number of workers left their lifelong support networks, such as families, churches, and civic organizations, hundreds or thousands of miles away when they migrated to take defense jobs. Living in a strange city, not knowing the neighbors, dealing with shortages, and countless other problems led to excessive drinking, marital strain, and other manifestations of alienation. Workers needed more than wages and patriotism, as a Federal Security Agency publication stated: "They must have some chance to be human



These employees of a Portland area shipyard were part of a civilian army of workers. Many had difficulty adapting to the fast-paced mechanized world of defense industries. ("Record Breakers" Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation Promotional Booklet, Oregon State Library Holdings)

beings, have places to go in time off, to entertain and to be entertained, to dance or enjoy themselves according to their age and taste." Of course, those tastes could vary widely as in two examples: "Uncle Joe, 60, when he leaves the drill press, may like to sit in the shade of a tree with his pipe, and whittle. Jinny, his granddaughter, 20, will chose the hilarity of juke-box dancing after a day's riveting, and why not?" [3]

There were strong production oriented reasons for encouraging tired workers to join recreation programs. Injury and illness often followed tense and tired workers and the resulting statistics made a compelling case. One expert, Carl Brown, claimed in 1943 that "accidents and illnesses snatched 484,059,000 workdays away from the Nation's war-pressed industrial output in the year just ended." To make the numbers more understandable, he said the effect was "the same as though enemy bombers had knocked out for the entire year 1,861 industrial plants, each employing 1,000 men and women...." Officials noted that armies of millwrights and other maintenance workers toiled in factories to keep the machines running at peak production, but the "maintenance of the human machine is more likely to be neglected." [4]

No Fun in the Trailer Camps



Trailer parks near defense plants often lacked any recreation for children beyond playing in mudholes. (Image courtesy helloportsmouth.com)

Some kids living in the Portland area trailer camps associated with factory and defense industry workers had to fend for themselves when it came to recreation. The Multnomah County Advisory Committee on Child Care, Health and Welfare sent a small committee to survey four trailer camps in late 1943 and learned plenty.



Mothers who worked in factories had to come home to care for children, prepare meals, and do chores, thus adding to stress. (Box 5 of 28, Education Dept. Records, OSA)

Women suffered problems that added to their stress since many had "double jobs" and "it is hard to be both plane maker and home maker." Many women, as with men moving from farm life, were new to the strains and pressures of the factory. After long work shifts, women often went home to shop for food, prepare meals, clean the house, look after children, and perform other chores. Among the tasks, they had to navigate the byzantine world of ration coupons and price ceilings while trying to volunteer in some way for the war effort. The resulting stress was very damaging according to experts who noted that "statistics show that women are ill more frequently than men; by the very nature of their physique they are more easily tired." [5]

The Victory Camp on North Columbia had 75 children who luckily could play in a nearby park. But, recreation in the camp came up short: the previous summer at the camp "ping pong tables had been placed in the barn...[but] the tables had been broken and the barn had been difficult to heat."

The 125 children living up the road at the Meadowlark Camp were not as lucky since they had no park around: "One mother stated that children had to play in mudholes. Several boys said they played marbles but had nothing else to do. One of the boys stated that he belonged to a boy commando group but the group met so far away, he was the only boy in camp who went."

The committee asked three 11-year-old girls at the Portland Auto Camp on NE Union if they belonged to any clubs: "Their faces [lit] up on the mention of Girl Scouts and Campfire. They belonged to such groups in the middle West but had not known of such opportunities here." [18]

Mobilizing to Attack the Problems

Government and local communities mobilized to attack these problems by forming committees, recruiting volunteers, and developing plans. Many communities were hampered by the huge influx of workers overtaxing meager recreational facilities. In other places, recreational opportunities were limited to a few hours in the evening, a problem noted by officials: "The 9-to-5 work life is gone, three-shift schedules to which we have adapted demand three-shift community services." In Oregon the State Recreation Committee, a subset of the Oregon State Defense Council, coordinated and acted as liaison between federal agencies and county and local recreation committees. These entities showed incredible imagination and resourcefulness in tackling the need for recreation despite significant hurdles. Tire and gas rationing made car travel to recreational destinations problematic, as did the government frowning on recreational travelers clogging up rail coaches needed for the war effort. Moreover, a large number of materials needed for constructing recreational facilities were either impossible to obtain or in short supply. Instead of these, many recreation committees would have to rely on creativity and baling wire. [6]

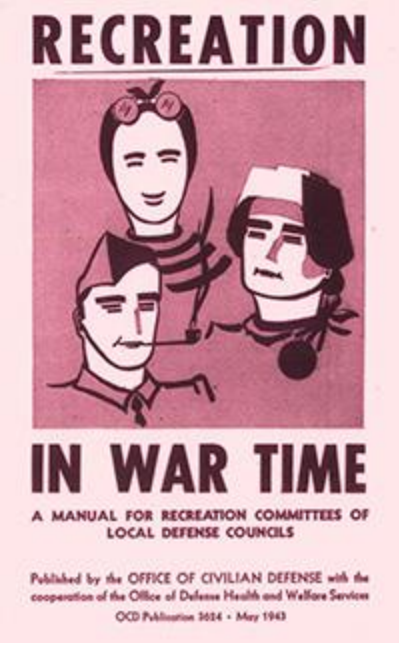
Officials were keen to survey the needs of a community so that efforts to usher limited resources could be most effective. For example, in 1944 a U.S. House committee

"If we let the recreation activities under State auspices

investigating congested areas issued a report on the Columbia River area that pointed out recreational deficiencies in Portland. The investigators, citing a "lack of recreation leadership," said that among other things Portland needed a downtown industrial recreation center, recreational equipment such as tennis shoes and basketballs, and gymnasiums and sport pavilions in the Guild's Lake and Vanport housing projects. They also recommended a "colored recreation center and theater in Albina." [7]

take on too much of the color of la-de-dah, such as some of the bright young men at Washington seem to have in mind, we could easily be criticized in the face of so serious a situation."

Once communities had completed surveys, identified needs, and developed program plans, they were able to tap grant money from the federal Lanham Act pot, although competition was stiff for any significant amount of funding. In fact, apart from possible grant money, some state officials had little time for federal government help. In 1942 Walter May, chairman of the State Recreation Committee, encouraged local recreation committees to develop their own plans since he had a dim view of the work on the federal level: "If we let the recreation activities under State auspices take on too much of the color of la-de-dah, such as some of the bright young men at Washington seem to have in mind, we could easily be criticized in the face of so serious a situation." [8]



The cover of a 1943 manual offering suggestions for creating recreation programs. (Folder 5, Box 31, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Volunteers were needed to make any community recreation program successful and officials suggested that planners cast a wide net. Professional people were needed. These included accountants to keep the books; doctors to give physicals related to athletic recreation; landscape gardeners to lay out and maintain playgrounds and outdoor party settings; teachers to train volunteers; and writers to publicize the effort through the press, radio, posters, and pamphlets. Business people could raise money, get advertising space, and serve as typists and stenographers. Athletes could organize games and help with the training, coaching, and refereeing related to sports. Artists were sought to teach classes in music, painting, sculpture, stage production and design, arts and crafts, dancing and photography. Farmers could pitch in with Grange and 4-H Club programs by teaching how to care for animals or cultivate gardens and by leading fishing and hunting trips as well as square dances. Officials didn't want to leave out "volunteers who are experienced in home management but have no special recreational skill...." They were invited to supervise children at play centers, plan recreation for "shut-ins, the aged and sick," and serve as hostess or chaperone at social functions. They could also help by "welcoming to the community such newcomers as service men and defense workers and their families, offering them hospitality in their homes, meals, etc." [9]

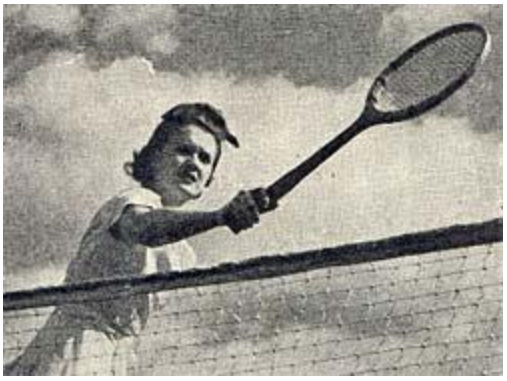
Local Recreation Efforts

The possibilities for recreational facilities and activities were equally encyclopedic as evidenced by the efforts of communities across Oregon. The Portland area, with by far the largest concentration of population and defense industries in the state, led the way. Reporting to the Portland mayor, the Parks Bureau director of recreation claimed that managing a large recreation program "is a little like playing

God; the director is dealing with the lives of men. Recreation is planned by hundreds, led by thousands, participated in by millions and directed by a few." He went on to speak about the "impressionistic canvas" of the recreational offerings:

> **"the flash of a batted ball, the splash of the swimmers, some figures that are children running in track meets, some sprawled and crumpled figure resting in the park, the lines of dancers, the theater goers, the music lovers in the open air." [10]**

Perhaps the recreation director could be forgiven for his indulgence in reporting on his program considering the staggering numbers of activities and participants described. The report claimed that from Dec. 1, 1943 to Aug. 31, 1944 "a total of 4,386,974 persons partook of recreational activities either as a participant or spectator." Of that total, about 1,500,000 participants divided their time between a number of activities including 92,045 men's basketball players and nearly 3,500 "Goldenball" players. Upcoming plans included "radio skits, comedies and farces and Saturday shows of every variety for the children" as well as "caravan troopers, the impromptu local talent shows; the string ensembles and dance bands." [11]



Tennis was one of many recreational pursuits promoted by civilian defense officials to help maintain healthy minds and bodies for the war effort. (Folder 2, Box 35, Defense Council, OSA)

The summer period of June 1 to August 31 drew nearly three million participants and spectators as the report detailed, including 7,804 participants in zoo trips. The Portland Circus brought in an audience of 12,500 while the Vanport Circus counted 5,000 people. The circus parade in downtown Portland had over 500 participants and 17,000 spectators. More than 400 performers in the "Hanzel & Grethel" pageant drew over 8,000 in the audience while "caravan shows" pulled in nearly 13,000 people and tennis court dances attracted almost 10,000 people. The Multnomah County Sheriff Band gave eight concerts totaling 360 performers and 5,650 in the audience. More than 33,000 people took in the "Fourth of July Physical Fitness demonstrations" while special dances and swimming parties put on by the Russian Merchant Marines tallied 1,100 people. Baseball and softball put up big numbers. The Portland Baseball Association included 26 adult teams and 32 junior teams that contributed to over 175,000 players and fans. The Portland Softball Association was even bigger. It included 42 industrial league teams with over 600 players. Kaiser shipyards fielded 24 teams with 360 players. All told, nearly 500,000 people were associated with the softball program. Over 61,000 players flocked to Portland's city-owned golf courses. Other programs pulled in smaller numbers but were entertaining nonetheless. The "Story Hour Lady" had 9,241 listeners over the summer while lawn bowlers numbered 542 and educational tours drew nearly 2,000. [12]

Other communities around the state developed programs on a smaller scale. Astoria volunteers "sponsored an entertainment in the form of a midget troupe of professional actors." Civilians were charged admission but servicemen got in free. A service club in Eugene formed a "gang buster"



State and local recreation committees focused on providing wholesome outlets for the servicemen at military facilities across Oregon. Shown above are barracks at Camp White near Medford in 1943. (Image courtesy Camp White Museum)

organization to program "wholesome" pursuits for the younger boys in an effort to reduce juvenile delinquency. The recreation committee in Bend asked the local school board to employ two physical education teachers on a year round basis to help develop and organize a civilian recreation program. And, Stanfield recreation officials targeted a trailer camp with 70 units as deserving of recreational help while Pendleton volunteers hoped to build an "outside roller rink." to entertain locals and servicemen. [13]

Recreation for Service Men and Women

Oregon towns and cities faced problems finding recreational outlets for men and women serving in the military who were stationed at various large and small facilities around the state. Hermiston had a large ordnance depot; the Corvallis area played host to Camp Adair; the Portland area provided recreational opportunities for various military facilities, including the Vancouver Barracks; Camp White was in the Medford area; Pendleton had an air base; Astoria had Fort Stevens and the Tongue Point Naval Air Base; other coastal communities played host to several Coast Guard operations and to the blimps at the Tillamook Naval Air Station. And several other Oregon communities had a military presence or impact of one sort or another, including Albany, Redmond, Salem, Bend, Madras, Klamath Falls, The Dalles and Ashland. While the federal government would chip in money, it expected local communities and organizations such as the United Service Organizations (USO) to pull the load of providing recreation to members of the armed forces. Once again, Lanham Act money played a big role in funding programs.

The State Recreation Committee had definite goals in relation to those in the armed services. Speaking on a radio program in 1942, one committee member described its aims:

> **"The State Recreation program contemplates nothing that will lend to 'soften' the men in the active fighting force. It will make it its business, however, to hold down to a minimum the activities of the vicious influences in the community. It will, give every assistance to local committees who want to provide something for the men in service to do besides walk the streets." [14]**

Portland's city life was a strong attraction to servicemen on leave and officials wanted to guide them away from the easy to find houses of prostitution and gambling and to more wholesome entertainment. Numerous centers, houses, clubs, and canteens, run by organizations such as the USO, Red Cross, Salvation Army, and others, fit the bill. For example, the George A. White Service Men's Center on 3rd Avenue offered free beds, showers, shaves, and snack bar food along with a library, music room, game room, daily dances, and even free legal advice. The YMCA-USO Center on 6th Avenue featured chapel singing, coffee and doughnuts, swimming, dancing, and services such as pressing, mending, shopping

and wrapping. The Jewish Community Center on 13th Avenue had swimming, basketball, weightlifting, boxing, steam rooms, and a lounge with a "junior hostess group" sponsoring parties on the weekends. The Chinese Service Center on 3rd Avenue had ping pong, games, a piano, and Chinese and English language newspapers and magazines. The Williams Avenue USO center offered showers, entertainment, food, and letter writing to black servicemen, which was fortunate because "public eating places for Negro workers and service men are extremely limited throughout the State" according to the State Recreation Committee. [15]

Hundreds of thousands of service men and women traveled through the state on their way to new assignments and recreation officials catered many programs for them. One offering was the Troops in Transit Lounge on the main floor of Portland's Union Station train depot. The room was outfitted with tables and benches, while "subsequent gifts of venetian blinds, modern lighting fixtures, leather chairs, and a phonograph have given the room a more inviting atmosphere. Flowers provide a bright and cheerful note." The center served all branches of the service and "included officers and enlisted men, both white and Negroes." The lounge saw significant growth during its first year beginning in 1942, climbing from 972 guests in its first six weeks to over 10,000 visitors in its last six weeks. This rise caused a corresponding need for more volunteers, who by 1943 numbered "7 day captains, 7 co-captains, 58 regular hostesses, and 40 substitute hostesses." [16]



The attractions of Portland's "big city" life drew servicemen seeking recreation. Many came from military facilities in the area such as the Vancouver Barracks while others were passing through on their way to assignment or furlough. Shown above is the corner of Front and Alder streets in 1941. (**Photo no. 1456, Highway Dept. Records, OSA (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/1768/rec/2)**)

Portland's Williams Avenue USO center offered showers, entertainment, food, and letter writing to black servicemen, which was fortunate because "public eating places for Negro workers and service men are extremely limited throughout the State."

Other Oregon communities offered recreational outlets as well. The recreation committee in Albany helped solve an overnight housing problem for servicemen by using facilities at the old Albany College buildings. Both the City of Corvallis and Oregon State College "sanctioned the use of their facilities for service men use." The local recreation committee also planned to build shelters on the highway at nearby Camp Adair and in Corvallis for use by servicemen waiting for the bus. Cannon Beach offered a "commercial skating rink" while Grants Pass operated a "hostess league which has organized girl hostesses who participate in dances at Camp White." Hermiston, which ballooned from a town of 700 to 11,000 in just a few months, had a significant USO presence. Independence volunteers put on "various parties during the week for soldier entertainment which includes games, cards and dances" along with "a fruit basket which is always full." Pendleton showed movies and put on dances. Moreover, "a Negro service men's Center was opened the

latter part of May [1943] and is operated by a representative of the U.S.O. Negro division." In Salem, 190 private homes opened their doors to help with an overnight housing problem for servicemen. Local officials also ran a "fine hostess league" that provided dance partners for events at Camp Adair and in Salem. [17] (**Listen to Jo Stafford sing "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JXxkkEkqH8)**)

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A Matter of Color: African Americans Face Discrimination

"While We Do Not Discriminate, We Do Segregate"

African Americans faced continuing discrimination and segregation during World War II. At the same time, a number of developments during the war served to quicken the pace of the struggle for equal rights. The massive migration of African Americans from the rural South to cities in the North and West brought new opportunities and challenges. Jobs in the military and defense industries brought expanded horizons and increased expectations. And, the hypocrisy of America fighting for freedom in other lands while denying it to minorities at home brought new legitimacy and resonance.

National Developments

African American civil rights groups and institutions grew in number and militancy during the war, determined to use the war effort to extract concessions and make gains for the movement. Many African American civil rights leaders vowed not to repeat what they saw as the mistake during World War I of putting aside their grievances for the duration of the war. One outgrowth of this strategy was the "Double V" [Victory] campaign, which aimed to fight racist fascism at home and abroad at the same time: "Defeat Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito," one newspaper exhorted, by "Abolishing Jim Crow." The campaign called on Blacks to loyally serve the nation while emphasizing the contradictions between America's professed values and its behavior with respect to racial discrimination. [1]

One African American leader, A. Phillip Randolph, used the threat of a large scale protest march on Washington to push President Roosevelt to issue Executive Order 8802 in 1941. The order declared that "there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in the

Fighting Jim Crow Racism



A Jim Crow illustration. (**Library of Congress image LC-DIG-ds-00886 (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ds.00886/)**)

Jim Crow was an exaggerated, highly stereotypical Black character performed by white entertainer Thomas Rice beginning in the 1830s. The actor darkened his face with burnt cork, wore a tattered plantation slave costume, and won nationwide fame performing in theaters. The portrayal reinforced views of Blacks as lazy, uneducated and thieving. The



A. Phillip Randolph, honored in a 1989 postage stamp, worked tirelessly during the war for civil rights. (Image courtesy alphabetilately.com)

defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin." Roosevelt also established the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) to receive and investigate related discrimination complaints. But the commission had no real enforcement power and was relegated to using publicity and moral persuasion to bring about change. Still, while progress came slowly, more and more African Americans found work in shipyards and factories during the war and the creation of FEPC set the first precedent of action by the federal government on behalf of Black rights since 1875. [2] (

Listen to Josh White sing "Defense Factory Blues" about discrimination in the defense factories (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEV_t53o8ZM))

persona became indentified with the segregation laws and customs that developed after the Civil War and lasted into the 1960s.

The Double V campaign during World War II decried American hypocrisy as it sought to fight racism at home and abroad. Campaign leaders wanted to defeat the Axis by "abolishing Jim Crow" laws that enforced segregation, thereby enhancing America's moral standing.

Other efforts were made to increase opportunity and reduce segregation in the military but key leaders such as General George C. Marshall feared desegregation would weaken morale while Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson simply considered African Americans to be inferior, writing in his diary: "Leadership is not embedded in the negro race yet." However, some gains were made with a 1941 policy that African American strength in the Army would reflect its percentage in the population (about 9%) and that African American combat and noncombat units would be formed in every branch of the service, including the formerly all-white Army Air Corps and Marines. Still, the units would remain segregated and Black servicemen suffered widespread discrimination throughout the war, often relegated to noncombat duties, subjected to racial quotas, and excluded from military career opportunities available to whites. [3] (

Listen to Josh White sing "Uncle Sam Says" about discrimination in the military (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRDAxnnHcCo))



Riots in Detroit in June 1943 killed 9 whites and 25 African Americans. This violence, along with riots in other cities, exposed the racial tension that developed as

By the summer of 1943, rising African American expectations triggered in part by relatively high paying defense jobs collided with growing resentment on the part of many working class whites to bring about the worst race riots in the country since the bloody aftermath of World War I. The riots hit communities such as Springfield, Massachusetts and El Paso, Texas, but the worst violence was in Detroit, Michigan. While the causes were many, much of the friction resulted from chronic overcrowding in housing, transportation, and recreation facilities. For example, most of the African Americans in Detroit were crowded into a 60-block slum, ironically called "Pleasant Valley," where sewage ran in the streets and residents seethed with frustration. Racial fistfights in June triggered

large numbers of Blacks moved from the rural South to urban centers. (Image courtesy The Detroit News)

36 hours of mayhem during which stores were looted and mobs attacked and counterattacked. By the time federal troops restored a shaky peace, nine whites and 25 African Americans were dead. The specter of race riots continued to worry city police forces across the country for the remainder of the war. [4]

Housing in the Portland Area

Oregon, in particular the Portland area, experienced many of the general demographic changes brought about by World War II. Nationally, shipyard and factory jobs drew hundreds of thousands of African Americans from the rural South to large cities across the country as industry leaders scrambled to fill war production orders. At the same time millions of men were leaving the labor force to enter the armed forces. The growth of the Black population in Portland echoed this trend, skyrocketing from under 2,000 before the war to over 22,000 in 1944. Combined with the concurrent rise in the number of working class whites in the area, the steep total population increase of about 160,000 led to inevitable overcrowding and friction. As a result, existing prejudices grew more pronounced as more African Americans looked for housing, jobs, and access to hotels, restaurants, and other services. [5]

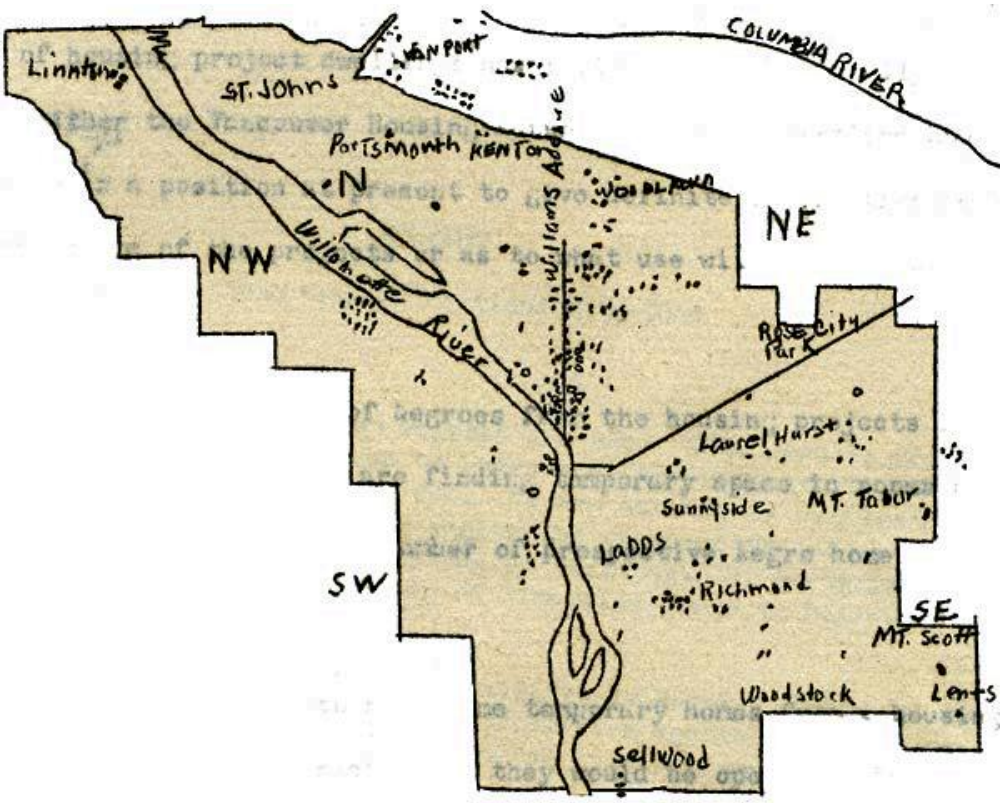


Aerial view of a portion of the massive Vanport housing project. Many housing projects in the Portland area segregated residents by race. **Image courtesy City of Portland Archives and Records Center (https://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/Record/1676451/)**

Housing was an ongoing problem for newly arriving African American migrants to the Portland area. Many found temporary shelter at local churches or in Black-owned businesses but eventually needed to find permanent housing. The completion of the massive Vanport housing project, together with other projects open to Blacks in Guild's Lake, Linnton, Fairview, and East Vanport, as well as several in the Vancouver area, helped ease the crunch. But discrimination came with the package as a Portland Council of Churches report noted in 1945:

> The practice of segregating the Negro is followed closely in all the projects. The Portland Housing Authority states that "while we do not discriminate, we do segregate." A Vancouver Housing Authority official stated that "because of the feeling among the white people against living where Negroes are indiscriminately housed, we had to segregate the whites to avoid trouble." [6]

African Americans seeking apartments away from the projects encountered similar attitudes. The Portland Council of Churches reported there were "few apartments in the city available to Negroes." Those few that were offered for rent to Blacks were small two to four room units owned by African Americans. Representatives of the Apartment House Owners' Association said they had no policy prohibiting renting apartments to Blacks, but claimed they had received no applications from Blacks and they "agreed that Negro occupants would not be welcomed unless in a segregated project." [7]



Dots on a map of Portland show the distribution of African American population and businesses. The majority of Blacks were restricted to the Williams Avenue corridor running north-south in the middle of the city. (Folder 3, Box 3, Gov. Snell Records, OSA)

Blacks attempting to buy housing in the Portland area ran into the same roadblocks in the form of policies and covenants found in other communities across the country. One report found "a general policy among mortgage firms that only 50% of the appraised value of a Negro's home shall be financed. Thus, with inflated real estate prices, the Negro finds it more difficult to buy a home." This policy combined with other collective actions to further limit where African Americans could purchase property. A 1945 Portland City Club report noted that interviews with representatives of the Portland Realty Board along with prominent area Realtors disclosed "a policy of restricted sale of property to Negroes. Such restriction confines the sale of any member of the Realty Board to Negroes to the segregated area (bounded by N.E. Holladay, North Russell, North Williams and the Willamette River), with limited sale in Woodlawn, Alberta, and Waverly Heights...." The policy was part of the local board's code of ethics which declared that a Realtor should never do anything, including selling to "any race..., whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values in that neighborhood." This policy applied even if "the owner instructs him to sell to anyone." [8]

"...a Realtor should never do anything, including selling to "any race..., whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values in that neighborhood."

Employment in the Portland Area

Discrimination in employment persisted through World War II for African Americans and other minorities. Prior to the war, many Blacks found jobs as hotel and train waiters and porters along with a handful of other unskilled positions. During the war, limits to the range of jobs open to African Americans remained in place. As one report noted, the position of the employer "in most instances has been guided by what he feels is an adverse attitude of his employees or the public who patronize his place of business." Thus, Blacks generally were excluded from jobs in cafes and restaurants. Some worked in hotels, such as the "full staff of Negro bus boys" that one hotel had recently hired in 1945. But many Portland hotels used more workers of Filipino descent than Blacks. Department stores resisted hiring

African American employees in jobs other than as maids and janitors, citing the general feeling that "the hiring of qualified Negroes in jobs other than of a service nature would not meet the approval of the public." White employees also provided resistance as a report noted:

> **"One department store employing Negro elevator operators recently dismissed these workers and hired white girls. There was no dissatisfaction with the service of the Negro girls. The general attitude of the employer...is that the white employees will refuse to work with Negro help." [9]**

During the war a large number of the African Americans in Portland held jobs in shipyards, factories, and construction sites, often working the graveyard or night shift. Unions, which played a big role in employment on these job sites, had a mixed record of discrimination. A 1945 survey of Portland labor unions examined policies related to admitting Black members. Of the 14 unions contacted, eight admitted African Americans as full members. Six unions excluded Blacks although two of these had "Negro auxiliary unions." For example, the Building Worker's Union, Local 296 had 2,000 Black members out of about 5,500 total members. According to the survey, "it is claimed that there are no interracial problems in the union, and it was stated that some of the best workers are Negroes. No educational program was felt necessary."

Likewise, the Electrical Worker's Union had nearly 1,000 Black members out of a total of 8,000. The union representative stated that "within the union, everyone has equal rights." He did note that several years earlier there were one or two instances in which white workers refused to work with African American members. In these cases, the Black members were kept on the job and the white workers "went to another job or quit the union." The Carpenters' Local 583 spokesman said that union cards were issued to Black members in "the regular manner" but voiced the common observation that "their experience has been that frequently after they have sent a Negro out to work, the contractor soon sends him off the job." [10]



An African American welder works on a liberty ship. Blacks suffered discrimination by many labor unions during the war. **Library of Congress, image no. fsa 8b04228 (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2017693754/)**

Several unions excluded African American members. The local International Woodworkers of America kept them out despite the international union's policy of non-discrimination. A union local spokesman said Blacks were "kept out by the prejudices of the men who refuse to work with them." The Laundry Workers' Union 107 held a similarly sour view on admitting Blacks as members, saying that "Negro workers had been tried, but other members demanded segregation. As no facilities for segregation were available, they were let out." The union representative went on to say that "the colored workers were not interested in union activities, in improving working conditions, and their work was not up to standard." The local Boilermakers' Union had no Black members but an auxiliary lodge was set up in Vancouver. Their representative gave several comments that the survey report summarized:

> The Negroes are not excluded because of "maliciousness" or prejudice on the part of the Whites, but because there is less trouble and things run more smoothly when they are separate. The Negroes do not work as well or accomplish as much under Negro foremen or bosses as they do under White bosses. You can deal easily with the educated or talented Negro, but can't get anywhere with the mass of uneducated ones. [11]

Other Discrimination in the Portland Area



African Americans seeking to eat in Portland restaurants were sometimes met by signs telling them they were not welcome. (Image courtesy Library of Congress)

Racial discrimination showed up in other aspects of life in the Portland area, but results were not consistent, with some institutions relatively free of overt measures. For example, two separate reports on race relations in the Portland area in 1945 concurred that public schools "drew no barriers on the basis of race." One report stated that "in the high schools in the city, you will find mixed youth working together more or less successfully." The report also noted that there were no restrictions on extra-curricular activities and high school clubs. Another report stated most colleges and universities accepted Blacks without discrimination, although a few imposed housing restrictions. Most hospitals got good grades as well, albeit with some caveats. For example, the Vanport Hospital stood out for segregating patients and several local hospitals limited nurses' training for African Americans. County health institutions treated all patients equally. Meanwhile, convalescent homes practiced almost complete segregation. In fact, only two would grudgingly admit Blacks, which caused "an acute problem with aged and infirm Negroes." [12]

Churches received mixed reviews in the survey of racial discrimination. Some of the problem may have come down to the subtleties between theoretical statements and actual behaviors when it came time to welcome a Black family over the threshold of the church. The survey noted that "the announced policy of churches of all faiths and denominations in Portland permits Negro worship" but blamed church governing boards for any opposition to African American membership. Some of these leaders voiced views such as "'Christian worship should be segregated. God intended it so. It is expedient since Negroes feel more at ease in their own presence. God has cast the color line, and expects it to be respected." Yet other church leaders expressed very different attitudes: "Segregation is not the answer. All should work together. Segregation, prejudice, is a refraction on the intelligence of people." According to one report, Portland had about six churches with multi-racial membership. [13]

Restaurants and hotels generally were singled out for their poor record on racial issues. According to reports, "a few of the higher class restaurants and cafes refuse service to Negroes while a much higher percentage of the smaller restaurants and cafes refuse service." Many of the smaller lunchrooms and restaurants, especially in the areas of Portland frequented by "working men" displayed signs reading "'White Trade Only.'" One report noted that "visiting race relations authorities have pointed out that Portland is the only city on the [West] Coast where such signs are displayed." Most restaurants wouldn't

"specifically ask Negroes to leave or otherwise draw public attention to this policy, but such instances have occurred." Some Black diners experienced discrimination by other minorities. According to *The Oregonian* newspaper, one African American went into a Chinese restaurant in 1945 where a "Chinese girl" called his attention to a sign reading "We cater to whites only." The diner promptly inquired: "How the hell did you get in here?" As a further variation of practice, some restaurants would serve African Americans only if they were with white diners. [14]
Blacks suffered similar indignities in Portland hotels where only one was known to admit Blacks without restrictions. A report added that "one other hotel will accept noted Negro guests, although it has been reported that this hotel restricts the hotel privileges of the Negro guest. Other hotels generally refuse to admit Negro guests under any circumstances." On a more positive note, with one exception, theaters and concert halls did not discriminate. The exception was one theater that was "located on the fringe of the largest Negro neighborhood and follows a policy of requiring Negroes to sit in the balcony." [15]



Churches received mixed reviews in a 1945 survey of racial discrimination. Shown above is the the Congregational Church on the South Park Blocks in downtown Portland. The church was known for its progressive views on racial issues. (Photo no. 3213, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

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State Auditors Go to War: Letters from Servicemen

Newsletters Feed Coworkers Hungry for Information

Cards and letters to and from relatives, neighbors and workmates provided Americans in the armed forces with a vital morale boost while giving those at home a valued insight into military life, travels and adventures during World War II. Newspapers, magazines, radio broadcasts and movie newsreels contributed to the understanding of events, but they couldn't offer the same perspective as a handwritten letter from a husband, son, or trusted friend. Combined, the two types of information gave those on the home front a deeper understanding of the war. And to the homesick Americans scattered around the globe, news about the neighborhood, church activities, or office gossip was as good as gold.



Bill DeCew sent this heroic Christmas card from Paris to the Audits Division in 1944. (Bill DeCew Letters, Audit Division Records, OSA)

An Office Information Hub



Letters from coworkers stationed around the world flowed into the Audits Division office during the war. (R.C. Irwin Letters, Audit Division Records, OSA)

Numerous informal methods developed to spread news about loved ones and friends serving in the military. Letters were often read aloud at gatherings or passed on from one neighbor or relative to the next. Simple newsletters were popular too, frequently based on local connections such as labor unions, churches, fraternity houses, or offices. The State Audits Division of the Oregon Secretary of State's Office distributed a newsletter titled C.P.A. News, puckishly subtitled "Certified Partly Accurate." Over the course of the war, the newsletter became the authoritative clearinghouse for information about the two dozen or so Audits Division employees serving in the armed forces. Members of the office's "stenographic force" transcribed letters from coworkers in the military to produce the newsletter, which was distributed to the office, family members and others. The keenest readers of the newsletters were those coworkers serving in the armed forces. Their letters

nearly always made mention of their great joy in receiving the newsletter and learning where their coworkers were stationed and what they were doing. A missed issue was often the cause of considerable disappointment. The letters and subsequent newsletters covered a range of topics but did not include news about troop movements, specific locations, or other information subject to censorship.

Life in the Military

The correspondents rarely failed to mention various aspects of life in the military. For example, Don Griffith, a newly minted Army private based at Camp Barkeley in West Texas, described his early experiences: "The training is rugged and thorough. By that I mean, the marches are long, the sand burrs and cacti sharp, and the full pack plenty heavy." Griffith also received an introduction to the language differences between Oregon and Texas: "Most of the officers speak little english but they speak profanity with marvelous fluency and a southern drawl. This means of expression is a little hard to understand at first, but after a couple of private sessions (with one of these officers) a fellow soon understands what is wanted." [1]



Navy Lieutenant Theodore Thompsen relaxes shipboard somewhere in the South Pacific. (Scrapbook, Audit Division Records, OSA)



Army Private Jim Jefferson stands ready to fight on an island in the South Pacific. (Scrapbook, Audit Division Records, OSA)

That feeling of not understanding what was happening, why a task was being done, or where a person would be assigned the next became a regular companion for many correspondents. Men would sometimes wait weeks for assignments. Doug DeCew joined the famed "Seabees" Navy construction battalions and quickly found himself bunking with 1,500 others awaiting assignment. He complained that "they keep us busy from 5: AM to dinner time about 6: PM every day on the fine wood pile, hauling logs out of the woods, general clean up jobs, and various other work details. They seem to have little trouble finding work to do." A relative in the Army, Bill DeCew, was similarly in the dark about his fate: "Have no idea where we're headed but am sure it won't be England. My guess is that we'll end up in Burma." He was soon assigned to England. The guessing game only seemed to intensify at the end of the war when the men were extremely anxious to return to their homes and families. Laments about not having the needed amount of service points to qualify for a discharge peppered their letters along with rumors about possible changes in the number of points required. [2]

Few men complained about the food, although their aversion to KP or kitchen patrol duty was clear, with several reveling in assignments that got them out of the hated duty. The meals varied greatly depending on where the person was stationed. Those serving at bases in the United States usually got standard meat and potatoes fare, and plenty of it, even if the quality was sometimes suspect. Others made do with what was

Fighting the "Battle of Barkeley"

Don Griffith had his hands full helping to run one of the Army officer mess halls at Camp Barkeley, Texas. According to Griffith, "'Fighting the Battle of Barkeley' is neither exciting nor dangerous; never the less, around the officers' mess (we have three of them) there is never a dull moment." Griffith was in charge of making the menu, which apparently created a constant challenge: "We serve boiled potatoes every day of the month; which in itself is nothing unusual but what taxes a person's ingenuity is thinking up new names for things so as to

available. For instance, Private Jim Jefferson, based on an island somewhere in the South Pacific, made the best of it, saying that "things aren't too bad. We get a ration of beer (1 case) and coke (8 bottles) each month and we have ice cream about once a week. When we are lucky enough to have fresh eggs the boys stand in the chow line without a complaint." Meanwhile, Navy Ensign Wilson Siegmund couldn't complain about his assignment in Australia. He was lucky enough to be stationed in a "large and quite fashionable hotel with breakfast in bed, if desired (an old Australian custom)." As an ensign, Siegmund also had access to the officers mess, where he noted that the "food is very good, quite like the food in the states and not the steaks and fried potatoes three times per day as is the custom here. Plenty of meat, potatoes, some vegetables, ice cream occasionally." [3]

Observations of Other Places

Most correspondents enjoyed describing the far off places they visited during their service and sending post cards as illustrations. Bill DeCew spent a couple of glorious days in Paris in November, 1944, not long after its liberation from the grip of Nazi occupation. He marveled at the sights, saying that "you can believe everything you've read about that city for it's all true. I went to operas, concerts, stage shows, the French Embassy, etc. Took a trip along the Siene [Seine River]. And spent one night at Le Lido, the night spot. It was really something. They had a swell floor show...the girls had beautiful costumes, those that wore them. Most of them didn't even wear gloves." [4]

Private C.E. Ruddell was so impressed with San Francisco, a key gateway for servicemen shipping out to Pacific Ocean assignments, that he recommended it to a friend back at the Audits Division office. Complimenting the "many places of amusement for service men," Ruddell singled out one in particular: "The San Francisco Stage Door Canteen is probably the best as they get the Lion's share of the business. The Canteen has all the leading lights of Radio Stage and Screen that come to town. Saw Gertrude Lawrence there the other night and many others have been there which I have missed seeing." He jokingly gave advice to a young woman who presumably worked as a stenographer in the Audits Division office: "You might pass along to Lucille that this might be the spot for her [to] spend her vacation. The town is full of strapping young innocent appearing sailor boys who seem to have a decided weakness for the buxom type of gal and [I] feel sure Lucille as I remember her could easily qualify. Just passing this information along for her consideration if she is still on the man hunt." [5]

camouflage the menu. If this is done in a good manner the officers do not know what they are getting until they see the plates."

Griffith described one environmental challenge of his job: "If you have ever been through West Texas you know how dusty it really remains here during the four seasons. The red dust and sand drifts in through the windows, floor, and ceiling and sifts over the tables and dishes. Following one of the sudden blows we always have an inspection. They always come in the same order: sand-storm--inspction [sic], sand-storm--inspection, etc. We are getting so that when a sandstorm hits we stand at the head of the tables at rigid attention-- we know what is coming and want to get it over with. The psychologists have a name for this, conditioned reflex or something similar." [17]



Don Griffith had to deal with "messes" for a living during the war. (Scrapbook, Audit Division Records, OSA)



Navy Ensign Wilson Siegmund had a nice setup while stationed in Australia. (Scrapbook, Audit Division Records, OSA)

Others were less impressed with what they saw during their travels. Jim Jefferson, after stints on Guadalcanal and New Caledonia, among other places in the South Pacific, saw little to recommend the region. In a letter to the Audits Division office, he admitted he had no excuse for not writing sooner, "except that I didn't have much to write about. One day is much like another, - heat and rain, rain and heat. I tell you, these south sea islands have none of the glamour given them by the movies and the nearest thing to Dorothy Lamour I have seen were a few very 'sun burned' females with rings through their noses." Jefferson continued with complaints about the weather: "After being on Guadalcanal I can appreciate what they mean by a sea of mud. When it rains there the mud is knee deep and it rains most of the time. [6]



Wilson Siegmund sent his coworkers at the Audits Division this souvenir Japanese occupation money from the Philippines. (Wilson Siegmund Letters, Audit Division Records, OSA)

Sidney Hoffman, a captain in the Army, offered a number of choice words in November 1943 about his assignment in another rainy place: "Somewhere in England":

Hello Gang:...

But to pass on to England itself. Over here they emphasize “tradition” but my reaction to a lot of it is “out of date”. Can you imagine meat laid out on a table in the open where dust & flies can get to it? Or warm beer? Or charging more for the seats in the cinema that are farthest from the screen? Or roads & streets that wind around & over the terrain? Or all the houses behind hedges or brick walls? Or the girls riding bicycles with their legs bare and smoking cigarettes? Or two-tone hair jobs (part dark and part bleached)? Or driving on the left side of the road? Or trains with the aisle on one side with compartments that you step into directly from the platform? Or calling a drug store the “chemists” or a telephone booth a “kiosk”? Or calling a flashlight a “torch”?

Well all that in brief is England. I could go on for hours. I really believe it is beautiful here – I have never seen greener grass with nearly all the land in cultivation. At the other place I stayed in a British home or “billet” as the Army calls it. Each morning I would be awakened with a cup of tea and a biscuit (cookie to you) and a pitcher of hot water to shave with. The British are always eating. They have tea before breakfast, then breakfast, then tea at ten, then lunch, then tea at four then dinner, then tea before retiring at



Army Captain Sidney Hoffman had plenty of observations about English ways. (Scrapbook, Audit Division Records, OSA)

nite. You can sure get “teaed up” over here and I don’t intend to pun as liquor is as scarce as “C” coupons in the states. I believe Scotch is only about 50 proof and the beers are all around 2%. But try & find Scotch! Of course, Bourbon, my favorite, is unheard of. The bars and cocktail rooms rack up [close] about 9:30 pm (2130 hours in the Army) so you have to stumble your way home in the total darkness with the help of a dimmed torch (the “stumbling” being do [due] to the terrain and not your condition).

Cherio, Sid [7]
(View entire letter)

Despite mixed reviews of the correspondents, most were excited about their experiences, especially the occasional brushes with celebrities. Clive Courter was in an unlikely spot to see a movie star since he was stationed at Fort Riley right in the middle of Kansas, an area not known for glamour sightings. Yet he relayed to his fellow auditors that "you might be interested to know that Gene Tierney, movie star, is here visiting her husband Count 'something' [fashion designer Oleg Cassini] who is a 2nd Lt. [Lieutenant]. Gene stays close to Whiteside hospital as she is expecting." While on the subject of beautiful women, Courter couldn't resist getting in a dig at the Women's Army Corps (WACS), an Army female auxiliary that suffered considerable sexist ridicule during the war: "We also have scads of beautiful (?) WACS here and one verse of a song we sing goes--The WACS that we have here, Are really very fine, They say they are twenty, But look forty-nine."[8]

"The WACS that we have here,

Are really very fine,

They say they are twenty,

But look forty-nine."



Clive Courter saw celebrities while stationed in Kansas. (Scrapbook, Audit Division Records, OSA)

Courter gleefully conveyed there were other verses that were "not exactly good material for a letter." Jim Jefferson also focused on the women while appreciating blockbuster USO shows where he was stationed in the South Pacific: "We have had several good USO shows here during the last month. The most important were the Bob Hope and the Jack Benny shows. They both had some gals with them which are the most appreciated over here. Jack Benny and his crowd, Carol Landis, Martha Tilton, and Larry Adlar [Adler] the harmonica king, had lunch in the enlisted men's mess hall on noon and almost caused a stampede."[9] (**Listen to part of a Bob Hope show from the South Pacific (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2CD2MXSTTU)**)

Into the Line of Fire

The men from the Audits Division performed a wide range of duties around the world. A few moved directly into audit work with the military and described some of the differences in practices compared to their old office. One started in the artillery but after a physical found he had tumors he was assigned as an auditor. One was a combat engineer. Most served in the Army, several were in the Navy, but none

appeared to be in the Marines. Their ranks ranged from lieutenant colonel to buck private. A number of the men never left the states, even if they were moved around the country extensively. Several went to Europe where one was part of the D-Day invasion. Several went to the South Pacific, Philippines, and eventually Japan. At least one went to Alaska and one served in China. Apparently, none of the correspondents was seriously injured or killed during the war.[10]

One man, Bill DeCew, had his share of adventures and harrowing experiences during his service in the Army Air Corps. After entering the Army in 1942, he trained to become a flight engineer, which he enjoyed, but he wistfully revealed his real dream: "Only wish I was a few years younger so I could be a pilot." While anxious to get into action, he spent 1943 and the first part of 1944 assigned to bases, mostly in the southeast United States. His job was to train the student engineers preparing for duty on bombers. DeCew described his work in a letter: "When a new class comes in, two student engineers are assigned to me. I fly with them each day, explaining to them the hydraulic system, electrical system and engines. They are shown what to do in case of hydraulic failure, generator trouble, run-away propeller, etc."[11]



Sergeant Bill DeCew (3rd from right) stands with his flight crew by their bomber. (Scrapbook, Audit Division Records, OSA)

His job in training was dangerous since he had "sweated out a lot of take-offs and landings with student pilots but all have gotten me back safely. I've been in one crash landing (the plane was finally scrapped) but everyone got out safely. There have been a good many fellows killed here but so far our squadron has had only one casualty." Perhaps in recognition of the dangers, his normal work day was short, at least most of the time: "They did increase my working day from four to eight hours a day and that didn't make me a bit happy. It is rumored around here that we'll go back to four hours a day next week. If that's not true I'm going to put in for a trip to Lake Lure for a rest cure. I don't mind the hours so much but it increases the take-offs and landings that I have to sweat out each day. Some of them are pretty damn rough." Apparently, he and his friends adapted to the stress of the job and heat of the Southeast, as he wrote: "We sit around in the evening drinking Tom Collins and that helps a little."[12]

By fall 1944 DeCew got his wish to get into the thick of the war, joining the waves of bombers flying day and night missions over Germany. An October 1944 letter to his workmates in Salem described the dangerous work:

> Hello Everyone:
>
> Not much to write about from France tonite. The missions are coming in pretty regular for me now. I don't suppose I'll ever be very much at ease while on one but it's a wonderful feeling when you get back on the ground and know that you dropped a good load on the Jerry's. That feeling is extremely different to the one you experience while over the target. When the flak [bursting shells fired from antiaircraft guns] starts popping all around you and so close that you can smell the powder - well, I guess you

just pray a little harder.

It's sure hell to watch a ship [another bomber in the formation] blow up right next to you. You're scared, mad, praying and cussing. Then you get out of the flak and start home. It's a great feeling. When you reach the field, everyone is out to meet you. The Chaplan [sic] is at the end of the runway standing on top of his jeep waving to you; the mechanics greet you as soon as you taxi up to the hardstand and stop. There is no scent of pretence [sic] in their 'sweating us out'.

Best Regards, Bill[13]



After a number of dangerous bombing runs over Germany, Bill DeCew was "reeling" from the flak and crackups. He was later shot down and became a POW. (Scrapbook, Audit Division Records, OSA)

DeCew's attitude about his dangerous job seemed to change over a period of about two months in late 1944 and early 1945. He noted in a Dec. 4, 1944 letter that he always felt "pretty bad when they come around to wake the crews and [I] find that our crew isn't flying, yet when we do fly I start shaking the moment I crawl into the plane. Guess I'm hard to please but I still like to fly even if it does scare me." By the time he wrote a letter on Jan. 26, 1945 there was no doubt about his wishes: "Now [I have] definitely changed my mind about flying. As soon as I complete this tour I'm going to stay on the ground. Between the flak and the crackups I've been in it's really got me reeling. Been lucky so far. Hope my luck continues."[14]

But his luck didn't hold. Just over a month after writing about his apprehensions, DeCew's plane was shot down over Germany. There was no word on his fate for about two months. Then, four days after Germany surrendered, DeCew's wife got a letter from the government telling her his plane had been shot down over Griessen, Germany and that "the last anyone saw of the plane it was still under control." Mrs. DeCew relayed that "I also received a letter from one of the Mothers of the crew and someone had written her that they had seen some chutes leave the plane before it dove into the clouds but whose they were or what happened they do not know. No one they say saw the plane crash."[15]

Some time later, probably late May, Mrs. DeCew came by the Audits Division office with the good news that her husband had been found in a cellar in Germany and was safe. A few days later, they received a V-Mail letter that DeCew had sent from Germany on May 4, 1945 saying he was anxious to catch up with the CPA newsletters he had missed:

Hello Everyone:

They knocked me down but not out. A ME 109 [German war plane] got us March 2nd causing me to leave the plane for the ground by way of a parachute. Been a POW [prisoner of war] from that time until just a few days ago when they liberated us. Has been rough at times but guess the experience was worth it. Although still in Germany, I will soon be on my way to the states and then home. Will no doubt be able to stop in Salem.

> Sure could use a few copies of the [CPA] News. Until the army came in we've had nothing to read. Hope the news is all good from the other fellows.
>
> Best Regards to all, Bill[16]

Notes

Letter from Don Griffith to Audits Division Employees, Oct. 4, 1943. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Doug DeCew to Audits Division Employees, Nov. 22, 1943. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA; Letter from Bill DeCew to Audits Division Employees, June 6, 1944. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Jim Jefferson to Audits Division Employees, Sept. 25, 1944. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA; Letter from Wilson Siegmund to Audits Division Employees, Sept. 16, 1943. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Bill DeCew to Audits Division Employees, Nov. 4, 1944. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from C.E. Ruddell to Audits Division Employees, June 9, 1943. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Jim Jefferson to Audits Division Employees, July 26, 1944. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Sidney Hoffman to Audits Division Employees, Nov. 7, 1943. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Clive Courter to Audits Division Employees, Sept. 27, 1943. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Ibid., Letter from Jim Jefferson to Audits Division Employees, Aug. 24, 1944. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Various Letters From Coworkers in the Military to Audits Division Employees, 1943-1946. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Bill DeCew to Audits Division Employees, June 19, 1943. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Ibid., Letter from Bill DeCew to Audits Division Employees, Nov. 1943. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Bill DeCew to Audits Division Employees, Oct. 14, 1944. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Bill DeCew to Audits Division Employees, Dec. 4, 1944. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA; Letter from Bill DeCew to Audits Division Employees, Jan. 26, 1945. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Thirza DeCew to Mr. Starr, Audits Division Supervisor, May 12, 1945. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

"C.P.A. News," Volume 3, Number 9 and 10, May and June, 1945. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

Letter from Don Griffith to Audits Division Employees, Dec. 23, 1944. World War II Correspondence, Audits Division Records, OSA.

State Auditors Go to War: Letter From Sidney Hoffman

The following is a letter from Sidney Hoffman "somewhere in England" to his coworkers at the State Audits Division in Salem:

Page 1

(Please excuse delay)
(Mailed 11 Nov 1943)
7 November 1943
Somewhere in England

Hello Gang:
It's been a long long time since I've written and "a lot of water has passed over the dam" and in this case a lot of water passed under the ship that brought me to my outfit here. I'll try and review some of the events that have transpired to bring you up to date as far as I'm concerned.

We [boarded] the train at Ayer, Mass. In August and from then on I've been terribly busy. We went to a staging area in New Jersey for a short period. While there I managed to get into New York City fine time to see the sights. I took in Radio City Music Hall which the word "tremendous" immediately comes to my mind; the Empire State Building; and Leon & Eddy's and Ubangi night clubs – at the latter Joe Lewis sat about three feet away. During the day time it was rush rush rush getting ready to leave. And then suddenly the big day came to move to the Port of Embarkation. We loaded our stuff on our backs & hiked to the train. You should have seen us. Just to give you an idea, I'll enumerate a few of the things I had on & carried: wool uniform, field jacket, field coat, pistol belt with accessories, gas mask, helmet & [lier?], musette bag full of personal articles & raincoat, blanket roll, brief case, and the heaviest article of all my val-pack. I imagine all those items would weigh over a 100 pounds. I managed but the perspiration rolled off in torrents. After the train ride we had another short hike to the boat, a massive grey object. Before loading we consumed coffee and doughnuts furnished by the Red Cross. The coffee had cream in it but it tasted like a beverage "fit for kings." On only one other occasion have I enjoyed coffee so much and that story comes a little later on (the Red Cross involved again). Well we got on board OK and to me it was not exciting at all. Walking up the gang plank I thot to myself "You should be excited as this is the real stuff" but I wasn't phased. It just seemed that the inclined gangplank was just another obstacle to overcome. I guess I'll reserve the "excited stuff" until I go down the gangplank on the return trip.

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The trip across the Atlantic cannot be told much. We had lots of work to do. I did learn one thing though. The maps of the world don't do the amount of water we saw justice. We arrived on this side all safe & sound and loaded our backs again and took a short hike to the British train. After unloading in the train the American Red Cross came by with coffee, candy, gum & cigarettes. And this canteen cupful of coffee was delicious! I should spell delicious with capital letters.

After a long train ride we arrived at our first station over here. At this place we went through a short training period in English currency and how a finance office operates in the ETO (European Theater of Operations). I saw several people there whom I knew in the States. Then we were ordered to this place to open up our own office which we did on Lincoln's birthday. We have an excellent office but it took a tremendous amount of work to get it straightened up & cleaned out and organized. I'll still have a few kinks to straighten out in procedures but in the main we are functioning smoothly. My money account is kept in the local branch of a bank located in London. Believe me, this is the life – spending someone else's money. My only hope is that Uncle Sam doesn't kick back any vouchers on me.

Our office is located a few blocks from the center of a fair sized city – somewhat larger than Salem – and in a very beautiful section of England. We are near enough to seaside resort towns to get there on days off – if there were any – so far I've had one day off since August but I have hopes – you'd think the boss could arrange to let himself off, wouldn't you? But you don't know the Army. Believe it or not but we have had five inspections since arriving here with another one coming up in a few days. I've done very well with the inspections so far getting "Excellent" on all but one and that one was "Superior"!

But to pass on to England itself. Over here they emphasize "tradition" but my reaction to a lot of it is "out of date". Can you imagine meat laid out on a table in the open where dust & flies can get to it? Or warm beer? Or charging more for the seats in the cinema that are farthest from the screen? Or roads & streets that wind around & over the terrain? Or all the houses behind hedges or brick walls? Or the girls riding bicycles with their legs bare and

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smoking cigarettes? Or two-tone hair jobs (part dark and part bleached)? Or driving on the left side of the road? Or trains with the aisle on one side with compartments that you step into directly from the platform? Or calling a drug store the "chemists" or a telephone booth a "kiosk"? Or calling a flashlight a "torch"? Well all that in brief is England. I could go on for hours. I really believe it is beautiful here – I have never seen greener grass with nearly all the land in cultivation. At the other place I stayed in a British home or "billet" as the Army calls it. Each morning I would be awakened with a cup of tea and a biscuit (cookie to you) and a pitcher of hot water to shave with. The British are always eating. They have tea before breakfast, then breakfast, then tea at

ten, then lunch, then tea at four then dinner, then tea before retiring at nite. You can sure get "teaed up" over here and I don't intend to pun as liquor is a scarce as "C" coupons in the states. I believe Scotch is only about 50 proof and the beers are all around 2%. But try & find Scotch! Of course, Bourbon, my favorite, is unheard of. The bars and cocktail rooms rack up about 9:30 pm (2130 hours in the Army) so you have to stumble your way home in the total darkness with the help of a dimmed torch (the "stumbling" being do to the terrain and not your condition). But I like it. I thoroly enjoy my work and what recreation we have. I wouldn't trade this experience for anything in the world. I'm running my "own show" here which gives you some feeling of accomplishing something – that is, its my show except when the inspectors are here or when following out the "directions" which arrive daily from a dozen different headquarters.

I forgot to mention the rain in my previous paragraph on England. It almost rains daily and naturally everything is damp so the [damn] or rather damp cold goes right thru you to your bones. I've threaghtened (I really know how to spell but my fingers don't) to put on longies several times but am still holding out.

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Here's an English joke: Two men met in the street & one said "I hear they buried your wife the other day." The other one, "Yes, they had to bury her. Dead, you know". No comment. I want to give the Red Cross another boost. They have Clubs over here in nearly every city where enlisted men can go and sleep for about 40¢ a nite and eat for about 20¢. In addition they hold free cinemas and dances every week, & have reading rooms and games also. These clubs are in former luxurious hotels. There are clubs for officers too with the prices about 10¢ higher. On my one day off over here I stayed in a seaside town that has been called the "Miami Beach" of England. It was wonderful to break away. This particular city where I visited was beautiful! – I've never seen anything like it. While strolling there in the park, a British band was playing a concert, children were wading in a shallow creek with a cement bottom, and soldiers & girls everywhere. My only regret was that my wife couldn't be there.

Last Sunday we had a Turkey dinner (probably a "dry run" for Thanksgiving) and this Sunday – today – we had southern fried chicken but it was tuff. I enjoyed it however. We get a lot of Spam and the eggs are all of the new-fangled variety – in a box instead of shell and we have no milk to drink – just coffee & tea, & cocoa once in awhile. Don't ever complain about food rationing as over here we think what we eat is good.

I've rambled on for about enough now so will wind this letter up with this thot for Seph: save a job for me that can be done with a fishing rod in one hand & a pencil in the other.

Regards to all,
Cheerio,
Sid
Note new APO # of 649(1)

After the War

World War II profoundly changed the world on every level from international to individual. In its wake, the promise of the modern age and the threat of the Cold War heavily influenced postwar Americans. This section traces the journey of Oregon and the nation after the war.

Smoothing the Bumps: Planning for Postwar Reconversion

Victory at Last: Oregon Celebrates the Final Acts of the War

A New Set of Challenges: Welcoming Home the Veterans

Doing Something Right for the Veterans: The G.I. Bill of Rights

A Mixed Reception: Japanese Americans Return to Oregon

A State of Change: Oregon After World War II

Threats from Abroad and Enemies at Home: The Cold War



Clockwise from top left: A veteran looks for work after the war; A couple looks at plans for their dream house; women factory workers were asked to return to their homes after the war; Children practiced "duck and cover" in case of atomic bomb attack.

Smoothing the Bumps: Planning for Postwar Reconversion

Fighting the Dreaded Postwar Unemployment Threat

Even as Oregon and the nation were ramping up industrial production to fight the Axis in the early days of World War II, planners were at work envisioning a postwar future. Officials sought to avoid the dangerously ragged postwar period that followed World War I during which unemployment spiked and the hopes of many veterans were dashed, leading to social upheaval. As World War II raged on, the private sector, often through industry and trade associations, looked into their crystal balls for clues to postwar development opportunities. And the public sector explored ways to bridge the transition period between a nation fully mobilized for war and one reconverted to a thriving peacetime economy.



A serviceman and his bride cut their wedding cake. Postwar planners counted on women to leave factory jobs and return to domestic life. (Folder 19, Box 37, Defense Council Records, OSA)

A New State Commission Begins Planning

Early in the war, numerous state agencies planned individually for the postwar period. Hoping for a more coordinated approach, incoming Governor Earl Snell asked the Legislature in 1943 to create a body that would explore state needs and opportunities at a more systematic and comprehensive level. The Legislature responded by forming the Postwar Readjustment and Development Commission, giving it a broad mandate to plan not only for the immediate reconversion period after the war, but also to study and make recommendations for the longterm development of Oregon. The 15-member commission (also known as a committee) included what was billed as a "cross section of the state" consisting of members from "capital and labor, scientists and businessmen" in addition to the heads of several state agencies and the chairmen of the Legislature's House and Senate ways and means committees. The day-to-day activities of the commission were carried out by John W. Kelly, who served as executive director. Kelly, a former newspaper political writer, kept a steady stream of analysis, reports, and recommendations flowing during the next five years. [1]

The Legislature called on the commission to consider a number of subjects. Its most immediate mandate was to "explore ways and means of avoiding or minimizing the social and economic disruption and unsettled condition" that could come with the end of the war. The commission was required to plan a program to "absorb and assimilate into civilian business, pursuits and employment the demobilized men and women of the armed forces and men and women released from war industries." The Legislature also wanted a strategy for keeping existing industries and businesses operating and for attracting new ones. Moreover, the commission was to conduct surveys and develop plans for "a long range program of public works and improvements." [2]



Finding jobs for the returning veterans was "the Number One job" for Oregon's Postwar Readjustment and Development Commission. (Folder 34, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Identifying the Employment Problem

The commission first focused its attention on the transition to peacetime. According to John Kelly, "the Number One problem of the committee of 15 is to see that the boys who return are provided with suitable jobs." But in the summer of 1943 Kelly could only use an "estimate of 150,000 Oregon boys as a guess" since "the actual number is a military secret." He also made other estimates since it was important to have some idea of the number of individuals who would need to assimilate back into the Oregon society and economy. Based on the overall military service numbers, Kelly guessed that "there will be 15,000 casualties among the Oregon boys, for this is a war of blood and tears." He anticipated that about 10,000 to 15,000 would return to their interrupted college educations. Noting that a great many of the returning veterans would possess few applicable peacetime skills or experience since they entered the armed forces right out of high school, Kelly cautioned against easy solutions: "It is foolish to think that a returned veteran can be picked up and placed on a farm, dairy ranch or irrigated land if the veteran has no knowledge of farming. This would leave him stranded. Farming is a technical business and must be learned the hard way." [3]



During the war, authorities urged women, such as "Jenny on the Job" above, to work in factories and shipyards. The message was very different after the war when women were asked not to compete with veterans for jobs. (Image no. ww1647-17 courtesy Northwestern University)

Kelly also made guesses about the number of workers affected by the transition from war industries to the peacetime economy, although he was once again aiming at a moving target. For example, while citing assurances from the Federal Maritime Commission that Portland's shipyard industry would continue in some form after the war, he still expressed deep concerns that "the shipyards will fold up long before the war is over and Oregon will find upon its hands the army of workers who will expect to be taken care of." He foresaw a future in which there would be "no need of a day shift, a swing shift, and a graveyard shift. One shift will be ample...with 8000 or less workers. The rest of the workers

in the industry, possibly 110,000, will have to live upon their unemployment compensation benefits." Kelly also speculated about the tens of thousands of workers who came to Oregon seeking jobs during the war, including the "hill billies from the south imported and trained to work on dairy farms." He went on to loosely categorize others as he anticipated the future:

> **"What will these thousands do? No one knows. Thousands will take their savings and return to their respective homes; others will decide to settle in Oregon and take advantage of the opportunities of this glorious state and still others will remain because they have wasted their pay checks and cannot leave. These latter will become charges on the public; they will be the professional reliefers you will have to support with your tax money as they create slum conditions."** [4]



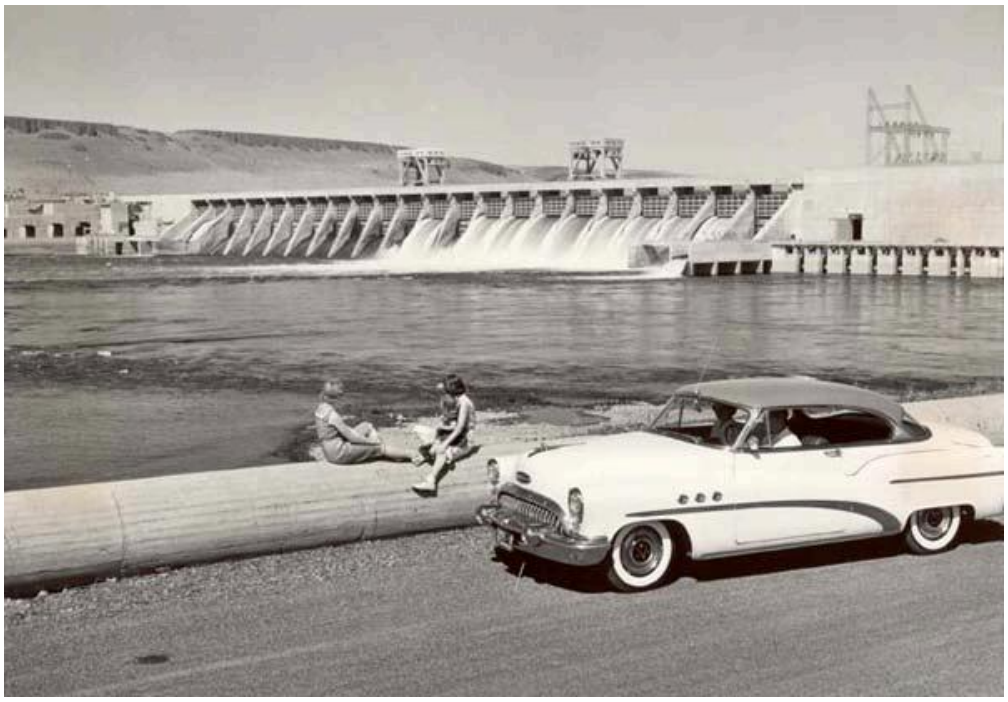
This 6-story high alumina plant in Salem was built in 1945 to process ore for aluminum. Planners saw private industry projects as vital to staving off postwar depression. (**Image no. 42, courtesy Salem Public Library, Ben Maxwell Collection (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/max/id/1422/rec/10)**)

Yet, others probably would leave the workforce without causing major disruptions according to Kelly. He claimed most women workers "will return to their domestic duties instead of seeking new jobs in the industrial world. They answered the urgent call of their country until the end of the war and having served well are content to once more become housekeepers. Their appearance in the industrial world was an adventure and they have no desire to follow it as a career." Likewise, Kelly saw about 10,000 Oregon workers who were 65-years-old or older leaving the workforce after the war: "These will have their social security numbers [retirement pension benefits] and will not compete for jobs with younger men." Moreover, he counted an "army of youngsters" consisting of about 7,000 mostly soon to be unemployed high school age workers who simply would "resume their education in high schools or college." Finally, Kelly anticipated that thousands of people who flocked to Portland from other parts of Oregon for war industry jobs would return to their shops and farms that they were compelled by the economy to "abandon temporarily." [5]

Employment Strategies

Despite the view that many former war workers would naturally be absorbed back into the state's farms, shops, schools, and domestic life, there was a potential for dangerously high unemployment and social disruption. Thus, in addition to providing unemployment insurance benefits to out of work Oregonians in the wake of the war, the commission developed a strategy to employ thousands in public works projects. But officials stressed that the health of the private sector was of the utmost importance: "Employment must be stabilized by free enterprise; public works are intended to supplement private industry and serve as a stop-gap." So, beginning in 1943, the commission began "building a stockpile of

worthwhile projects of public works which can be activated quickly to provide employment as necessity demands." The projects involved all levels of government from massive federal dam projects to additional classrooms in small schoolhouses. [6]



Construction on McNary Dam on the Columbia River in eastern Oregon was started in 1947, one of many massive federal projects that kept the Oregon economy humming in the postwar period. The dam was authorized by Congress in 1945 and completed in 1954. (Photo no. 5832, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

Over time, cities, counties, school districts, and other governmental entities submitted proposals. One of the first problems was to educate local government officials about the potential problem as Kelly noted in a radio address to the Oregon Federation of Women's Clubs in 1943: "In a period when everyone was advertising for help and offering high wages it was difficult to convince the administrative bodies of counties and municipalities that there may be dark days ahead and that inevitably war work would cease and a period of widespread unemployment likely would ensue." At the time, only 17 of 36 counties had submitted their proposals while only 29 of 192 cities had responded. Still, Kelly was encouraged by statements that "with or without federal assistance the counties intend to fly with their own wings and retain control of the projects and not permit dictation from some bureau in Washington D.C." [7]

Public Works Proposals

There was no shortage of projects to implement even if funding and supply problems delayed work. The biggest spender was the federal government with huge amounts earmarked for dams such as those in the highly promoted Willamette Valley Project and projects on the Columbia and Snake Rivers. These works promised thousands of construction jobs as well as benefits in flood control, navigation, irrigation and hydro-electric power. Other anticipated federal projects added tens of millions of dollars to potential payrolls. Reforestation of timber lands that were badly overcut during the war would "require the greatest tree planting program ever undertaken in this State." Grazing restoration in central and eastern Oregon was estimated to employ 10,000 men. Reclamation work promised not only the initial jobs but also large areas newly suited for farmland on the Deschutes Reclamation Project in central Oregon, the Long Tom Project in Lane County, and others. Calls were also heard to expand veterans' hospitals as waves of injured and disabled veterans flowed back to the home front. [8]

State plans were made for a number of projects around Oregon. Officials proposed improvements, repairs, and expansions of institutional buildings such as the state hospital and state penitentiary. The Oregon State System of Higher Education responded to the request for projects by submitting an

ambitious ten-year building program that would cost 12 million dollars. The plans called for new buildings, classrooms, dormitories, laboratories and other improvements on college campuses around the state. The Oregon State Highway Commission proposed spending 60 million dollars over a three-year period. By late 1943, the highway commission had toured the state conferring with counties on project priorities and highway department engineers already had completed surveys and blueprints. Officials said they could start highway projects within a couple of weeks. Of course, John Kelly didn't want any illusions about the nature of much of this work: "This is not a fancy program, but one of physical labor. It will require a strong back. Experience in driving trucks, bulldozers and pick and shovel work." Kelly estimated that highway projects could directly employ 5,000 workers for three years, although he acknowledged that "not all the veterans, however, can do this pick and shovel labor and not all will wish to, but it will be a job until something better shows up." [9]



A car speeds down a new highway near Mt. Hood circa 1950. The Oregon State Highway Commission poured millions of dollars of federal and state money into Oregon roads after the war. (Photo no. 4369, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

Public works proposals flowed into the postwar commission from counties, cities, school districts and local governments. Kelly stressed to local governments that the commission was not a "dictatorial agency" and that it had neither "the authority nor desire to impose its will upon anyone" in relation to local projects. He noted "no one knows better than the residents of a municipality or county what its needs are." Still, it became clear that many smaller governments lacked the expertise or competent engineers to perform practical planning. The lack of technical consultants made it difficult to determine if a project was feasible, to estimate costs and prepare blueprints. In spite of the hurdles, surveys and correspondence with local governments revealed plenty of ideas for growth in communities that had suffered through the Depression. Counties often aimed to build or improve county roads or replace aging courthouses. Cities looked to pave more streets, add sidewalks, install sewers and sewage treatment plants, or renovate city halls. Meanwhile, school districts sought to repair or add to school houses. In fact, many districts planned on a bigger scale, such as in Bandon, Eugene and elsewhere, where officials wanted to build entirely new high schools and school facilities like playgrounds and gymnasiums. [10]

Seeing Results

Many of John Kelly's assumptions and predictions proved correct in the years after the war. As he relished to point out, doomsayers were wrong about the certainty of massive unemployment in the postwar period. Instead, and at least partially because of the actions of the postwar commission and other government agencies, "the unemployment load was not unduly burdensome." As Kelly predicted, about 40% of workers from other states returned home, although they did receive millions of dollars in unemployment benefit checks from Oregon. Meanwhile, "housewives withdrew from the labor pool; elderly workers had their social security; [and] young people resumed their schooling." The state's unemployment fund saw heavy drains for a few months but then recovered as job openings appeared. The distribution of jobs during this period created some problems since many unemployed workers refused to leave their Portland area housing and unemployment benefits, no matter how modest, for jobs in other areas of the state with chronic housing shortages. Housing shortages were made worse by widespread shortages of materials from bathtubs to wiring as American industry struggled to reconvert from producing helmets and hand grenades to refrigerators and radios. [11]



Many Oregon counties replaced their courthouses during the late 1940s and 1950s. The Curry County Courthouse (above) in Gold Beach was completed in 1958. (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/23938#lg=1&slide=0)**)



Chambers of commerce worked with local authorities to promote postwar projects such as new streets and sewers. (Folder 34, Box 20, Defense Council Records, OSA)

While there were significant postwar problems, measurements of the growth in Oregon's economy were encouraging. The number of businesses subject to the payroll tax rose from 9,000 in August 1945 to 16,600 in May 1948. Wages and salaries as well as income from businesses and property saw healthy gains from 1945 to 1947. Civilian employment in the state rose by nearly 300,000 workers from 1940 to 1948 to over 628,000. Meanwhile, unemployment dropped to a modest 22,000 by August 1948 in spite of significant population gains since 1945. In fact, population growth kept the economic ball rolling. For example, a postwar commission report cited a "notable increase of youngsters...[that] caused the school districts of Oregon to launch frantically, a building program to accommodate these children." [12]

The rising economic tide came with the help of public spending. A 1946 postwar commission report pegged the estimated cost of government postwar programs in Oregon at over 800 million dollars, a staggering sum at the time. While not all projects made it to completion, a significant number did, which in turn triggered more hiring by construction contractors and other private sector businesses. At the same time, according to the postwar commission's 3rd biennial report, "practically every incorprated [sic] town in the state is attempting to

provide services to meet [the] demands of the new population. This means additional police and fire protection, paving and sidewalk maintenance, more street lights and teachers." The report noted that even with the agonizingly chronic shortage of new automobiles, there still was one passenger car for every three people, leading to the proclamation that "the horse and buggy days are gone forever and the hitching rack has been replaced by the [parking] meter." [13]

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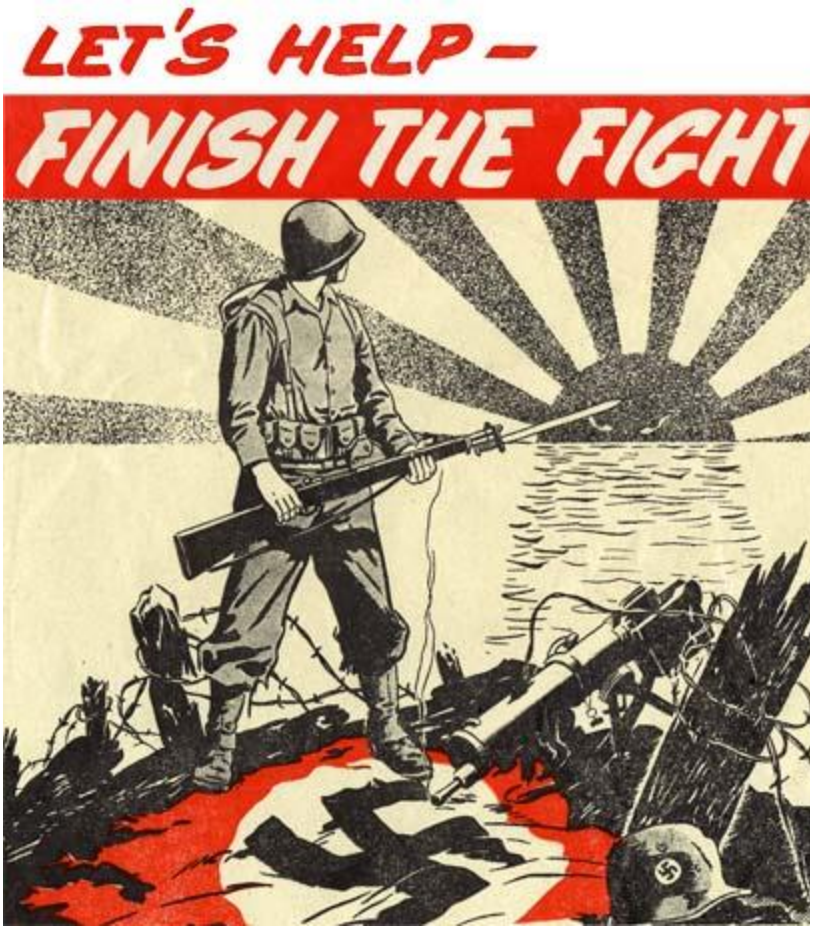
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Victory at Last: Oregon Celebrates the Final Acts of the War

Nervous Anticipation Yields to Joyous Bedlam

Several months separated the Allied victories over Germany and Japan in 1945. Following the collapse of the Nazi forces in May 1945, the Allies, led by the United States and Great Britain, turned their attention to the defeat of Japan and the final act of the war. Based on the refusal of Japanese defenders on western Pacific islands to surrender and the suicide tactics of kamikaze pilots, many experts predicted a long string of gruesome battles similar to those fought on Iwo Jima. Some thought the war could continue for more than a year and cost tens of thousands of American lives to win. But the atomic bomb, newly developed and tested by the super secret Manhattan Project, was ready for use. New president Harry Truman had to make a terrible decision: Fight the war conventionally and surely witness the deaths of countless Allied and Japanese troops and civilians or unleash the awesome power of the atom on Japanese cities and cause the deaths of untold Japanese civilians, hoping to trigger a surrender. Truman's controversial decision, and the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August, ushered in the Atomic Age and within days ended World War II.



Officials worried about a letdown after defeating Germany. Posters and publications exhorted Americans to continue working for victory over Japan. (Oversize Records, Defense Council Records, OSA)

V-E Day Challenges

Events in the European Theater moved quickly in early 1945 after the Allies withstood the last major gasp of Nazi resistance at the Battle of the Bulge. While the Allied forces tightened the noose on Germany and the end of the fascist regime became just a matter of time, military and home front officials planned for the inevitable V-E [Victory in Europe] Day to mark the German surrender. They also thought about how to keep troops and home front workers motivated to "finish the fight" against Japan. There were good reasons to fear complacency and burnout on the home front. The war had dragged on for years and



General Dwight D. Eisenhower (left), shown before D-Day, led the Allied effort in Europe.

Americans were weary of the endless overtime, war bond drives, rationing and sacrifices. Officials needed to convince civilians to not rest on the laurels of victory in Europe when there was still work to be done: more victory ships to build, more war bonds to buy, and more materials to salvage. Literature distributed as part of a statewide Shriner's Hospital salvage drive in June 1945 spelled out, in blatantly racist terms, the challenge ahead:

> We can't sit down to rest until the war is really won. Have you ever looked at the Jap...the Jap we haven't yet tackled! Translate this into all the things we need to win -- PAPER -- TIN!
>
> **He's big** - The Jap controls the world's second largest empire - [he] has 4,000,000 war hardened soldiers - twice the number [of] Germans used to defend [the] Western Reich. [He] has millions more in China, Burma, Manchuko, which we have yet to encounter.
>
> **He's strong** - For 20 years the Jap has worked to make Manchukuo a war arsenal. Here he has huge war plants. He has ample resources. He can build ships, tanks, [and] guns in great numbers. And thousands of swift planes.
>
> **He's hard to hit** - It takes three times as long to carry men, guns and food to our rear bases in the Pacific as it did to our front lines in Europe. Three times as many ships for the same amount of material - more men in our supply lines.
>
> **He's a hustler** - The Jap war worker works like a beaver - he is 35,000,000 strong, working 12 to 16 hours a day, 7 days a week, taking only 2 days off per month. He's hustling [with] every muscle he's got - building ships, planes, and guns.
>
> Says Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, U.S. Marine Corps: "The Japanese fighting man may sometimes fight foolishly but he always fights furiously, savagely, ruthlessly. Any notion that such a people will wilt morally, psychologically or economically is quite certainly wrong. Our battles with the Jap will go into Marine Corps history as the toughest of all our time. Beating him will take the best we've got.["] [1]



A Japanese infantry rifleman.

Officials Issue Calls for a "Sober" Observance

Many communities adopted a "V-E Day Code of Conduct" in an effort to tamp down excessive enthusiasm and keep citizens focused on the work ahead. One such code included pleas that "the steady flow of airplanes, ships and other materials should not be interrupted by unrestrained celebration causing let-down or absenteeism in the war plants...." The code told citizens that "the announcement of the termination of hostilities in Germany should be received with prayerful thanksgiving and with

gratitude that the further sacrifice of human life for the defeat of the Axis Powers in Europe is no longer necessary." Instead, the code called for a "rededication to the unfinished task of defeating the Japanese aggressor in the Pacific" and reminded readers that:

> **"The end of the war in Europe cannot be an occasion for celebrating. Not while America's sons are dying in the merciless fighting of the Pacific. Not when the nation's war job is only half done." [2]**



Governor Earl Snell, shown above in a lighter moment, asked Oregonians for a prayerful V-E Day. (**Image 117, OSA (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/1718/rec/6)**)

During an early May 1945 radio talk, Governor Snell echoed calls for a subdued reaction to V-E Day. He asked Oregonians to join him in a prayer of thanksgiving for the victory in Europe and a prayer for early victory in the Pacific. Snell reminded citizens that "we must not forget that our boys are still out in the far Pacific fighting for our freedom at this very hour." He called on Oregonians to set even more production records "until the Japanese join their comrades of Nazi tyranny in unconditional surrender." When asked how long the war would last, Snell demurred, but did state that "various estimates on the part of those who should be qualified to predict [are] running from six months to nearly three years." He also cautioned Oregonians that the new "concentration of activities here on the West coast" would cause more hardships. More soldiers and sailors would mean that the "transportation facilities likely will be taxed to the utmost." And he warned residents to prepare for the "certain cutbacks in the production of war goods and materials which will have some effect no doubt upon the social and economic life of the people of Oregon." [3]

Focused on the Work Ahead

Actual events and actions when V-E Day arrived on May 8, 1945 generally followed the pattern hoped for by officials. In Portland churches were open for prayer and special services were held. In order to encourage the proper reaction, liquor stores were locked up as were most downtown businesses and stores. But city offices, courthouses, schools, post offices and similar venues were open. Highlighting the rededication to finishing the war, the shipyards were open and, according to *The Oregonian* newspaper, they "operated with renewed zeal." While absenteeism was normally a chronic problem, on V-E Day the "Swan Island yard reported even more than the normal complement of workers on the job."

A large crowd did gather for a scheduled event at the Victory Center in Portland. But according to reports, people "felt little cause for jubilation." Instead, they listened "soberly and with a strange stillness" to a civic program of prayers, addresses by government leaders, and music. They heard

Portland Mayor Earl Riley summarize the official view: "We have work to do, ships to build, bonds to buy, blood to give. Today we pause; tomorrow we resume." As a counterpoint, editors at *The Oregonian* had heard enough of government leaders "scolding" citizens about avoiding "immoderate celebration." Writing that "our concern...should be with the lack of exuberance rather than any excess of it," the editors made the case that considering the heroic victory over the Nazis, "there is every reason why V-E day should be a day of true celebration." [4]


The Oregonian
NAZIS SURRENDER UNCONDITIONALLY;
ALLIES DESIGNATE TUESDAY V-E DAY

Victory in Europe finally came May 1945. (*The Oregonian*, May 8, 1945, Page 1) (**Listen to a V-E Day radio report (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDGkbFB7Unc)**)

V-J Day Finally Arrives

The mood of Oregonians surrounding the surrender of Japan in the middle of August took a more boisterous tone than the subdued events of V-E Day. Certainly, people were shocked by the power and destruction of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan days before. But the consensus was that the bombs were a necessary evil needed to quickly end the war and save American lives. This attitude was reinforced after people read or heard about the desperate, no-surrender mindset of enemy fighters encountered by Allied forces as they island-hopped in the direction of Japan. Most people moved quickly from imagining of the horror of people being instantly vaporized or dying slow deaths from radiation poisoning in Hiroshima to excited anticipation of the official announcement of Japanese surrender. The announcement finally came on Aug. 14, 1945.



A sailor from Minnesota and a Portland woman hold up a newspaper announcing "Peace!" (Oregon *Journal*, August 15, 1945)

Once again, state and local officials worried about celebrations turning into riots, only this time they couldn't use the argument that "the war job was only half done" to tamp down the exuberance. Still, on Aug. 9, 1945, Brigadier General Raymond Olson, the acting Adjutant General of the Oregon Military Department, had advice for Governor Snell. Obviously worried about the effect of alcohol on celebrations, Olson counseled Snell to issue a proclamation closing all liquor stores in the state. He also urged the governor to call on citizens to be "sober and patriotic," by attending church services and offering thanksgiving prayers. Snell took much of Olson's advice as he followed the lead of President Truman in declaring August 15 and 16 to be legal holidays. In addition to closing the liquor stores, Snell closed all public buildings and asked that business activity be suspended as much as possible. While he made no mention of "sober" observances of the holidays, he did ask that the "rejoicing be tempered with compassion and prayer for the loved ones of those who have made the supreme sacrifice." [5]

Others took precautions in anticipation of V-J Day as well. The Portland Retail Trade Bureau called on its members to close for the holidays. The bureau took the further step of sending out a bulletin "requesting that all merchants remove things from their display windows and where possible either pull down a blind or shade the window at such a height that people from the street would not be able to

glance in over the blind and see anything that might be on display." The bureau also asked that there be "a representative on duty in each store who would be able to handle any disturbances in case they should arise." Meanwhile, the Veterans' Guard and Patrol in Portland was planning to "immediately put from two to five men in plain clothes in each of the hotels and also have a patrol around the various theaters to handle the situation." Portland Mayor Riley issued his own proclamation calling on all "dispensers of beer" in the city to suspend sales. All State Guard personnel were to be available for duty if the governor needed their help. Moreover, police forces in the area cancelled leaves and set strategies for dealing with trouble. According to General Olson, "the Portland Police Bureau figures on maintaining a heavy patrol in the Albina area to take care of the Negro situation and [Multnomah County] Sherrif [sic] Martin Pratt figures on a very rigid patrol of the Vanport area." [6]



Donna Jean Ryan of Portland (left) and Dorothy Langdon of Coos Bay sit down for a brief rest during Portland celebrations triggered by Japan's surrender on Aug. 14. (Oregon *Journal*, Aug. 15, 1945)

While Portland and other Oregon cities experienced no significant violence during the victory celebrations, officials were right to be vigilant. By the night of Wednesday, August 15, the death toll related to celebrations reached 26 in the United States. San Francisco experienced some of the worst violence as events escalated beyond control on Tuesday, August 14 after people read headlines proclaiming "Tokyo says: Japs quit!" According to Associated Press reports, "milling soldiers, sailors and civilians ripped up war bond booths and started a bonfire in the middle of Market street. Flames roared up 30 feet high before fire trucks inched through the thousands of boisterous people to douse the blaze." The next night riot squads of 3,200 police and shore patrolmen were called out to quell "a mob of celebrants who inflicted heavy damage on downtown property." According to reports, every window along a busy three block stretch of Market Street was broken and five people died in the San Francisco violence. Several others died in New York City where at least 890 people "were treated for injuries or alcoholism." [7]



A Vancouver veteran holds up a Japanese flag he "captured" while serving in New Guinea. The soldier was joined during the evening of August 14 by countless celebrants in downtown Portland. (Oregon *Journal*, Aug. 15, 1945)

While incidents of violence occurred across the country, most celebrants showed their pleasure with dancing, shouting, kissing, and ear-to-ear grins seemingly frozen across their faces. Portland's celebrations began in earnest just after midnight on August 14 as unofficial announcement of the imminent surrender spread. Most of the celebration developed along Broadway in the downtown area where an impromptu parade formed, including 200 marchers, "many flourishing bottles, and a continuous two-direction parade of cars with horns sounding almost constantly." The afternoon of August 14 saw more celebrations as the official announcement of the end of the war was made by President Truman amid a "joyous bedlam" of laughter, blaring horns, and confetti that rained down from buildings. According to *The Oregonian*, "girls kissed sailors to signify their joy at the end of the war, and particularly exuberant sailors kissed girls at random." Firecrackers were heard in all parts of Portland but nowhere more than in Chinatown where

people of Chinese descent had saved their fireworks for years to celebrate the defeat of Japan, which first invaded Manchuria in 1931. By Thursday, the celebration continued "but a great deal of the steam had gone out of it." Similar events broke out across Oregon as the pent up energy of years of war finally found its release. [8] (**Watch San Francisco V-J day celebrations (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjPB9hjfjbg)**)

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A New Set of Challenges: Welcoming Home the Veterans

"To Be Treated Like Normal Human Beings"

Nearly 150,000 Oregonians served in the military during World War II and over 3,700 died as a result. Men from each of Oregon's 36 counties served. They came from the remote ranches of Harney County dozens of miles from any paved road, from the densely packed apartments of central Portland and everywhere in between. From every corner of the state, from every walk of life, men and women answered the call to service and discharged their duties honorably. Along with those families that grieved sons and fathers and brothers who made the "supreme sacrifice," many others coped with disabilities, both physical and mental, wrought by war. Meanwhile, most returning veterans wanted to get on with their lives: marry their sweethearts, buy homes, have children, and live the "American Dream" they had deferred for so long.



Romantic visions of reuniting with returning veterans filled advertisements in the waning days of the war and into the postwar period. Shown above is a Greyhound Bus advertisement. (Folder 19, Box 37, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Demobilization Churns Forward

The demobilization of about 12 million men and women serving in the U.S. armed forces at the close of the war was destined to be a drawn out affair for practical and strategic reasons. Simply moving that many people quickly from the far corners of the globe would be impossible. But the real reason was that the world remained a dangerous place in the wake of the war as power vacuums developed around the world with the collapse of the Axis powers. Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin began executing his designs on eastern Europe. Communist forces were on the march in China and elsewhere. Dozens of colonies held by Britain, France, Belgium, and other powers posed control problems as calls for independence grew louder. Many American servicemen were destined to serve long duty as part of large occupation forces in Germany and Japan. While new inductees would eventually be sent to replace them, it was not be fast

enough for many anxious men ready to go home. Most veterans were allowed to return to civilian life but the process for many, depending on their duty and location, was agonizingly slow. [1]



President Truman at the Salem Airport in 1948. He oversaw the demobilization of millions of veterans after the war. (**Image no. MJON0070, courtesy Salem Public Library, Marion County Historical Society (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/mchs/id/80/rec/1)**)

Just as President Truman was officially announcing the surrender of Japan in August 1945, he was also making demobilization plans, forecasting that over five million men would return to civilian life in the next 12 to 18 months. He ordered the immediate reduction in selective service inductions from 80,000 to 50,000 per month. And he ordered the local draft boards to stop inducting anyone over 25 years old. Oregon's demobilization experience mirrored national events. By March 1, 1947, 118,292 Oregon men and women had returned to civilian life, leaving just under 30,000 in the service. Some of those still serving had chosen military service as a life vocation despite being eligible for discharge. Many servicemen, because of disabilities and other reasons, were discharged long before the end of hostilities. [2]

Uneven Changes Brought by War

Demobilized veterans returning to Oregon experienced vastly different circumstances during the war, depending on where they went and what they did. Some spent the entire war in a relatively routine and uneventful environment not greatly removed from their civilian experience--the 28-year-old civilian auto parts clerk who entered the Army and became a supply clerk at a base in California for most of the war. Conversely, others were thrown into a maelstrom of death and brutality--the 18-year-old farm boy who entered the Marines and survived the bloodbath at Iwo Jima, killing the enemy in hand-to-hand combat, stepping over rotting bodies, and watching his friends die.

Likewise, the communities they returned to experienced the war in different ways as well. Some communities, far away from defense industries or military bases, changed little. They may have stagnated and lost some of their population to migration during the war, but they were essentially the same. Others, such as

Forged Sympathy Letters?

John W. Kelly was a man full of ideas and advice. Beginning in 1943, he served for over five years as the executive director of the Oregon Postwar Readjustment and Development Commission, charged with smoothing the transition from war to peace. As such, he kept a steady stream of memoranda flowing to Governor Snell on a range of topics. But Kelly was also a

Hermiston and Medford, had been transformed by defense activity. Their populations boomed with many "outsiders" moving in and changing the culture. While their downtown core was recognizable, new businesses and slapdash housing had been built to cater to the boom. Many of the faces a returning veteran saw walking down Main Street would not be familiar. Thus, the range of reactions varied greatly from veteran to veteran and community to community. This was complicated further by the size and strength of a person's family and social network before and during the war. Those with strong family ties, close friends, and deep connections to churches, clubs, and similar organizations were less likely to suffer problems during their "reabsorption" into civilian life.

Veterans' Expectations

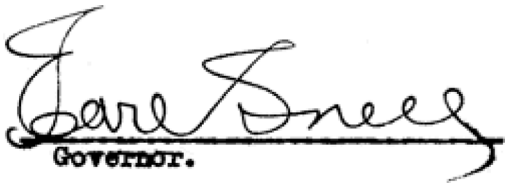
Even before being discharged, many servicemen had specific opinions about returning to civilian life. Jobs were high on the list of priorities, according to W.M. Kipplinger, who compiled quotations of their expectations and fears from hundreds of letters in June 1945. One serviceman wrote, "you can't take twelve million men, and train them in a new life, and churn them all up, and then expect them to go back to the same old ruts." Others were frustrated that they would be late for the "postwar scramble" for jobs. They heard many civilian war industry workers had already quit their defense jobs "to bed down in more permanent peacetime jobs, and the men think this is 'lousy rotten.'" One man said, "I think the country owes me a better job than I had, but I don't think I'll find it if I am not discharged ahead of the mob." Few men wanted to make a career of the military,

former longtime political writer for *The Oregonian* newspaper so he couldn't help but offer Snell political advice, solicited or not.



Gov. Earl Snell got plenty of political advice from John Kelly. (*Oregon Blue Book*, Oregon Secretary of State, 1945-1946, Page 17)

In March 1944 he wrote a memo to the Governor offering "a smart bit of political sagacity." Kelly suggested that the governor could capitalize politically from sending form letters of sympathy to the parents or widow of Oregonians killed in the war. Unfortunately, he got a little carried away in suggesting others could forge the governor's signature to save time. Kelly recommended that "the signature of the Governor could be applied at odd moments and a stockpile accumulated or one of the Governor's bright young ladies could write the signature."



He added that while other Oregon politicians had sent congratulations to citizens in relation to births and graduations, "I know of no one who has siezed [sic] the opportunity to win the friendship of the survivors of a soldier's family." It is not known whether anyone explained to Kelly that sympathy from the governor expressed in a form letter with a forged signature might be inappropriate, no matter how politically advantageous.

Six years later when Kelly died in his seventies, his old colleagues at *The Oregonian* eulogized him on the editorial page: "John Kelly was a mettlesome man, as most Kellys are born to be--a staunch friend and uncompromising enemy. In his heyday he was something of a power in state politics, and certainly his interest never waned." [13]

saying instead that they "already have a bellyful."



Jobs were a high priority for returning veterans. (Folder 13, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Many correspondents were tired of foreign lands and people, with one confessing, "for the first time in my life I appreciate my home town." Others were fed up with military rules and regulations and were concerned about more of the same upon returning to civilian life: "I don't want government regulating everything when I get back." Some servicemen resented the frivolous civilian "high life" shown in magazines. One man grumbled that "Jitterbugs [people enjoying a lively style of dancing] and other silly people ought to have to come out here and see what we have seen and it would cure them." [3]

Home Front Expectations

Home front civilians had their own opinions and apprehensions about how to welcome and relate to returning loved ones and friends. There was no shortage of experts offering advice on the subject in the months before and after the Japanese surrender. But many returning veterans had advice of their own, saying people should "stop trying to practice amateur psychiatry on them, don't be misguided by the widely published attempts to tell you 'how to handle' these 'changed men.' Instead, welcome the boys home naturally, as what they are--that is, fundamentally the same boys who went away." The men complained about the "patronizing, over-sympathetic, kid glove treatment" and were disgusted by "the impression created among the home folks that most returned soldiers were strange neurotics who didn't want to talk about what they'd been through." One returning Army sergeant recounted his frustrating homecoming: "Ma kept watching me all the time, trying 'not to do anything that would make me nervous.' Of course that just made me nervous as hell." [4]



Many friends and family were apprehensive about how to act around returning veterans. (Folder 4, Box 35, Defense Council Records, OSA)

"Ma kept watching me all the time, trying 'not to do anything that would make me nervous.' Of course that just made me nervous as hell."

Many returning veterans emphasized that each person needed to be treated with common sense as an individual, not as a potential "problem child" experiencing a "painful readjustment" to civilian life as advocated by many of the "When-He-Comes-Home" articles. A Marine officer, back from duty in the South Pacific, summed up his opinion: "The whole thing is wrong--trying to set up rules on how to treat men back from war. There are no rules. Every man is different. People draw up plans about just how they are going to act when Johnnie comes through the front door. Then Johnny comes in the back door, and they're all upset." A lack of common sense in much of the advice troubled some veterans. For example, some articles cautioned family and friends to avoid questions about combat experiences. One observer scoffed at the notion. While allowing that no man wanted to be prodded into talking about the subject, "the normal service man wants to talk. Why not?

They are the most exciting, the most terrible, the most important things that have ever happened to him in his life, or probably ever will. What else would he talk about?" [5]

Most informed observers recognized the majority of returning servicemen would not suffer a "painful readjustment." Major General Norman T. Kirk, Surgeon General of the Army, counseled that the average returning soldier was "basically the same man he was when he went away." Kirk argued that the military discipline and experiences far from home had matured the average soldier so that "the large majority of these men can take their experiences in stride and can return to their homes, their families, and their jobs finer citizens, ready and able to shoulder their share of responsibility in the civilian world." Others claimed that the challenges endured by the returning veterans made them uniquely qualified as leaders in the community. Because of the wide range of circumstances involved, most of those giving advice were right--at least part of the time. In fact, most veterans adjusted to civilian life without significant problems, applying the self-confidence and "can-do" attitude gained from years of overcoming obstacles and learning new skills. Sadly, some veterans fell victim to what is now called posttraumatic stress syndrome, which when left untreated was destined to lead to despair and tragedy for many families after the war. [6]

Disabled Veterans

Disabled veterans, depending on the nature and degree of their injuries, had additional challenges upon returning to their communities. Throughout the war and into the postwar period, a steady stream of disabled servicemen returned home after convalescence and rehabilitation. Early on, the military, Veterans Administration (VA), state and local governments, and groups such as the Red Cross, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars developed services. For instance, the Army surgeon general published information in 1944 designed for family members of disabled veterans to help smooth the return to civilian life. In one such handbook, the surgeon general lauded medical advances such as blood plasma, penicillin, improved battlefield evacuation, and the treatment in Army hospitals, but put much of the rehabilitation burden on the shoulders of the veterans' families. [7]



Many veterans returned to civilian life with disabilities. Governments offered services but pushed disabled veterans to be self-reliant. (Folder 8, Box 1, Governor Snell Records, OSA)



Veterans Administration hospitals helped disabled veterans adjust to civilian life. (Folder 13, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)

An early challenge for many families, according to the surgeon general, centered on understanding problems related to disabilities. He noted that "at the outset, emotional upsets and black despondency are to be expected, though some men accept their misfortunes with remarkable calm and fortitude." The surgeon general pointed out that disabilities created an "unconscious dependence" on others. He argued that "gains in self-reliance made in the hospital may be swept away by the fear of pity and by resentment toward a 'make-it-easy-for-the-boy' attitude on the part of people at home." Resentments toward the Army by disabled veterans were common, with bitterness toward the men who got the "safe jobs" and toward the system that put him in the foxhole risking his life, eating canned rations, and

"enduring countless hardships which other soldiers are spared." Some disabled veterans resented civilians, especially those who avoided military service because of occupational or physical deferments. Many soldiers suffered from an overly-idealized view of their prior lives. They nurtured a sort of "dream image" of loved ones, mother's cooking, and home town life that could not be sustained in reality: "All too frequently, a man comes home to find the town has gone to seed; home a bit shabby; mother's 'corn pone and fatback' not so tasty.... Maybe some 4-F [a man designated not fit for the draft] married his best girl, or his wife seems silly and superficial...." [8]

"The wife's immediate reaction was worth months of rehabilitation for she reassured her tortured husband with the remark, 'I married a man, not a face.'"

The surgeon general had plenty of suggestions for family members to help the disabled veteran with emotional problems. His first pieces of advice were to avoid treating the man "either like a hero or a martyr" and, by all means" don't patronize or pity or fuss over him." Loved ones needed to acknowledge the disabilities in order to move forward with full rehabilitation. The surgeon general told the story of a soldier recovering in an Army hospital whose nose had been shot off in battle. He wore a plastic nose temporarily until surgeons could build a new one. When his wife first came in the room and they embraced, the man's nose was dislodged and fell to the floor. According to the surgeon general: "The wife's immediate reaction was worth months of rehabilitation for she reassured her tortured husband with the remark, 'I married a man, not a face.'" [9]

Key advice focused on helping disabled veterans achieve independence and self-reliance. No matter how good the medical or technological help, the final question of success fell to the veteran and his family. Thus, "a man may be fitted with an artificial leg and shown how to use it, but it is up to the man to work at the job of developing power, balance, and skill." Family members were urged to give encouragement but to "avoid doing things for the handicapped. Adversity may become an asset with reassurance, guidance, and a chance to work things out for one's self." Disabled veterans were advised to get to work quickly since "idleness and boredom...breeds restlessness and discontent." The Veterans Administration took the lead in providing many of the services available for disabled veterans. The regional office in Portland prescribed and financed education, training and other aids needed for their vocational rehabilitation. The agency also paid compensation and pensions to disabled veterans and dependents of veterans who died in the war. Moreover, the agency operated hospitals in Portland and Roseburg for ongoing medical services. [10]

Living Memorials Proposed

Well before the end of the war, groups nationwide began planning projects designed to honor the veterans of World War II. One popular idea centered on the concept of "living memorials," which would not only be "symbolic of their deep gratitude but will serve some useful purpose in the community life." This was in contrast with the statues, plaques, and obelisks common to previous wars such as World War I. One leading group, the American Commission for Living War Memorials, had the motto: "Memorials that live will help build a stronger, healthier nation." This theme was underscored by the commission's direct cooperation with the Federal Committee on Physical Fitness. By January 1945 the commission counted over 400 communities across the country that were "actively engaged" in planning memorials. Governor Snell appointed a statewide committee to study and coordinate plans in Oregon. Preliminary

suggestions included swimming pools, playgrounds, tennis and basketball courts, and summer camps for boys and girls organizations. [11]



Voters approved bonds to fund construction of Portland's Memorial Coliseum in 1954. The building was completed 6 years later. (Image courtesy ballparks.com)

Over time the Oregon committee saw plans and proposals for projects around the state. Local organizers sought the endorsement of the state committee as a way of encouraging funding from local governments and businesses. While the committee approved most proposals it saw, it did decline some. For example, plans submitted by the Oregon Museum Foundation were not approved because they were "not in keeping with the physical fitness" theme of the program. Among the dozens of projects planned were two in the Salem area. One proposed to erect a stadium on a 100 acre site in Salem "known as Bush's pasture." The other sought to create a one-mile waterfront park along the Willamette River in West Salem. La Grande also had big plans. Organizers raised $27,000 toward a new swimming pool and were exploring the possibility of a boat landing and a golf course. While Portland didn't have any definite plans as of September 1945, the committee heard a report that "there is talk of a coliseum to hold major indoor events such as large conventions, fights, wrestling, ice hockey, automobile shows, banquets for 5000 persons, and with a seating capacity for at least 15,000 people." While it would be some time before completion, Portland eventually saw the construction of Memorial Coliseum. Many other cities moved forward with plans in the ensuing years. Some projects were never completed due to lack of funding or the waning interest of organizers. Still, many others were finished and continue to serve local communities throughout Oregon. [12]



Gov. Douglas McKay breaks ground for a new Disabled American Veterans Memorial Hall in Salem in 1948. After dissension among promoters and funding problems, the hall was never built. (**Image no. 9082, courtesy Salem Public Library, Ben Maxwell Collection (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/max/id/4510/rec/1)**)

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Doing Something Right for the Veterans: The G.I. Bill of Rights

Investing in the American Dream



A veteran and his wife look at plans and dream about their future in their new home financed by a G.I. Bill loan. (Folder 19, Box 37, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Although governments and organizations across the country offered services to World War II veterans, none compared in scope and impact with the G.I. Bill of Rights. Officially known as the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, the G.I. Bill addressed fears about millions of veterans returning home without jobs and susceptible to radical political ideas and social unrest. Looking ahead to the postwar period, President Roosevelt said in 1943: "Veterans must not be demobilized into an environment of inflation and unemployment, to a place on a bread line or on a corner selling apples. We must this time have plans ready." The resulting act offered over 15 million veterans of World War II substantial benefits, including free education, job training, mortgage loans, small-business loans, and unemployment insurance. [1]

Legislative Efforts

While nearly everyone agreed something had to be done to assist returning veterans, differences arose in the debate over the type and amount of aid to be offered. In the beginning many lawmakers and educators worried the bill would cost too much, lower educational standards, or encourage laziness on the part of veterans. But these reservations were overwhelmed by dire predictions of unemployment and civil unrest if substantial legislation were not passed. And, telling Congress that America was "morally obligated" to prevent veterans from suffering economic hardships, Roosevelt echoed the findings of a White House study recommending a series of education and training programs. The American Legion played a leading role in designing legislation and convincing Congress to pass it. After completing a first draft of the G.I. Bill in early 1944, American Legion members defended the program against critics who

worried that the legislation was too sweeping and could backfire. Legion members organized a grassroots campaign to flood congressmen and senators with letters of support. The effort paid off. The bill overwhelmingly passed both houses and was signed by Roosevelt on June 22, 1944. [2]



The American Legion played a key role in pushing the G.I. Bill through Congress.

Well before Congress passed the G.I. Bill, Oregon leaders were making plans of their own to assist veterans. The 1943 Legislature created the War Veterans Service Committee to "take the lead in our state in rendering service to our veterans...." The committee included representatives of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars and was managed by a veteran of World War II, who soon set up an office in Portland. The success of the operation in the Portland area prompted the Legislature to expand the program in 1945. Replacing the War Veterans Service Committee, the new Department of Veterans' Affairs was charged with the "organization and coordination of the administration of all laws, federal and state, pertaining to the 147,000 war veterans and their dependents in this state." Meanwhile, the 1943 Legislature passed House Bill 400 to provide educational aid to the returning veterans. The measure was referred to voters and easily approved the next year. [3]

Educational Aid

Oregon's World War II veterans could choose between accepting educational aid from the federal G.I. Bill or from the state's own program. The G.I. Bill was offered to those had served 90 days or more after Sept. 16, 1940 and had received other than a dishonorable discharge. Veterans were entitled to one year of full-time training plus a period equal to their service time--up to a maximum of four years--to be used at any approved educational or training facility in the country. By contrast the state plan was limited to those who were residents of Oregon for at least a year prior to entering the service. An applicant for state aid needed to have served 90 days in the military and the Oregon program was not available to anyone receiving G.I. Bill educational assistance. Moreover, the state plan required that the money be used at schools in Oregon. [4]



Returning veterans could choose from school, job, business, and farm assistance from the G.I. Bill. (Folder 13, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)

The aid programs offered different amounts of educational aid as well. The G.I. Bill would pay up to $500 per school year for tuition and fees. For reference, costs even at expensive universities rarely exceeded $300 per year at the time. The money could be applied to books, supplies, and other expenses "as are generally required for the successful pursuit and completion of the course by other students in the institution." However, the money was not to be used for "board, lodging, other living expenses and travel." Instead, veterans could apply for subsistence payments amounting to $50 per month or $75 per month with dependents. Both amounts were raised in 1946 and again in 1948. The state's financial aid package was more modest. A student could receive $75 for the first month of school and $50 for each month for eight months thereafter. The amount dropped to $35 per month for nine months during each of the next three years. Not surprisingly, most Oregon veterans chose the G.I. Bill. However, for those with little over 90 days of service, the state plan could pencil out since it would still pay for four years of

school, whereas the G.I. Bill would only pay for one year. This advantage attracted over 700 veterans to apply and gain approval of state educational aid in a nine month period in 1946. [5]

Colleges and Schools Respond

Regardless of whether they chose the federal or state educational aid, veterans took advantage of the opportunity in numbers that few officials predicted. Before the World War II era G.I. Bill program ended, 7,800,000 veterans out of a total population of 15,440,000 were trained. These totals included 2,230,000 in college; 3.480,000 in other schools; 1,400,000 in on-the-job training; and 690,000 in farm training. The total cost of the World War II educational program came to 14.5 billion dollars. The flood of new students brought big changes on college campuses in the late 1940s and early 1950s. During the G.I. Bill peak attendance year of 1947, veterans made up just under half of all college enrollment nationwide in a phenomenon that came to be known as the "G.I. Bulge." Universities across the country ballooned in size. For instance, the University of Michigan grew from under 10,000 students before the war to over 30,000 students in 1948. Syracuse University grew from about 6,000 before the war to 19,000 in 1947. [6]



Quonset huts became a fixture on college campuses across the country as G.I. Bill students flooded in after the war. (Image courtesy msu.edu)

Oregon colleges saw impressive bumps in student population as temporary buildings sprang up on and around campuses to provide classroom and housing facilities. Many campuses devised creative responses to the challenge that combined the use of prefabricated housing, Quonset huts, and trailers. John Lienhard, then a G.I. Bill student at Oregon State College (now University) remembered how "they threw up tacky prefab quarters in their mud flats--squalid quonset-hut housing for married students." Meanwhile, the University of Oregon created the large Amazon and Columbia student housing projects in 1947 from Portland area shipyard housing that was shipped and reconstructed in Eugene not far from the campus. [7] Barbara Gunn, whose husband studied at the University of Oregon on the G.I. Bill in the late 1940s, described the college life for many young families: "College has been anything but a shelter from real life--it's been a baby crib squeezed into one corner, diapers drying over the furnace, and grocery bills instead of prom tickets." [8]

The Legislature responded by turning normal (teacher training) schools in La Grande, Ashland, and Monmouth into liberal arts colleges to meet the demand. Portland area veterans flocked to the Vanport Extension Center and the Portland Extension Center of the State System of Higher Education, which later merged and became Portland State University.

"College has been anything but a shelter from real life--it's been a baby crib squeezed into one corner, diapers drying over the furnace, and grocery bills instead of prom tickets."

Educators expressed a consensus that veterans were the best students ever seen on college campuses. The education editor of the *New York Times* noted in late 1947 that "the G.I.'s are hogging the honor rolls and the Dean's lists." None of the nearly 8,000 veterans studying at Columbia University in 1947 was in "serious

academic difficulty" and even the president of Harvard University admitted that "for seriousness, perceptiveness, steadiness, and all other undergraduate virtues," the veterans were "the best in Harvard's history." One observer captured the difference between the G.I. Bill students and the regular students across the country, writing that "lights stay on late at night in many rooms. The quietness of the dormitories is enough to sober the most chronic of noise-makers. The library is filled with diligent seekers of knowledge. Little interest in anything but studies has been exhibited. The veteran realizes he has a golden opportunity and a well-earned one and he is out to make the most of it." But the solid work ethic caused friction too. One non-veteran Lehigh University student probably betrayed the resentment of many other students when he complained, "veterans work so hard, we have to slave to keep up." [9]

Vocational Education



G.I. Bill on-the-job training was offered for veterans who wanted to be service station attendants. (Image courtesy chevron.com)

G.I. Bill educational opportunities included more than traditional four-year colleges and universities. Many veterans opted for on-the-job and apprentice-based vocational training instead. The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs distributed bulletins describing the possibilities to those more interested in learning a trade than pursuing an academic education. The G.I. Bill had provisions allowing for wages to be supplemented while veterans learned a vocation or worked as apprentices. These allotments mirrored the dollar amount of subsistence allowances given to academic students. Veterans could choose from dozens of options for on-the-job training, which was classified to include occupations requiring from 1,000 to 4,000 hours of training. Examples included automobile painter, bookkeeper, candy maker, sales clerk, radio announcer and service station attendant. Apprenticeships required from 4,000 to 8,000 hours and included automobile mechanic, carpenter, baker, dental technician and upholsterer among others. Officials noted that "such work as truck driving and parking-lot attendant would not qualify because not enough training time is required to learn the occupation." [10]

Worried about potential abuse by employee and employer, readers were reminded that the money was "not intended as a 'dole' for the veteran nor as a means whereby the employer gets cheap labor at government expense." In fact, most of the abuses in the G.I. Bill program centered on trade-level training and education. Vocational and business schools sprang up like mushrooms in the first years of the G.I. Bill. Many of them were scams that collected government money and provided no education of any value. Congress eventually tightened the restrictions on vocational and technical schools in 1949. [11]

Other G.I. Bill Financial Aid

In addition to educational aid, both the G.I. Bill and an Oregon government program offered low interest loan guaranties to help veterans readjust to the civilian economy. The eligibility requirements were the same as for the educational financial aid. The loan programs

Officials noted that "such work as truck driving and parking-lot attendant would not qualify because not enough training

had the objectives to reward veterans for their sacrifices while spurring the economy and providing an investment outlet for the record amounts of savings that existed at the end of the war. Once again, significant differences existed between the federal and Oregon programs. For instance, the G.I. Bill program was more expansive, allowing loans for homes, farms, businesses, equipment, supplies, and other assets. The Oregon program allowed loans only for homes and farms. [12]

time is required to learn the occupation."



This veteran started a business with the aid of a G.I. Bill loan. (Image no. NY669-R courtesy U.S. Veterans Administration)

As originally written, the G.I. Bill program administered by the Veterans Administration had significant flaws. The guaranty was limited to 50% of the loan, not to exceed $2,000 with a maximum interest rate of 4%. The purchase or construction cost could not exceed the "reasonable normal value" as determined by an appraisal and all loans initially required the prior approval of the Veterans Administration. Before long the plan's real world shortcomings became apparent. For example, real estate prices had increased so much that the maximum guaranty of $2,000 was not enough to help most veterans. Many interpreted the "reasonable normal value" to mean prewar prices, which limited loan acceptance. Congress fixed these and others problems in a major 1945 revision that doubled the guaranteed amount to $4,000, deleted the word "normal" to reduce appraisal interpretation problems (leaving the words "reasonable value" instead), extended loan periods, and extended the deadline for veterans to apply for loans. Subsequent changes over the years further refined the program. From 1944 to 1952, over 2,360,000 World War II veterans received G.I. Bill loans. The peak year of 1947 total 640,298 loans, including 562,985 home loans, 24,690 farm loans, and 52,623 business loans. [13]

Veterans were entitled to receive other benefits under the G.I. Bill. For instance, they could receive unemployment pay of $20 a week for up to 52 weeks. Despite earlier worries about encouraging slothful behavior, this part of the program caused few problems. Less than 20% of the funds set aside for the so-called "52-20 Club" were actually used. Instead, most veterans were either working or in school. Still, the program did have safeguards to protect against abuse. A veteran could be disqualified "if he leaves suitable work voluntarily, without cause, or for misconduct, if he fails to accept suitable work when offered" or for other related reasons. Self-employed veterans could qualify for payments under certain circumstances. Other G.I. Bill provisions included offering veterans help finding jobs, setting up military review of dishonorable discharges, and giving top priority for building materials to Veterans Administration hospitals. [14]



Veterans who were unable to find a job could join the "52-20 Club" and collect G.I. Bill unemployment benefits of $20 a week for up to a year. (Folder 13, Box 36, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Impact of the G.I. Bill

Overall, historians have judged the G.I. Bill to be one of the most successful government programs in history. The short term goals of keeping unemployment and potential social strife in check were met. But the long term impact of the program must have surprised even its ardent supporters, with profound benefits not only for the individual veterans but also the nation. The educational benefits opened up universities and other centers of learning to people who previously would not have dreamed of college. The loan guaranty program provided millions of veterans with the means to realize the "American Dream" of owning their own homes. And at a time when the military was segregated and racial discrimination was the norm, Congress took the enlightened approach of making most benefits available regardless of race, gender, or military rank. Taken as a whole, the G.I. Bill has to be seen as a major contributor to the growth of the middle class in the decades after World War II. [15]

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Impressions Of A Returning Vet

By JACK FISLER

Being somewhat of a sentimentalist, I just couldn't keep that lump in my throat from bobbing right up and knocking a few very dry tears out of my eyes as I gazed on our beautiful Memorial Tower last March after three long, long years of drilling, KPing, griping, jumping from airplanes, and in general, making a monkey out of myself and the Japs. There came to my mind, too, that we'd have to start building another such memorial soon or else rededicate the one we have to Emil, Morehead, Calvin, and all the others who would not stand and gaze and reminisce as I was so fortunate to be doing. Yes, it was great to get out of those GI boots and get into "civvies" again but it was an equal thrill to be able to say, "I'm back in school again."

For the past several weeks my life has been so occupied with getting back into the grind or groove (take your choice) that I have hardly had time to take stock of any situation here at our dear Alma Mater. Renewing old acquaintances has been one of the more pleasant phases of my readjustment but even there I have noticed the need for a new rule in social etiquette. Any number of times I have run into familiar faces which should have a name, but for the life of me, the name just would not come out of the cobwebs of my memory. The "face" was having the same trouble so we usually stood there for fully five minutes shaking hands and welcoming each other back before one of us broke down and said, "My name is so-and-so. What in the heck is yours?"

Even with five weeks of State College post-war life behind me, I am not completely up-to-date on all that has transpired since we went away. A college which did not change — and for the better — in three years would not be much of a college. It is natural, therefore, to expect many things here at N. C. State to be different from those of the "good old days." It is an all too obvious fact that the college has been operating under a war-time handicap but, in spite of this, we see that several changes have been made in faculty personnel, curriculums, and student government which are all progressive steps toward the better day for State College. For these progressive steps, credit should be given to the Administration, the faculty, and the war-time student body. We returning veterans, whose outlook on life has been appreciably broadened by travel and experiences in foreign lands, feel a deep satisfaction in knowing that our college is not content to rest on past laurels of educational achievements, but is ever receptive to new ideas brought about by the changing times which will better promote education and better prepare the youth of today for life in the international state which will always offer baffling problems that only the best prepared will be able to solve.

With a large percentage of the student body being veterans, it is easy to see why there is a marked difference in the general student atmosphere or attitudes. Lights stay on late at night in many rooms. The quietness of the dormitories is enough to sober the most chronic of noise-makers. The library is filled with diligent seekers of knowledge. Little interest in anything but studies has been exhibited. The veteran realizes he has a golden opportunity and a well-earned one and he is out to make the most of it.

One cannot fail to observe the tremendous amount of work that has been placed in the hands of so few in carrying on the traditional student extra-curricula activities—publications, organizations, and student government. These men have given liberally of their time and efforts in order that these activities might not die out on our campus. They have fought hard for a progressive State College and through their persistency, the administration has moved forward with them. To these men we, who have been here before and to whom State College has meant so much, owe a great debt of gratitude. We can show our gratitude for their unselfish efforts by pitching in now and helping them carry the ball. Many of these boys have sacrificed their studies which is not necessary when we are all pitching together. While diligence in studies

(Continued on Page 4)

A Mixed Reception: Japanese Americans Return to Oregon

"Please Notice: No Jap Trade"

After enduring long years of internment at relocation centers during most of World War II, Oregon's Japanese Americans suffered further indignities as racist and nativist elements in their old communities tried to prevent their return late in the war and into the postwar period. Many internees heard about hateful intentions of Japanese exclusionists in towns such as Hood River and Gresham and chose to start a new life elsewhere in the West. Others returned to their homes, confronted the prejudice, and rebuilt their lives.



Large groups met in Northwest cities, including Gresham, to demand action against returning Japanese Americans in early 1945. A Bellevue, Washington meeting is shown above. (Folder 22, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Stirring Racist Sentiments



Retiring Oregon U.S. Senator Rufus Holman was outspoken against Japanese Americans. (*Oregon Blue Book*, Oregon Secretary of State, 1943-1944, Page 13)

The absence of the interned Japanese Americans from Oregon communities during the war emboldened many opportunistic neighbors and politicians to stir up mistrust and hatred. Newspaper stories were replete with accounts of Japanese military atrocities during the war and therefore provided ample grist for the mill. Many people made a link between their old Japanese American neighbors and the heinous actions of the enemy. Proponents of harsh measures against all people of Japanese descent quoted respected American military leaders to bolster their case. For example, the Oregon-based *Japanese Exclusion League Journal* highlighted a statement by Navy Admiral "Bull" Halsey that "Japs are not fit to live in a Civilized World!" along with Army General Douglas MacArthur saying that "the Japanese have proved that they are barbarians."[1]

Some Oregon political leaders, including retiring U.S. Senator Rufus Holman, jumped on the bandwagon. But none were more consistently anti-Japanese American than former governor and congressman Walter M. Pierce. In the early 1920s, he supported an Oregon law banning ownership of property by Japanese aliens and a federal law barring further immigration of Japanese aliens. If anything, his nativist tendencies deepened over the next two decades. By World War II, he said "we should never be satisfied until every last Jap has been run out of [the] United States and our Constitution changed so they can never get back." Writing in 1945 under the headline "Japs in U.S. Must Go" in the *Japanese Exclusion League Journal*, Pierce made his case against Japanese Americans:

Their ideals, their racial characteristics, social customs and their way of life are such that they cannot be assimilated into American communities. They will always remain a people apart, a cause of friction and resentment, and a possible peril to our national safety. They are an ever-present menace in our midst. Their presence here is definitely detrimental to our country.

In the half-century they have lived in the United States, they have never been part of community life, but dwellers in miserable "Little Tokyos" or slum farms. On Pearl Harbor Day there were thousands of them, born in the United States and living under the Stars and Stripes who could not speak or understand English.

We are white and Christian. They are yellow and do not accept Christianity. We believe in democracy and individualism. They are totalitarian and believe in the divinity of their emperor. Japanese are aggressive and ever plotting for racial supremacy. ...There is room in the world for both of us, but not on this continent.[2]



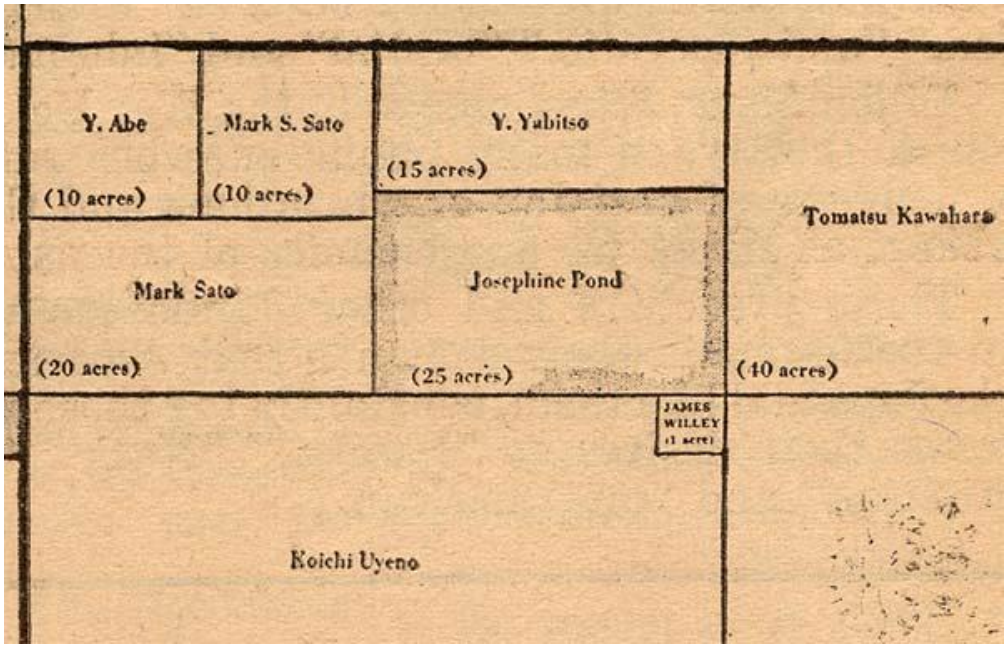
Former governor and congressman Walter Pierce was a leader in the anti-Japanese American movement in Oregon. (Folder 22, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Oregon newspaper editors, reflecting public opinion, ran the gamut on issues related to the return of Japanese Americans. Some newspapers echoed statements of the more rabid nativists. For example, the Albany *Democrat-Herald* went so far as to question the heroism of Japanese American combat soldiers simply because they had not fought directly against Japanese troops. The Albany newspaper was joined by the Pendleton *East Oregonian* in charging that Japanese Americans were plotting to "out-breed" whites in America to gain control. Other editors, in particular former Governor Sprague at the Salem *Statesman*, argued forcefully in favor of fair and equal treatment for returning Japanese Americans. Sprague, regretting his role in the internment process of 1942, wrote often and passionately against what he called the "almost insensate prejudice within the white mind." Most editorial writers, however, avoided the subject, perhaps out of fear about getting too far ahead of public sentiment on such a volatile issue.[3]

Conspiracy Theory

Some advocates of harsh measures pointed to what they claimed to be a long standing conspiracy on the part of the Japanese American community of orchardists in the Hood River Valley. Since the passage of Oregon's 1923 Alien Land Law prohibiting land ownership by Japanese nationals, many purchased land in the names of their children. Former Hood River County Clerk Ken Shoemaker said that his old job of recording deeds had put him "in an excellent position to watch the 'squeeze method' used by the intruding Japs in Hood River Valley as well as other desirable areas where they seek to penetrate...." He charged that Japanese Americans and aliens would systematically purchase property until they had encircled a white landowner. According to Shoemaker, at that point, "needless to say, the bottom has dropped out of the value of what once was excellent property." That land would then be purchased at a low cost and added to the growing Japanese American holdings so "white farmers were gradually being smoked out."[4]

Along the same lines, the secretary of the Hood River American Legion post wrote to Governor Snell asking for the "assistance of your legal staff" because "there is a widespread beleif [sic] among the people here that this law [Oregon's Alien Land Law] has been cleverly bypassed for many years." Snell, too politically savvy to put his fingerprints on such an issue, offered nothing more than a bland response. Generally, the governor did little to discourage actions of nativists in the state. After intense lobbying, the Legislature passed a law in March 1945 closing loopholes in the 1923 law and adding new penalties.[5]



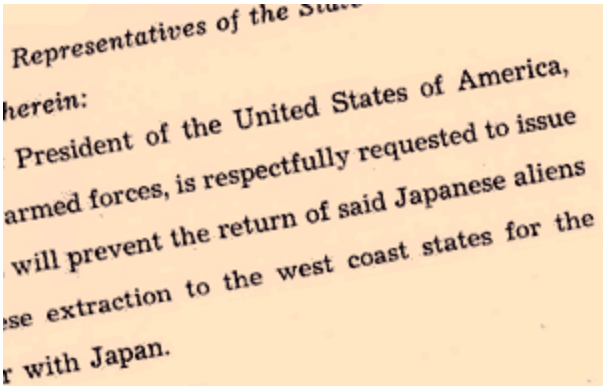
Former Hood River County Clerk Ken Shoemaker claimed Japanese Americans were conspiring to squeeze out white farmers and orchardists in the Hood River Valley. He used the Josephine Pond property as an example. (Folder 22, Box 34, Defense Council Records, OSA)

"The policy of appeasement and pussy-footing should be an example not to follow."

Japanese Americans Begin to Return

Various groups sent a number of resolutions and letters to the governor and Legislature after the federal government's Public Proclamation No. 21 of Dec. 17, 1944 ended the exclusion of people of Japanese descent from the Pacific Coast. Tensions rose in several communities such as Gresham, Sherwood, and Forest Grove in anticipation of the returning internees. One public meeting in Gresham drew over 1,000 people demanding that the return migration be prevented. Delegations to the meeting from Multnomah, Clackamas and Hood River counties called for the deportation of aliens and other actions against Japanese Americans. Meanwhile, Harold Barr, with the Clackamas Implement Dealers Association, informed the governor that many businessmen and farmers in the Oregon City area were "genuinely concerned about the return of the Japs to this district at this time." Barr urged strong action by the governor "against letting them infiltrate back now." And he claimed that Snell would "gain in stature" from taking a stand on the issue: "The policy of appeasement and pussy-footing should be an example not to follow."[6]

The Oregon House of Representatives responded to the political pressure by passing Joint Memorial No. 9 on Feb. 28, 1945. The statement called on President Roosevelt to prevent the return of Japanese Americans "for the duration of the present war with Japan." The legislators based their request on what they described as "considerable antagonism to such return" in Oregon as well as the claim that the internees would be "safer and cause less civilian disturbance in the relocation centers."[7]


Representatives of the Sta
herein:
President of the United States of America,
armed forces, is respectfully requested to issue
will prevent the return of said Japanese aliens
se extraction to the west coast states for the
r with Japan.

The Oregon House of Representatives and Senate called on President Roosevelt to prevent the return of Japanese Americans to the west coast.

"House Joint Memorial No. 9" (https://www.oregonhistoryproject.org/articles/historical-records/oregon-house-joint-memorial-number-9/) Oregon Legislative Assembly, Feb. 28, 1945. (Oregon History Project)

The former internees who did trickle back to their old homes during 1945 were often met with open hostility by white neighbors. Some found their homes looted and their orchards vandalized while others endured boycotts on the purchase of their fruits and vegetables or heard racial slurs or threats. A few were assaulted physically. Some merchants in the Hood River Valley refused to offer service to the returning Japanese Americans. Ralph Sherrieb put a sign in the window of his rural grocery store that read: "PLEASE NOTICE: NO JAP TRADE." Sherrieb said that "we just don't recognize 'em around here." We don't want 'em and we tell 'em to stay away from us. So far as we are concerned, it's once a Jap, always a Jap." The Hood River post of the American Legion called for the "total elimination of all alien Japanese and their sons and daughters of American citizenship from the Hood River area...and 'fair disposal' of property held by these people."[8]

Glare of the National Spotlight

Amid escalating hostility, Hood River landed in the national spotlight in January 1945 after the local post of the American Legion removed the names of 16 Japanese American servicemen from a military service honor roll in front of the county courthouse. The action caused a firestorm of indignation and drew the condemnation of magazines and newspapers across the country. A column by New York newspaper writer Thomas L. Stokes focused on the hero's death of Hood River resident Frank T. Hachiya who fell to a sniper's bullet after volunteering for a dangerous mission in the Philippines. Although his name had been omitted from the honor roll in the first place (apparently because he had registered for the draft outside of Hood River), his story epitomized patriotism and sacrifice. Clearly, the removal of the names of other brave Japanese Americans was well beyond what most Americans would tolerate. Yet the local Legion leaders held firm for weeks under increasingly intense pressure to restore the names.



The farms and orchards of Hood River County drew national attention after the local American Legion post removed the names of 16 Japanese Americans from the county's war service honor roll in early 1945. Tensions quickly rose across the county. **Oregon Scenic Images Collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s**

The ongoing controversy caused problems for Governor Snell, not known as a friend of Japanese American rights. Snell and other state officials were concerned about the possibility of violence in the tense war of words. He received a state police officer's report on the "Japanese situation [in]

Hood River County" at the end of January 1945. The officer surveyed the sheriff, police chief, district attorney, county judge and others about the possibility of "mob violence in the area." While most discounted large scale violence, one was "afraid there would be scattered cases of fires and assaults." The editor of the local newspaper heard that "certain men...were carrying firearms and had made the statement that they would shoot the first Jap on sight, but due to the fact that he was acquainted with these men, believed this was only a rumor."[9]

/oregon-state-archives/item/22105#lg=1&slide=0)

Snell was also concerned with the political fallout of the negative publicity for the state and received advice on what he could do to diffuse the crisis. Hubert Holloway, a New York City public relations expert and former Snell advisor was looking out for Snell's political future when he offered his suggestions:

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS · INC.
NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

February 20, 1945

Dear Earl:

Quite frankly, Earl, I know that you have been concerned by the Hood River situation. It is doing Oregon no good because the whole situation is being built into one of these national incidents similar to that we had in Bastrop, Louisiana, during the days of the Klu-Klux-Klan [sic].

At one time you let me be your public relations advisor. If I can still act in that capacity, I would like to strongly urge that you do everything possible -- as you are no doubt already doing -- to get the Hood River people to restore these names. In fact, I would like very much for you to be able to announce that it had been done because I know that it would be helpful to you throughout the country.

Cordially,
Hubert Holloway[10]

Snell replied to Holloway that he had discussed the issue several times with the Hood River post commander of the American Legion who maintained that "their position is logical and well founded." The governor relayed that the commander "had stated on several occasions if any branch of the federal government will direct a communication to them which contains a statement that the names of those in question are Japanese loyal to the United States that such names will be reinstated immediately." But

while President Harry Truman decried the post's actions, apparently no federal agency had satisfied the Hood River commander's demands. Meanwhile, national American Legion officials, who normally allowed local posts great autonomy, finally gave in to the pressure and embarrassment by instructing the Hood River post to restore the names. The post's leaders, even while submitting to orders, remained defiant, which caused the editors at *The Oregonian* to muse that they had "repented under compulsion." The newspaper noted that the Hood River post, "while restoring the names of the nisei service men, utters in the same breath its decision, a continuing resolve, to oppose the return of any Japanese to the Hood river valley."[11]



Former Governor Charles Sprague spoke forcefully in support of Japanese American rights. (Photographs, Gov. Sprague Records, OSA)

Enlightened Actions

But along with the many instances of blatant racism, intimidation, and hatred, some Oregonians welcomed returning Japanese Americans and publicly campaigned in support. Many church leaders and others rallied against anti-Japanese American legislation, calling it "anti-Christian and undemocratic." They argued that "passage of such legislation would serve as a precedent and an invitation to further legislation which might well penalize Americans because they are Christians or because they are not Christians; because they are property owners or simply because they live on the wrong side of the tracks." The campaign peaked in Gresham at a March 16, 1945 meeting that drew about 1,000 supporters. The event featured a speech by former Governor Sprague in which he said that he knew of "not one single act of sabotage or traitorism committed or on record as having been committed by any person of Japanese extraction in the state of Oregon, and to the best of my knowledge I know of none on the entire Pacific Coast."[12]



Sherman Burgoyne and Mrs. Max Moore, leaders of the fight to restore the names of Japanese American servicemen, look at the Hood River County honor roll after local American Legion leaders finally relented. (*The Oregonian*, June 16, 1946, Magazine Section, Page 1)

Meanwhile, others rallied like-minded individuals in Hood River County. The Reverend Sherman Burgoyne worked tirelessly to restore the names of the Japanese American servicemen to the honor roll and to organize support in Hood River for fair treatment. Other citizens formed the League for Liberty and Justice, led by Mrs. Max Moore, a grandmother and operator of an electric shop. Moore said the group organized "because we did not want the country to think that everyone in Hood River approved of the removal of the names from the county courthouse. We wanted America to know that there was tolerance as well as intolerance in Hood River, that many Hood River people believed in fair play. We took the title of our organization from the final words of the pledge of allegiance to the American flag--'with liberty and justice for all.' That's what we stand for."[13]

Many Oregonians resisted the pressure to reject Japanese Americans. Taro Asai experienced the value of good neighbors first hand when he returned home to his 40-acre orchard near Hood River. A staff sergeant in the Army, Asai had read in the Army newspapers about his name being removed from the honor roll. And he certainly was alarmed by letters from home that told about the organized resistance proclaiming "there is no room in Hood River for Japs." So he felt great relief in seeing with his

own eyes that his neighbors, Carl Smith and his wife, had taken good care of his fruit trees. Asai later commented that "the Smiths have shown us what the brotherhood of man really means. They watched over our farm while my parents were in the relocation camp and my brothers and I were in the army. They have been the best friends and neighbors anyone could possibly have." Carl Smith returned the compliments in recounting his experience: "The Asais always have been our friends. We helped them out when they were in trouble. It cost us some of our friends. They accused us of being 'Jap lovers.' Of course that was ridiculous. We were only helping neighbors in trouble."[14]



Sagoro Asai and his wife look at photos of their 4 sons who served in the military. The couple spent the war in an internment camp. (*The Sunday Oregonian*, June 16, 1946, Magazine Section, Page 1)

Patience Rewarded

Only about half of the prewar population of Japanese Americans returned to the Hood River Valley. Those who did return kept a low profile until the hatred fanned by Walter Pierce, Ken Shoemaker, and others dissipated. The end of the war in August 1945 started the slow healing process. While some neighbors, both white and Japanese Americans, refused to let go of their bitterness, most found ways to get along and move forward. Japanese Americans eventually reintegrated with the social and cultural life of the community, returning to stores, schools, and churches. Government responded too. In the late 1940s the federal government reimbursed a small portion of the economic losses suffered by Japanese Americans due to internment. The Oregon Supreme Court struck down the Alien Land Law in 1949. Hundreds of Oregon Issei, those born in Japan, applied for citizenship after Congress lifted the ban in 1952. And in 1965 Congress finally reversed the strict and racist immigration quotas that dated back to the 1920s.[15]

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A State of Change: Oregon After World War II

In Search of Peace and Prosperity

Oregonians looked forward with great anticipation as World War II drew to a close. They endured over 15 years of the Depression and war and wanted nothing more than to live the "American Dream" so long postponed. While they faced significant challenges, most Oregonians found their much desired peace and prosperity in the next 15 years. After a few early sputters immediately following the war, the economy grew along with the population. Faith in American ingenuity and technology fueled much of the growth as mechanization and economies of scale helped the state's farms and factories reach unheard of productivity. New chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides combined with improved irrigation and farm machinery to revolutionize farming. Likewise, chainsaws and logging trucks, along with bigger and more efficient lumber and plywood mills drove big gains in the wood products industry. These advances, coupled with rapid highway and power system expansions, helped Oregonians build a relatively stable prosperity through the 1950s. [1]



The use of chemicals in farming accelerated in postwar years, leading to increased production. (**Photo no. OAG613, Agriculture Dept. Records, OSA (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/orarc/id/1220/rec/17)**)

Changes Down on the Farm

The focus on bigger, more mechanized farms accelerated a demographic shift from rural to urban that had begun decades earlier. The process became a vicious cycle for many small farmers who could not compete with larger farms that used huge tractors and combines and applied significant amounts of chemicals to their crops. Most small farmers couldn't hope to afford or get loans for the new technologies. Worse, profits proved elusive as prices for many farm products fell with the increased productivity brought by mechanization and farm chemicals. Many small farmers sold out to their larger neighboring farms or to the increasingly prominent corporate farms. Some went to work as employees of the larger farms but most found new ways to make a living. Those farms that survived the modernization

trend generally prospered during the period. Overall farm acreage increased, largely a result of vast new stretches of irrigated land in eastern Oregon.



Farm machinery increased in size and number in the 1950s. With fewer farm laborers needed, many rural Oregonians migrated to towns and cities. (Photo no. 3040, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

The drop in rural farm population caused problems for some small communities. Larger farms supported only a fraction of the laborers previously needed as dozens of men and horses could be replaced by one large tractor and operator. Moreover, other forces conspired to drain away the population as wide gaps between farm and non-farm incomes drove many farm children to leave for brighter horizons in towns and cities. From 1950 to 1960 many Oregon farm towns lost residents. For example, Scotts Mills dropped 28.1%; Yamhill lost 21.1%; and Brownsville lost 26.4%. Some communities closed their local schools to district consolidations and watched their children ride off in buses to larger schools miles away; others lost banks, stores, and cafes as fewer customers came to town for services. [2]

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Booming Timber Industry

Timber industries saw dramatic change in the years after World War II. Increased demand resulted from the unprecedented housing boom of postwar America. Millions of people across the country applied their considerable war savings, G.I. Bill loans, and other resources to owning their own homes. The phenomenon was good news for those making their livings in Oregon's forests and mills. As earlier seen in Wisconsin, Washington, and elsewhere, timber companies first depleted the resources of an area and then moved on to virgin territory. Logging operations shifted from the largely consumed stands of old growth timber in northwestern Oregon to the south where Lane, Douglas, and Coos counties offered thick forests of Douglas fir and other desirable species stretching over the horizons. With these new stands available, timber production grew sharply through the late 1940s and early 1950s, before stabilizing at about nine million board feet per year. Technology was at the heart of much of the production gains. Chainsaws slashed the time needed to fell and cut up trees. Tractors and other equipment helped to move the cut logs to loading sites quickly. And bigger equipment cut thousands of logging roads to rugged and remote locations making for easy access by log trucks. [3]

There was plenty of work for large and small timber and mill operations during the period. New logging roads meant an end to dependence on logging railroads and large scale camps needed to house loggers, which required huge investments. Instead, small operators, known as "gyppos" commuted to work on smaller, more accessible tracts of timberland. Their investment was relatively modest, often consisting of a small inventory of log trucks, tractors, chainsaws and related equipment. Considering the money to be made, local bankers were more than willing to loan money to most gyppos. Small lumber and veneer mills thrived during the period as well, often sending semi-finished products to larger mills or specializing in niche markets such as railroad ties. [4]



Road graders and other heavy equipment cut thousands of new roads into Oregon's forest lands in the 1950s, providing unprecedented access for legions of loggers. (Separated Photographs, Forestry Dept. Records, OSA)

As earlier seen in Wisconsin, Washington, and elsewhere, timber companies first depleted the resources of an area and then moved on to virgin territory.

But by the late 1950s, these small operators were beginning to feel the pinch. New and more expensive harvesting and milling technologies were needed to compete. The smaller stands of timber available to the gyppos became increasingly hard to find. Lumber markets became more consolidated, often to the detriment of small operators. And new government regulations began to drive up the cost of doing business. Small wood products operators were being marginalized just as small farmers had been.

Meanwhile, large corporations, such as Weyerhauser and Georgia-Pacific, were applying vertical integration techniques to the timber industry. The companies bought huge stands of timber, employed armies of loggers and log truck drivers, and operated massive mills with hundreds of workers. These operations dominated the economies of many small communities, and they brought prosperity--as long as the timber supply held out. However, the decline of the gyppos and the domination of the highly concentrated corporate interests made trouble for timber communities in the coming decades. Still, new technologies were developing to postpone the decline. For example, pulp and paper, plywood, and hardboard mills began making better use of lesser quality wood and wood waste materials that previously would have been burned. During this time, Lebanon became home to the largest plywood mill under one roof in the world. [5]



Loggers exploited smaller, more accessible stands of timber during the 1950s. (**Image no. HSTC146, courtesy Salem Public Library, Special Collections (https://www.salemhistory.net/digital/collection/specialcol/id/1561/rec/1)**)

Transportation Growth Triggers New Development Patterns

Transportation developments, while generally spurring on economic growth, delivered a mixed bag for many Oregon communities. By the late 1940s, the pent-up demand for automobiles caused by curtailed wartime production was finally being satisfied and motor vehicle registrations climbed. Even more than before, cars, and the mobility they provided, took a central place in American social and cultural trends. Encouraged by governments on every level, old roads and highways throughout Oregon were improved, with many being widened, straightened, or paved for the first time. New roads, highways, and bridges moved from the drawing board to construction as the number of miles of state highways and county roads shot up sharply. Many of these took commuters to new suburban developments and subdivisions, especially in the booming areas around Portland. Beaverton grew by over 165% from 1950 to 1960; Milwaukie shot up over 72%; and Oswego ballooned by nearly 168%. [6]

The federal government played a central role in developing Oregon's road and highway system. Congress extended federal road aid to urban areas beginning in 1944. And it raised the percentage of federal contribution to highway construction in the 1950s. But the big change came in 1956 when Congress authorized the interstate highway system and contributed 90% of construction costs. The rise of these four lane limited access highways transformed growth patterns. Depending on the alignment of the freeway, some towns boomed while others busted. New businesses such as service stations, cafes, and motels sprang up around interchanges. Meanwhile, many small downtowns began to decline, unable to compete against bigger towns and cities with more varied and lower priced goods. Some farms and communities were bisected by the freeway as people who formerly drove a mile down the road to see their neighbors, now found themselves driving 10 miles to the nearest overpass. [7]



Federal aid fueled construction of freeways across the country in the decades after World War II. Shown here is Interstate 80N near Mayer State Park along the Columbia River. (Photo no. 6624, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

Depending on the alignment of the freeway, some towns boomed while others busted. New businesses such as service stations, cafes, and motels sprang up around interchanges. Meanwhile, many small downtowns began their slow declines, unable to compete against bigger towns and cities with more varied and lower priced goods.

Tourists Flock to Oregon

New roads and highways catered to the wanderlust of Oregonians and tourists from around the country. New cars, cheap gas, smooth roads, and beautiful Oregon scenery brought record numbers of tourists to the state during the 1950s. Even before the end of World War II, Governor Snell and the Postwar Readjustment and Development Commission saw the value of drawing visitors to the state. And John Kelly, executive director of the commission, claimed in 1948 that "the tourist business in the Pacific Northwest can be developed into the Number One Industry." He offered advice for how to improve the industry:

What we need in the Pacific Northwest are more first-class hotels and first-class restaurants. The tourist business demands these services, for not all tourists are looking for some cheap place to stay over night, nor a hot-dog stand. There is not a single trailor [sic] camp in the Northwest that is as modern and up-to-date as some of the delux [sic] establishments in California or the Southwest. Restaurants on the coast should specialize in seafood--the tourist can find steaks and chicken in any town.

Hotels, motels, filling stations and garages, all of whom come in contact with tourists, should be thoroughly familiar with their state and highways and be able to give information about scenery, points of interest and recreations. They should be supplied with pictorial literature dealing with attractions the visitors may wish to see. A little background on historic events that have taken place in the immediate vicinity is another excellent talking point. [8]



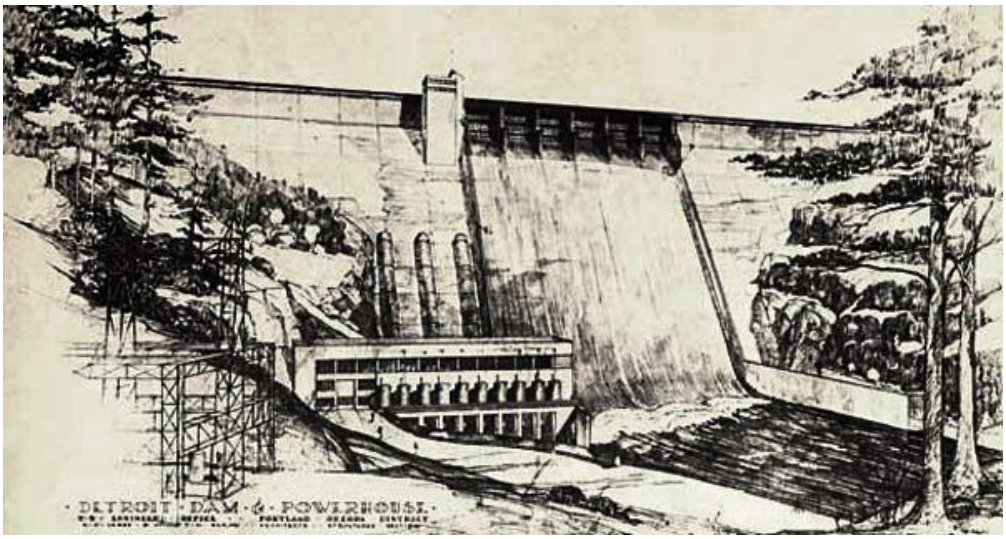
Tourists enjoy a sunny day in a convertible with Mt. Hood in the background. (Photo no. 2982, Highway Dept. Records, OSA)

Throughout the 1950s, increasing numbers of Oregonians and out of state tourists visited the spectacular state parks along the coast, marveling at the crashing waves, hurtling down the sand dunes, and strolling on beaches. Others explored historic Highway 99, stopping at every tacky amusement park after succumbing to earnest pleading from their children. New or improved highways provided better access to the Cascade Mountains with fishing, camping, and other recreational opportunities. The centennial of Oregon statehood in 1959 attracted visitors from around the country as local communities from every corner of the state staged colorful festivities commemorating the event. Many Oregon men grew long beards and dressed in period costumes to help set the mood for the celebrations.

Dam Construction

In addition to a massive infusion of money for highways, the federal government contributed to Oregon's development in other ways. Jetties were built or extended along the coast and rivers were dredged for better navigation. But no federal investment compared in scope or impact with the dam construction on the Columbia, Willamette, and other rivers in the state. Development was driven by a powerful mix of

political and business forces. Perhaps the strongest force behind the building of dams in the 1950s was the general mood of the times. With the undeniable power of the United States on the world stage, many Americans believed the nation was destined to succeed, that progress was inevitable, and that science and technology were the way forward. They harbored a belief that man could, and should, shape nature for the betterment of all. And most people were impressed with the results of earlier projects, such as the Bonneville Dam, that were built on the Columbia River in the 1930s.



An artist rendering of the Detroit Dam and Powerhouse on the North Santiam River east of Salem. Boosters promoted the huge amounts of electricity gained from such projects. The dam was completed in 1952. (Photo no. OWR0046, Water Resources Dept. Records, OSA)

Proponents released reams of studies, reports, and analyses--all very scientific--to bolster their arguments. Among other points, they hailed the ability of dams to control floods, citing the millions of dollars of damage regularly caused by rivers rampaging through towns and farms. They welcomed the millions of kilowatts of electricity to be generated while arguing that if Oregon didn't develop the power, someplace else would, leaving the state at a competitive disadvantage. One memorandum from 1944 promoting hydroelectric power argued, "it is very important to the Willamette basin to have this power program progress on an economic basis instead of letting our neighbors of Puget Sound, Spokane and Los Angeles force upon us some system which will deprive us of our natural economic advantage." Proponents also trumpeted the improvements to navigation that could follow the dams. Certainly barges on the Columbia River were to benefit from more full development of the river, but one optimistic suggestion saw projects "carrying navigation up the [Willamette] Valley as far as Eugene...." And, supporters pointed to opening up vast amounts of new and productive farm land through irrigation made possible by dams. For example, one projection claimed that "The [Willamette] Valley could easily be made to produce from $100,000,000 to $200,000,000 of dairy products if we could irrigate pasture and feed lands during the dry months." Further arguments focused on the recreational potential of large reservoirs created by dams. [9]

"It is very important to the Willamette basin to have this power program progress on an economic basis instead of letting our neighbors of Puget Sound, Spokane and Los Angeles force upon us some system which will deprive us of our natural economic advantage."



Boaters and campers flock to the edge of Detroit Reservoir in 1955. Dam proponents pointed to recreation as one of many reasons to build more. (Photographs, Box 1, Water Resources Dept. Records, OSA)

Despite the onslaught of pressure to build dams, the massive development of Oregon's rivers was not a foregone conclusion in the postwar years. Conservation groups, commercial and sport fishermen, Indian tribes, and others fought several dam proposals during the late 1940s. Among others, opponents tried to block the proposed McNary and The Dalles dams as well as the ambitious Willamette Valley Project that envisioned numerous dams on the Willamette River and its tributaries. Opponents railed against the loss of scenic rivers, the destruction of communities, and damage to fish habitat and migrating salmon. Even the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service argued in 1946 for a ten-year moratorium on dam building on the Columbia and lower Snake rivers. But then the devastating 1948 Columbia River flood wiped Vanport off the map, leaving 15 people dead and 18,000 homeless. The disaster turned public and political opinions even more in favor of building dams to protect against future floods. [10]



For many, the Vanport Flood in 1948 underscored the need for dams to aid in flood control. **Photo from Oregon Encyclopedia essay on Vanport (https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/vanport/)**.

Into the 1960s, the Army Corps of Engineers, despite ongoing protests and lawsuits, oversaw massive new dam building projects on both the Columbia and Willamette rivers. These included the John Day, McNary, and The Dalles dams on the main stem of the Columbia River as well as the Brownlee and Oxbow dams on the Snake River at the border with Idaho. The Willamette River and its tributaries were largely tamed during this period as well. The Middle Fork of the Willamette River saw the construction of Dexter, Lookout Point, and Hills Creek dams. And Congress appropriated tens of millions of dollars for Foster, Green Peter, Big Cliff, and Detroit dams on the forks of the Santiam River. Officials originally planned to build a huge dam on the McKenzie River but its reputation as a world-famous trout fishing stream saved it from being flooded by a reservoir. Testimony at Portland hearings about the proposed dam pointed to film actors, famed writers, and other notables who regularly fished the river. In an unusual victory for those who stood in the way of development, the Corps altered its plans and instead completed work on the smaller Cougar and Blue River dams along tributaries of the McKenzie River. [11]

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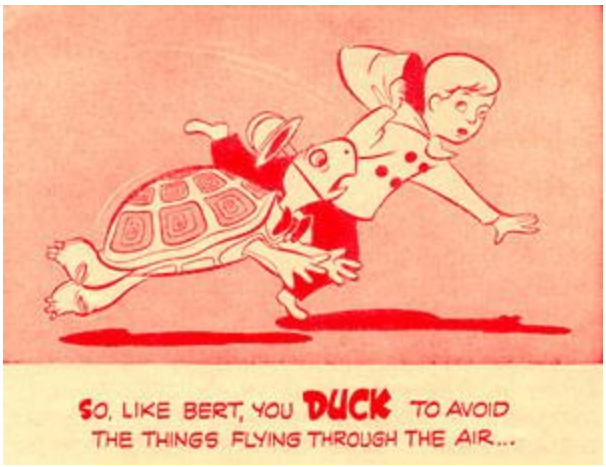
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Threats From Abroad and Enemies at Home: The Cold War

The Specter of Communism Captivates the Nation

On a domestic level most Oregonians and other Americans enjoyed peace and prosperity in the late 1940s and 1950s. But on another level they nursed Cold War fears as the Soviet Union and Communist China advanced their agendas on the world stage. Meanwhile, at home they wondered if communist spies were around every corner plotting the destruction of American institutions from within. They heard Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy make shocking charges against important government officials and they watched as some of Hollywood's stars, such as Orson Welles and Edward G. Robinson, were blacklisted for alleged ties with communist organizations. They saw teachers, professors, and others scrutinized and forced to sign loyalty oaths. And they wondered: Were their children's teachers communists? Was their coworker a communist? ...or their neighbor? These questions, and fears of an atomic war, crept into the minds of many Oregonians during a prosperous but unsettling period.

The Federal Civil Defense Administration



(Image courtesy conelrad.com)

promoted the "Duck and Cover" campaign in 1951. It consisted of an animated film, a radio program, a record album and a pamphlet, that taught the nation's youth what to do in case of atomic attack by the Soviet Union.

Watch Duck and Cover (https://youtu.be/IKqXu-5jw6o?si=Vx3BzkJJAE4qTylm), a U.S. Civil Defense film showing how to be safe in an atomic attack. (Produced 1951)

The Global Cold War

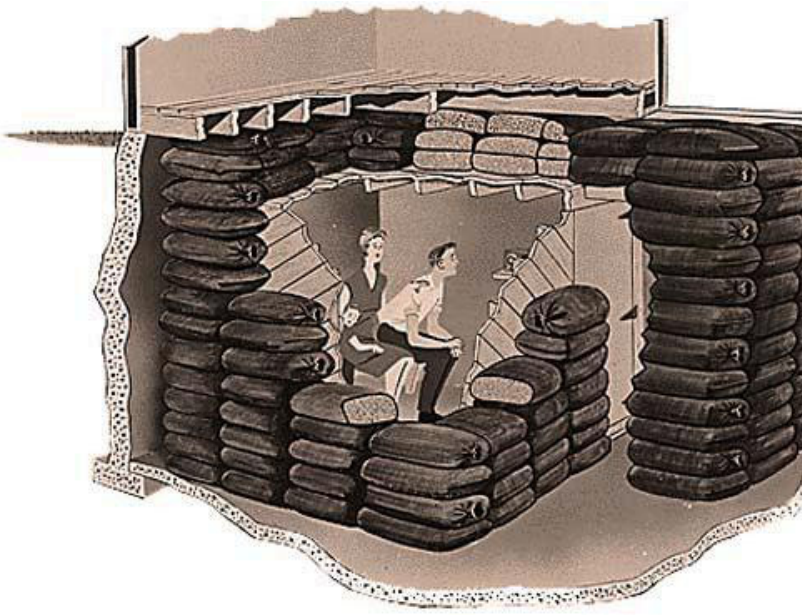


The phenomenon that came to be known as the Cold War was destined to become the defining geopolitical, ideological, and economic struggle of the last half of the 20th Century. The global contest took its name because direct hostilities never occurred between the two main opponents, the United States and the Soviet Union. On the heels of World War II, the Soviet Union successfully engineered the creation of communist regimes in several eastern European nations such as Poland, Hungary, East Germany and Czechoslovakia. These buffer

Students practice ducking and covering during a classroom drill. The efforts were intended to protect the children in the event of an atomic attack. (Image courtesy detnews.com)

states formed part of the Eastern Bloc and were divided from western Europe by what Winston Churchill called the "iron curtain," in reference to the brutal and repressive communist regimes. (**Listen to a 1946 Winston Churchill speech about the iron curtain (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJxUAcADV70)**)

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall oversaw a massive infusion of economic aid to western European nations, both to bolster these countries as American trading partners and ward off the effectiveness of leftist political movements. In 1949 the United States joined 10 western European countries and Canada to form the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO) for collective security. The alliance would consider an attack on one member to be an attack against all. The stage was set for decades of standoff in Europe. With the Soviet Union successfully detonating an atomic weapon in 1949, a generation of brinksmanship became governed by the concept of mutually assured destruction (MAD). The idea was that neither side would attack the other because, considering the destructive power of the atomic weapons, to do so would be suicidal. To reinforce the concept, both sides engaged in an expensive arms race, each developing more powerful bombs and more effective delivery systems.



This 1957 drawing shows a basement fallout shelter. Many Americans built basement or backyard shelters, hoping to survive an atomic attack.

Artist's rendition courtesy National Archives (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/542104)

With the stalemate in Europe, the Cold War moved to lower level struggles around the world. As the Soviet Union projected its influence and ideology globally, the United States and its allies worked to check its moves. But communist influence was on the rise in the late 1940s and the success of communist forces in taking control of China in 1949 alarmed America and its allies. When war broke out in 1950 on the Korean Peninsula between communist and western aligned forces, the United States and 15 other United Nations members entered the conflict in an attempt to roll back communist aggression. Over the next three years, UN forces battled Soviet supported North Korean troops, and later Chinese forces, but could achieve nothing more than a stalemate. At the same time, Soviet and American intelligence operatives fought a behind the scenes war in countries such as Iran and Guatemala in the mid-1950s, building and toppling governments in the process. Meanwhile, in the 1950s and beyond, communist operatives followed a pattern of influencing and co-opting forces fighting for independence from colonial control in such places as Vietnam. These efforts, along with western attempts at influence led to the so-called proxy wars that became an important part of the global Cold War.



Medics treat wounded soldiers during the Korean War. United Nations forces fought North Korean and Chinese communist forces to a stalemate. **Image courtesy Truman Presidential Museum and Library (https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/photograph-records/2007-716)**

Naming Names in Hollywood



Film director Elia Kazan chose to "name names" in the hunt for communists in America. Others in the film industry refused to cooperate and were blacklisted. (Image courtesy dga.org)

The brutal and insidious methods used by Soviet operatives to crush democratic parties and governments in eastern Europe in the wake of World War II were not lost on American observers. Many could imagine that the very same tactics were being used by communists in the United States. Political pressure grew in the late 1940s to find communist spies and those spreading communist ideology. Opportunistic politicians on the Congressional House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) quickly found high profile targets in Hollywood, reasoning that communists were using popular films to influence Americans. Certainly, many people in the motion-picture and other creative and intellectual professions had flirted with communist ideology during the desperate economic times of the Depression. Others had friends or relatives who were Communist Party members. During hearings beginning in 1947, actors, directors, screenwriters and others were called to expose and testify against their colleagues. Some, such as director Elia Kazan, chose to "name names," saying it was patriotic to do so. Others went along because of fear of the consequences if they didn't. Many refused to cooperate on a number of civil rights grounds, leading to two fates. One group, dubbed the "Hollywood Ten," was convicted on contempt charges, its members eventually spending up to a year in prison. Those convicted were also blacklisted, or frozen out of employment for over a decade. Another group of more than 300 people employed in films and related industries was blacklisted during the worst of the so-called "Red Scare."

Loyalty Investigations and Oaths

At the same time the federal government adopted the use of loyalty oaths to purge employees with communist connections and enforce conformity. Bowing to political pressure to hunt down "subversives" in the federal government, President Truman signed Executive Order 9835 in 1947 establishing the Federal Employee Loyalty Program. The program directed the FBI to look for "reasonable doubt" of loyalty. Loyalty boards were created to review the field investigations into questionable people. Those accused were not allowed to confront their confidential accusers and no appeals were allowed. From 1948 to 1958, over 4.5 million employee names were checked, resulting in 27,000 field investigations. While 5,000 people voluntarily resigned (many no doubt from the stress alone), only 378 employees were dismissed or denied employment. None of these were proven to be spies.[1]



State college and university professors feared the Oregon Legislature would follow neighboring states that went on witch hunts against professors accused of being communists. Shown above is Friendly Hall on the University of Oregon campus. (**Oregon Scenic Images collection (https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/oregon-state-archives/item/62339#lg=1&slide=0)**)



Mark Hatfield. (Governors Photos, OSA)

Meanwhile, many state legislators got into the act as well. Both the California and Washington legislatures formed committees with the goal of purging communists and sympathizers from state universities. The committees conducted hearings, required loyalty oaths, and applied other means of pressure with the help of university governing boards and administrators. The actions of these committees led to turmoil among professors at the University of California and the University of Washington. Oregon avoided the strife on its campuses but very nearly passed a law that would have required public school teachers and state college professors to submit a signed statement saying "whether the applicant is or has been a member of or is or has been affiliated with the Communist Party or any other organization that believes in, advocates or teaches the overthrow of the United States Government or the government of the State of Oregon by force or any unlawful means." The bill also would call on teachers and professors to state if they had "contributed time or money to the support of, or has subscribed to, taught or advocated the principles of such party or organization." Those who had would need to submit a detailed explanation of their participation. Anyone who failed to cooperate could have been fired.[2]

Commenting later on his political tactics, Sprague "figured this was a time when 'children of light' might learn something from the 'children of darkness.'"

Only intense and last-minute backroom lobbying by former Governor Sprague averted passage of the bill. Those who would have been affected by it were largely muzzled. Maurine Neuberger, a legislator who had been active in the teachers' union later remembered the oppressive climate of the 1950s, saying "teachers were afraid to speak out...afraid to participate in politics." Professors were prohibited from directly contacting legislators during the session by the State Board of Higher Education. The board, fearful of budget reprisals, remained neutral on the issue. With the affected parties silenced, the measure passed the state Senate by a 25 to 5 vote. It fell to Sprague, as the most outspoken newspaper editor on the issue, to kill the bill in the House. He quickly prowled the State Capitol corridors looking for legislators to lobby, cornering freshman representative Mark Hatfield, one of the co-sponsors of the bill, three times before convincing him to drop his support. Still fearing defeat, Sprague resorted to an uncharacteristic backroom deal with the house leadership to kill the bill by sending it back to committee just before adjournment. Commenting later on his political tactics, Sprague "figured this was a time when 'children of light' might learn something from the 'children of darkness.'"[3]

High McCarthyism

Although many state legislators and members of Congress proved more than willing to place limits on personal liberties in the pursuit of communists, none could match the determination of the Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy. McCarthy grabbed the national spotlight on Feb. 9, 1950 during a speech in which he held up a list that he claimed included over 200 "card-carrying" members of the Communist Party. His timing was perfect to raise the issue to a fever pitch. In the weeks before McCarthy's speech, the Soviet Union tested an atomic bomb, China fell to the communists, Alger Hiss was convicted of perjury in a case related to communist espionage, and a physicist on the Manhattan Project confessed to giving atomic secrets to the Soviet Union.



George C. Marshall, instrumental in winning the war and helping Europe recover in the postwar period, had his reputation attacked by Wisconsin Senator McCarthy. (Image courtesy foreignaffairs.org)

Over the next four years, McCarthy used his position on a Senate subcommittee to carry on a crusade against communism, leaving decency and broken lives in his wake. His committee worked overtime to examine 653 witnesses during 1953 and early 1954. McCarthy's tactics included floating wild accusations and browbeating witnesses, even attacking the reputations of leaders such as George C. Marshall and Adlai Stevenson. Relying on extensive press and television coverage, whose reporters couldn't resist his sensationalistic tactics, McCarthy portrayed himself as a tough guy. He often used vulgar words to characterize the "vile and scurrilous" objects of his attacks.

McCarthy's appearance at an annual picnic sponsored by the Multnomah Republican Club in 1951 threatened to expose divisions within the Oregon Republican Party. Many newspaper editorial writers lashed out at the senator in advance of his visit. Once again, former Governor Sprague, representing the moderate wing of the party from his editor's desk at the Salem *Statesman*, led the charge, writing that "because the Statesman regards him as a mendacious demagogue it protests his appearance in Oregon as



Senator McCarthy wielded great power on the national stage in the early 1950s. Even President Eisenhower, who deplored McCarthy's tactics, felt politically unable to publicly rebuke him.

a guest of an organization identified with the republican party." But undaunted by the negative press about McCarthy, Republican Governor Douglas McKay, along with much of the state Republican Party leadership, attended the picnic. Despite the governor's presence, only a handful of elected officials dared to show up. In the end, the crowd was smaller than expected for a speaker who was regularly in the headlines. Reports also noted a small band of hecklers on hand to greet McCarthy. The picnic was the senator's only appearance in Oregon.[4]

A Bully Falls

After years of bullying, harassing and failing to produce hard evidence against his targets, the public finally tired of McCarthy's tactics. Two events in 1954 combined to turn public opinion against the senator for good. First, respected television journalist Edward R. Murrow presented a program featuring clips of McCarthy speaking. Among other accusations leveled, the senator said the Democratic Party had been "in charge of twenty years of treason." In another clip he made similar charges against the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. More clips included exchanges in which he berated witnesses, including an Army general. Edited in this way, viewers got their most meaningful look at McCarthy's methods, and they didn't like what they saw.[5]



Army Attorney General Joseph Welch (left) confronts Senator McCarthy (right) during the Army-McCarthy Hearings in 1954. The event had a profound effect on public opinion and led to a backlash against McCarthy. He was censured by the Senate later that year and died of liver disease a few years later.

The second telling event began the next month when the Army-McCarthy Hearings were broadcast live to more than 20 million viewers over 36 days. The hearings had been called to look into allegations that McCarthy had tried to bully the Army into not drafting one of his aides. During the course of the hearings, and

"Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?"

after one too many reckless accusation by McCarthy, Army Attorney General Joseph Welch solemnly asked: "Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?"

Welch's question spoke for millions of viewers in their homes asking the same thing. His credibility broken, his intimidation no longer effective, McCarthy was censured by the Senate later in 1954. The hunt for communists in America would continue through much of the 1950s but most people were ready to close one of the darker chapters of the country's history.[6]

Related Document

"Senate Bill No. 323," Oregon Legislative Assembly, 1951
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11318806). Original Bill Files, Oregon Legislative Assembly Records, OSA.

Notes

"Cold War Policies, 1945-1991," Professor Steve Schoenherr, University of San Diego. **Google Books (https://books.google.com/books/about/Cold_War_Policies_1945_1991.html?id=i1WIDAEACAAJ)**.

"Senate Bill No. 323," Oregon Legislative Assembly, 1951. Original Bill Files, Oregon Legislative Assembly Records, OSA; Floyd McKay, *An Editor for Oregon* (Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1998), Pages 187-188.

Floyd McKay, *An Editor for Oregon* (Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1998), Pages 189-193.

Ibid., Pages 195-196.

"Censure of Senator Joseph McCarthy," Basic Readings in U.S. Democracy, U.S. Information Agency.

Ibid.

Learn More About the Home Front

Despite its large size, this exhibit only scratches the surface of life on the Oregon home front. Researchers are encouraged to look further into the original records from the period that are held at the Oregon State Archives. This section offers suggestions and links to these and other resources.

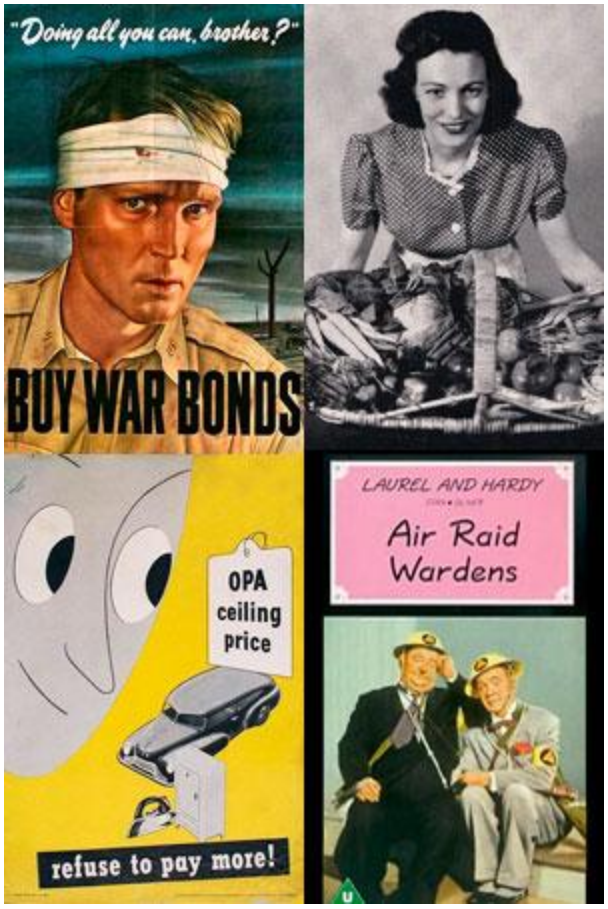
Related Record Group Guides and Inventories

Other World War II Resources and Web Sites

Oregon State Archives Research and Use Options

Exhibit Credits and Acknowledgements

Contact Us With Questions or Comments



Clockwise from top left: A poster calls on people to buy war bonds; A woman shows off the bounty of a Victory Garden; A Laurel and Hardy comedy movie about air raid wardens; a poster exhorts shoppers to honor price controls.

Related Record Group Guides and Inventories

These records guides and inventories offer agency histories, scope and content notes, records series descriptions, and information to aid research at the Oregon State Archives. The record groups are listed in descending order of connection to the information in this exhibit.



Hollywood ventriloquist Edgar Bergen (center) shakes hands with a salvage worker while dapper puppet Charlie McCarthy and his country yokel cousin, Mortimer Snerd, ride a salvage truck during a World War II scrap drive. (Folder 16, Box 28, Defense Council Records, OSA)

Oregon State Defense Council

Defense Council records guide
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151211)

Defense Council records were used in every section of this exhibit. The guide includes an administrative history, scope and content note, container list and record series descriptions.

Governor Sprague's Office

Biographical note and 1939 inaugural message
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/RecordView/6777856)

Record series descriptions and container list
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/RecordView/6777855)

Information for the Threats Real and Perceived section and other sections including documentation of the experiences of Japanese Americans during the war.

Governor Snell's Office

Biographical note and 1943 inaugural message
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/RecordView/6777858)

Record series descriptions and container list
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/RecordView/6777857)

Information in the After the War section as well as chapters covering issues during the last years of the war.

Military Department

Military records guide (/archives/records/agency/Pages/military.aspx)

Information about the Oregon National Guard before, during, and after the war and the formation and activities of the Oregon State Guard during the war.

Education Department

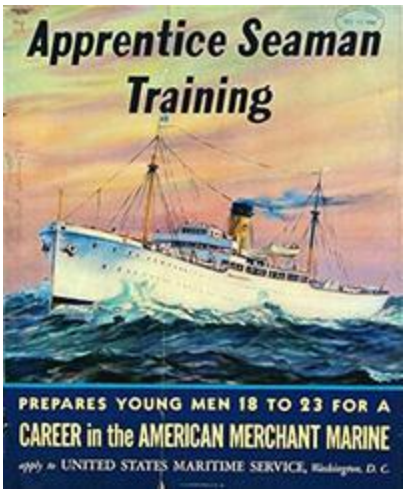
Education agency history (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/9975597)

Education Record series descriptions
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151109)

A contributing source of information for the Youth Strategies chapter. Includes records documenting vocational education programs of the G.I. Bill.

Oregon Department of Transportation

Transportation records guide
(/archives/records/agency/Pages/transportation.aspx)
The source of images from the Highway Department tourism photographs dating from 1930s to 1950s. Also documents transportation issues during the war.



The merchant marine fleet played an essential role in the war. (**Image courtesy Northwestern University Library** (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/7359bcd7-041d-4387-a3c9-491546c77fbf))

Oregon State Library

Library agency history
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/RecordView/7589716)

Scope and content note
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151214)

Library record series descriptions
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151213)

The major source of information for the Victory Books chapter.

Audits Division

Audits records list
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151053)
The source of letters and photographs for the State Auditors Go to War chapter.

Oregon Postwar Readjustment and Development Commission

Commission essay (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/11151199)
A major source of documents and information for the After the War section.

Forestry Department

Forestry records guide (/archives/records/agency/Pages/forestry.aspx)
Records documenting the Aircraft Warning Service, forest fire prevention, and other activities.

Board of Control

Board of Control records guide (/archives/records/agency/Pages/board-of-control.aspx)
Documents the operation of state institutions during the war.

Other World War II Resources

The following resources include, image databases and descriptions of selected films that relate to the home front. It also includes a PDF document that provides a bibliography of scholarly works about the American home front during World War II.

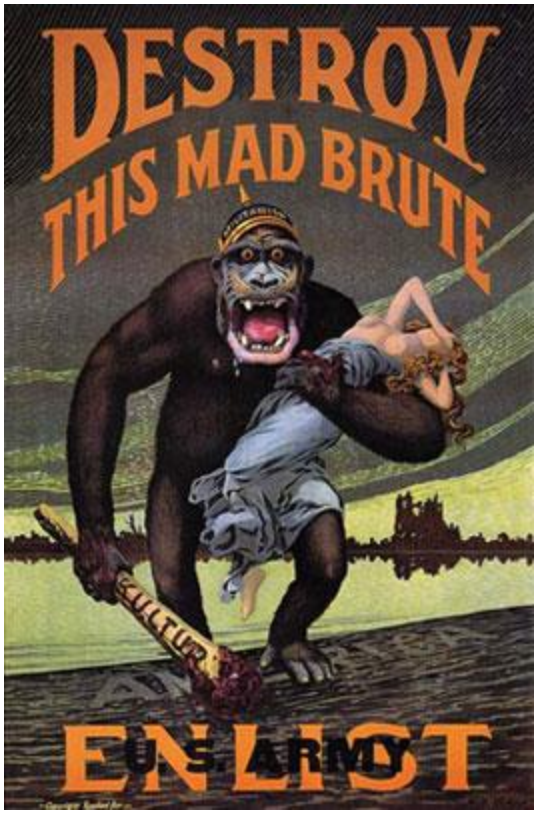
Home Front Images

Images from the following sites were used in this exhibit. Collectively, they offer an excellent visual record of home front life in the United States:

National Archives (https://www.archives.gov/)
Search for home front photographs in the Archival Research Catalog (ARC).

Library of Congress
(http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsa/)
Search the extensive collection of photographs from World War II.

Northwestern University Library
(https://www.library.northwestern.edu/libraries-collections/government-collection/)
Search over 300 posters issued by federal agencies during World War II.



This World War I poster stirred strong emotions for many Americans. This and other posters were produced by the Committee on Public Information portrayed Germans as bloodthirsty animals in an effort to spur enlistment. (**Library of Congress image (https://www.loc.gov/item/2010652057/)**)

Salem Public Library (https://photos.salemhistory.net/)
Browse photographs in the Oregon Historical Photographs Collection from collections including the Salem Public Library, Marion County Historical Society and the Oregon State Archives.

Web Exhibits and Collections

The following Web exhibits and collections of links provide more perspective on the home front and the war:

Oregon at War (https://www.opb.org/television/programs/oregon-experience/article/oregon-at-war/)
Watch videos of Oregonians describing their World War II experiences on both the home front and the battle fronts- from Oregon Public Broadcasting, Oregon Experience.

The War: A Ken Burns Film
(https://www.pbs.org/kenburns/the-war/)
Gain a deeper view of the war through the lives of people in four American towns - from the Public Broadcasting Service.

The Perilous Fight: America's World War II in Color **(https://www.pbs.org/perilousfight/)**
See color images of home front and battlefield life - from the Public Broadcasting Service.

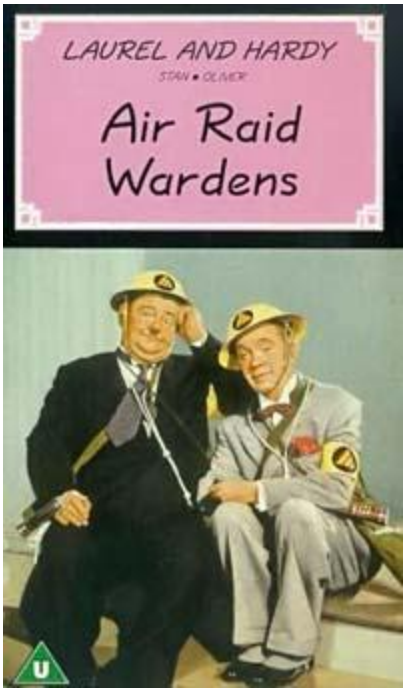
Veterans History Project
(https://www.loc.gov/programs/veterans-history-project/about-this-program/)
Learn what it was like to serve in the military in World War II with audio and video - from the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress.

From the Home Front and the Front Lines
(https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/homefront/)
See diaries, photographs and other resources documenting both sides of the war - from the Library of Congress.

Films About the Home Front

These comedic and dramatic films, described in Wikipedia, give a contemporary taste of home front life from the viewpoint of the Hollywood studios:

Air Raid Wardens
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Air_Raid_Wardens) (1943 - Directed by Edward Sedgwick)
Comic actors Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy are turned down when they try to enlist in the military. They decide to do the next best thing and become air raid wardens.



Laurel and Hardy contributed to the home front cause as air raid wardens in a 1943 comedy film. (Image courtesy Amazon.com)

Hail the Conquering Hero



One of many World War II posters available on the Northwestern University Library website. (**Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/4e95dad1-8627-42c0-9f86-10a65c4dec56)**)

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hail_the_Conquering_Hero) (1944 -Directed by Preston Sturges)
A man is discharged from the Marines for a hay fever condition before seeing any action. Feeling like a failure, he is talked into passing himself off in his home town as a wounded war hero. The story careens out of control and comedy follows.

The House on 92nd Street **(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_House_on_92nd_Street)** (1945 -Directed by Henry Hathaway)
A Nazi espionage ring operates on the American home front on the trail of the Manhattan Project to build an atomic bomb.

The Best Years of Our Lives **(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Best_Years_of_Our_Lives)** (1946 - Directed by William Wyler)
Three World War II veterans return home to small town America to discover they and their families have changed.

Publication About the Home Front

World War II and the American Home Front **(https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/downloadfile/465955)**
This publication contains discussions of mobilization, family life, the working class and minorities. It includes bibliographic references on pages 174 to 178 - from the National Park Service.

Oregon State Archives Research and Use Options

Ordering Images

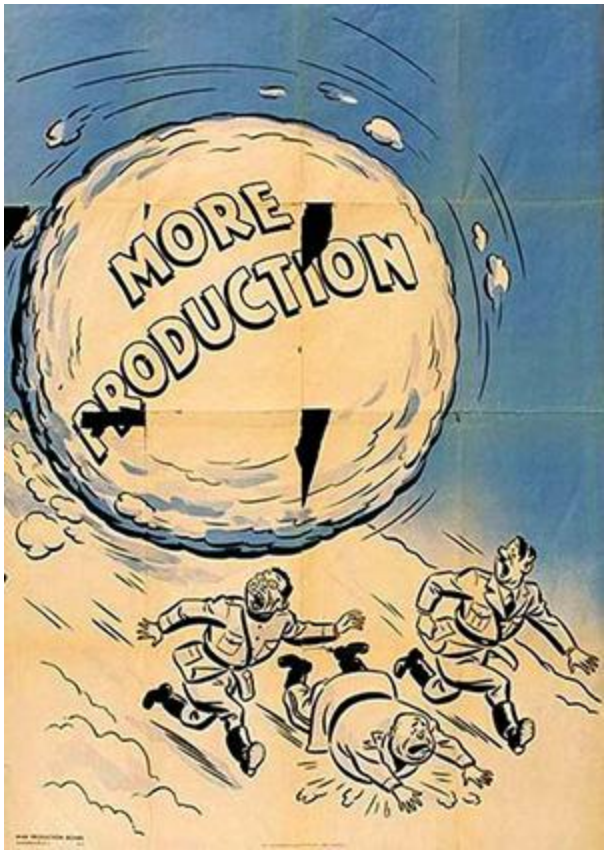
Many images in this exhibit are from other repositories.

Any image in the exhibit that has a citation ending with "OSA" is available for purchase from the Oregon State Archives. Some images were scanned from original publications with less than ideal photographic or graphic characteristics. The cost for a digital image is $20. **Contact us for information (mailto:reference.archives@sos.oregon.gov)** about getting copies as photographic negatives or prints.

Any image or document lacking a citation ending with "OSA" is not available for copy from the Oregon State Archives. Please contact the source cited or general sources for copies. Images lacking any citation are commonly available online.

Use and Citations

You may use materials contained in this exhibit for personal or educational purposes. Please cite the "Oregon State Archives, Life on the Home Front Web Exhibit" when using Oregon State Archives (OSA) images or direct text quotations from the exhibit.



A poster implores Americans to keep the ball rolling against the Axis powers by increasing war production. (**Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/7d1b18a1-2d13-4c9d-ae10-cb4888805c3e)**)

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Stretching the life of clothing and equipment became a routine part of home front life during the war.

Image courtesy Northwestern University Library (https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/items/f32ef471-481f-4c15-afc1-9ce7f6e3ff49)

Acknowledgements

We thank the following repositories for many of the images and audio/video clips used in this exhibit:

National Archives (https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2/photos/images/thumbnails)

Library of Congress (http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsa/)

Northwestern University Library (https://www.library.northwestern.edu/libraries-collections/government-collection/)

Salem Public Library (https://photos.salemhistory.net/)

YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/)