The Writers' War Board: Writers and World War II. (volumes I and II).

Robert Thomas Howell

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THE WRITERS' WAR BOARD: WRITERS AND WORLD WAR II. (VOLUMES I AND II.)
The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, Ph.D., 1971
History, modern

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan

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THE WRITERS' WAR BOARD: WRITERS AND WORLD WAR II

VOLUME I

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agriculture and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

by

R. Thomas Howell
B.A., Louisiana College, 1964
M.A., Louisiana State University, 1966
January, 1971
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank, first, Dr. Burl Noggle not only for his direction of this dissertation, but also for his constant interest in the subject of this study. He also wishes to thank his mother, Mrs. Hazel Howell, for her invaluable assistance in every phase of this study from its beginning to its completion. Finally, he wishes to thank D. J. W., who asked not to be mentioned, but whose constant encouragement and inspiration made possible the completion of this work and cannot be left unacknowledged.
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ABSTRACT

The Writers' War Board was a group of professional writers organized in New York shortly after the United States entered World War II. Originally intended as a small, part-time group whose membership would lend personal assistance to the Treasury Department, in early 1942 under the leadership of Rex Stout it quickly developed into a clearing house designed to mobilize writing talent throughout the nation in support of the war effort. It became a quasi-official agency of the government, receiving a subsidy from public funds, but retaining some independence as a private organization as well.

During the war the WWB served as both a direct and an indirect propaganda agency. The members themselves and individuals closely associated with them produced magazine articles, newspaper stories, stage shows, and radio broadcasts containing blatant and subtle propaganda messages. The board stimulated the production of a great deal more propaganda by innumerable contacts with writers, editors, publishers, and show producers and by periodic suggestions to writers.
throughout the country as to useful propaganda messages which their material should contain. To carry out this program the members of the war board constantly utilized their professional contacts inside the various communications media.

Propaganda by the WWB supported the campaigns instigated and approved by the government, as well as policies which the group advocated in its role as a private agency. For the government, the board maintained a close liaison with the official propaganda agency, the Office of War Information. Through the OWI it cooperated with the war activities of most agencies of the government, particularly the Treasury Department, the Office of Civilian Defense, and the Office of Price Administration. The New York writers devoted especial attention to assisting the armed forces in their problems of morale and recruiting. Much of the group's help went to the Army, the Army Air Force, and the newly organized women's divisions of the military.

As a private agency, the board consistently pursued three main goals: to convince the country of the malignant nature of the enemy, to promote racial tolerance and racial equality, and to persuade Americans of the necessity for international cooperation and even world federation in the post-war era. The board's hard-line anti-German stand, vi
which included the open advocacy of hatred for the German enemy and the belief that all Germans were completely responsible for that country's activities in wartime, involved it in the greatest controversy of its existence. Most of the group's activities ceased simultaneously with the end of the war, though a strictly private successor group, the Writers' Board, continued some functions until early 1946.

Although the WWB can be compared with other official and unofficial propaganda groups in the United States, it constituted a unique organization without a real predecessor. Furthermore, the group represents the best instance of the organized use of writing abilities in a war effort in American history.

The existence of the WWB has gone practically unnoticed in American history texts. This study is almost entirely based on the hitherto unused papers of the group in the Library of Congress. These voluminous records document the vast range and volume of the board's activities.
CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS AND THE BACKGROUND

On the morning of Sunday, December 7, 1941, Japanese planes attacked the American naval fleet at Pearl Harbor and propelled the United States into World War II as an active military participant. Two days later, a series of events began which led to the formation of the Writers' War Board.

As the enormity of the war ahead became clearer, Julian Street, Jr., an official in the Treasury Department with connections in the literary world, suggested to Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., that the assistance of prominent authors would be useful in forthcoming bond drives. Morgenthau approved the idea, and Street telephoned actor-playwright Howard Lindsay, president of the Authors' League of America. He asked Lindsay what the Authors' League could do to assist the Treasury Department. Lindsay informed him that the Authors' League was prohibited by charter and constitution from engaging in any activities except those dealing directly with the professional activities of writers.
Lindsay felt, however, that many writers outside his organization might well want to participate, and he asked his friend and collaborator, Russel Crouse, to serve on a special committee to assist the Treasury Department. Crouse was willing but preferred not to head the group. He agreed to become a member provided the chairman be Rex Stout, a writer already outspoken on public affairs. Lindsay then contacted Stout who accepted the chairmanship, stipulating that, among other things, the committee be completely autonomous, without any ties either to the Authors' League or any other organization, and that it be given full responsibility for obtaining its own financial backing. Lindsay assented to these conditions, and the group which came to be known as the Writers' War Board was born.¹

Another condition which Stout attached to his acceptance of the chairmanship was that he select the members

¹Interview with Stout, August 14, 1970; Stout to the author, June 15, 1968; Russel Crouse, "Writers and the War," The Writer, LVII (September, 1944), 267; Stout, as quoted in "Minutes of Meeting of Representatives of Writers' War Board, Deputies and Program Managers of OWI, February 11, 1944," Container 53, Writers' War Board Records (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress), hereinafter cited as WWB Records.
of the committee. Thus, from the very first, Stout's influence and opinions were of the greatest importance in relation to the activities of the Writers' War Board. The first meeting of the group was held on Tuesday, January 6, 1942. Those present included Stout, Crouse, Clifton Fadiman, Oscar Hammerstein, Pearl Buck, and John P. Marquand. They organized as the "Writers' War Committee" and retained that name until it was changed to Writers' War Board in late April, 1942, to signify a more permanent organization.²

The original idea among the board members was simply that they should do a little writing on Treasury projects, but from the very beginning their activities were not so restricted. The exigencies of war mobilization placed demands on a multitude of other agencies; as soon as the WWB's existence became known, requests for its assistance in other writing began to pour in. Within three months, the members found that at least two-thirds of their time was being spent on such jobs. It was clear that the task would require an expansion of the group's membership. Since Pearl Buck and John P. Marquand had assignments which

²Interview with Stout, August 14, 1970; Stout to the author, June 15, 1968; Fadiman to Bennett Cerf, May 2, 1942, Cont. 5, WWB Records.

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took them overseas, they were soon unavailable for regular duty. Others were added to meet the growing demand.

One of the new members was Luise M. Sillcox, the executive secretary of the Authors' League of America. Her selection was significant, because it was the first indication of what ultimately became the WWB's most important function: to serve as a clearing house, matching the best available writers to all necessary tasks. Miss Sillcox was not primarily a professional writer, but her position with the Authors' League gave her access to the files of about four thousand of America's most talented literary individuals. Officially, she served on the board as a private citizen, but the files of the Authors' League were a resource which the board constantly utilized.3

The biographical details of the more important members of the Writers' War Board will be given later, but one

3Crouse, "Writers' and the War," 267; Stout, as quoted in "Minutes of the Meeting of Representatives of WWB, Deputies and Program Managers of OWI, February 11, 1944;" Cont. 53, WWB Records; interview with Stout, August 14, 1970; Stout to the author, June 15, 1968; interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968; "Writers' War Board Decides to Continue in Response to Many Requests," Publishers' Weekly, CXLVIII (July 28, 1945), 308-311; Mercedes Rosebery, This Day's Madness: A Story of the American People Against the Background of the War Effort (New York: Macmillan Company, 1944), 245.
point should be noted at this time. Virtually all of the members were experienced writers, and all were familiar with contemporary methods of publicity. Some had assisted the various groups agitating for intervention before Pearl Harbor. Extensive experience in professional propaganda techniques, however, was not characteristic of the WWB members; and yet propaganda became their chief objective.

An expert on propaganda of the World War I period made the following summation of the composition of propaganda in wartime:

Propaganda refers solely to the control of opinion by significant symbols or, to speak more concretely and less accurately, by stories, rumours, reports, pictures and other forms of social communication. Propaganda is concerned with the management of opinions and attitudes by the direct manipulating of social suggestion rather than by altering other conditions in the environment or in the organism.

During war much reliance must be placed on propaganda to promote economy of food, textiles, fuel, and other commodities, and to stimulate recruiting, employment in war industries, service in relief work, and the purchase of bonds. But by far the most potent role of propaganda is to mobilize the animosity of the community against the enemy, to maintain friendly relations with neutrals and allies, to arouse neutrals against the enemy, and to break up the solid wall of enemy antagonism.\(^4\)

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The WWB functioned primarily within the United States and thus devoted little time to arousing neutrals or breaking up enemy antagonism, but with that exception the above statement, made in 1938, rather accurately describes the board's activities. It seems fair, therefore, to characterize the board as primarily a propaganda organization. Its members never flinched from such a description. The Hearst press once called the WWB "the greatest propaganda machine in history." The statement was probably an exaggeration; but, though it came from a hostile source, the board regarded it as a compliment, not a slur.  

If the WWB was a propaganda organization, there was ample precedent for its activities, both in America and elsewhere. The function of propaganda in wartime did not receive a great deal of attention until World War I, but the activities of civilians in the United States toward provoking or maintaining a war did not begin in the twentieth century. For example, it is often argued that Thomas Paine's writings, particularly *Common Sense*, played an

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5 See *Writers' War Board Report*, December 1, 1943; Fadiman to Stout, November 14, 1943, Cont. 82, WWB Records.

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important part in stimulating the American Revolution. There is a school of historical interpretation which points to the efforts of agitators, including Southern extremists and Northern abolitionists, as one of the major causes of the Civil War. Finally, the "yellow press" has been credited with an important role in stimulating war sentiment before the Spanish-American War.

If propaganda was not an unfamiliar phenomenon before World War I, that conflict demonstrated what an important force it could be. It has been argued at length that propaganda was the major force that impelled America's intervention in that war. According to one authority, "propaganda

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came to be so important during the World War that it was adopted officially as an indispensable adjunct of the war-government staff. This is the basic difference between the World War and all previous use of propaganda.\textsuperscript{10}

Though offered primarily in reference to British activities, that statement applies equally well to the United States, because American intervention was shortly followed by the establishment of the Committee on Public Information. The authors of the principal history of the Committee have described it as "America's first 'propaganda ministry'."\textsuperscript{11} President Wilson created it by executive order on April 13, 1917, and appointed as its civilian chairman a journalist, George Creel. The secretaries of state, war, and the navy were the other members. The original purpose of the CPI was to direct the handling of news from the government, but soon Creel "moved into the far less restricted field of opinion management, invented new techniques and perfected old ones, and first to last

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built up a stupendous propaganda organization that was to make President Wilson's theories known at every village crossroads in this country and in remote corners of the foreign lands."

The CPI did, indeed, put together a propaganda campaign unprecedented in American history. Some seventy-five thousand individuals were utilized as volunteer speakers; some seventy-five million pieces of propaganda were printed and distributed. Films, books, magazines, newspapers, schools, churches, labor unions, and any other available media, organization, or method were employed in the struggle to shape public opinion. The CPI also made use of the assistance of volunteer groups, including the National Board for Historical Service, a group of prominent historians who wrote a great deal of propaganda for the committee in addition to performing other services.13

The Creel Committee's use of its powers of censorship, its emphasis on the sensational, and the periodic liberties it took with the truth were criticized; but there is no doubt that it was responsible for introducing a number

\[12\text{Ibid.}, 49; \text{see also 4-5.} \]

of the techniques of mass propaganda to the United States. In World War II, the Office of War Information undertook the job of dissemination of official propaganda.

Actually, the most immediate predecessors of the board were the various organizations which, in the period of 1940-1941, campaigned against isolationism and for heavy assistance to the Western democracies fighting Hitler or even for direct American intervention. The most notable of these groups were the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, organized in May, 1940, by William Allen White and Clark Eichelberger, and the Fight For Freedom Committee founded by a group of hard-line interventionists in early 1941 under the chairmanship of Bishop Henry W. Hobson.¹⁴ Both of these organizations established national headquarters and tried to organize local chapters throughout the country. In size and structure the WWB was much like the "Century Group," an informal committee of some twenty-eight "warhawks" who were the predecessors of the Fight for Freedom.¹⁵


¹⁵Chadwin, Hawks of World War II, 43-45, 169-173.
With Pearl Harbor, the Fighters for Freedom achieved their ardent desire for intervention, and the committee disbanded. The United States then had the problem of winning the war; and in the upsurge of patriotism, the writers of the country wished to participate in the war effort. The WWB organized to exploit this desire, at first on a modest scale, ultimately to such an extent that Lewis Gannett called the board "incredibly active," and Chairman Stout estimated that the manuscripts composed by the writers associated with it weighed over three tons.\textsuperscript{16}

In general, then, the members of the WWB were individuals who before 1941 had privately, and often publicly, attacked what they believed was the isolationist attitude in America. Several had openly advocated intervention well before Pearl Harbor; all were enthusiastic supporters of the war when it came. Two men who were briefly WWB members in the early months may illustrate this tendency toward an aggressive stance in the pre-war period. George Britt, a New York newspaper reporter, in 1940 published a work which

undertook to demonstrate the existence of some one million Nazi supporters in the United States.\textsuperscript{17} Elmer Davis, a well-known radio commentator and analyst who soon left the board to become head of the Office of War Information, was among those designated as "warhawks" by a recent historian of the pre-Pearl Harbor interventionist movements. Davis was a member of the Century Group and repeatedly made clear his belief that war with Germany was a necessity for the United States.\textsuperscript{18}

Though the Writers' War Board had contact with writers all over the country, its members lived in and around New York. Since the WWB formally met at least once a week, it was not convenient for writers from outlying areas to be in attendance. The group was never intended to be a representative selection of any kind. The members belonged only because they were interested in helping to win the war and, hopefully, to win the peace afterwards. Their sincerity in pursuit of these goals can be established beyond any reasonable question.

\textsuperscript{17}The Fifth Column Is Here (New York: Funk and Wagnalls).

\textsuperscript{18}Chadwin, Hawks of World War II, 43-45; Lamar Seal Mackay, "Domestic Operations of the Office of War Information in World War II," (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1966), 55; Davis to Burton Roscoe, August 11, 1940, Cont. 1, Elmer Davis Papers, (Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress).
CHAPTER II

THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Any discussion of the personnel of the WWB must begin with the chairman, Rex Todhunter Stout. Stout was both the most interesting and by far the most important member. Born in 1886, he was the oldest of the board members who exerted any really important influence; but his extra years neither slowed his actions nor mellowed his opinions. He was born in Indiana into a Quaker family and has maintained that religious affiliation throughout his life. His formal education ended with a high school diploma and a month’s stay at the University of Kansas. He served in the United States Navy as a warrant officer on President Theodore Roosevelt’s yacht. After leaving the service he undertook a remarkable variety of jobs, ranging from New York hotel manager to plumber’s assistant. In 1912 Stout became a writer, selling both serious articles and adventure fiction to the magazines of the day for the next five years. He simultaneously developed a social conscience, backing several causes considered radical and humanitarian with his pen and his money.
He was a contributor, for example, to the radical magazine, The Masses. By late 1916, however, Stout was devoting himself to business. He developed a school banking system, the Educational Thrift Service, and operated it on a nationwide basis for ten years. In 1927 he retired with a comfortable financial backlog and returned to writing. Beginning with How Like a God, in 1929, Stout published four serious psychological novels which were generally well received by critics. He helped to found the Vanguard Press and to direct it in its early years.¹

In 1933, however, the depression finally reached him, depleting his financial resources; and he was compelled to make writing pay. This he did by creating one of the most successful fictional detectives of all time, Nero Wolfe, who first appeared in Fer de Lance in 1934. A steady stream of Nero Wolfe novels, recognized as being among the best

mysteries written, left Stout with sufficient support and free time to permit considerable attention to other activities.²

Stout took little apparent interest in world affairs until the Munich Conference in September, 1938. That event gave him his "first belly-ache." In his own words, he "started making speeches, debating these America First fellows, going on the radio to answer them, doing all [he] could to wake people up to the danger."³ In the two years before Pearl Harbor, Stout supported the efforts of such pro-Ally groups as the "Century Group," the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, and the Associated Leagues for an Immediate Declaration of War. He sought to drive home the implications of Nazi aggression and campaigned ardently for American intervention. He cheerfully gave himself the title of "warmonger" and called America First


leader and aviation hero Charles Lindbergh a "quitter."
As early as November, 1940, he flatly stated that the United
States should already be actively fighting the war.4 He was
a sponsor of the Fight for Freedom Committee, and during
the eight months of its existence he became one of its most
popular speakers. He appeared before its pro-war rallies,
debated isolationists on the radio, and otherwise encouraged
interventionist sentiment.5

After the Fight for Freedom Committee disbanded,
Stout became one of the prominent leaders of its successor,
Freedom House, an organization launched October 30, 1941,
with the avowed purpose of becoming "a world symbol of the
fight against tyranny, not only the fight on the field of
battle but the fight in our own hearts..."6 Also in

4New York Times, November 25, 1940, p. 6, and April
25, 1941, pp. 1, 12; Bainbridge, "Rex Stout," 42-43, 46;
Chadwin, Hawks of World War II, 145, 168, 179; van Gelder,
Writers and Writing, 219; "Rex Stout," Cue, X (November 1,
1941), 34.

5Chadwin, Hawks of World War II, 168, 179; van Gelder,
Writers and Writing, 219; New York Times, November 27, 1941,
p.26; interview with Stout, August 14, 1970.

6News release, quoted in Chadwin, Hawks of World War
II, 268-69; "The Stout Ire," Newsweek, XXIV (October 30,
1944), 48-49.
1941 he became president of the Friends of Democracy, a group organized by a clergyman, Leon M. Birkenhead, which specialized in slashing, sensational denunciations of Nazis and exposés of Nazi atrocities. At home they mounted periodic attacks on extreme right-wing and isolationist groups. One of their pamphlets, for example, called the America First Committee "the Nazi transmission belt."  

Stout remained president throughout the war. In addition, he was a member of the Council for Democracy, a group organized as a service and liaison agency for the interventionist organizations. He was master of ceremonies for its radio broadcast, "Speaking of Liberty," on the air during 1941-1942.  

Beginning in August, 1941, and continuing through the first two years of the war, Stout himself regularly made a fifteen-minute broadcast called "Our Secret Weapon" each Friday evening over the Columbia Broadcasting System network. In cooperation with Freedom House, each week he selected about fifteen statements put out by Axis news

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7Cole, America First, 109-111; interview with Stout, August 14, 1970.

8Bainbridge, "Rex Stout," 42, 45-46.
services which he considered lies, read them to the American public, then exposed and refuted them. The program attracted a sufficiently large audience to be commercially sponsored during its last year. Finally, in 1943, Stout took on not only the presidency of his professional organization, the Authors' Guild of America, but also that of the Society for the Prevention of World War III, a group which advocated world government, as well as other far-reaching proposals for solving the world's difficulties.

Stout's biting commentary and aggressive attacks won him the lasting enmity of the non-interventionists. During his Fight for Freedom days, in a radio talk he predicted that Charles Lindbergh would be the collaborationist president of the United States if Hitler succeeded in his plan for conquest. In 1942 he published a book entitled *The Illustrious Dunderheads*, a collection of assorted quotations from men he regarded as isolationists. He never shied

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9 "Stout Truth," *Newsweek*, XX (December 7, 1942), 97; Bainbridge, "Rex Stout," 42-43, 46.


from public controversy and on more than one occasion evoked a violent reaction at his public appearances. This kind of onslaught brought replies in kind. Congressman Hamilton Fish of New York, one of Stout's favorite targets, publicly called Stout a "Communist and more dangerous to America than Earl Browder."13 A writer for Colonel Robert McCormick's isolationist Chicago Tribune detected a "fanatical gleam" in Stout's eye and declared him to be a member of a number of Communist-front organizations.14 In another area, Stout's advocacy of "hatred" as the proper attitude toward the Germans provoked several controversies, as will be seen later.

If Stout was the kind of man who both used and provoked strong language, nevertheless under his direction the WWB proceeded in its activities with remarkable harmony. The passage of time may have edited the memories of his associates, but the available members of the WWB unanimously answered in the negative when asked if there were any serious disputes among the board. The effectiveness of Stout's

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leadership is simply not open to question among those who were his wartime associates. The words of Mrs. Frederica Barach, executive secretary of the WWB throughout most of its existence, are typical: Stout was "an extraordinary executive and dedicated day to day . . . a superb executive."\textsuperscript{15}

With those he respected, Stout would always listen to objections and modifications and could, on occasion, be persuaded to withdraw or revise his opinion. For every individual that he alienated by his strong advocacy of certain ideas, he probably convinced ten to assist in the board's work by his tactful persuasiveness exercised either in person or, more often, through his extraordinarily charming literary gift.

In all of the WWB's efforts, Stout's influence was paramount. All decisions of the board were by majority vote, of course, but the influence of Stout's opinions was always pervasive, and his dynamic personality was the driving force behind most of the board's actions. In the words of

\textsuperscript{15}Mrs. Barach to the author, July 19, 1968.
one of the other important WWB members, Alan Green, "if there ever was one, Rex was the autocrat of the breakfast table."  

Throughout the four years that the board existed, Stout was usually on the job all day, six and seven days a week. He even closed the mansion-like country home just north of New York that was his particular pride and moved his wife and children to a downtown apartment because he was too involved in his work to break away at all. Stout's only extended absences from his duties came in December, 1943, when he suffered a siege of pneumonia; six weeks during the summer of 1944 when, due to financial pressures, he found it necessary to write another Nero Wolfe story; and two months in early 1945 when he took an Air Force-sponsored trip to Europe. Stout was, however, the only member of the board to devote himself to its work quite so completely. Other members usually made an effort to keep up some semblance of their normal schedule.

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16 Interview with Green, August 8, 1968.
The WWB had no vice-chairman or any other person who might have been designated second-in-command, but in any consideration of the individual members of the board, it seems proper to list the name of Clifton Fadiman next to that of Stout. Fadiman was with the board continuously from its organization to its dissolution; and Stout considered him the most active, important, and effective of the members. Others, including Mrs. Barach, echoed that evaluation.  

Born in 1904, Fadiman was one of the younger members of the board. He was graduated from Columbia University with Phi Beta Kappa honors. During his college days he was already writing book reviews for *The Nation*. Beginning in 1925, he taught English in New York City in the Ethical Culture High School for four years. During this time, he also worked with the publishing firm of Simon and Schuster and in the early 1930's became its editor-in-chief. There, at a publishing house noted for its emphasis on best sellers, he proved an excellent judge of written material. Fadiman was

19 Stout to the author, June 15, 1968; interview with Stout, August 14, 1970; interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968; Mrs. Barach to the author, July 19, 1968.
a man of some erudition and usually left his acquaintances impressed with his intellectual versatility and ingenuity. Nevertheless, throughout his career he demonstrated little originality and lived largely off the work of others, re-interpreting and purveying culture to the masses. He once described himself as "an amiable hack."  

He quickly developed an excellent reputation as an editor and lecturer, and his articles were published in magazines such as *Stage* and *Harper's Bazaar*. In 1933, he became book editor of the *New Yorker*, a prestigious and powerful literary position which he held through 1944. While "Kip" Fadiman was perhaps the board's most widely known figure, this status did not result from his literary endeavors, though he had a devoted following. Instead, it derived from his position as master of ceremonies for one of the most popular and respected radio programs of the day.

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20 John Chamberlain, "Fadiman for the Millions," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCXIII (January 1, 1941), 27; interview with Stout, August 14, 1970; interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968.

21 Fadiman, as quoted in Chamberlain, "Fadiman for the Millions," 27.
"Information Please," which began its Friday night run in 1938 and continued throughout the war.22

Fadiman was one of the WWB's drawing cards when it wished to attract public attention, but his contributions went beyond that. He had shown little interest in world affairs beyond using them as a basis for his caustic wit, but when Hitler went to war against Britain he began to have a feeling of concern. In April, 1940, he wrote, "In a sense, all of us today are exiles, men and women for whom history has moved too fast, who have lost or are losing their moorings."23 By mid-1940 he was making his views public. In a speech, he described Hitler as an "Alaric at the gates . . . that guard the very citadel of civilization itself," and urged that the United States "by all means throw itself into the task of grim and dreadful preparation. . . ."24 He used his book review column to give frequent airing to his interventionist views. In June, 1941,

22 Chamberlain, "Fadiman for the Millions," 27.

23 Fadiman, "Exiles and Barbarians," New Yorker, XVI (April 27, 1940), 87.

24 Fadiman, "In a Time Like Ours of Gathering Darkness," Current History, LII (September, 1940), 49.
for example, he spoke bitingly of Charles Lindbergh and then stated, "The Germans are convinced that American aid to Britain has come too late and they are readying for the real showdown, which is to be, my gentle readers, with all of us except our potential Quislings and their supporters." 25

Oscar Hammerstein II was another member of the group who served from beginning to end. Born into a New York theatrical family in 1895, and reared in the Jewish faith, Hammerstein had attended Columbia University, where Carl Van Doren was his faculty adviser. He went on to take a degree in law, but never practiced. Instead, he undertook a writing career, primarily as a librettist and lyricist for the Broadway stage. He was outstandingly successful, collaborating with the leading popular composers of his day for a long series of popular and profitable musicals, including "The Desert Song" and "Showboat." By the time the war began, these had made him one of the highest paid authors in the world. In 1942 his writing career entered an even more successful phase when he began a series of

25 Padiman, "Seven Years," New Yorker, XVII (June 21, 1941), 77-78.
collaborations with composer Richard Rodgers. Their first
effort was "Oklahoma," produced in 1943, one of the most

At first glance, Hammerstein's contributions to the
board are not obvious, since the names of other members
appear in the records more frequently and often more promi-
nently. Stout, however, listed him and Fadiman as the two
most important members of the group. One of his colleagues
described him as a "gentle, quiet man . . . a great doer
rather than a great talker."\footnote{Interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968; Stout to the author, June 15, 1968.}

Devoted to the WWB, Hammerstein often passed up
lucrative opportunities as a song writer in order to work on
the group's projects. He attended the meetings of the board
more consistently than any other member. Stout could not
recall a single absence, nor can one be found in the records


\footnote{Interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968; Stout to the author, June 15, 1968.}
of the group. He exploited his contacts in the entertainment world for the WWB's causes and contributed a number of ideas to their campaigns. Much of Hammerstein's wartime service was through music, as might be expected. He was chairman of the Music War Committee, which operated in close coordination both with the WWB and the American Theater Wing. All of the board's problems concerning songs and music were referred to him.28

Russel Crouse, who played one of the major roles in the WWB's founding, continued to be active in it throughout the war. Born in Ohio in 1893, the son of a newspaper editor, a member of the Methodist church, Crouse spent most of his early years as a newspaper reporter first in the Midwest and then in New York. He authored several books ranging from biography and nostalgic history to mystery stories. He became a columnist for a New York newspaper and later, in the early 1930's, turned his attention to the Broadway stage. He wrote or collaborated in several librettos with only moderate success. At the same time he became press agent for the American Theater Guild.

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In 1954 he formed a partnership with actor-dramatist Howard Lindsay. This arrangement proved so happy that it was widely described as the American theater's most successful collaboration. Shortly before the war, the pair enjoyed their greatest triumph. In 1939, as writers, they co-authored "Life With Father," which became the longest running play in the history of the Broadway stage. In 1941, as producers, they were responsible for "Arsenic and Old Lace," a comedy-mystery with the ninth longest run in Broadway history. During the war the collaboration continued. A new Lindsay-Crouse success, the political comedy "State of the Union," written during the war, opened in late 1945 and promptly won a Pulitzer Prize. Crouse was never as prominent in the pre-war fight against isolationism as Stout or Fadiman, but his sentiments were made clear by the fact that he was a sponsor of the Fight for Freedom Committee.29

Of the members added to the WWB after its beginning, one of the most important was Christopher LaFarge. He was

born in 1897 into a talented family. His father, Christopher Grant LaFarge, was a famous architect. The WWB member's younger brother, Oliver, became a well known anthropologist and writer on Indian affairs. Christopher was educated at Harvard and became an architect, practicing that profession until 1932, when the depression virtually halted new construction. Thereafter, he devoted his time to writing, specializing in short stories, poems, and novels written in verse, often concerned with life in Rhode Island. His 1939 novel, Each to the Other, was especially successful and received several awards.

During the war, LaFarge wrote constantly for publication. In 1943, he served as a war correspondent in the Southwest Pacific and on his return wrote a book of short stories, East by South-West, on the war. Before Pearl Harbor, LaFarge demonstrated his concern for the battle against isolation by his position as chairman of the Executive Committee of the Writers' Committee of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. He was one of the board's most consistent producers of effective articles, speeches,
plays, and other propaganda materials. 30

Another latecomer was Margaret Leech. Born in 1893, she was educated at Vassar College. She worked both with a publishing firm and an advertising agency for brief periods, then did publicity work for a number of fund-raising organizations during and after World War I. In 1928 she married Ralph Pulitzer, son of the famous newspaper publisher. Meanwhile, she undertook a literary career, writing novels and a play. With Heywood Broun, she also wrote a biography of anti-vice crusader Anthony Comstock. Her literary career reached its peak in 1941 with the publication of Reveille in Washington, a study of life in the capital city during the Civil War. It won a Pulitzer Prize for history in 1942 as well as numerous other awards.

She apparently took no active part in pre-war political organization but made clear in interviews her sentiment favoring a strong line against Hitler. Possessed of an exceptionally sharp mind, she had real influence on

the board and was one of its most dedicated members. She had chief responsibility for the WWB's part in the production of *Transatlantic*, a magazine published in Great Britain; but she was active in all the board's affairs.\(^{31}\)

Carl Carmer was born in upstate New York in 1893. He received an undergraduate degree from Hamilton College and a master's degree from Harvard. His first years of employment were spent in college teaching, primarily at the University of Rochester and the University of Alabama, where he was professor of English until 1927. Indulging an urge to write, he then turned to newspaper work in New Orleans and to the editing of several periodicals in New York. After 1933 he was a full time writer of both poetry and prose. Carmer's specialty was American folklore and informal history. Through 1941, he was for the most part a regional writer, concentrating on Alabama and his native upstate New York. Particularly noteworthy were his *Stars Fell on Alabama*, published in 1934, and *Genessee Fever*, published in 1941. Much of Carmer's pre-war political interest centered on preserving

the liberties of the individual under the Bill of Rights. He was a director of the American Civil Liberties Union. During the war he periodically served as a war correspondent.32

Though the WWB tried to hold to a policy that no one should be a board member unless he attended meetings regularly, they were aware of the advantages of well-known names gracing their letterhead. Both Pearl Buck and John P. Marquand had attended the first meetings of the WWB, and they had considerable public reputations as authors. Mrs. Buck, fifty years old in 1942, was born the daughter of Presbyterian missionaries to China, where she spent all her early life. In the 1920's she began to write, primarily on China. In 1931 she published one of the most popular novels of the twentieth century, The Good Earth, which received the Pulitzer Prize. In 1938 she received the Nobel Prize for literature for her overall work, particularly the biographies of her parents. By 1941 she had already published fourteen books, and her name was famous throughout the world. In

that year she began the East and West Association and the publication of *Asia Magazine*, both devoted to promoting the American-Asian unity that was her primary interest.\(^\text{33}\)

Marquand was born in 1893 and educated at Harvard. After a brief career as a newspaper reporter he began writing popular literature and for fifteen years after 1922 was one of the mainstays of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Like Stout, he created a fictional detective, the oriental Mr. Moto. However, in the years shortly before the war he had turned to serious writing, primarily social satire. His best work, *The Late George Apley*, won a Pulitzer prize in 1937. He was well compensated for his efforts and was called more than once the most successful novelist of his day. A conservative by inclination, he had taken little interest in world affairs prior to the war. He reacted strongly to Pearl Harbor, however, and at least temporarily became active in the war effort.\(^\text{34}\)


Since the names of these two writers were probably more widely recognized than most of the rest of the group, no attempt was made to remove them despite their relative inactivity. Mrs. Buck resigned in July, 1943, primarily because she was unsympathetic toward some of the war board's activities and did not wish to lend her name to them.\footnote{Mrs. Buck to Stout, July 12, 1943, Cont. 109, WWB Records.} She remained on the group's Advisory Council, however. Marquand's name was periodically utilized throughout the war, and he did cooperate with some WWB projects. Neither, however, made any greater creative contribution than a hundred other well-known writers who gave occasional assistance.

To a degree, the same thing was true of Franklin P. Adams. Sixty-one years old in 1942, Jewish in religion, he was the oldest of the board members. He had been a regular newspaper columnist since 1903 in various New York newspapers. His column, "The Conning Tower," was a collection of wit, verse, epigrams, and pieces from contributors. He was a participant in a famous literary circle at the Algonquin Hotel, which included Robert Benchley and Alexander Woollcott. He had published books, all collections of his

\footnote{Mrs. Buck to Stout, July 12, 1943, Cont. 109, WWB Records.}
columns. In August, 1941, he published his last column after having been fired from the New York Post. He was best known to the nation, however, as a regular panelist on "Information Please," which continued throughout the war.36

The veteran humorist attended a number of board meetings and expressed his opinions. But his contributions to the work of the WWB, outside of the use of his name and the contacts he had made through the years, were limited to occasional pieces of doggerel which were his literary stock in trade.

Two of the other members of the WWB were sometimes chiefly useful for their names. Paul Gallico and William Shirer were often absent from the board meetings on writing assignments, broadcasting, and lecturing, but when present took an active and sometimes influential role in WWB affairs.

Gallico, born in New York in 1897, was the son of an Italian immigrant. Fascinated by sports at an early age, he worked his way through Columbia University and soon became a sports columnist for the New York Daily News. There, he

became one of the best known and best paid sportswriters in America. In 1936, however, he resigned to devote himself full time to the writing of free-lance fiction. A large part of the next four years he spent in England writing short stories and novelettes which he sold to American magazines. Much of the work was sheer escapist fiction, but The Snow Goose, published in 1940, was highly praised for its literary merit. Gallico continued to write and sell stories throughout the war. In the summer of 1944 he became European editor and war correspondent for Cosmopolitan. Well before Pearl Harbor his stays in England had produced a strong sympathy for the British people, and his experiences as a sportswriter caused him to despise racial prejudice.37

Shirer was only thirty-eight in 1942, but his name had been constantly before the American public for several years. An Iowa-raised Presbyterian, immediately after his graduation from Coe College he had gone to Europe and obtained

a job with the overseas office of the Chicago Tribune. He covered the entire continent as a correspondent for the Tribune and the Universal News Service. In 1937 he joined the Columbia Broadcasting System as continental representative and during the crisis-filled years that followed was heard almost nightly with on-the-spot reports. When World War II broke out, he set up headquarters in Berlin and was the chief American voice from that crucial area until his return to the United States in 1940.

In the summer of 1941, Shirer published an account of his daily observations of the rise of Hitler's Germany, Berlin Diary, which immediately became a best-seller. Throughout the war he continued to work as a correspondent and news analyst for CBS. His frequent absences from New York were attributable to both news assignments and lecture tours. Due to his absences from the country and work on his book he did not participate actively in pre-war movements, but his Berlin Diary is credited with having stimulated many Americans to consider Germany a real menace. In the work Shirer stated clearly that Lindbergh and the isolationists were assisting Germany, though perhaps unconsciously. He called the Nazi movement a part of "Pan-German imperialism,
whose aim is world domination," and he asserted that Hitler would soon attack the United States.\footnote{38}

A number of other board members were not quite so well known to the public at large. Except for the fact that their names did not instantly attract attention, their value to the WWB was at least equal to, and quite often greater than, some of the previously mentioned individuals. Good examples of this are Alan Green and Jack Goodman. Both were young and relatively obscure, but both played major roles in WWB activities. Green was born in 1908, Goodman two years later. Green was a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, while Goodman was a Canadian who became a naturalized American citizen in 1939. Neither had a college degree, although Goodman had attended universities in New York for three years. The background of both was primarily in advertising. In 1928, Green had formed with Julian Brodie an advertising agency, Green-Brodie, Inc., with which he worked throughout World War II. A year later Goodman came to work for the firm. In time the younger man moved on to another advertising agency and then in 1935 to the publishing firm of Simon and Schuster


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where he served as advertising manager and executive editor throughout the war. Green, in the meantime, had caused a minor stir by creating a new, dramatic kind of book advertising for Viking Press.

Both men had turned to writing as a sideline well before the war, with some success. In the early 1930's Green had written three mystery novels in collaboration with his wife and his partner Brodie. Another novel, "Love on the Run," which he co-authored with Brodie, was published in *Cosmopolitan* in 1936 and made into a motion picture. Goodman, in collaboration with Albert R. Lewenthal, had a best-seller in 1935, *I Wish I'd Said That*, and had also sold a story to the movies. Both men, in and out of collaboration, had published various stories and articles in such magazines as *Cosmopolitan, Collier's, Saturday Evening Post, Reader's Digest*, and *The New Yorker*. In early 1942 they collaborated in a humorous parody on do-it-yourself books, *How to Do Practically Anything*. Green was politically active before the war, assisting in the Fight for Freedom campaign and serving on the steering committee of the Friends of Democracy.39

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Both Green and Goodman were among the most active WWB members, leading or serving on some of the group's most important committees and frequently devoting half their time to board activities. Green's partner Brodie never joined the WWB itself but headed up its "Brief Items" service, one of its most effective functions.

Another advertising man who saw periodic service with the war board was Robert T. Colwell. A Presbyterian, Colwell (born 1903) received a college degree from Colgate University. He then immediately entered the field of advertising and from 1929 through World War II worked with the largest advertising agency in America, J. Walter Thompson, rising to a high executive position. His outlet for writing was primarily radio, though he authored some stories and articles for magazines. He wrote for several popular radio shows including those of Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, Rudy Vallee, and numerous others. He was also the author of a play that had been made into a movie, "Strictly Dynamite." During the war, Colwell was on and off the board periodically because of his service with OWI-Overseas and with the Psychological Warfare Department of the American

Third Army. When present he helped both with the WWB's publicity ideas and its contacts with radio.\textsuperscript{40}

Robert J. Landry joined the board a few weeks after it was formed and soon took over important responsibilities. Born in 1903, he had done some writing for magazines, but he had made his reputation as the original radio editor for Variety, the trade paper of the entertainment business. He gained considerable mention for his objective and frequently controversial critical commentary in Variety. These first attracted the war board's attention to him. In early 1942 he published \textit{Who, What, Why is Radio?} In November, 1942, he became director of the division of program writing for the Columbia Broadcasting System, a position he maintained throughout the war. Landry regularly attended the meetings for several years and was most valuable for his theatrical and trade paper background and his critical, sometimes skeptical, commentary. He was particularly important to the board for his contacts within the radio industry. He frequently used his positions at Variety and CBS to promote the WWB's projects, and was an active and effective chairman.

of the group's committee which was concerned with racial
tolerance. The board maintained contact with Variety
throughout the war.

Samuel Grafton maintained membership on the WWB
throughout its existence, though he devoted less time than
most of its members to its activities. Born in Brooklyn
in 1907, immediately after graduation from the University
of Pennsylvania Grafton became an editorial writer for the
Philadelphia Record. He began to write articles, primarily
on political subjects, for such magazines as the North
American Review, the New Republic, and the Nation. Soon
he became a political columnist for the New York Post; and
by the time of the intervention in World War II, his column
"I'd Rather Be Right," was syndicated to twenty-seven other
papers.

Grafton quickly established a reputation as a rather
passionate crusader. He was frequently called the most liberal
columnist practicing in American newspapers at the time. He
was a strong supporter of the New Deal but believed that a

41 "Gloomy Sundays," Time, XXXIV (October 2, 1939), 34;
"The Illegit," Time, XXXIX (March 2, 1942), 70; New York Times,
November 25, 1942, p. 44, and June 11, 1945, p. 14; John K.
Hutchins, "3 W's of Radio," Saturday Review of Literature,
XXV (March 28, 1942), 20; Landry to the author, September 28,
1970.
much more progressive program was needed. In foreign policy, he began to demand that America intervene early in the war and in his column launched some really savage attacks on American isolationists and American neutrality policies. In 1940 he published *All Out! How Democracy Will Defend America*, which called not only for intervention in the war but for the use of the wartime crisis situation to implement political, economic, and social changes then considered radical. In 1943 he published *An American Diary*, a collection of his newspaper columns up to that year. Outspoken, provocative, and sometimes abrasive, Grafton rarely attended WWB meetings. Nevertheless, he periodically used his column and his attention-getting style in the service of the WWB's causes.42

Jean Ellis Poletti was with the board only for a little more than the last year of its active existence, but during that period she contributed in a number of areas. Mrs. Poletti was the wife of Charles Poletti, lieutenant governor of New York from 1939 to 1942 and then briefly governor when the incumbent, Herbert Lehman, resigned close to the end of his term. In early 1943, Poletti became special assistant to the Secretary of War and eventually senior civic affairs officer for the Allied Military Government in Italy. Mrs. Poletti had been left at home with the children. She was a graduate of Vassar College and had written fashion copy for New York department stores before her marriage. As a politician's wife she had been in charge of education for the Women's Democratic National Committee and had held a series of radio debates with Republican supporters. The board utilized both her name, well-known in New York, and her abilities as a writer, which were more than adequate. 43

Katharine Seymour, born 1901, had been with radio almost since its invention. In 1925, she had become a writer on a New York station that was soon involved in the merger that formed the National Broadcasting Company. She was an assistant script editor at NBC until 1935. She resigned to become a freelance radio writer and, except for six months as assistant on a radio show, she continued freelance writing into World War II. She undertook practically every kind of script for every kind of show. In 1931, she published, in collaboration, a textbook for radio writing and revised it in 1938 as *Practical Radio Writing*. She was widely respected throughout the broadcasting industry. She worked actively with the WWB during its first two years of existence, serving as chairman of its Radio Committee. She wrote some of the material the board furnished to radio herself and arranged for a great deal more. However, in 1944, she was compelled by a serious illness to leave the group and died shortly thereafter.\(^{44}\)

Kobe Morrison was born in 1904 in Philadelphia. In 1930 he joined the Philadelphia Record as a reporter. He quickly specialized in show business reporting and became drama editor as well as a critic of films, music, and the theater. In 1937 he joined Variety in New York, and regularly covered radio and the theater. In 1944 he joined the radio department of Young and Rubicam, an advertising agency, but returned to Variety as drama editor shortly after the war.

Morrison joined the board in 1944, at least partially as a replacement for Katharine Seymour. By his own statement, he was not one of the more influential members but served rather in the status of special consultant on radio programs. He kept the board advised of the situation in radio and particularly of suitable shows for the placement of WWB material.45

Two other members were on the board primarily as liaisons to other organizations. Luise Sillcox, already mentioned, was born in 1887, educated at Columbia University

and of the Baptist faith. She had first worked with a publishing firm but since 1915 had been executive secretary of the Authors' League of America, as well as treasurer of the Authors' League Fund and secretary-treasurer of the Dramatists' Guild.

Rita Halle Kleeman was invited to join the WWB as the representative of P.E.N. (International Association of Poets, Playwrights, Editors, Essayists, and Novelists) of which she was vice-president and chairman of the war committee. Also born in 1887, educated at Wellesley College, Mrs. Kleeman, a Jew, was the wife of a prominent banker, Arthur S. Kleeman. Unlike Miss Sillcox, she had done a considerable amount of professional writing. She wrote articles for national magazines, particularly Good Housekeeping. She had written several books, including guides to colleges and an introduction to college life for freshman. In 1935, she published a well-received biography of Sara Delano Roosevelt, Gracious Lady. In addition, she held positions of responsibility in several other organizations, including the National Council of Women, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and the Pan-American Women's Association. Both women were constantly active in WWB affairs throughout its
existence.  

One individual not on the board itself deserves special mention. This is Mrs. Frederica Barach, the executive secretary of the WWB. Born in New Jersey in 1904, she was educated at Vassar College. She undertook a career in editing, first with the Review of Reviews, then with Golden Book Magazine. She had also taught creative writing at Sarah Lawrence College. She was married to Alvan L. Barach, a much honored New York physician. Her official position during the war was Liaison Officer of the Office of War Information, which meant that unlike members of the WWB itself she received a salary. However, she gave to the board the kind of service that only complete dedication could bring. She handled the day to day activities of the board, supervised the staff, dealt with visitors, kept up a massive correspondence, and, in general, was in charge of most of the board's "clearing house" functions. WWB

members constantly testified to her superb executive ability, and she came as close as any individual did to being indispensable. 47

A few other individuals served for brief periods on the WWB (see Appendix I), but their contributions were not significant. After the early months the war board's membership stayed at about twenty, although twenty-seven persons were at one time or another members. Within its ranks the WWB encompassed several important and influential literary figures. The statement by one WWB member, that the board was a collection of some of the most talented people in the country, seems well justified. 48


48 Interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968.
CHAPTER III

MODUS OPERANDI

During the course of the war the Writers' War Board undertook a great number of activities, some of which were far afield from the concept of the WWB as a liaison organization. To any matter which the board encountered it applied what one of its members called "one yardstick marked with two scales:" could the WWB do something to further the winning of the war or the winning of a durable peace? Once that test was met, the board would undertake any project or make any effort where time and ability permitted.\footnote{Christopher LaFarge, "What Is the Writers' War Board?" Cont. 80, WWB Records; Mrs. Rita Halle Kleeman to Rex Stout, November 8, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records; Interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968; "What the Writers' War Board Is and What It Does," (1942), Cont. 49, WWB Records; Writers' War Board, \textit{Third Annual Report} (New York, 1945), 1.}

The volume of requests that began to deluge the WWB shortly after its existence became known soon resulted in the members spending two-thirds of their time doing volunteer work for the government. In the very early days the
members paid for materials and stenographic help out of their own pockets; but when expenses rose to about $150 apiece, they decided that it was only fair that the government make some contribution. In late February, 1942, contacts were made with the Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) within the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).²

Among the duties of the Office of Civilian Defense, along with such things as training air raid wardens, was that of promoting civilian morale and encouraging civilian cooperation with the entire defense effort. James M. Landis, OCD head, felt that an information service as well as a number of wide-ranging promotional activities were essential to achieve these goals.³ Pursuant to this end, an Arts Division had been created within the OCD. Its

²"Minutes of the Meeting of Representative of Writers' War Board, Deputies and Program Managers of OWI, February 11, 1944," Cont. 52, WWB Records; Stout to the author, June 15, 1968.

purpose was to find artists, playwrights, and writers whose services might be needed by the OCD or any other branch of the government. The Arts Division, however, was used purely as a clearing house. In connection with the graphic arts, for example, it did not contact individual artists but rather consulted the Chicago Museum or the Modern Art Museum in New York. Actor Melvyn Douglas, technically only a consultant to the Arts Division but actually its driving force, recognized the potential of the Writers' War Board. He came to a meeting in New York of some thirty writers, and it was agreed that government help to the WWB would be of mutual value. Earlier, on March 5, Stout had met with I. J. Meade, Regional Manager of the Division of Central Administrative Services of the Office for Emergency Management, and obtained the use of an office and a stenographer. Meade could justify support for the board under that part of the official responsibilities of the OCD which included "promotion of activities designed to sustain the national morale and to create opportunities for constructive civilian participation in the Defense Program."  

4United States Government Manual, Spring, 1942, 64; Stout as quoted in "Minutes of Meeting of Representatives of Writers' War Board, Deputies and Program Managers of OWI,
The WWB always depended heavily on volunteer workers for many of the routine tasks, and by March several were assisting. Stout, however, felt strongly the need of an executive secretary and pointed out that the board's services to the government could thereby be greatly increased. In April, Stout interviewed Mrs. Frederica Barach, and in early May the government agreed to hire her. It was decided that she should be, at least technically, a civil service employee of the Office of Facts and Figures, an agency established in October, 1941, to disseminate factual information on the defense effort.\(^5\)

Later in May, 1942, the board established a policy concerning requests received from various government departments: these would be cleared with Douglas. If he

did not approve, the board would decline. It might begin on a project that seemed urgent or one almost certain to receive routine approval; but the understanding was that Office of Civilian Defense money was to be used only in ways acceptable to that agency.\(^6\)

Even as the board obtained its first assistance from the government, it was clear that more aid must be forthcoming. By late May, despite the remarkably efficient work of Mrs. Barach, the board was turning down virtually all requests from non-governmental sources, and many from government agencies, due to the volume being received. A typical reply to a request for help in the correspondence going out of the board's office stated that "we are so swamped with requests from various government departments that it is physically impossible for us to take on any more assignments until and unless our staff and office space are considerably expanded."\(^7\)

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\(^6\)Stout to Melvyn Douglas, May 21, 1942, Cont. 6, WWB Records.

\(^7\)Stout to Mrs. William R. Butler, Director, Speakers' Bureau, American Women's Voluntary Services, June 5, 1942, Cont. 94, WWB Records; Stout to Melvyn Douglas, May 21, 1942, Cont. 6, WWB Records.
Stout continued to press for more space and clerical assistance, and finally government approval was obtained. On August 28, the board moved into more adequate quarters in the Channin Building in New York, at 122 East 42nd Street, and its main operations were conducted there through 1945. The board had originally worked out of the offices of the Authors' League, at 6 East 39th Street, and continued to hold formal meetings there, so that the affairs of the board as a private organization might be properly discussed.  

Meanwhile, changes in governmental organization had occurred which eventually resulted in shifts in the WWB's connection with the government. The Office of Facts and Figures had been established under the leadership of post and librarian Archibald MacLeish primarily for the purpose of informing the public and obtaining support for the defense program. Despite the deliberately dry title given the agency,  

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8Mrs. Barach to Henry Pringle, August 15, 1942, Cont. 6, WWB Records; Miss Ellen Tannenbaum to Mrs. Selma Hirsch, August 28, 1942, Cont. 6, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Mrs. Genevieve Herrick, April 22, 1944, Cont. 28, WWB Records.
MacLeish set out to make it, in effect, a propaganda agency to prepare the public for a necessary war. When the war began, the office attempted to coordinate all civilian war information. In 1941, a Coordinator of Information was also established, one of whose purposes was to disseminate propaganda overseas. The board undertook certain projects for the Coordinator of Information; and, during the early days, the Office of Facts and Figures was used by the WWB as a liaison with the government about as often as the Office of Civilian Defense. The WWB's contact within the Office of Facts and Figures (OFF) was Henry Pringle, Chief of the Production Division of the office. The OFF had assembled within itself a small staff of researchers and writers to prepare material for publication not provided by other agencies. Generally, it confined itself to articles published strictly through government channels and to occasional pamphlets. However, the OFF arranged to fill any requests it might have for outside writers through the WWB rather than to establish its own lists of writers.9

The government propaganda effort encountered a number of difficulties, not the least of which was lack of cooperation between various agencies. In an effort to resolve the situation, on June 13, 1942, President Roosevelt created a new agency, the Office of War Information, charged with handling virtually all government information activities, foreign or domestic. Elmer Davis, one of the WWB's early members, was appointed head of the new agency, partly at the behest of some of the board's members and contacts. The Office of Facts and Figures was absorbed into the new organization. Davis was familiar with the WWB's function; and ultimately he and James M. Landis, Director of the Office of Civilian Defense, agreed that it would be more appropriate for the OWI to take charge of the WWB governmental connection so as to permit it to serve all government agencies. The shift became official in October, 1942, when Davis' agency

began to provide the subsidy for the board's liaison office.  

The members of the board usually insist that it was entirely separate and independent of the government. Stout asserts that "there was no government control of the board's activities. None whatever." Leo Rosten, who was deputy director of the OWI, states that the problem of OWI control over the WWB "simply did not exist," as the WWB just filled requests. Nevertheless, the connection with the government was quite close and the relationship not a simple one. Clifton Fadiman commented that "we were for the most part, I suppose, an arm of the government." The WWB was often mistaken for a government agency by those who came in contact with it, despite painstaking efforts to eliminate a misconception. It was the OWI's support of the liaison office

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10 Dizard, Strategy of Truth, 33; Mrs. Selma Hirsch to Hollister Noble, September 3, 1943, Cont. 126, WWB Records; Palmer Hoyt, "OWI in 1943 -- Coordinator and Service Agency," Journalism Quarterly, XX (December, 1943), 320-33; interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968.

11 Stout to the author, June 18, 1968.


13 Fadiman to the author, February 17, 1969.

14 See, for example, Stout to Congressman Fred Bradley, January 9, 1945, and John Patric to Bradley, January 17, 1945, Cont. 127, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the
which made the WWB a borderline case. This office served as the hub of all the board's operations, and even though its services were supposed to be strictly confined to government-backed projects, its activities often involved the group's private projects as well. For example, in 1945 there was some question raised by government officials because the board sent out its private literature along with government-approved material, in government-financed mailings, and billed the government for the cost of printing certain non-government items.\(^5\) On the other hand, some of those connected with the board worried periodically about the possibility that the WWB might eventually become subordinate to the OWI.\(^6\)

 Probably the most official statement of the WWB's relationship to the government was that made by Oscar Schisgall, Chief of the Magazine Bureau of the Office of War Information, in early 1944, as part of an exchange of letters with Stout Writers' War Board, January 24, 1945," Cont. 1, WWB Records.\(^{15}\)

\(^{15}\)"Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board," February 7, 1945, Cont. 1, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, February 14, 1945," Cont. 1, WWB Records.

\(^{16}\)See, for example, Mrs. Selma G. Hirsch to the Writers' War Board, March 8, 1943, Cont. 128, WWB Records.
for the purpose of making the relationship a matter of written record:

My own feelings on the matter . . . are these: The Writers' War Board ought to continue as a volunteer agency which is completely independent of O.W.I. I know this is the way you are now operating; if I repeat the obvious, it's simply because I feel it's the right way to go on from this point.

I think, too, that a great part of your program should be the furtherance in every way at your command of Government programs and campaigns designed to help with the war. Since this is the purpose for which you are organized, I'm sure there won't be any disagreement on such a point. Whatever the O.W.I. pays to maintain liaison with the Writers' War Board is money paid in recognition of the services the Board can and does give to the war program; but such payments are not to be construed as indicating that the O.W.I. controls the actions and the decisions of the Writers' War Board; nor, on the other hand, that the O.W.I. is in any way responsible for such actions.\(^\text{17}\)

Stout concurred with the above, noting that it "states clearly and properly the status of the Writers' War Board; and its relation to the Office of War Information."\(^\text{18}\) Nevertheless, some question remained to the end of the war.

The subsidy granted by the OWI to the board was never very large. The total official budget for the board's

\(^{17}\text{Schisgall to Stout, February 25, 1944, Cont. 52, WWB Records.}\)

\(^{18}\text{Stout to Schisgall, February 29, 1944, Cont. 52, WWB Records.}\)
liaison office during the fiscal year 1944 was $28,552, excluding overtime salary payments.\textsuperscript{19} The budget for fiscal year 1945, excluding overtime, was $33,360. Actual expenditures were probably slightly higher, but the highest figure ever officially cited for government subsidies to the board during one year was $37,628.78, including overtime.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lrr}
 & 1945 & 1944 \\
\hline
Personal services & $17,100 & $14,756 \\
Travel & 1,260 & 300 \\
Transportation & 500 & 425 \\
Communication & 3,000 & 2,568 \\
Rents and utilities & 3,926 & 3,926 \\
Printing and binding & 24 & 22 \\
Special projects & 4,500 & 5,037 \\
Other contractual services & 900 & 757 \\
Duplication supplies and materials & 0 & 458 \\
Equipment & 0 & 103 \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{19}United States House of Representatives, Hearings Before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on the National War Agencies Appropriations Bill for 1945, 78 Cong., 2 Sess., 1944, Part II, 263.

\textsuperscript{20}Mrs. Selma Hirsch to Hollister Noble, September 3, 1943, Cont. 126, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board," February 14, 1945, Cont. 1, WWB Records. The complete budget breakdown was as follows:

House of Representatives, Hearings Before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on the National War Agencies Appropriation Bill for 1945, 78 Cong., 2 Sess., 1944, Part II, 263.
Exactly what percentage of the board's total income this represented is difficult to say. Stout stated that the government subsidy met only one-fourth of the WWB's requirements.\(^{21}\) He should be in a position to know: he was chairman of the WWB and his wife, Pola, was chairman of the financial committee of the WWB. Nevertheless, this figure is difficult to substantiate. A financial statement for the year 1942 listed contributions of only $2,237.27. Expenditures were given as $2,777.40 with a deficit for the year of $515.71.\(^{22}\) If statements for succeeding years were compiled, the records were unavailable. The board's annual reports contain no financial summary.

In 1943, there is evidence of larger contributions. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., contributed $1,500 and Marshall Field $2,000. One unidentified member of the board apparently donated about $4,200 to WWB work.\(^{23}\) These sums were

\(^{21}\)Stout to the author, June 15, 1968.


\(^{23}\)Pola Stout, undated form letter, Cont. 12, WWB Records.
exceptionally large, the average contribution being less than twenty-five dollars. Sometimes fees paid to writers for WWB-arranged work were passed on to the New York group. There is no evidence to indicate any large inflow of money. Indeed, a form letter sent out in 1943 to almost one hundred individuals requesting financial assistance drew virtually no response.24 Contributions from January 1, 1944, to October 1, 1944, totalled $11,500 from fifty-nine individuals.25

Financing WWB activities does not, however, seem to have been a serious problem. Occasionally funds ran low, and the board's members had to make contributions;26 but, as the Writers' War Board depended on and existed because of the voluntary efforts of writers, all of its talent came free of charge and the board had few major expenses. The answer to the whole question is probably that financing was a highly informal procedure with the board members asking


25"Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, November 8, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.

26See, for example, "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, January 26, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.
their agents, publishers, or personal friends for money whenever it was needed.27

The government-supported liaison service consisted, ultimately, of nine individuals. Two of them were assigned to the board's liaison office in Washington in order to be available to the various government agencies. This office was headed by Mrs. Selma G. Hirsch, whose official title was Administrative Officer. Mrs. Hirsch was responsible for the contact with federal agencies there. She received and evaluated all the requests made, then sent directives to the WWB, indicating what work needed to be done and what talent was required to do it. She frequently visited the board's headquarters in New York in order to consult with WWB members on these requests and to meet with the writers who were to carry out specific assignments. She was also responsible for reviewing the finished product of the writers' efforts in order to make sure that it met the specifications of the job and conformed to all pertinent policy statements.

27These statements are based in part on the interviews with Alan Green, August 8, 1968, and Rex Stout, August 14, 1970.
Finally, she arranged for the delivery of the completed job to the appropriate agency.²⁸

Mrs. Hirsch received the highest salary of any of the paid officials, $3,800 per year. Despite her close ties with OWI, she was basically in sympathy with the board's position and constantly sought to make certain that it was in no sense subordinate to the OWI. She further attempted to make sure that it had no sense of obligation to the OWI due to the subsidy. In her own words, she wished to keep the WWB from being "infected with the government bug -- a deadly virus."²⁹

Mrs. Barach, the board’s executive secretary, was the head of the seven-person liaison office, with the OWI official title of Senior Administrative Assistant. Already mentioned are her functions as the board’s organizer and implementer. Officially, she was responsible for receiving all the government's requests and presenting them to the board. In practice she was the WWB’s main contact with the

²⁸"OWI Domestic Branch, Book Division, as of June 2, 1943," Box 1695, OWI Records.

²⁹Mrs. Hirsch to Mrs. Barach, March 8, 1943, Cont. 128, WWB Records.
vast body of their writers through the voluminous correspondence which she carried on and through personal interviews. She, with the cooperation of the Authors' League, made more job assignments to writers than anyone else, though these were of a routine nature. Part of her time was spent on the private projects of the board. For this she was compensated, if at all, with WWB funds. One of the most difficult of her responsibilities was to keep the governmental and private projects of the board strictly segregated.30

The duties of the remainder of the liaison office personnel were primarily clerical. They performed the usual secretarial functions. In some cases, they were available for research assistance to writers working on WWB jobs. Whenever necessary, this staff was supplemented by volunteer workers. Some ten to fifteen volunteers assisted periodically, and numerous others made an occasional appearance. Without their help many of the WWB's private

30"OWI Domestic Branch, Book Division as of June 2, 1943," Box 1695, OWI Records; Mrs. Hirsch to Hollister Noble, September 3, 1943, Cont. 126, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to the author, July 19, 1968.
activities would have been impossible. The board itself sometimes hired extra help. Stout paid his own secretary throughout. But the liaison office carried out most of the necessary functions.\(^3\)

The subsidy given to the WWB was split up between the Domestic, Overseas, and Administrative Divisions of the OWI. Perhaps as a result, responsibility for the board was somewhat scattered throughout the government agency. Overall responsibility was unquestionably taken by the Director of the OWI, Elmer Davis, who apparently retained some interest in the group he had helped to start. General supervisory functions were shared with Robert Sherwood, head of OWI Overseas.\(^2\) Day-to-day contact was handled throughout the war by separate divisions of the OWI. In the earlier days, the Book Bureau, headed by Chester Kerr, was officially in charge of liaison with the WWB. However, Dorothy Ducas, head of the OWI's Magazine Bureau, carried on the principal

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\(^{31}\) Mrs. Hirsch to Noble, September 3, 1943, Cont. 126, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to the author, July 19, 1968.

correspondence with the New York writers. In late 1943, the
OWI was reorganized and the Book and Magazine Divisions were
combined under the leadership of Oscar Schisgall, himself a
professional writer, who got along exceptionally well with
the board throughout the remainder of the OWI's existence. 33

Stout estimated that about eighty-five percent of
the WWB's efforts went toward government projects for govern­
ment agencies. 34 The OWI consistently put a high value on
the board's services to it and other agencies. The WWB
was the constant recipient of awards and was recognized for
special achievements. Leo Rosten, a deputy director of the
OWI, speaking with a perspective of some twenty-five years,
remarked that the board undertook an "immense variety of
tasks" and was "extremely useful" to Washington agencies
during the War. 35 Schisgall once justified the money spent
for the liaison office by citing several examples of WWB
cooperation and then stating:

33 Office of War Information, Handbook of Emergency
War Agencies (1943), 29-32; Division of Public Inquiries,
Office of War Information, United States Government Manual,
Summer, 1944, 94.

34 "Minutes of the Meeting of Representatives of the
Writers' War Board, Deputies and Program Managers of OWI,
February 11, 1944," Cont. 33, WWB Records.

35 Leo Rosten to the author, March 14, 1969.
For the money we spent in maintaining liaison with the Writers' War Board, we have the services of almost 5000 writers; we reach thousands of newspapers; more than 600 radio stations; and have a vast army of writers ready to cooperate in the Government's war work. I can think of no other way in which the talents and the efforts of so many writers can be organized for the Government's benefit. The money laid out to maintain liaison with this organization is repaid a hundred fold in the work the Writers' War Board produces.36

To understand how the board was able to benefit the government, an examination must be made of its resources and procedures. The basis for all WWB activities was the regular meeting. This was held at the offices of the Authors' League every Wednesday afternoon. Here the matters requiring WWB attention were considered in detail. The meetings were scheduled from two to six o'clock, but it was not unusual for them to continue for eight or nine hours.

At these meetings the board determined general policy. Procedures for the office staff were set up and the board's position on various issues was discussed often in connection with the opinions of the prominent authors on the WWB's Advisory Council. Much of each meeting, however, was devoted to applying the assorted creative talents of the

36Schisgall to Elmer Davis, April 13, 1944, Cont. 52, WWB Records.
board to a problem or project. This type of approach has come to be called "brain storming." Some members of the board, at least, were later of the opinion that they were among the early users of this technique. Problems which could not be handled on the normal administrative level would be presented to the assembled members, usually either by one of the board or the liaison officers. These would involve assistance in major publicity or propaganda campaigns. Often the help of the board was desired in determining what kind of publicity could or should be obtained, not just simply help in getting a specific piece of writing done. If the matter was sufficiently important or complex, a government official or other interested individuals might appear in person to present their case. In spite of a standing board policy to discourage such visits, due to the time they took, they were a common occurrence.

Once the board heard the problem, it first had to decide whether or not it could or should act. Only if the board believed that the project would help win the war or the peace, and that they could take effective action, would

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37Mrs. Barach to the author, July 19, 1968; interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968.
they consent even to offer suggestions. Due to the great number of projects, the board frequently had to reject requests, sometimes even from government agencies. When the board did agree to attempt to help out, its combined talents might be immediately applied. In that case, each board member would let his imagination go to work. Out of the deluge of suggestions concerning ways to obtain publicity, perhaps thirty to fifty reasonable possibilities might be obtained.\textsuperscript{38}

More often, particularly with projects likely to continue over an extended period, the matter would be referred to one of the board's standing committees or to the chairman of a committee created especially for the project. Though the WWB kept a tight control over general policy, its real spadework was done in these committees which often included personnel outside the board's own membership. Such committees numbered as few as two members and as many as eighteen. Over the entire span of the WWB's existence, some seventy-four such committees were created. In addition, four

\textsuperscript{38}Interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968; Mrs. Barach to the author, July 19, 1968; "Minute Extracts," \textit{passim}, Conts. 1, 3, 5, WWB Records.
special committees were organized in cooperation with other organizations.  

Most of the WWB's committees might be termed project committees, created to carry out specific activities, usually to meet a specific problem. Project committees might be short-term, designed to cope with particular situations or to carry out single functions. On the other hand, they might be long-term committees designed to continue particular functions for indefinite periods.

Excellent examples of the short-term projects committee are the May 10th-Book Burning Committee and the Lidice Committee, both of which were established to exploit a specific anniversary or event for the purpose of demonstrating the evil nature of the German enemy. In both cases, which will be discussed in detail later in this study, the committees ceased to exist after a few months

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39Stout to the author, June 15, 1968; WWB, Second Annual Report, passim; WWB, Third Annual Report, passim; Clifton Fadiman to the author, February 17, 1969; Christopher LaFarge, "What Is the Writers' War Board," unpublished manuscript, Cont. 93, WWB Records; WWB, First Annual Report, passim.
when the anniversary or event no longer attracted attention or served a useful propaganda purpose.

One of the most active of the WWB groups provides a good example of a long-term project committee, the Scripts for Soldier and Sailor Shows Committee. This committee was one of the first to be formed, but it continued for the duration of the war. Headed by the wife of Broadway musical composer Richard Rodgers, Mrs. Dorothy Rogers, the committee toiled industriously on one single task: to provide material for the use of the members of the armed services in putting on their own shows in camps. Members of the committee included WWB members as well as prominent writers who were non-members, such as George S. Kaufman. The committee worked tirelessly to insure a steady flow of appropriate material, utilizing their extensive contacts in the entertainment industry.40

A second group of WWB committees may be designated as media committees. These were created to maintain contact

with a certain part of the communications industry and to obtain cooperation for a wide variety of projects. This group included the Radio Committee, the Pulp Writers' Committee, the Comics Committee, and others of a similar nature. Usually in these cases the chairman and perhaps one other committeeman would be board members, but the rest would be men involved in the particular media. The Comics Committee, for example, was chaired through most of its existence by Paul Gallico, but numbered among its members two artists whose comic strips appeared regularly.41

Finally, a third type of WWB committee may be called issue committees. They usually concerned themselves with the board's private campaigns and were not numerous because normally the board as a whole ran its own campaigns. The best example of this type was the Committee to Combat Race Hatred, a group whose far-reaching activities will be considered later. Some of these committees never reached the stage of formal organization and their existence was not mentioned in the board's published reports. One such was

41 WWB, First Annual Report, passim; WWB, Second Annual Report, passim; WWB, Third Annual Report, passim.
called the Committee on Creating a Stronger Feeling Against the Enemy. It was less formally known in intra-board communications as the Committee on the Goddam Truth or simply the Get Tough Committee. The issues committees involved themselves in numerous projects and availed themselves of all appropriate media in their efforts to carry out their particular campaigns of persuasion.

The strength of the WWB obviously was based on the writers whose talents it could command. When the board was first organized as the Writers' War Committee it was intended to consist of only a small, closely associated group. When other writers began to inquire about the organization, the members soon came to realize the advantage of a large group of cooperating writers, and they began to register and classify them. In late March and early April, 1942, the board sent out a comprehensive questionnaire to some three thousand writers whose names were obtained from the Authors' League. The same questionnaire was also sent to all writers who subsequently contacted them. It inquired as to the types

\[42\] Ibid.
of writing in which the recipient was experienced, his fields of knowledge, his foreign language ability, and, most important, his previous publications or sales of material.

Some twenty-two hundred writers answered this first survey. Crackpots and total amateurs were eliminated; the rest were contacted and encouraged to help the war effort. Eventually, about five thousand active publishing authors were thus registered. The job of classification was, after several months, turned over completely to the Authors' League. In this fashion the WWB acquired a stockpile of writers to whom requests for material could be given with some expectation of getting results. Furthermore, appropriate individuals could be selected from this group for specific assignments.43

The WWB continued to recruit writers throughout the war. It made certain that each new registrant received a list of suggestions for useful writing projects. More important, realizing that the markets for publication of the

43 "Writers' War Committee Questionnaires," Cont. 6; WWB Records; "Summary of Writers' War Board Activities- September, 1942," Cont. 11, WWB Records; "What the Writers' War Board Is and What It Does," Cont. 49, WWB Records.
overwhelming majority of these writers were principally local, it created, in January, 1943, the Assignments Committee, headed by Luise Sillcox and Martha McCleery. A list of writers whom the board felt to be serious and competent but without the ability to reach a national market was selected. To these the Assignments Committee sent periodic war messages in the hope that they would write or stimulate a special editorial, a local radio show, a discussion group, or, at the very least, a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. These messages might be sent as part of the board's regular national campaigns conducted in cooperation with the OWI, or they might be part of specialized local approaches to problems. Selected writers in the agricultural states, for instance, were requested to urge increased farm production in 1943. Those from heavily wooded states were asked to remind their readers of their patriotic duty to prevent forest fires. How effective this tactic was is impossible to determine. However, the torrent of letters from local writers which poured down on the board makes it clear that the WWB did succeed in involving a great many local writers personally in the war effort with undoubtedly
beneficial results.\textsuperscript{44}

The WWB also attempted to reach and utilize another potential source of material: foreign writers resident in the United States. One of the board members, Mrs. Rita Halle Kleeman, was head of the American center of the P. E. N., an international writers organization, and as such was the recipient of many offers of help or requests for advice from such individuals. The board cherished hopes of utilizing these writers as "propaganda instruments" both to write in English with a knowledge of circumstances in foreign countries and in their native tongues for publication in the foreign language press and for appeals to other foreigners. The Foreign Writers' Committee was established with Manuel Komroff as chairman in late 1942, and a series of interviews and questionnaires was begun to uncover potentially useful individuals. This project produced some results, with several articles being written and symposiums held. Nevertheless, the committee never achieved the results the board

\textsuperscript{44} "What the Writers' War Board Is and What is Does," Cont. 49, WWB, Records; Crouse, "Writers and the War," 268; WWB, Second Annual Report, 4; Mrs. McCleery to James Fisher, March 5, 1943, Cont. 124, WWB Records; "Forest Fires," form letter circulated to fifty writers, April 1, 1943, Cont. 13, WWB Records; File 1-61, Cont. 13, WWB Records.
first envisioned, apparently due to the fact that the opportuni­
ties for publication available to such persons proved limited. Furthermore a number of them were found to be politically unreliable, at least by WWB standards. The committee ceased to be active in 1943. 45

In order to deal with any problem or issue which it might encounter and to assist in making the best use of its human resources, the WWB developed a considerable variety of publicity organs of its own which could be utilized in any campaign. All of these were secondary propaganda mechanisms not designed to reach the public directly but rather to influence those whose work was for the mass of the people. These organs did some of the board's most effective work and they were routinely used in almost all of its campaigns.

The first of these organs to begin functioning was the Writers' War Board Monthly Report. The early experimental activities of the Assignments Committee in sparking activity and discussion on the local level by

45 WWB, First Annual Report, 16; "Summary of Writers' War Board Activities -- September, 1942," Cont. 11, WWB Records; Records of the Foreign Writers Committee, File 1-38, Cont. 2, WWB Records.
sending out messages or themes were so successful that the WWB decided to carry on this procedure on a regular basis and to expand the circulation coverage to almost all of the board's registered writers.

The first monthly report went out on April 15, 1943, to a readership of about twenty-five hundred writers in all states of the Union. Publication was continued regularly each month thereafter until March, 1946. Once circulation had built up in the first months, the report reached an audience of thirty-five hundred to four thousand writers, each presumably of sufficient ability or local prominence to stimulate some action on its suggestions. This was the largest circulation of any WWB publication.46

The Monthly Report was not impressive in appearance. It was usually simply a single mimeographed sheet printed on both sides. Each number would normally have some six to ten paragraphs dealing with four to six WWB projects. A

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46 WWB, Second Annual Report, 4-5; WWB, Third Annual Report, 4; "Report of the Writers' War Board Activities for the Month of November, 1944," Cont. 8, WWB Records; Writers' War Board Report, April 15, 1943- March 1, 1946. No issue appeared in August, September, or October, 1945. Thereafter, the publication was referred to as the Writers' Board Report.
typical issue dealt with a campaign of the Office of Price Administration to get housewives to pledge to abide by the rationing system; a projected series by the OWI of short sketches on the typical American; the effort to recruit for the Women's Army Corps; the effort by the Music War Committee of the American Theater Wing to find suitable war songs; the board's own campaign for racial tolerance; and two or three more minor items. Some of the articles simply provided writers with information; most tried to enlist their support. The typical issue also contained brief reviews of movies or radio programs, rating them with one to five bombs or one to five duds, depending on their propaganda value. A typical movie rating, quoted in full, gave "For Whom the Bell Tolls" one dud, because "the propaganda value of Hemingway's novel has been largely eliminated while several negative aspects have been italicized." Another movie, "Watch on the Rhine," was, however, rewarded with four bombs for "exposing Fascism as an urgent personal matter for everyone."47 The contents of the monthly report

47 All of the foregoing is drawn from the *Writers' War Board Report*, September 1, 1943.
were always written by various members of the board who were assigned topics at the WWB meetings. A volunteer worker, Jane Grant, edited the report, but her function was primarily technical, since she was neither admitted to the board meetings nor given access to the minutes of those meetings.48

Probably as important as the WWB Report, and perhaps even more so, was the board's editorial service. This originated with a request from Sutherland Denlinger of the Domestic News Bureau of the OWI, sent to the WWB on May 5, 1943. The problem was that war information sent out by the OWI under its official letterhead was receiving almost no mention in the nation's editorial columns. The board already had an excellent record for getting its material into local publications and OWI felt that this fact, in addition to the prestige attached to the names of board members, might cause it to succeed where OWI had done rather poorly. The board agreed to prepare and send out one set of editorials each month primarily based on facts supplied

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by the OWI if it could include material on some of its private projects as well.49

The board sent out its first set of editorials in August, 1943, to about seven hundred newspapers. Rather quickly the number of recipients was increased until the mailings of the editorial service were reaching more than sixteen hundred American newspapers, almost all of which had circulations of less than one hundred thousand. This was deemed the optimum number, since each district of the United States was reached, but without duplication. To handle the service the WWB was able to obtain Robert L. Duffus, an experienced journalist, and into his hands fell the job not only of editing but also of doing much of the writing during its earlier months of operations. Duffus continued to head this program until November, 1944, and the editorial service itself continued through July, 1945.50


No matter whether Duffus himself, a member of the WWB, or one of the board's cooperating writers wrote the editorial, it was always sent out anonymously. Editors were invited to use the editorials word for word, in whole or in part, or to paraphrase them in any manner they wished. No credit line to the author or the WWB was required or desired. Anywhere from four to eight editorials might go out each month. The normal number would be five, three on subjects suggested by the OWI News Bureau and two on subjects appropriate to the WWB's own current campaigns. There would be, of course, variations from this pattern. For example, the editorials for August, 1943, explained fuel-oil rationing, urged the public not to travel, and defended the government's anti-inflation measures, all at OWI request. That same month, the board added an editorial of its own, calling for racial tolerance. Four editorials for April, 1944, typical for that year, supported OWI campaigns to eliminate venereal disease, "V. D.;" to suppress the black market in gasoline, "The Racketeers Need you;" to popularize service in the infantry, "Hats Off to the Infantry;" and to improve soldier morale by means of cheery letters concerning activities on the local scene, "Letters from the Home Front." Two others supported the WWB's own
campaigns: "Exploding the Myth," on racial activity, and "Hirohito Must Go," demonstrating the evil nature of the Japanese enemy. 51

As is often the case with WWB activities, it is difficult to evaluate accurately the extent of coverage the editorial service was able to provide. As part of the original agreement, the OWI was to supply a newspaper clipping service so that the value of the project could be determined. The latitude permitted editors in utilizing the material, together with the fact that the WWB was never given credit in print, made the use of a clipping service impractical; and apparently nothing of this nature was attempted. There is, however, considerable evidence to indicate that both the government and the recipient editors were appreciative of the service. Mrs. Barach, WWB executive secretary, wrote in 1944 that "the reception to the editorials continues to be enthusiastic, and more and more

government agencies in Washington keep putting pressure on us to use them to support their causes."52 The board maintained a file of letters concerning this service. One Wisconsin editor reflected the sentiments of most of those who wrote by commenting that "of literally pounds of franked releases received by us daily, yours is the only one we really look forward to, and the one which is the most utilizable."53

The third of the WWB publications was known as "Brief Items." The board almost from its beginning had a Brief Items Committee, under the chairmanship first of WWB member Jack Goodman, and then chaired by a public relations agency executive, Julian Brodie. The committee was originally formed by circularizing some three thousand writers, emphasizing particularly those with experience with advertising agencies. Eventually, about two hundred writers were selected whose work was useful and effective, and they were

52 Mrs. Barach to Robert L. Duffus, September 15, 1944, Cont. 68, WWB Records; Mrs. Hirsch to Mrs. Hatton, August 3, 1943, Cont. 57, WWB Records.

53 John Burnham to WWB, January 11, 1944, Cont. 57, WWB Records.
the source of most of the "brief items" throughout the rest of the war.

The function of this committee was to create slogans, catch phrases, wisecracks, brief radio plugs, newspaper fillers, poetry, and short articles. In the early months, its main intention was to supply appropriate material for Treasury Department campaigns, and hundreds of items were eventually utilized.54

As the original demand for such slogans and ideas slackened when the government was able to hire capable individuals as regular sources of supply, the committee was able to consider requests from quasi-government and private groups. The board had already taken note of the fact that there were throughout the United States a considerable number of industrial house organ publications with a readership of over thirty million workers. These house organs were already being used for various types of propaganda, but the WWB believed that much of it was so stilted and blatant as to be ineffective.

54 "Memorandum on the Activities of the Committee on Brief Items," Cont. 6, WWB Records; WWB, First Annual Report, 14-15.
In order to meet the situation, beginning on June 15, 1943, the board began a new publication entitled "Brief House Organ Items from the Writers' War Board." The WWB reasoned that one of the problems about most ordinary propaganda material in such papers was that it was blandly anonymous. The principal device employed by the board, therefore, was to attach the name of a well-known writer or entertainer to most of the items in their service to the house organs. These names would attract the attention of the local editor first of all, resulting in the pick-up of the material. Then, it was hoped, the personalized propaganda message would carry far more impact than usual.\footnote{"Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, June 2, 1943," Cont. 6, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, June 16, 1943," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Julian P. Brodie to Mrs. Marjorie Denton, November 29, 1943, Cont. 6, WWB Records; "Brief House Organ Items from the Writers' War Board," June 15, 1943, Cont. 6, WWB Records.}

Pursuant to this policy, the first issue contained an article under the by-line of strip-tease artist Gypsy Rose Lee on war bonds, as well as one by Rex Stout himself on the post-war world. Subsequent issues, which appeared monthly until the end of the war, carried articles by such...
figures as minister Harry Emerson Fosdick on the Negro problem, actor Frederic March on world organization, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover on security of war information, radio character Fibber McGee on war bonds, and ventriloquist's dummy Charlie McCarthy on the income tax.

Each edition contained four or five short articles of a few hundred words at most, one or two poems, a few inspirational fillers one or two sentences in length, and, invariably, a cartoon by comic strip artist Ham Fisher featuring his character Joe Palooka in some patriotic posture. As with the editorial service, the house organs could use any or all of this material without crediting the source, although it was assumed they would want to use the big name by-line. The WWB itself and its affiliated writers wrote virtually all of the material, simply obtaining the use of the name, though occasionally a genuine original piece might appear, usually a pick-up from another source.56

The board considered the response to this service excellent. Circulation of this service began with only about five hundred publications, but within a few months "Brief

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56"Brief House Organ Items from the Writers' War Board," June, 1943, to July, 1945, Cont. 6, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 4-5; WWB, Second Annual Report, 13.
Items for House Organs" was reaching some twenty-six hundred industrial papers with a possible audience of more than thirty million. The number of publications utilizing WWB material varied with the attractiveness of the items, and the board had no consistent statistical data on results. Periodic checks did reveal, however, that after an early average of twenty-two percent, ultimately thirty percent of the house organs used one or more items each month, and the board's material thus had a circulation to an audience of about nine million persons per month through this medium.57

The service to house organs was deemed so successful that the board decided to extend its efforts to a different but equally crucial audience, the American soldier. In March, 1944, the board began circulation of "Brief Army Camp Items from the Writers' War Board." This publication was aimed at the editors of the army camp papers in the United States. It was similar in form to the publication for house organs and had the same general editor, Brodie, but often included different material. For example, a Joe

Palooka cartoon was a characteristic feature in both publications, but instead of being a war worker, in "Brief Army Camp Items" Joe was a private first class. The soldiers were urged more often than the workers to support the fight against Germany to an outcome of unconditional surrender and less often to buy war bonds. This version of "Brief Items" went out to between eleven hundred and eleven hundred fifty camps each month.58

Both of the "Brief Items" publications were maintained until almost the end of the board's existence well after the fighting stopped. Periodic insertions in them were a standard tactic both for the propaganda campaigns with which the WWB cooperated or which the New York group conducted.

Less widely circulated than any of the above mentioned publications was the board's "Bulletin to Cartoonists." This was an activity of the WWB's Comics Committee, and it served much the same function for cartoonists as the WWB's

58"Brief Army Camp Items from the Writers' War Board," March, 1944, to October, 1945, Cont. 34, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, August 21, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Christopher LaFarge, August 4, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 4.
Monthly Report did for writers. It gave written descriptions of ideas considered particularly suitable to visual presentation. It was first sent out May 3, 1944, and the response was enthusiastic. Accordingly, monthly publication was begun in August, 1944, and continued for at least nine months thereafter. Circulation reached about 270 per month. Recipients of the "Bulletin" were comic magazine editors, comic-strip artists, and editorial cartoonists. Ideas for most of the board's campaigns were given their place in the "Bulletin." The first issue, for example, contained "problems" such as "We Are Not Keeping Military Secrets" and "Can We Glamourize Economy?" together with some suggestions designed to stimulate creative thinking on these matters. No specific reports on results were apparently ever assembled. It was one of the first of the board's routine activities to be abandoned, so its effectiveness was probably none too high, at least in the opinion of the WWB.59

59"Bulletin to Cartoonists," May 3, 1944, August, 1944, and assorted issues to April, 1945, Cont. 12, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 5; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, August 2, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.
Another of the WWB' services that offered the opportunity for nationwide propaganda circulation was the war script of the month. Of the board's major continuing service activities that was one of the earliest and it continued as long as the New York group existed. It originated in the fact that there was, in 1942, a demand for patriotic material suitable for performance by schools and colleges active in local broadcasting throughout the country, combined with the fact that the board had available to it several excellent radio scripts. The WWB established the War Script of the Month Committee under the chairmanship of Erik Barnouw, then a teacher of journalism at Columbia University. When Barnouw resigned to join the National Broadcasting Company script department, the chairmanship went briefly to Louella Hoskins, professor of journalism at New York University, then back to Barnouw, and finally, in 1944, into the hands of WWB member Robert Landry. No matter who was chairman the committee functioned smoothly throughout the period with little change.

In the summer of 1942, with the cooperation of the National Association of Education Thru Radio, a mailing list of more than two hundred fifty stations was obtained; and distribution of the scripts began in July of that year.
Response was enthusiastic, and soon the board was mailing the scripts to all sorts of stations, regardless of their educational connection, the only provision being that the production must be on a non-commercial basis. Over the years the mailing list grew until more than 825 stations, colleges, and clubs regularly received the monthly selection, and hundreds more might receive any given script simply by sending the board a request for it. The board maintained a comprehensive script catalog so that all of its scripts remained continuously available.60

The scripts of the month included both original unused scripts, sometimes written at WWB request, and scripts already broadcast nationally or locally. Technically, these scripts were selected for their easy production, small cast requirement, and adaptability to use by young voices. In short, the committee took considerable care to insure a maximum number of performances.

60"War Script of the Month Selections," Cont. 21, WWB Records; "Summary of Writers' War Board Activities, September, 1942," Cont. 11, WWB Records; WWB, First Annual Report, 27-28; WWB, Second Annual Report, 15, 27; WWB, Third Annual Report, 7, 31; Robert Landry to the Philadelphia Fellowship Committee, November 19, 1945, Cont. 21, WWB Records; File 1A-1, Cont. 21, WWB Records.
As with the other WWB activities, the subject content of the scripts ran the full gamut of WWB propaganda themes. The first script, sent out in July, 1942, was "They Burned the Books." Written by Stephen Vincent Benet, it had been produced on nationwide radio, although it was first prepared at the WWB's request for one of its early projects. Radio scripts treated such other subjects as food supplies, a defense of the performance of the Russian army, the way war veterans should be treated upon their return home, world organization, and the ugliness of anti-Semitism. The "hate Germany" theme was by far the most frequently employed perhaps because it most easily lent itself to simple dramatic presentation. Second in emphasis was the continuing campaign for racial tolerance which was the subject of several later scripts. One of the board offerings in this area was "Is Fair Play Controversial?" by Chet Huntley, a script for four characters intended to run fifteen minutes. According to the catalog description, it was "a simple script set in a war plant which shows that, when given equal opportunities, Negroes learn as rapidly as white people." Most of the leading radio writers of the day contributed at least one script without
charge. The scripts proved so attractive that, when the urgency of a campaign provided extra motivation, the "script of the month" might actually be two or three separate items. No statistics were apparently compiled on the frequency or effectiveness of performances, but the board's continuing attention to and praise of this project is evidence of its opinion of the value of the series.

Another type of publication of the WWB was issued irregularly but its preparation became just as much a part of the board's routine procedure as any of the above-mentioned publications. These publications were the "war talks" or "canned speeches." Speech-writing was always one of the functions of the board. Almost immediately after it was organized the board received letters requesting speeches on various subjects, so the "Speech Writers Committee" was one of the earliest organized in 1942. Composed of two women, Mrs. Nina Bourne and Mrs. Elinor Green,
it filled countless requests for speeches from both the
government and private organizations such as the Veterans
of Foreign Wars and the Red Cross.

In 1943, Alan Green took over the chairmanship of
the Committee, and it began to expand its activities. For
one thing, it began to furnish speakers as well as speeches.
Members of the WWB such as Stout, Fadiman, LaFarge, and
Gallico, and other personalities, like writer John Gunther
and radio commentator Raymond Gram Swing, were made avail­
able for appearances before the armed services or other
related groups such as the U. S. O. where they discussed
subjects relative to the war. Most personal appearances
were naturally on the East Coast, and especially in the New
York area. On occasion, nationwide influence was possible
when the committee supplied speakers for radio debates to
present the WWB's side of controversial subjects. In 1943
alone some fifteen such radio debates were arranged.62

62 WWB, First Annual Report, 24; WWB, Second Annual
Report, 10; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War
Board, March 17, 1943," Cont. 100, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach
to the WWB, March 10, 1943, Cont. 100, WWB Records; Alan
Green to Mrs. Lawrence Tibbett, September 15, 1943, Cont.
13, WWB Records; "Report to Date of Activities of the Committee
on Speeches and Speakers," November 6, 1943, Cont. 13, WWB
Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of Representatives of the
Writers' War Board, Deputies and Program Managers of the OWI,
February 11, 1944," Cont. 52, WWB Records.
More important, perhaps, under Green's chairmanship the output of speeches was increased so as to fill more requests. When it had accumulated several excellent speeches the board had a circular printed advising the recipients of their existence and contents. Finally, it had a catalog, originally with some twenty-seven speeches made up and sent out to potential users such as radio stations, and patriotic, educational, and church groups. The committee ceased simply to await requests for speeches and began to prepare talks on any subject where a need was felt to exist. Circulation went up. By February, 1944, Stout estimated that the WWB had sent out about nine thousand speeches; and while no figures were kept on the size of the audiences, he estimated that the speeches were delivered between seven and eight thousand times. In June, 1944, the board redoubled its attempts to stimulate use of the speeches by wider publicity concerning them. As a result, the demand for speeches rose to almost eight hundred monthly.63

63 WWB, Second Annual Report, 10; WWB, Third Annual Report, 7; Interview with Alan Green, August 8, 1968; "Summary of the Writers' War Board Activities, for the month of November, 1944," Cont. 9, WWB Records; Green to Mrs. Tibbett, September 15, 1943, Cont. 13, WWB Records; "Report
The speeches were deliberately written in a simple, straightforward style, so that they could be delivered effectively by almost anyone. Board members and associate writers authored the talks, which had to meet rigid standards of clarity, effectiveness, and doctrine. Only one of every four speeches written was accepted. When the speeches were sent out, the author was, never identified.

A frequent tactic in any campaign was to prepare several speeches well in advance, suitable for various occasions and of varying lengths. Ultimately over forty were written, accepted, and kept in the general catalog. These were revised periodically so as to be up to date in every respect. Among the offerings in the catalog were such speeches as "Can We Trust Our Allies at the Peace Table?" the answer to which was contained in another title, "Not Just Allies -- Friends."

Some of the other speeches were anti-enemy talks such as "Horror Is Their Pleasure" and "Our Enemy -- Madame Butterfly," home front stimulations such as "How Writers Can Help Win the War" and "A Challenge to Every Woman," and

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to Date on Activities of the Committee on Speeches and Speakers," November 6, 1943, Cont. 13, WWB Records;
"Minutes of the Meeting of Representatives of the Writers' War Board Deputies and Program Managers of the OWI, February 11, 1944," Cont. 52, WWB Records.

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post-war preparations such as "Our Chances of Avoiding World War III" and "A Bad Half Hour for the Average Man."

As was the case with most board activities of this nature, the speech catalog touched on all subjects. Also, as usual the speeches were often blunt declarations of even the most controversial policies of the board. Stout once commented that "it is surprising how much you can get in a speech that is contrary to the opinion of the group hearing it and still have the speech accepted."^4

One other method which the board utilized periodically for its campaigns was a service to newspaper syndicates, which sought to place articles in hundred of papers, including some with massive circulations. The WWB early organized a Syndicate Committee under the leadership of WWB member Carl Carmer. The results achieved through this committee were uneven. Although a number of articles did

^4Stout, as quoted in "Minutes of the Meeting of Representatives of the Writers' War Board, Deputies and Program Managers of OWI, February 11, 1944," Cont. 52, WWB Records; "Catalog of Speeches -- Writers' War Board," Cont. 100, WWB Records; File 1-36 (Complete file of all war talks written for the WWB), Cont. 128, WWB Records; "Report to Date on the Activities of the Committee on Speeches and Speakers," November 6, 1943, Cont. 13, WWB Records.
find their way into print, the board had to submit to the
dictates of popularity-conscious editors and were never
able to use this outlet as they desired.

The Syndicate Committee established closest re-
lations with the Newspaper Enterprises Alliance, a syndicate
serving six hundred newspapers with twelve million readers.
It provided a number of articles to this organization. A
typical article was a rewrite of a War Department recruit-
ing release put out over the signature of Paul Gallico to
make it more attractive; a series released in 1944 con-
sisted of short editorials on various war themes written
by more than fifty public figures including senators,
ministers, and scholars, as well as nationally circulated
authors.

Relations with the syndicates proved troublesome
as many articles written for them never saw print. The
board was never able to rely on the syndicates to pub-
licize any really controversial issue. Although the Syn-
dicate Committee itself was disbanded in 1943, the WWB
did not abandon its effort to work with the syndicates
because of the potentially large audience to be reached.65

65 WWB, First Annual Report, 25; WWB, Third Annual
Report, 6; "Summary of Writers' War Board Activities --
September, 1942," Cont. 11, WWB Records; Carl Carmer to King
The foregoing is by no means a complete summary of WWB methods and procedures. Their methods were limited only by their ingenuity, and the WWB was by its nature a peculiarly creative group. The board once listed more than thirty standard and routine procedures for promoting books alone, not to mention the varieties and additions formulated for each particular book. Many of their other methods will be discussed in connection with specific campaigns. The methods and outlets mentioned here, however, were those upon which the board routinely and primarily relied. They were available for any purpose, and the WWB's ordinary approach to routine promotion and assistance in a campaign often went no further.

One of the WWB's limitations in any campaign was the fact that while its publications did reach writers and other audiences around the nation, it was, of necessity, limited in sources of talent primarily to the area around New York. This deficiency was keenly felt by the board,
and periodic efforts were undertaken to alleviate it. For example, cooperation was established with a group of Chicago radio script writers, headed by Ruth Wallister, who lent assistance both nationally and locally to many of the board's campaigns.67

Unfortunately, the New York based WWB was never able to achieve any kind of real connection with New York's only rival as a center of the mass media industries, Hollywood, California. The principal problem was that a rival group, the Hollywood Writers' Mobilization, had been organized for a purpose similar to that of the WWB. They carried on some activities like those of the New York group, such as enlisting writers for documentary films and writing plays for use in army camps.68

Despite the similarities of the two groups, the Hollywood Writers' Mobilization resented any WWB efforts on the West Coast as an unwelcome intrusion by outsiders or at least so it seemed to the WWB. Since the Hollywood group was

67 Mrs. Barach to Marion White, July 5, 1943, Cont. 87, WWB Records.

68 "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, August 30, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Lewis Gannett, "Books," While You Were Gone, 460; Mrs. Barach to Mrs. Hirsch, December 4, 1943, Cont. 11, WWB Records.
not very active by board standards, some attempts were made to bypass them, once the lack of cooperativeness was demonstrated. A particular effort was made in the fall of 1944 when several WWB members contacted acquaintances on the West Coast, and board member Robert Colwell went west in part to see what the possibilities there were. These efforts accomplished little. One main problem seemed to be that the WWB was projecting a somewhat left-leaning image in the realm of politics, and Hollywood writers seemed to fear identification with such a group. After this failure the attempt at expansion of the board's activities was abandoned; and, except for certain individual situations, the WWB continued to have little influence on or support of Hollywood's various entertainment and informational enterprises.\(^{69}\)

WWB campaigns, then, as they developed were always carried out from an East Coast base of operations. The board always kept this limitation in mind. Even so, collectively the board's various publications and other approaches reached a wide and varied audience.

\(^{69}\)"Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, August 30, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Carroll Carroll to Fadiman, September 22, 1944, Cont. 21, WWB Records; Robert Colwell to Stout, no date, Cont. 21, WWB Records.
Throughout the war, the WWB's services were available to all government agencies which desired to utilize them. There were few such agencies which did not take advantage of this opportunity at one time or another. More than in any other area of the board's work, its function as a clearing house was constantly primary in its relations with the government bureaus. The group's expertise as a contact with writers was so evident within a few months after it was organized that government agencies saw no reason even to attempt to duplicate its function.¹

The board's knowledge of American writers was utilized in a variety of ways. For example, in a single week in the fall of 1942, the WWB received a request from the Office of Civilian Defense for a list of clergyman writers

¹Dorothy Ducas to Ulric Bell, May 11, 1942, Box 1695, OWI Records (Record Group 208, National Archives).
of various faiths who could comment lucidly on the role of the churches in civilian defense, another from the Board of Economic Warfare for a list of writers familiar with German economics who could prepare effective memoranda, and still a third from the Office of Strategic Services to contact all writers who might have photographs, maps, or accurate descriptions of foreign countries. Each of these requests was filled. Such requests flowed into the WWB office in a never-ending stream. Many times they were dealt with by the administrative personnel. If not, some members of the board itself could handle the problem routinely.

Probably due to the fact that the WWB was originally organized to assist the Treasury Department, and functioned at first as an adjunct to the Office of Civilian Defense, many of its government-connected activities in 1942 centered around those two agencies. For the Treasury the first major project after the successful completion of a number of small jobs was the management in March, 1942, of a nationwide prize contest for manuscripts to increase the sale of war bonds and stamps.

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2File 9-27, Cont. 51, WWB Records; File 16, Cont. 71, WWB Records; File 18, Cont. 72, WWB Records.
Arrangements were made with newspapers in thirteen states to sponsor the contest throughout the school system. In order to stimulate the approved kind of thinking about the war and bonds, contest essays were to discuss such subjects as, "If either Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lincoln, or Lee talked to my school today about defense bonds, what would he say?" Prizes were awarded to the eight best manuscripts from each state. Newspaper and radio coverage of the contest provided a large amount of desirable publicity, particularly in many larger cities, such as New York, Cleveland, and Boston. A national winner was selected by the WWB's judge, Lewis Gannett of the New York Herald-Tribune, and this essay was reprinted in many newspapers.3

Next, the WWB was given large responsibilities in connection with the Treasury's radio campaign for bonds. First, the groups Radio Committee, directed by Katharine Seymour, provided a number of scripts for the "Treasury Star Parade," a radio show that diligently sold bonds in the summer of 1942. The government considered the show

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successful. However, the Treasury was requesting that all scripts be free, while the board felt that it could not continue to request work from the better writers unless there was at least a minimum fee. The group accordingly ceased to participate.

In the fall, an expanded version, the "Treasury Bond Wagon," was launched in prime time over the Mutual Broadcasting Company network. The Treasury had come to agree with the board's position on writers' fees by that time and asked the New York group to furnish dramatic sketches, scripts, and comedy material and to enlist some writers for personal appearances on the show. Furthermore, they were to supply all the commercials on the program. The WWB was compelled to organize a special committee, and requests were met through November, 1942. At that time, the board asked to be relieved of the responsibility, noting that it was not equipped to be a radio production unit. Its suggestion, which was followed, was that the "Bond Wagon" be dropped and that a new series with a full-time staff be inaugurated.\(^4\)

From the time of its organization in August, 1942, the board's exceptionally able Poster Committee, under the direction of co-chairmen Thomas Craven and Reeves Lewenthal, almost completely took over the responsibility of supplying posters for the Treasury. Later in the war, the board was able to boast that the posters for every major war loan drive had emerged from its committee. Throughout the fall of 1942 this committee was engaged in the torturous process of guiding posters from the stage of idea formulation through the painting stage and finally to finished product.5

The Treasury was the recipient of many other services from the WWB. These varied from the composition of the narration for a movie short to the writing of speeches for the War Bond Pledge campaign. Well known WWB members might be requested to make personal public appearances. An example of this occurred when the WWB undertook to get publicity for the Secret Service branch of the Treasury when it held an exhibit of counterfeit money in Rockefeller Center in New York to familiarize the public with techniques the enemy might employ in an economic destruction campaign.

5 WWB, First Annual Report, 21-22; "Report of Work of Poster Committee, August 11, 1942, to December 31, 1942," Cont. 9, WWB Records; File 1-37, Cont. 9, WWB Records.
Clifton Fadiman and Franklin P. Adams were dispatched to the exhibit, and their faces, in due course, appeared in a national magazine. In sum, Treasury projects probably received more man-hours of WWB work in 1942 than any other agency or those related to any other cause.6

With the Office of Civilian Defense the story was much the same: a few major projects carried out along with a great host of small tasks. The two largest projects for this agency were the development of civilian programs and the promotion of the "V-Homes" campaign. The first involved the procurement of "skits and sketches dramatizing the importance of every civilian's individual day by day activities." These were to "demonstrate, graphically and simply, that seemingly dull, routine efforts contribute to victory."7 The board composed complete speakers' manuals for the OCD, but primary emphasis was placed on the plays.

For morale purposes the scripts were to be suitable for performance by local groups. To prepare them, the board

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6 WWB, First Annual Report, 9, 24; Fadiman to Bing Crosby, October 9, 1942, Cont. 47, WWB Records; File 5A-1, Cont. 46, WWB Records; "Silent Saboteur," Banking, XXXV (January, 1943), 35.

7 Lee Wright, form letter to writers, May 5, 1942, Cont. 49, WWB Records.
organized a Civilian Programs Committee which primarily utilized the services of radio writers, since such individuals were more used to meeting deadlines. Rather quickly, the group put together a catalog of thirty-two scripts which the OCD and the board itself distributed nationally by the thousands. A typical popular script was "Man Bites Carrot," by Ben Brady, which, according to the board's catalog, was a "fast moving piece of broad comedy on nutrition but one that makes an important point." Another was "We the Tools," by Denis Halman, which utilized a cast of household hardware, such as a hammer, a saw, and a screwdriver, to illustrate how do-it-yourself home repair could help win the war. These scripts were distributed on request throughout the rest of the war, though the WWB questioned their effectiveness since their propaganda message was all too obvious.  

The V-Homes campaign was the major OCD publicity effort during 1942. This was a campaign to enlist directly

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each home in America in the war effort. Five criteria were established for a V-Home: obedience to the instructions of the air raid warden; conservation of food, clothing, and transportation; salvage of essential war materials; refusal to spread rumors or foster racial intolerance; and purchase of war bonds. Homes meeting these standards would be granted a V-Homes sticker for display, and the campaign directors sought to make this a coveted and prestigious item.

The New York group labored furiously to promote the V-Home theme. The OCD was sent more than fifty spot announcements and jingles for radio in addition to several full-length scripts. Kits of this material went to writers of radio programs aimed at housewives. The board arranged for several speakers to appear on national radio chains. Local writers were contacted and persuaded to get V-Homes material into their local papers.

The board expended much of its effort on magazines. Its Juvenile Writers Committee, under the leadership of Rita Halle Kleeman, undertook to get V-Homes coverage in all juvenile magazines. That goal was nearly achieved when thirteen cooperated. Most of the magazines dealing with homes, such as *House Beautiful* and *American Home*, carried stories, often in the form of editorials. In the end,
through WWB perseverance, over twenty-five magazines co-operated.9

The OCD's own office did not handle the V-Homes campaign well. It began the campaign much later than originally scheduled, creating chaos in WWB plans. At no time was promotional material handled with any measure of organization and expertise. Stout, demonstrating an uncharacteristically critical spirit, wrote strong letters of protest to responsible officials. In his letter to the director of OCD, Stout pointed out that the board's writers had done a great deal of work but that none of it had been used efficiently.10

The board began a comprehensive coordination with the Office of War Information during the latter part of 1942. Since the relationship was new, and the OWI itself still in the process of organization, much of the WWB's work for the OWI was limited to routine cooperation and the fulfillment

9WWB, First Annual Report, 26-27; Mary Blankenhorn to Selma Hirsch, September 5, 1942, Cont. 50, WWB Records; "Now Everyone Can Enlist," Cont. 7, WWB Records. For example of magazine coverage of the campaign, see "V-Homes," Young America (September 16, 1942), 5.

10Stout to James M. Landis, September 28, 1942, Cont. 126, WWB Records.
of some isolated requests. A typical service was the board's distribution of the OWI Magazine War Guide and Magazine Supplement. These were suggestions for story backgrounds, plot ideas, articles, and editorials on themes the government wanted publicized three months hence. The WWB's responsibility was to select a sharply limited list of writers who could utilize these materials effectively and to distribute the guides each month. The group performed this service throughout the war.\textsuperscript{11}

It filled a number of specific requests. For example, the OWI felt that the government, in the course of trying to convert to a war footing, was receiving undue criticism on the grounds of inefficiency. The OWI feared that such criticism might eventually shake the confidence of the people in the government's ability to handle the situation. To combat this, at the WWB's suggestion Paul Gallico wrote and published a semi-humorous article in \textit{Cosmopolitan} which tried to demonstrate that the government was a model of efficiency when compared to the time-wasting activities of the average individual.\textsuperscript{12} Specific requests

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\textsuperscript{11}File 11-1, Cont. 52, WWB Records; WWB, \textit{First Annual Report}, 8. \hfill
\textsuperscript{12}Gallico, "Who's Efficient?" \textit{Cosmopolitan}, CXIII (October, 1942), 17, 62.
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came in from the Overseas Branch of the OWI. A typical request came from the Coordinator of Information asking for dramatic scripts for a program on the armed forces radio network, "Command Performance." The WWB supplied twenty-eight such scripts, though it undertook no large-scale projects or campaigns for any part of the OWI in the early months.

In 1943, the WWB became a full participant in many of the government agencies' informational and propaganda campaigns. For the United States Treasury Department, many of the services were the same as in the previous year. Two major war loan drives, the third and the fourth, were held during the year; and the WWB was closely connected with the publicity for each. The group's Poster Committee contributed the basic poster and slogan, "Back the Attack," for the Third War Loan Drive. More than three million copies of their poster were distributed nationally. For the Fourth War Loan Drive one of the WWB innovations was to obtain thirty writers to record distinctive, personalized radio commercials, as well as to furnish the Treasury Department with a variety of written spot announcements over the signatures of literary notables, such as William Faulkner.
and Eugene O'Neill.13

On January 5, 1943, the board inaugurated a new direct technique for selling war bonds. At the original suggestion of Julian Street, Jr., of the Treasury, the board assisted in the organization of the Books for Bonds Committee. At WWB instigation Mark Van Doren was made chairman of the committee which included representatives of book publishers and libraries as well. The idea was to hold "Books for Bonds" days throughout the nation, during which well known writers would appear for a day-long series of meetings climaxed by a rally at which the authors spoke. Admission would be by war bonds purchase, and manuscripts of books of the authors would be auctioned off for war bonds. The function of the committee, later called the Books and Authors War Bond Committee, was to arrange the details of the rallies; the WWB agreed to furnish the authors themselves.

The first such rally, held on an experimental basis, took place at Allentown, Pennsylvania, in late February. Van Doren himself and the WWB's Pearl Buck were the leading attractions. It was successful far beyond the expectations of the organizers and was followed by a long series of other rallies. The Treasury found to its astonishment that the book and author meetings produced more results than did appearances by Hollywood stars. The war board and the committee worked particularly hard on one rally held in Pittsburgh on February 1, 1944, starring the WWB's Clifton Fadiman, as well as Fannie Hurst, Louis Bromfield, and Carlos P. Romulo. The result was the spectacular total of more than $32 million in bond sales. The rallies continued through late 1945, and the Treasury calculated that more than $188 million worth of bonds were sold at eighty-three rallies. The WWB supplied all of the authors through 1944; in the last year the Treasury Department took over some of the responsibility. The WWB felt that in addition to bond sales they had made a contribution to the morale of the various localities, as well as to that of the participating writers.14

14Van Doren, "Report on the Books and Authors War Bond Committee," November, 1943, Cont. 41, WWB Records; "Books and Authors War Bond Committee Report," May, 1943,
In 1943, the WWB undertook extensive cooperation with the Overseas Branch of the OWI. This agency, one of the two principal divisions of the OWI, was responsible for American informational and propaganda efforts outside of the U. S. Most of its assistance went into radio programming. Its Features Division had the task of keeping up a steady flow of articles which supplemented the news stories and tried to show the world the broad image of America at war. In this area, the war board was able to lend constant assistance.\textsuperscript{15}

A complete listing of the projects undertaken for OWI-Overseas is not feasible. Some, such as the board's production of the magazine *Transatlantic* in Great Britain, are discussed elsewhere in this study. The general nature of these projects may be understood by examination of a few examples. The board might simply furnish information about writers to the agency. There were repeated requests to the New York group to locate writers who could prepare scripts or broadcasts in one foreign language or the other. In other cases, the WWB merely served to notify some individual or group of the need for articles. For instance, when OWI-Overseas wanted short articles describing the activities of American educational and philanthropic institutions abroad, the board simply contacted the information or public relations officials of fifty such foundations and organizations and shipped the resulting flood of data along to the government.16

In a number of cases the WWB members fulfilled the requests themselves. When OWI-Overseas wanted a weekly

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16 File 3-27, Cont. 68, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Marion White, September 4, 1943, Cont. 68, WWB Records.
column for Parade, the British army magazine, conveying what America was thinking or feeling, Paul Gallico and Russel Crouse undertook the job, each writing on alternate weeks. This practice continued for several months until OWI decided that it could not afford to use up two of America's best known writers for a relatively limited market. Pearl Buck and John Marquand were persuaded to write several features for the Australian press. Rita Halle Kleeman and Christopher LaFarge also fulfilled several OWI-Overseas requests for articles on topics ranging from the humor of the Southwest United States to a dehydrated egg plant in Tennessee.17

Apart from Transatlantic, the largest single project carried on for OWI-Overseas derived from the popularity of the OWI's own material. The government agency met the needs of foreign outlets with factual war information, but this had only served to stimulate a flood of requests from these magazines and newspapers for special material. The OWI regretfully concluded that none of its staff possessed either the authority or the creative ability to fill such requests.

In March, 1943, the board was asked to furnish at least one major article per day by a big name author on topics to be assigned by the OWI's own agencies. The general purpose was to produce accurate word portraits of what America and Americans were like.\(^{18}\)

The WWB agreed to help, though it warned that it could not supply quite the quantity desired or set any standard of quality. It created the Special Assignments Committee to take on the job with literary critic Joseph Wood Krutch as chairman and soon began to provide OWI with three or four articles per week. The articles furnished were of high quality on a wide variety of subjects. They included John Dos Passos', "Life in a Boom Town;" Mark Van Doren's, "Walt Whitman and the Common Man;" Pearl Buck's, "What America Means to Me;" Ralph Cannon's, "American Sports Go Around the World;" R. P. Tristam Coffin's, "The New England Town Meeting;" Rollin Kirby's, "Political Cartoons;" and well over one hundred others. The board was constantly assured that these articles were much valued and reprinted.

\(^{18}\)Hollister Noble to Mrs. Barach, March 20, 1943, Cont. 64, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual Report, 20-21.
widely. Its files contain some evidence of this. The article by Mrs. Buck, for instance, appeared in the Egyptian paper She Khi El Sahaja on September 30, 1943. The series came to an end in December with a change in the administrative leadership of OWI-Overseas. Such new requests as were made were for technical articles which both Krutch and the WWB felt the government's own experts could better supply.\(^{19}\)

During the war, the New York group undertook many other projects similar to, though smaller than, the kind of work done by this committee.

Many government agencies availed themselves of WWB assistance on small informational and promotional campaigns. For example, the War Manpower Commission requested and obtained feature articles for local newspapers in areas of labor shortage to acquaint the public with the problem involved. When the Commission set out to recruit women for war work, the WWB was there with a supply of articles for the campaign and even furnished the services of Fadiman for

\[^{19}\text{File 13-18, Conts. 64-67, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual Report, 20-21; Krutch to WWB, December 2, 1943, Fadiman to Krutch, December 11, 1943, and Mrs. Barach to Malcolm Young, February 12, 1945, Cont. 64, WWB Records.}\]
a Baltimore rally that began the effort to recruit all kinds of workers. The War Production Board was supplied with speeches for its salvage drive. Even the Canadian government utilized the services of the War Board to obtain writers such as the WWB's Fadiman, Gallico, and Marquand, as well as others, like John Gunther and Dorothy Thompson, for recorded radio announcements and written statements in connection with Canada's war loan drives.  

In June, 1943, the WWB became involved in one of its most important campaigns in cooperation with the government. On June 16, James Brackett, deputy in charge of the Economic Stabilization campaign of the OWI, visited the New York group and explained that the OWI was about to undertake "its most elaborate and important program," a campaign against inflation. He asked the WWB to make a special effort because of the difficulties involved. In the first place, it was hard just to explain the complicated and apparently intangible factors which lay behind the problem of inflation.

20 File 19-5, Cont. 72, WWB Records; File 17, Cont. 71, WWB Records; Allen Wilson to WWB, February 17, 1943, and Frederick W. Wile, Jr., to Mrs. Barach, May 27, 1943, Cont. 72, WWB Records; "Show Biz to Recruit Labor," Variety, CXLIX (February 10, 1943), 1, 30; Writers' War Board Report, April 15, 1943.
and its solutions. Furthermore, the solutions were unpopular. It was not easy to persuade the American public that it should not buy up the few goods available to it during the scarcities of wartime and willingly to agree to pay higher taxes. Finally, the anti-inflation problem could not be solved with the brief high-pressure advertising campaign that the OWI and its associated group in the business world, the War Advertising Council, were geared to deliver. The OWI believed that a continuous impact on public opinion must be made during the war and for some time thereafter. Such a long range effort required both careful planning and sustained ingenuity to execute.  

The board organized an Economic Stabilization Committee under the co-chairmanship of Leon Shimkin, an executive in the publishing firm of Simon and Schuster, and WWB member Mrs. Kleeman. The committee's duty was both to conceive ideas for the OWI and to initiate and carry to completion projects of its own. The committee considered attacking the current government policies on inflation and wage and price

21 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 16, 1944," Cont. 58, WWB Records; Brackett to Stout, June 18, 1943, Cont. 58, WWB Records.
controls through a series of cartoons and articles. However, they rejected this approach in favor of a more general information campaign on the grounds that when acting as an arm of the government they were in no position to criticize it.22

The committee contacted practically all communications media. It furnished a large number of ideas for radio shows and posters. The Radio Division of OWI handled the actual writing of radio material, while the posters were printed through the cooperation of life insurance companies and other commercial sources. Magazines and newspapers were the committee's special area of emphasis. A large response was obtained from one of the committee's ideas that was published in Harper's Bazaar. In the text, under a picture of a headless woman, American housewives were informed:

This woman is the national nightmare. At the first scent of victory she walks out on her war job, walks into the shops. She buys by the dozens, yawns at inflation, thinks she's pretty coony to stock up while the going is good. Multiplied by the thousands, she is draining the shops, cornering merchandise needed by others, shooting up prices, paving the way for

post-war breadlines. She is the disgrace, the despair of America--this hit and run shopper, this selfish complacent little woman who has lost her head.23

This article brought inquiries for reprints and blow-ups for display purposes nationwide, particularly from department stores.

The business and professional women were approached with an article in Independent Woman. A WWB-written "Reader's Digest Study Guide on Inflation" stimulated discussion groups on this subject. The committee sought out the high school audience with an article in High Road, and the readers of the romance pulps with a story in Thrilling Love. Two "Superman" comic strip sequences were prepared at WWB instance and distributed in December, 1943. From facts furnished by the war board, Robert Ripley prepared a "Believe It or Not" cartoon on the effects of inflation. Committee co-chairman Shimkin arranged for banks and savings and loan associations to distribute material showing the economic advantages that would accrue to the customer provided that he left his money on deposit until well after the war ended.

23"The Woman Who Lost Her Head," Harper's Bazaar, LXXXVII (September, 1943), 89.
The board enlisted various personalities to fight the good fight. On his radio show, Frank Sinatra spoke against excessive spending. In a statement released through the WWB's arrangement with the NEA newspaper syndicate, Booth Tarkington asked the nation, "Are You Choosing to Be Poor?" and comedian Jack Benny discovered that his notorious penny pinching tendencies were now the epitome of patriotism. At the specific request of the OWI, the WWB itself even made an attempt, apparently unsuccessful, to persuade President Roosevelt to discuss the subject of inflation in his next "Fireside Chat." The campaign had to be continuous, and, of course, the problem was not solved with one outburst of publicity.24

In the meantime, a new problem had emerged to complicate the anti-inflation battle, as well as the financing of

the war effort generally. In 1943, Congress had passed a
new revenue act which greatly increased the complications
of figuring personal income tax. Once the incredible com-
plexity of the law began to dawn on Treasury officials,
there was a hasty effort to publicize the difficulty of the
impending task. On November 17, the board was asked to
help in the attempt to attract public attention to the prob-
lem, to clear up some misconceptions, and to persuade the
public to begin work on the tax returns well before the
deadline for filing. The board agreed to bear down on the
"do it early" approach and to inform the public that expert
help was a necessity.

The board agreed that its contact with industrial
house organs was particularly important, since war workers
made up the majority of the ten million people who were
filling out an income tax form for the first time. To their
assistance the board summoned that ubiquitous ventriloquist's
dummy, Charlie McCarthy. In an article for "Brief Items for
House Organs," entitled "Bergen Makes with Pay as You Go,"
Charlie explained that the purpose of the new tax was to
fight inflation and finance the war, and that those who
immediately sought the help of experts were not dummies but
were instead the smartest people in the country. As usual, the board tried to touch all bases. It told the writers in its Monthly Report that those who waited until March to begin work on their tax returns courted insanity. It warned the vast readership of the Reader's Digest that the upcoming tax blanks were the "most brutally complicated and unintelligible forms ever issued by any government to its citizens." Even the readers of pulp magazines such as Real Story were dosed with income tax information, and appropriate slogans filled all the empty column space.

In the late summer of 1943, the Office of Price Administration began a campaign against the black market in America. The WWB was requested to persuade housewives to take a pledge: "I will pay no more than top legal prices;


I will accept no rationed goods without giving up ration stamps.”27 The OPA planned to kick off the campaign with a rally from Bridgeport, Connecticut, on August 29. Clifton Fadiman and Franklin P. Adams were dispatched to the scene from New York and spoke on the program broadcast over the Mutual Network. The board's customary cooperation was extended through its own organs and available magazine outlets.28

This campaign continued well into 1944. Time and again the articles that the board produced sought to convince people that their personal black market purchases were a blow to the war effort. For example, America's women shoppers were told:

We can remind ourselves that Black Markets are a form of sabotage and that no amount of government planning can succeed without the individuals who can carry it out. The beautiful blind spot which keeps us from thinking of ourselves as the focal point -- the feeling that "this can't apply to me and this

27Writers' War Board Report, September 1, 1943.

28File 10-12, Cont. 51, WWB Records; Bridgeport Herald, September 5, 1943, p. 2. For example of WWB magazine coverage in this campaign, see Charles Doane, "The White Market," This Week, September 5, 1943, p. 2.
once can't harm anything" -- is just another cozy sample of the theory that "another little drink won't do me any harm." 29

By the spring of 1944, the OPA was generally satisfied that the black market had been cut to its irreducible minimum in every area except gasoline. There, the black market continued to cause a loss of over five per cent of the total supply available for civilian use. Since this was a crucial area, the OPA enlisted the WWB's help for a special crash campaign. As the OWI official assigned to help the OPA put it:

We at OWI and OPA have been attacking the black market problem on a somewhat factual basis. This is almost a necessity when the government speaks. But what we believe it now needs is good old-fashioned emotion. . . . What we need is something of the atmosphere of a crusade -- or at the very least righteous indignation. 30

To get the campaign off to a flying start, the WWB arranged for a meeting at the Hotel Commodore in New York on April 4, where fifty reporters and magazine and radio writers were addressed by Bryan Houston, OPA deputy administrator for

29 Kate Sproehnle, "You Don't Mean Me?" Woman's Day (August, 1944), 14, 64.

rationing, and Shad Polier, chief of the crime enforcement division of the OPA. They explained that the situation was so serious that many drivers faced the total loss of any gasoline allotment. He also pointed out that it was impossible for a dealer to sell illegal gasoline unless he cooperated with a criminal gang which stole ration coupons or printed counterfeit coupons. The public was to be told that by using the gasoline black market they were encouraging one of the greatest and most dangerous rackets in existence.

The meeting had the desired effect. The next day the New York newspapers all carried stories delivering the message. The New York World-Telegram's report is typical. With the headline "Counterfeiters and Black Market Operators May Get It All," the public was warned that "unless the nationwide black market in gasoline is stemmed and counterfeiters and traffickers in that racket, including high school children, are apprehended the nation's A-card [non-essential driving] holders may soon find themselves without any gasoline whatsoever."31

31 New York World-Telegram, April 5, 1944, p. 2; see also New York Post, April 5, 1944, p. 16, and New York Times, April 5, 1944, p. 21.
In his effort to stir up emotion, the WWB's Paul Gallico told the country to "hurry down to the nearest chiselling garage or unscrupulous filling station and get your extra five or ten gallon quota of available gasoline because the criminal scum of the country is hungry. It has been a long time between juicy rackets... Dope peddler, white slaver, kidnapper, extortionist, murderer and racket king have left their specialties to become a part of the gasoline black market."32

A bitingly sarcastic article about the man who proved how "smart" he was by living off the black market appeared in the Saturday Evening Post. The high school students of the country were told that "the racketeers who print and sell counterfeit gasoline coupons, the car owners who buy coupons to obtain another supply of fuel, are no better than Nazi saboteurs."33 Other warnings went out in various pulp magazines, women's magazines, and publications aimed primarily

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32Gallico, "The Racketeers Need You," Army and Navy Woman (Spring, 1944), 14.

33"Smash the Black Market Menace," Scholastic, XLIV (May 1-6, 1944), 3-4; Pete Martin, "Solid Citizen," Saturday Evening Post, CCXVI (May 6, 1944), 34, 102.
at automobile drivers.34

The board's effort was not confined to newspapers and magazines. The group's Comics Committee consulted comic magazine publishers. The result was that the "Gangbusters" in *Popular Comics* for September and October, 1944, enthusiastically pursued and incarcerated gangs of black market gasoline racketeers. *Blue Circle* comics for summer, 1944, also commented on the situation. The WWB members utilized their contacts in the radio industry with the result that "Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons," examined black market racketeers; and "David Harum," another radio serial, carried an extended story on the counterfeiting of gasoline coupons. In addition, a large number of radio commentators took note of the situation.35 Naturally, the WWB's own organs carried this same message. All available outlets except the war-script-of-the-month covered the subject fully. The board and

34 See, for example, Arthur Bartlett, "Dynamite in Your Gas Tank," *This Week*, April 9, 1944, p. 2; Betsy Talbot Blackwell, "Memo from the Editor," *Mademoiselle*, XIX (June, 1944), 10; "Your Gasoline Coupons -- Are They Endorsed?" *New York Motorist* (April, 1944), 1.

the OPA considered the June, 1944, editorial on the subject "Stop Thief," by Robert Duffus, especially effective due to its wide pick-up. Also, the WWB's "Cartoonists' Bulletin" was credited with having stimulated several worthwhile efforts, including one cartoon entitled "Gasoline for Pleasure," which were distributed nationally by the United Feature Syndicate.36

Apparently the prescription of emotion as a cure for the problem helped. By early 1945, the OPA reported that the five per cent loss of gasoline through the black market had been reduced to the satisfactory level of a fraction of one per cent. OWI officials later credited the WWB with a "major share" in this achievement. It was one of their strongest performances for any government agency.37

The year 1944 saw the WWB's most active assistance in OWI campaigns, because the government agency's funds for domestic operation had been considerably reduced by Congress


37 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 21, 1945," Cont. 52, WWB Records.
and also because the OWI had been impressed with the value of the war board's help.

One request from OWI in February, 1944, did not produce much of a result. The problem was that the labor movement was becoming unpopular with the American public and particularly with the American soldiers. The wages of the war workers were already high; and when strikes occurred in some industries, the workers gave the appearance of extreme selfishness at the cost of interference with the war effort. The board created a Labor Committee, headed by Jack Goodman, to work on the problem; but that group could find no satisfactory solution. There was no way the life of a war worker could be made to seem hazardous. Any publicity given to war workers would only serve to highlight their salaries in comparison with the income of soldiers and fixed income groups. Furthermore, to publicly admit the existence of a bad relationship between workers and soldiers might just increase the hostility. In the end, the WWB printed a few pieces in its "Brief Items to Army Camps," such as "Labor is Fighting Too," based on the Truman Committee's report on the production achievements of American industry. Otherwise, the group left the problem alone in the belief that its solution
was beyond their ability and that there was serious danger of making things worse.38

Beginning in late February, 1944, the WWB was briefly involved in the OWI's campaign in cooperation with the Surgeon General's office to educate the public on the nature of venereal disease, an increasing problem under the changed social conditions of wartime. The board printed material on this subject in its own publications and would have done more; but the campaign was, for the most part, dropped. A film documentary prepared by the OWI on the subject was never distributed. The Catholic Legion of Decency had protested that the film violated the motion picture code that sex hygiene and venereal disease were not fit subjects for motion pictures. The War Advertising Council was compelled to withdraw its part of the campaign under similar pressure. The WWB felt strongly that the campaign should continue and made some tentative efforts to develop counter-pressures. Letters were sent to the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America protesting the provisions of the code.

The New York group tried to interest several newspapers, among them the New York Post, in doing an expose on the situation but without apparent result. Eventually, the matter was dropped.39

Early in April, the OWI presented a new problem to the WWB. The Germans and Japanese were acquiring valuable information by piecing together trivial bits of war news heard in civilian conversations. Often parents, families, and close friends of the soldiers were responsible for the unintentional leaks. An escaped American prisoner of war, a Sergeant Gardiner, was brought before the board to report his story that the Germans had compiled a complete dossier on his career in the armed forces by the time of his capture, almost entirely from such isolated pieces of apparent trivia. With an invasion of Europe upcoming and constant military operations elsewhere, the problem was considered particularly crucial.

The board was asked to use its regular channels to

39"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, February 23, 1944," Cont. 92, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, April 5, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records; Fadiman to Mortimer Adler, April 3, 1944, Stout, et al., to Will Hayes, May 4, 1944, and Carroll Carroll to Fadiman, October 5, 1944, Cont. 92, WWB Records.
spread the "don't talk" message. The "Brief Items for House Organs," for example, carried the article "If You've Got a Mouthful, Swallow It." The OWI was particularly interested in obtaining radio, newspaper, and fiction coverage. Through the services of the WWB's Oscar Hammerstein and Hobe Morrison, Sgt. Gardiner went on one of radio's highest rated shows, the "Kate Smith Hour," on April 28, 1944, to tell his story.40

As for the newspaper stories, among other things the board got a somewhat wry poem by Christopher Morley, "Pipe Down," in the New York Times Magazine:

To your reticences do stick
Be less oral and acoustic
Be a valet to your palate
And a muffler to your throat
Leave the inside dope at anchor
Just an evening's lingua franca
Crashed a plane and shelled a boat.

Stitch a careful little suture
In predictions of the future
Bite the tongue and cut the gas
In a battle merely tribal
Died a thousand says the Bible
By the jawbone of an ass.41

The chief product of the effort to place suitable stories in magazines was a novelette by Paul Gallico which ran serially for three months in Cosmopolitan. Entitled "Who Killed My Buddy," it told the adventures of a returned serviceman who traced information leaks to their sources and found out that twenty well-meaning individuals had contributed facts to German spies that had led to the death of his friend.42

Much of the board's material was assembled and mailed out to committees organized by the Office of Civilian Defense to carry out the work at the local level.43

More or less simultaneously with these campaigns the WWB engaged in an extended argument with the OWI over the use of V-Mail, an attempt to cut down the tonnage of the mail sent to servicemen so that air delivery could be used without


42Gallico, "Who Killed My Buddy," Cosmopolitan, CXV (August, September, October, 1944).

43File 11-23A, Cont. 56, WWB Records.
reducing the number of letters. The request for help in publicity first came to the WWB in February, 1944. It was the opinion of the New York group, however, that the brevity and impersonality of such letters outweighed any corresponding advantages. Exercising their prerogative as a private organization, they declined to cooperate. The OWI then had the problem of persuading the WWB of the plan's merits. Months and many memos later, the war board saw the light and assisted in the campaign. The WWB's Jack Goodman, for instance, even contributed the basic slogan of the entire publicity effort, "You Can Fly to Him in a V-Mail Letter." However, the episode demonstrated that the group did keep itself separate from the government's control and was quite capable of exercising a veto power.44

The next major task was participation in the OWI's "Back-to-School" Campaign for the Children's Bureau, beginning in late June, 1944. During the previous year, there had been a drop in school attendance of more than one

44"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, February 9, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, February 16, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Richard D. Mathewson, November 11, 1944, Cont. 124, WWB Records; File 11-33, Cont. 59, WWB Records.
million, and a three million summer employment figure caused officials to worry that many teenagers would forsake their education in favor of the high salaries in industry. All the WWB publications were utilized in the campaign, including a piece entitled "Ninny" for the newspaper syndicates over the signature of Frank Sinatra. In particular the board sought to work with comic book publishers because of their especial access to the teenaged audience. WWB member Carl Carmer wrote a widely praised article for This Week centering around his school superintendent father which carried the message that "no matter how much a fighting nation needs its men it should not be using its boys in jobs when they should be learning to live. If it does we lose the very thing we are fighting for." The board's work was highly praised by the OWI Program Manager: "As you know this campaign has been an outstanding success. . . . I want you to know how conscious we are of your very substantial contribution to its

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45 Carmer, "Don't Miss Anything," This Week, September 24, 1944, p. 2; "Back to School Campaign: Progress Report of August 10, 1944," Cont. 47, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, July 5, 1944," Cont. 3, WWB Records; Jackson Clarion-Ledger, August 27, 1944, p. 16.
Also, late in June, the war board undertook to help the OWI and the Office of Defense Transportation. In a meeting on June 21, 1944, with representatives of these agencies and Mayor Fiorella LaGuardia of New York, who was attempting to organize the national campaign against unnecessary travel, the writers were told that the invasion of Europe had caused many Americans to believe the end of the war to be in sight. Consequently, there was already an upswing in pleasure travel. This was expected to increase and completely swamp the already overstrained transportation facilities unless it was checked. The government felt that a rationing program for travel was unworkable and so, outside of establishing restrictions to provide space for the wounded on trains, hoped that a voluntary program would meet the situation.  

Once again, the board set to work. It immediately arranged newspaper stories in the New York area. It then attacked the problem from a variety of approaches. In some cases it used humor, as in a piece for the NEA Syndicate by

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46 Natalie Davison to Mrs. Barach, October 18, 1944, Cont. 47, WWB Records.
47 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 21, 1944,"
Weare Holbrook entitled, "Why I Sit at Home with a Book—and a Blonde." It could use poetry:

The trains are jammed, the buses too,
With all—and more—than they can carry;
That's why you're asked—and this means YOU—
"Is your trip really necessary?"

Just give a thought, before you roam,
To GI Joe and don't forget him
For Joe may find he can't get home
Unless you stay at home and let him.48

Finally, the board often used tones of blunt sarcasm as in this piece by Clifton Fadiman: "Go ahead and travel. Have a fine vacation—that is, if while you're there you can stop worrying whether you're going to be able to get back or not. Go ahead and travel, it's a free country—IF you want to compete for your Pullman with a wounded soldier just back from France."49 Articles or editorial references were arranged and the WWB's radio liaisons stimulated discussions

Cont. 4, WWB Records; Mackay, "Domestic Operations of the Office of War Information in World War II," 149.


of the problem by radio commentators Robert St. John, Cecil Brown, and Lowell Thomas.\textsuperscript{50}

This is by no means a complete listing of campaigns on which the WWB toiled in 1944. Among the others was a Department of Agriculture project to stimulate the growth of victory gardens, a Department of Labor campaign to persuade all war workers to stay on the job until the fighting stopped, and a War Production Board effort to step up public interest in the salvage of essential war materials. In each of these cases, as well as in a number of others, the board followed approximately the same procedure as above, always cooperating through its own publications and arranging for material in other media where feasible or desirable.\textsuperscript{51}

During 1944, the board continued several of the important campaigns that it had begun earlier. In the Fifth and Sixth War Loan drives the WWB lent the Treasury the same assistance as before: recruitment of big names to give plugs on the radio and in newspapers, preparation of a speaker's


\textsuperscript{51}File 6-15, Cont. 47, WWB Records; File 11-39, Cont. 62, WWB Records; File 17, Cont. 71, WWB Records.
manual for local campaign use, and cooperation with the Books and Authors War Bond Committee in their direct sale of bonds.

OWI-Overseas got continued assistance on all sorts of projects. For example, in keeping with the constant effort to better the understanding of American culture held by allied nations, the war board put together an entire issue of a British art magazine, The Studio. Under the direction of art historian Thomas Craven, who headed the Foster Committee, the New York group assembled a number of articles and selected prints giving the entire history and cultural contributions of American art.52

The anti-inflation effort continued to be just as important as ever. The WWB supplied a steady stream of materials to the OWI on the subject and continued a direct campaign of their own through their publications and their contacts on the newspapers. The New York writers even came up with a gimmick of their own. They saw a mention by a newspaper columnist of an Ohio high school girl named Luette Goodbody who had organized a group called "B.O.N.D." The

52 The Studio, June, 1944; File 13-32, Cont. 69, WWB Records.
initials stood for "buy only necessities for the duration." This being entirely in keeping with the philosophy the group was trying to promote, they obtained publicity for the girl and her organization in several newspapers and national publications. The reaction was so favorable that for a time the board had to assist in organizing other "B.O.N.D." groups. Eventually the work became too much for both Miss Goodbody and the WWB, and the job was handed over to the Treasury.53

There was also a crash campaign during the summer by the Anti-Inflation Committee to help promote the government's new program of "Planned Spending and Saving." Here the campaign was aimed at persuading bankers to support the idea and pay for local community advertising to get the job done. This presented the WWB with the unusual task of finding suitable bankers willing to lend their names to WWB-written articles in bankers' journals. As usual, the job was completed.54


54 "Bankers Campaign: Final Report to the Anti-Inflation Committee," September 13, 1944, Cont. 58, WWB Records; Mackay, "Domestic Operations of the Office of War Information..."
More in its customary field, the board undertook to warn its writers that they had a "frightening influence on public behavior." When writers described beautifully furnished homes or new mink coats, people had the urge to go and buy them. So, in view of the wartime circumstances, the writers were asked, "Don't get too fancy with your typewriter. Sell newly bought glamor short!"55

In this area the board again exercised its prerogative to refuse a government request it thought to be unwise. The OWI asked the board to emphasize the need for continued anti-inflation controls long into the post-war period, partially on the grounds that the nation might soon face another war. The WWB refused to touch this subject, believing that the resulting public pessimism might promote a withdrawal into post-war isolationism that they were trying to counteract in other areas.56


55Writers' War Board Report, August 1, 1944.

56"Minutes of the Meeting of the Anti-Inflation Committee, September 24, 1944," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
There was even one curious instance of a WWB campaign which was, to an extent, against a government agency. In October, 1944, the OWI circulated a memorandum which gave directions for the cancelling of much of the government's wartime publicity efforts and the institution of post-war programs immediately following the defeat of Germany. This incurred the wrath of the WWB because it fostered the attitude that all necessity for wartime sacrifices was over once Germany was defeated. A protest was dispatched to the OWI. However, the board decided that the government agency was merely reflecting a general over-concentration on the importance of V-E Day. Accordingly, they undertook an Anti-V-E Day campaign. Of necessity, this was entirely confined to the WWB's own publications, since it was the attitude of other communications media to which the New York group objected. In a biting article in the "Brief Items for House Organs" series, for example, Paul Gallico criticized American who were preparing to celebrate V-E Day as resembling "a bunch of screwy college kids getting ready to paint the town red after the football team wins the big game." He added that even college kids did not buy red paint until after the game's final whistle and that this was "the most vicious, savage, ruthless war the world has ever
known. And maybe there won't be any final whistle."\(^5\) The other WWB organs made similar statements.

Despite this effort, by 1945 the government agencies were definitely bringing most of their publicity campaigns to an end. But many of the campaigns extended into 1945. Also, of course, the Treasury continued to press the sale of war bonds all the way into 1946, and the WWB gave its customary help. Most of the major efforts were, however, at an end.

One exception to this was a special campaign for the Office of Price Administration. At a meeting in late March, 1945, OWI and OPA officials explained that the OPA was having trouble with enforcement. In the short run, there were immediate problems such as the scarcity of food both for foreign and domestic consumption. Over the long run, the problems involved the danger of over-hasty relinquishment of price controls and the inflationary threat of the large amounts of money saved during the war and available for spending. To combat both kinds of problems the WWB was asked

to help sell the public both on the necessity for controls and their continuation and also on the need for voluntary support of the program. The New York writers agreed to try. They were successful in getting appropriate material on several radio shows, including a full dramatic treatment on the program, "Now It Can Be Told." Time was either too short to get articles into other publications, or magazine editors had little interest in delivering what was basically an unpopular message. Accordingly, the WWB was restricted to its own publications. It dispatched an editorial, "Help Wanted, Male and Female," which told the American public that while the OPA made mistakes in its enforcement, most of the cheating went on because they did not understand how vital their cooperation was in this matter.\(^{58}\)

The Monthly Report carried a call for direct action by writers:

This is not a private fight: Anybody can join in. Referring not to the Japs but to the Dollar That Makes Noise Like a Dime. That's the kind of dollar we may actually get unless everybody does join in. One thing badly needed is facts -- from everywhere. Get them and send them to us. While cussing out the OPA, are your neighbors themselves following the rules? Do they or do they not buy without points when they can pay, above ceiling prices without protest or report, or use the latest private detour to avoid the annoyances of decent community cooperation? Will you find out and tell us and let us pass the information on?59

This request to writers proved somewhat controversial. The strongest attack on this statement came from conservative columnist George E. Sokolsky, who called it a "collector's gem of private Gestapo items." He continued, "I am neither a cop nor a snooper. Let those who like that kind of work engage in it, wear a badge and proclaim themselves for what they are. But the secret ones are just plain squealers and should be treated as such." He suggested that anyone turned in by the writers bring a damage suit in court. "Don't tell the Writers' War Board anything. If you have something to tell, tell it to a cop."60 In any case, the WWB's call did

59 Writers' War Board Report, June 1, 1945.
60 New York Sun, June 9, 1945, p. 8.
not produce too many results. Less than twenty writers responded with information for the WWB and the OPA, a smaller number than those who wrote to criticize the group's stand.

Since beginning in January, 1945, the breaking of the WWB's governmental tie was under serious consideration, and since the actual break took place at the end of July, 1945, neither the board nor the government agencies were much interested in starting new propaganda efforts. So, for all practical purposes the cooperation with the government agencies had disappeared before the subsidy from the OWI was dropped.
Throughout its existence, the WWB provided a number of services to the armed forces of the United States. These were usually done at the official request of and in close coordination with the government. The board's services varied widely, ranging from obtaining speakers for army orientation programs to agitation for a better rehabilitation program for veterans, to popularization of a branch of the military. No matter what the service, however, the WWB saw it as a direct contribution toward winning the war.

The most consistent service which the board performed for the armed forces throughout the war was the collection of material which could be used for entertainment purposes by the men in the military. Early in 1942, Col. Marvin Young of the Special Services Division of the War Department approached the war board for help in obtaining dramatic material with which the troops could put on their own shows. The board formed the Committee on Scripts for Soldier and
Sailor Shows, under the chairmanship of Dorothy Rodgers, wife of the musical composer Richard Rodgers. The committee remained in existence for the duration of the war and, according to the WWB chairman, Stout, was always one of the board's "most active and useful committees."¹

The committee agreed to supply from thirty to fifty pieces of material per month in the beginning and later greatly increased that amount. They utilized three main sources of supply. First, there was material from revues and vaudeville, including sketches, blackouts, monologues, and other short pieces, mostly humorous. Next, there were both dramatic sequences and slightly altered comedy scripts from the shows of such radio figures as Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Fibber McGee and Molly, and Charlie McCarthy. Finally, the board solicited leading dramatists to write short plays especially for the armed services. Clifford Odets, Russel Crouse, Robert Benchley, and numerous others contributed.

The collection mounted throughout the war. The committee eventually furnished over three thousand separate scripts to the army, several hundred of which were completely

¹Stout to the author, June 15, 1968; "Committee on Scripts for Soldier and Sailor Shows," Cont. 8, WWB Records.
original. These were published for the exclusive use of the armed services in several folios that were distributed throughout the world. The committee also worked to develop new writing talent among the soldiers themselves. Contests were held, under WWB sponsorship, in both the U. S. Army and Navy with prizes in war bonds contributed by civilian dramatists. All of the material was obtained and delivered at no cost to the government. The board's files contain evidence of massive usage of the scripts and repeated expression of gratitude for its services from all concerned.2

A somewhat similar project in 1943, though on a much smaller scale, was "Yarns for Yanks." In this case the board undertook to collect short stories suitable for reading by Hollywood stars over the armed services radio network to cheer

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up the troops. The New York group selected these for their entertainment value and obtained the necessary releases.\(^3\)

The war board rendered major assistance to a number of branches of the military in popularization and public information campaigns. The goal of such an effort might be to stimulate recruiting; it might be simply to raise the morale of those already in service. In any case, the New York group usually helped in the overall direction of the campaign as well as with individuals and specific projects.

The earliest of these campaigns and one of the earliest of all such WWB efforts was the activity in behalf of the Army Air Force. A request came to the group early in March, 1942, from the War Department. An urgent recruitment effort was necessary to expand the Air Forces to the required size. The service expected no difficulty in recruiting 150,000 pilots, since that job was relatively glamorous. However, an equal number of navigators, bombardiers, and tail-gunners were needed, in addition to over one million ground crew members. Filling the less publicized positions caused the difficulty.

\(^3\)File 3-55, Cont. 27, WWB Records.
The WWB, itself just becoming organized, appointed a committee of Fadiman and John P. Marquand. These two men, with some assistance from Crouse, had the primary responsibility for conceiving approaches to the problem and making contacts. One of their earliest achievements was a mailing to writers of Army Air Force "slants," a general statement of the approaches they desired the authors to take in their work. Some of the slants were:

- Popularize the bombardier and the navigator as against the pilot.
- Popularize the work of the tail gunner as against the bombardier and the navigator; try to remove the false impression that the tail gunner's job, which is a hazardous one, is necessarily a shortcut to suicide.
- The Army Air Force needs glider cadets. Anything writers can do to popularize the idea of gliders will be helpful.
- Estimates differ, but remember that it takes twelve or fifteen men on the ground to get a plane up in the air. Hundreds of thousands of ground-crew mechanics must be trained. They are just as valuable as the fliers themselves and they should receive as much attention.

The WWB also urged writers to prepare the public for accidents inevitable in training fliers, and to emphasize the importance of non-combat fliers in the Air Transport Service.

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A few examples of the activities in this campaign may serve to illustrate the thrust of the board's effort. For instance, the group endeavored to leave no major type of magazine uncovered. In the hope of stimulating stories, the board arranged a trip for thirteen professional fiction writers to Washington on July 16, 1942, for official briefings and exhibitions. At least three stories resulted from this trip, one in a weekly magazine aimed at high school students, another at a nationwide lodge audience, and the other at female readers of romance magazines. Each story, of course, in its own way plugged the Air Force.6 Lest the women of America inhibit Air Force recruitment for their men, the board arranged for an article in a women's magazine pointing out that the casualty rate among fliers was not abnormally high. The farmers of America were informed of the military uses of gliders and the need for glider pilots.

6 File 2-24, Cont. 26, WWB Records; Howard Fast, "Joe Levy," Young American, XIV (December 9, 1942), 8; William Fay, "We Fly for Freedom," Elks Magazine (October, 1942), 21-22, 32. The third story referred to, by Fannie Heaslip Lea, appeared, according to WWB Records, in Popular Love. As is true for other similar cases elsewhere in this dissertation, this publication is unlisted in the Union List of Serials, and no copies were available for examination. The WWB's records are, however, generally accurate in such matters.
The veterans of past wars were enlightened as to the vastly increased uses of aviation in this war and the need for more money and men for the Army Air Force.\(^7\)

There were a number of articles and pieces of fiction in the large-circulation "slick" magazines. Two articles on aviation were placed in the *Saturday Evening Post*. One, by Hermann B. Deutsch, was just a publicity statement about some members of the Dutch Air Force stationed in Jackson, Mississippi; but the other, by Frank J. Taylor, was a strong effort to inform the public of the importance of the work of the ground crews for planes and the desperate need for more men in this area.\(^8\) The ground crews also got their due in *Look*, where it was pointed out that they "must match the men in the air in resourcefulness, in know-how, in courage."\(^9\)

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The Post published one of the most successful stories the board ever delivered in terms of propaganda effect, Paul Gallico's "Bombardier." In that story, the bombardier hero is described in glowing terms by a pilot: "He's got hunting blood. He signed up for bombardier from way back. He's no washed-out pilot or flop navigator. Ever since he's come into the Air Force, he's done nothing else but eat, sleep, live, and dream bombing. He just wants to bomb." The job of bombardier is also described as "the most wonderful job in the war," "the top card in the deck," and "one of the things that sets you apart."10

A similar effort aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the gunner's position was undertaken with a gunner's own personal narrative in American Magazine. The gunner described his work as "the most important job in this man's war" and said that "I'm twenty-five and I know that most of the fellows my age think the pilots have the best job. I don't think so now that I'm an aerial gunner. I see how important my job is. An aerial gunner is on his own. If he

shoots too long and burns up his guns, if he exhausts his ammo, then he's endangering his comrades and his plane. He's got to have horse sense, and like to shoot rather than eat."¹¹

The WWB placed in the New Yorker an article on the special problems of aviators' wives. The board suggested subjects on the Air Force to William L. White, who turned them into a series of articles that continued long after the original campaign had ended. Articles written under WWB auspices included a story on the Air Ferrying Command and on naval anti-submarine fliers. The board also assisted in the writing of an article on the heroics of the Air Force during Japan's invasion of the Philippine Islands.¹² A photographic survey of fliers in Look prominently featured ground crew, bombardiers, and gunners while passing lightly over the pilots.¹³


The war board's contacts were responsible for a large number of stories without a straight propaganda message but with a favorable Air Force background. An excellent illustration of this type of fiction was a serial by Faith Baldwin published in *Collier's*. A routine romance, it nevertheless repeatedly gives approving glances to the work of the Air Force.\textsuperscript{14}

The board placed pieces with newspaper syndicates as well. It arranged for columnist Dorothy Thompson to spend a weekend at Langley Field in Virginia, which resulted in continuing cooperation in her column. Feature writer Katharine Brush was sent to three air fields and used the material gathered for numerous newspaper pieces. Several other single feature stories were sold to the syndicates, including one by Franklin P. Adams popularizing the gunner, "The Gunner's the Man."\textsuperscript{15} The WWB arranged for the publication of a cheaply priced book for boys by Keith Ayling, *How

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\textsuperscript{14}Miss Baldwin, "Change of Heart," *Collier's*, CXIII (May 26, June 3, June 10, June 17, and June 24, 1944).

\textsuperscript{15}"Typical Jobs Accomplished by the Writers' War Board for the Army Air Forces," Cont. 26, WWB Records.
\end{flushleft}
Every Boy Can Prepare for Aviation Service.16

In order to round out the field of coverage, the New York writers held a campaign to produce Air Force slogans and mottoes that involved almost two thousand writers. Arrangements were made to provide posters for various Air Force campaigns. Finally, the group stimulated the writing of several songs on the Air Force. One in which the propaganda line was especially obvious was "I Wanna Marry a Bombardier," by Mack David and Leonard Whitcup, which emphasized the romantic talents that a man with the physical condition, self-confidence, and steady nerves of a bombardier would undoubtedly possess. The WWB undertook to get this song performed publicly as often as possible.17

There were a number of other activities in the campaign. In sum, the board counted fifty-two articles, twelve fiction stories, twenty-four syndicated columns, three broadcasts, one novel, one handbook, and two popular


17"Typical Jobs Accomplished by the Writers' War Board for the Army Air Force," Cont. 27, WWB Records; Fadiman to Dinah Shore, November 3, 1942, Cont. 26, WWB Records.
songs for which they were directly responsible. All gave
the Air Force favorable mention, all were distributed or
broadcast nationwide. In addition, there were uncounted
slogans, short pieces, or indirect mentions in other works.
In retrospect, this was a campaign which the WWB members
took pride in always because in at least one instance they
were too effective. The jobs of bombardier and gunner were
made so attractive that the Air Force had to request the New
York group to cease publicizing them because too many re-
cruits were now demanding to be trained in those areas.
After the initial effort for the Air Force in 1942, the Air
Force Committee was joined with the Army Committee since
special efforts no longer seemed necessary. Most magazines
had established their own contacts with the Public Relations
Department of the War Department and were using capacity amounts
of aviation material.18

18 WWB, First Annual Report, 14; Stout to the author,
June 15, 1968; interview with Stout, August 14, 1970; in-
terview with Green, August 8, 1968; Mrs. Barach to the author,
July 19, 1968; "Report on Army Air Forces Campaign, October
The Army Committee had been formed in July, 1942. Major Frank Mason visited the WWB on July 8, and proposed that the group obtain writers for several specified topics and that they attempt to publicize, primarily through fiction, certain general fields which had received little attention, such as the Signal Corps, the Quartermaster Corps, the Medical Corps, the Field Artillery, and the Military Police. The Army Committee was formed under the chairmanship of radio commentator and military expert George Fielding Eliot. The committee arranged for writers for dozens of articles and stories. It located experts who could make technical information comprehensible, as in the case of articles arranged for Firepower, the ordinance magazine. It also found writers for "pulp" magazines who could gush forth with innumerable romantic stories containing the proper romantic backgrounds.

The effort made in behalf of the Military Police is illustrative. The WWB's committee obtained some newspaper mention in editorials and signed columns for this often unpopular branch of the military. By letter and personal contact it urged radio commentators to give the MP's favorable mention. The burden of the campaign was carried by two approaches in magazines. The WWB arranged a factual article
in the *Saturday Evening Post* stressing the importance of the Military Police and pointing out that their qualifications for membership, their attitude toward the average soldier, and their methods were vastly improved over those of times past. At the same time, to get coverage in fiction for the MP's, the New York group persuaded Matt Taylor, whose stories about a policeman hero regularly appeared in the Sunday supplement *This Week*, to transfer his hero to the Military Police. Thereby, the American public learned in several stories that being an MP was a "big-time job" and that "every job everywhere is important, in the army."

A third major campaign was undertaken in 1942 and a third committee formed. This was for the Maritime Commission which had requested help in making the public appreciate the importance of its task which did not have the appeal of a number of other, more spectacular, war jobs. At the request of Mark O'Dea, director of the Maritime Commission's Bureau

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of Public Relations, the board designated Margaret Leech to head the special committee which undertook a few activities. At the WWB instigation, Edna Ferber wrote and sold a story, "Lifeboat," tracing a merchant ship from its construction in Indiana to its delivery of vital cargo across the Atlantic. The WWB also helped to publicize a serial in the Saturday Evening Post by Robert Carse, a merchant seaman turned writer, whom the group persuaded to return to the sea and then write about his experiences. His work was the factual but dramatic account of his own ship's run through dangerous waters. Another merchant seaman, with the help of a WWB-arranged ghostwriter, told his own story in American Magazine, speaking of the "thousands of heroes without uniform, crews of the tanker fleet. . . . Without this oil they carry, battleships won't cruise, airplanes won't fly, tanks won't charge." The WWB's committee soon found,

S. Edward Ross, "I Ride the Hell Ships," American Magazine, CXXXIV (December, 1942), 22-23, 126-30; O'Dea to Alden Chester, June 1, 1942, and Miss Ferber to WWB, August 30, 1942, Cont. 40. WWB Records; WWB, First Annual Report, 3; Miss Ferber, "Lifeboat," Cosmopolitan, CXII (September, 1942), 28-29, 94-96; Robert Carse, "We Fought Through to Murmansk," Saturday Evening Post, CCXV (November 7, 14, 21, 1942); Carse, There Go the Ships (New York: W. Morrow and Co., 1942).
however, that O'Dea himself was doing such a thorough job that the field was as well covered as possible and became inactive. Their proposed Merchant Seaman Relief Committee was abandoned when an official group was organized to meet this need.  

In March, 1943, came a call for help from the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. The WAACS had been established in May, 1942. There had been a flurry of enlistments and for a time recruitment had not been a serious problem. More than fifty thousand women joined. However, in early 1943, when a major expansion of the corps to one hundred fifty thousand members was undertaken, difficulties began to appear. The early recruitment appeals had been centered on the slogan "Release a Man for Combat," and the main appeal was aimed at the patriotism of the nation's women. By early 1943, this was clearly insufficient. The Army found that women were not responding due to apathy, fear of Army life and training, misunderstanding as to the jobs WAACS did, 

unfavorable attitude of relatives and friends, and the supposed unfavorable attitude of Army men toward WAACS.  

Accordingly, the Army launched a "recruiting campaign which for desperate thoroughness had not been surpassed in Army history." Young and Rubicam, an advertising agency, had principal charge. The Army and the agency asked the WWB to contribute ideas for "angles" and particularly to get stories and articles in magazines and radio material, the kind of publicity that could not be obtained by paid advertisements. The revised campaign de-emphasized patriotism. Instead, it was devoted to familiarizing the public with the life and work of a WAAC, particularly the good side of that life.

Under the leadership of Fadiman the New York group's WAAC Committee began vigorous activities. It immediately compiled a list of suggestions for slanting stories to be

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24 Ibid., 185, 188; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 24, 1943," Cont. 28, WWB Records.
sent to the writers with whom the WWB was in contact. These writers were urged to emphasize the "smart-looking" uniforms of the WAACS, the "fine relationship" between the men and women in the armed services, the real need for WAACS, the usefulness of their experience in the post-war world, and, perhaps as a clincher, the better than average chance of finding romance and a good-looking husband.25

Furthermore, a trip to most of the major training centers for WAACS was arranged for ten of the more important writers, editors, and radio personalities. Lasting from April 16 to 18, 1943, the trip was not only designed to interest those on the trip in women in service but to produce immediate publicity. For example, on April 17, a fifteen-minute nationwide radio program, "Salute to the WAACS," was broadcast over the National Broadcasting Company network with the WWB's Russel Crouse as host, and Jack Goodman, the author of the show's casual sounding script, and writers Katharine Brush and Alice Hughes as participants.26

25"Suggestions in Re WAACS," Cont. 27, WWB Records.

26"WAC Committee Activities," Cont. 27, WWB Records; "Itinerary of Trip for WWB," Cont. 27, WWB Records.
That trip, as well as other WWB contacts, paid off in one of the larger spurts of publicity that the WWB was ever able to arrange. A representative sample was the episode on the soap opera, "This Life Is Mine," which saw the heroine join the WAACS and then proceed to work her way through untold useful tasks and heart-wrenching romances. Another serial, "Green Valley, U. S. A.," devoted a week to the WAACS in June, 1943. Frequent references to the WAACS incorporating the WWB's suggested slants were placed in the script of the radio show "Blondie." Alice Hughes used her experiences on the trip as the source for two full broadcasts and parts of others.27

Finally, the board produced a special network program on the WAACS. After some feverish searching through American history, the WWB and WAAC headquarters had decided that Molly Pitcher was a suitable American heroine whose image, if polished a bit, could bear the additional burden of being a symbol for the WAACS. No small consideration was the fact that Molly's heroism had taken place on June 28, 1778, at

27 "WAC Committee Activities," Cont. 27, WWB Records; Lynn Stone to Fadiman, May 20, 1943, and Fadiman to Alice Hughes, April 21, 1943, Cont. 28, WWB Records.
the Revolutionary War battle of Monmouth, and thus the anniversary could be celebrated quite quickly. Accordingly, Carl Carmer wrote a script which dramatized Molly's heroics and then drove home the point: "the Army honors WAACS, the Army respects WAACS, and — by the shades of Molly Pitcher -- it needs WAACS." A duly inspired WAAC then told her story, and speeches followed by such notables as Army General James Bowers and actor Spencer Tracy. The program went out over NBC at 6:45 P. M. on Saturday, June 26.\textsuperscript{28}

In magazines there was similar widespread interest. The WWB made an effort to obtain WAAC coverage in all the major women's magazines, and this effort was largely successful. Harper's Bazaar was most cooperative, devoting its entire July issue to women in service. In McCall's Magazine there was a striking display of photographs featuring an attractive WAAC in swimming, in a beauty shop, at inspection, playing ping-pong, and in a boat with a handsome soldier.

\textsuperscript{28}"WAC Committee Activities," Cont. 27, WWB Records; Fadiman to Lt. Col. E. M. Kirby, June 22, 1943, and Selma Hirsch to Fadiman, June 18, 1943, Cont. 28, WWB Records. A copy of the show's script is in Cont. 28.
Ilildegard Fillmore's accompanying article was careful to

touch on practically all of the WWB suggestions:

When you meet these WAAC officers you are touched
by the fact that they combine the competence of top-
drawer business executives with the skill and sympathy
of ultra-modern college deans. . . . A WAAC told me
that a girl often gets to know the soldier she is re-
placing. And the boys tell us they aren't sorry to
leave a desk job for active duty. . . . Does her job
spoil a girl's natural individuality? Well, watch the
crowded stag line at one of their dances, or look at
the bulletin board crammed with invitations to nearby
functions, and you have your answer. . . .

How do they feel about their jobs? They are
thrilled, first, because they have been set apart from
other women in war service to relieve a man for combat
duty. But they are stimulated, too, by the training
that continues even after they've taken their basic
training.29

Vogue and Ladies Home Journal also carried features.30

Other popular magazines cooperated with the WWB's committee.

American Magazine used a photogenic WAAC as its cover girl for
August, 1943, and This Week did the same on August 8, 1943.

Cosmopolitan bought a story submitted to it through the war

29Hildegard Fillmore, "WAACS, How They Work -- Live
-- Play," McCall's Magazine, LXX (June, 1943), 96-97; Harper's
Bazaar, LXXVI (July, 1943), has numerous references to WAACS.

30Sally Kirkland, "The WAACS Take Over," Vogue,
(July 1, 1943), 18-21, 68; "Your Men in Uniform," Ladies
Home Journal, LX (September, 1943), 4-5, 148-49.
board, "The Lieutenant Meets the WAAC," and ran it in July. Many of the pulp magazines played the romantic possibilities from all possible angles. A good example is "The Women's Army" by Carter Sprague in the August, 1943, issue of Thrilling Love. The device of having an already existing fictional heroine join the WAACS was used in magazines. Arizona Spratt, a familiar figure to readers of This Week, was dispatched into the service, buoyed up by the properly ennobling sentiments: "I didn't want any of those pink pants war jobs, which I'd get on account of being a Spratt. A lot of good men haven't been too good to go in where they could share some of the tough going of the boys that are fighting for us . . . so I just went out and enlisted in the WAACS."  

For newspapers, several syndicated columns were written by Alice Hughes for King Features and by Katharine Brush for the Bell Syndicate. Heavy coverage was obtained

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on women's pages throughout the country by the media of McCall's "Washington Newsletter" which serviced several hundred local papers. Somewhat later in September, when the WAAC ceased to be an auxiliary and became the Women's Army Corps (WAC), the board's editorial service was responsible for a considerable amount of favorable local editorial mention. Specific newspaper articles or mentions in columns were placed periodically at WWB instance.32

The WWB undertook dozens of other kinds of projects seeking to exploit all possible angles. They arranged for a WAAC to be selected "Miss Subways" for July, 1943, which meant that a picture poster went up in a prominent position in all New York subways for that month. In cooperation with Harper's Bazaar, a contest was held nationwide for department store window displays on the Molly Pitcher theme. New Jersey proclaimed Molly Pitcher Day when the governor signed a WWB-prepared proclamation. Oscar Hammerstein's

Music War Committee produced a WAC song. The list is almost endless. Whether the WWB's efforts produced new recruits is an open question. The Women's Army Corps continued to have its problems in this respect. It was, however, a considerable display of ability and ingenuity from the War Board. Even Col. Oveta Culp Hobby, the WAC commander, was impressed. She wrote Fadiman, "I feel that nothing that has been done for the WAC has had the impact of the work which the Writers' War Board has accomplished."

While the WAAC campaign was in full activity, other service-connected requests arrived. In April, Dogs for Defense, the official procurement agency for dogs for the armed forces, requested publicity. No major effort seemed required, but the board did contact its writers in the Monthly Report, set up several radio interviews, prepare a promotional jacket for a Book-of-the-Month selection, and

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33 Writers' War Board Report, September 1, 1943; "WAC Committee Activities," Cont. 27, WWB Records; "WAAC Recruitment Committee Report, April 1, 1943," Cont. 28, WWB Records; Treadwell, Women's Army Corps, 186-87, and passim.
place one story specifically written for the purpose in *Cosmopolitan*.\(^{34}\)

In May, there were two more major requests. One was from the Bureau of Aeronautics of the United States Navy. This agency wanted help from the WWB in publicizing the fact that the Navy actually had an air arm, since there was no special official distinction. Help in publicizing the less glamorous jobs in the Navy such as those of the flight instructors and the ground crews was also requested. The board appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Paul Schubert and Goodman, but it soon encountered difficulties. Admiral Ernest King, Chief of Naval Operations, frowned on most kinds of publicity, lest the enemy receive information of value. Besides, the Navy had a long tradition of anonymity which made the exploitation of individual heroics somewhat difficult.

Nevertheless, some things were done. Fletcher Pratt was persuaded to hastily write a book on naval aviation. He and eleven other writers were sent on a five-day tour of Navy

aviation bases in order to obtain material for informational stories and articles which, it was hoped, the Navy command would clear. About four stories, authored by Keith Ayling, did appear in the pulps put out by Standard Magazines. The Music War Committee endeavored to provide a song despite the unappealing prospect of trying to work with the unwieldy title of the United States Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics. Further activity was largely stymied by the refusal of publications to utilize still more material on men in service training and the reluctance of the naval command to release material dealing with anything else.  

In the fall of 1943, Admiral King and the naval command aroused the wrath of the WWB. At the request of naval officers, the board had procured writers for three books on the submarine service, including WWB member Carmer. The writers had toiled all year, and just as their works were about to be published, the Navy ordered them suppressed.

35"Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, May 5, 1943," Cont. 37, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, July 21, 1943," Cont. 37, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual Report, 8; Writers' War Board Report, July 15, 1943; Pratt, The Navy Has Wings (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943); Mrs. Barach to Paul Schubert, August 7, 1943, Cont. 37, WWB Records.
on the grounds of security. The books had been written with
the full cooperation of naval officers. What was especially
irritating to the board was that all the material in question
had already been published in newspaper and magazine arti-
cles. Strong protests were sent to King, requesting a
reconsideration of his decision to suppress the material.
If not, the board asked for some kind of financial compensa-
tion for the writers, since their months of lost work had
been at the Navy's request. King, however, was most unsym-
pathetic and declined to recognize even that a problem
existed. No satisfaction was gained. Thereafter, the WWB
seems to have been less than enthusiastic about any Navy
requests.36

On May 12, the WWB received a request from the Army
Service Forces, which composed about one-third of the Army's
personnel but which felt that the public and even the troops
knew little of its work and appreciated even less the es-
sential work of such divisions as the Quartermaster Corps
and Signal Corps. A campaign to publicize the functions of

36 Fadiman, et al., to King, September 4, 1943, King
to Fadiman, September 19, 1943, Fadiman to King, September
30, 1943, King to Fadiman, October 14, 1943, Cont. 39, WWB
Records.
these divisions would also increase the public understanding of the ramifications of total war and the sacrifices that were necessary, Henry Pringle, then of the OWI, had already assembled most of the material and ideas needed for such a campaign. The board was simply requested to suggest possible writers and suitable markets. The board provided over fifty suggestions and contacts. One example of the result may be found in *Life*, where a photographic study of the multiplicity of the supply services' activities appeared.  

Just as the WAAC campaign was drawing to a close in early September, 1943, the Woman's Reserve of the United States Naval Reserve (WAVES) requested WWB help in their recruitment campaign. The procedure followed and the appeal made were similar to the effort for the WAACS. The WAVE Committee was headed by Rita Halle Kleeman. Once again a trip was arranged to kick off the campaign. September 14-17, staff members of the leading women's magazines were taken to

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37"Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, May 12, 1943," Cont. 33, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual Report, 7; "It's a Big War," *Life*, XVI (January 10, 1944), 35-42.
visit the U. S. Naval Station at Jacksonville, Florida, where WAVES were trained. This resulted in an outburst of publicity. Articles promptly appeared in Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Mademoiselle, True Confessions, and Woman's Press. All leaned heavily on photographs to demonstrate the personal attractiveness of the WAVES, the excitement of their lives, and the excellent conditions under which they worked. The texts strongly emphasized their interesting and important jobs, their good character and morale, and their opportunities for romances.38

This was followed by an appeal to alumni publications to feature their graduates who had entered the women's services. Over forty sent evidence of cooperation. Out of the mentions made in the WWB's own publications, particularly notable was a sharply worded editorial by Mrs. Kleeman sent

38 "WAVES Recruitment Sub-Committee Report," January 10, 1944, Cont. 38, WWB Records; "The WAVES on Active Duty at the Jacksonville Naval Air Station," Vogue, CII (December 1, 1943), 74-75; "WAVES--Sky-Workers with Their Feet on the Ground," Harper's Bazaar, LXXVII (November, 1943), 82-85; "MLLE Wings to See WAVES," Mademoiselle, XVIII (November, 1943), 79-81; Pauline Reaves, "Editor Meets the WAVES," True Confessions (February, 1944), 4, 32-33; Rita Halle Kleeman, "They're Women to Be Proud Of," Woman's Press (January, 1944), 16-17.
out in January. "What's the Matter Girls?" hinted that the recruitment failures of the women's services might indicate a lack of proper spirit in America's women. Another trip for writers was arranged, this time to the Naval Recruiting School at Hunter College in New York. In the area of radio, one of the things done by the board was to obtain a script on the WAVES by Robert Colwell which was first performed by the husband and wife acting team of Howard Lindsay and Dorothy Stickney. In general the WAVE campaign was a smaller version of the WAAC effort. This occurred not because the need was less but because most communications media felt they had already done their share.39

In November, 1943, the advertising agency working on recruitment for the Army Air Force Cadets requested WWB assistance in obtaining magazine coverage only. Paul Gallico was placed in charge. Mailings were quickly sent out to pulp and slick magazine writers and editors. The

39 "WAVES Recruitment Sub-Committee Report," January 10, 1944, Cont. 38, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual Report, 9; WWB, Third Annual Report, 10; Writers' War Board Report, December 1, 1943; "List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records; Selma Hirsch to Francis McFadden, February 23, 1944, Cont. 37, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Oscar Schisgall, January 8, 1943, Cont. 52, WWB Records.
December *Writers' War Board Report* explained the situation:

The restless, impatient seventeen year old boy, still one year away from draft age and the big fight, may now ... enlist in the Air Corps Enlisted Reserve and take the physical and mental examinations which, when he reaches the ripe old age of eighteen, will qualify him without further tests to begin his training for his wings.

A blue and silver Air Corps lapel button will be awarded to successful candidates. This button, worn by the civilian boy, advertises to all the world and especially to the girls of his acquaintance that he has been accepted by the Air Force. 40

Results were soon apparent. *Liberty Magazine* carried a fictional account of a young man's eager entry into the air cadets. A serial in the *Saturday Evening Post* used the air cadet program as part of its background. *Rotarian* carried a picture story on the cadets. Milton Caniff's "Terry and the Pirates" comic script carried a sequence on air cadets for the war board. The pulp magazines were especially cooperative. *Ranch Romances, Mechanix Illustrated, True Detective, Master Detective,* and *Air Aces* all immediately carried stories or other materials on air cadets. Numerous other stories and articles were in the planning or development.

40 "Writers' War Board Report, December 1, 1943."
stage when the advertising agency asked the board to halt its efforts. The overall campaign was too successful; there were more than enough air cadets. The WWB's plans for further activities were, accordingly, cancelled.41

CHAPTER VI

ARMED SERVICES, 1944 - 1945

Throughout the last year and a half of the war, requests from the military continued to come into the WWB offices. During 1944, the WWB kept up its efforts to publicize various branches of the armed services. The campaigns for the women's branches were continued to a certain extent. A new, though limited, campaign was undertaken in behalf of the U. S. Cadet Nurse Corps recruitment. It was primarily confined to obtaining publicity in the New York area through the media of radio interviews on New York stations, local newspaper reporting, and speeches before meetings in the immediate vicinity. Some of the publicity was national in scope. For example, an article was run in Parents' Magazine, and dramatic material was written into the network radio shows "Broadway Matinee" and "When a Girl Marries." The OWI reported an unusually wide pick-up on the board's editorial on the subject, "From Jitterbug to Angel."¹

¹"Activities to Date on Behalf of U. S. Cadet Nurse Corps Recruiting," May 5, 1944, Cont. 92, WWB Records; "Wanted: Cadet Nurses," Parents' Magazine, XIX (June, 1944), 40. At least forty-eight newspapers had run the editorial within two weeks of receiving it.
The board continued to support the recruitment campaigns for WACS and WAVES but in an atmosphere of increasing discouragement. The board went through the motions, helping to prepare recruiting pamphlets for the Air-WAC campaign, obtaining Carl Sandburg to author the narration for a movie short as well as numerous other items. In June, however, the group told the WAC recruiters that the board had been working extensively and continuously on WAC recruitment with "discouragingly little effect." The writers were convinced that the only solution was national conscription and that little else could be done.² That did not quite end the matter. One of the strongest of the WWB statements appeared in August, an article in _Glamour_ magazine signed by Stout in which he said that ten million American women were slackers, that the reasons given for not joining women's services were "flimsy alibis," and that the real reason was that American women "do not care that much about winning the war."³ The article drew controversy, as Stout intended, and perhaps even showed results. Other articles were placed. The board, however, considered that their efforts in this area were largely in vain.

²"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 21, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 9-10; Mrs. Barach to WWB, January 19, 1944, Cont. 27, WWB Records.

In another area, however, during 1944 the WWB scored one of its greatest successes in its work with the military. Early in February the Army Ground Forces presented a morale problem to the board. The public, it said, was too little aware of the essential part played by the infantry in winning the war. Infantry representatives noted that while their men were dependent on the assistance of all branches of the military, the work of all the groups was meaningless unless the infantry moved forward along the ground to capture and hold territory. The war board agreed that the point was valid and undertook to conceive ideas for a publicity campaign and carry them out.4

The New York group appointed a committee under the leadership of correspondent James Putnam. It was quickly decided that the campaign should be built around the celebration of an Infantry Day. The committee selected June 15, 1944, the anniversary of George Washington's appointment as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army and thus presumably of the foundation of the American infantry. The concurrence of the War Department was gained and the campaign was set in motion. General James McNair, commander of the infantry, signed appeals

4"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, February 2, 1944," Cont. 30, WWB Records.
sent to newspapers. Radio commentator George Fielding Eliot contacted other commentators, Fadiman wrote to radio writers, and Paul Gallico appealed to fiction writers. The project began to snowball. Well over one hundred separate special projects were set up in the three months that the campaign lasted.

Three magazine pieces indicate the variety of the approaches taken. Christopher LaFarge published a story in American Magazine designed to show the heroic qualities of the average, everyday infantryman. The central character, Private Krasek, explained the problem: "One guy went home, and he's back here now. He says it's all the air force or the submarines. Or the paratroopers. He says, you say you're in the Infantry when someone asks, and they say, 'Oh?' like if you said you was in the business of hauling manure." As for the heroics with which the story is concerned, "It could have happened to a million little GI's from Hat Creeks in all of the forty-eight states, all of them decorating the Infantry."

George Fielding Eliot drove home the point in a straight article in *Argosy*:

The very arrogance, the very feeling of being a superman, which leads men to the conquest of their neighbors, suggests that they do so on horseback, or in armored vehicles, or in airplanes. Time and time again, as history repeats itself, such folk have come to grief at the hands of tough foot soldiers who were not over awed by either equine or mechanical display.

The pendulum swings— but it always swings back. New weapons are invented, seem invincible; but the human mind instantly turns to devising countermeasures. We are entranced by the complexity, the fury and the ingenuity of machine war; but victory still goes, at the last, to the side whose infantry can move forward and take and hold ground. That is the pride and glory of the foot soldier—the mudslogging doughboy who knows that, whatever happens, upon his weary shoulders rests the final responsibility for victory.6

Finally, the ground forces were celebrated poetically by Sheldon Stark in *Look*:

So here's to the men who fight hand to hand
With no armor plate to save them,
They do their job and they make their stand
With only the strength God gave them.

They're the thin black line on the map of war
Up where the foe can find them,
They're out in front of the other corps
The rest of the army behind them.

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They live for months in the mud and rain  
With only a foxhole to curl in,  
But they're moving ahead to Tokyo  
They're first on the road to Berlin.  

The "thin black line" referred to in the poem was one of the principal publicity ideas that the WWB had. Derived originally from a comment by General McNair, the group used the black line on the newspaper map that the public saw each day, which registered the advance of American forces, to drive home the importance of the Army Ground Forces. As Eliot put it in one of the WWB's own publications, "The little black line on the map, that's the payoff. That's where the infantry is. That's the yardstick of victory or defeat."  

Newspaper treatment was similar. The board sent out two local editorial mailings, "Hats Off to the Infantry," and "How Far Can You Walk?" which were picked up by several hundred papers. All of the major newspaper syndicates were sent infantry material, and they utilized it in one form or another. The WWB stimulated the creation of a special newspaper cartoon figure for the infantry. Typical of the treatment given the ground forces by the newspaper columnists was


8Eliot, quoted in "Brief Items to House Organs," May, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records.
Frank Sullivan's commentary in the New York PM. He lamented, "The doughboy? Ah, he is down in the nice clean sewer picking nits out of his shirt and leading a pretty unglamourous life which never moves a correspondent to raptures. . . ." 9

Among other columnists and broadcasters to call attention to the infantry were Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Earl Godwin, Adelaide Hawley, Imogene Wolcott, and Edgar Ansel Mowrer. The prestigious New York Times was inspired to make an editorial comment that could have been but was not written by the war board: "We know that with all our steel of combat, our planes, tanks, self-propelled guns and other engines of war, it is the flesh and blood infantry that will have to clinch the victory that we and our allies seek." 10

Among comic strips, "Superman" and "Joe Palooka" were brought into the fight to give the infantryman his proper recognition. Radio shows of all the national broadcasting networks paid tribute to the ground forces in one form or

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another. The Broadway team of Rodgers and Hammerstein produced for the infantry one of the few songs to make a real impact, "On Our Way,"11

The campaign climaxed with the successful celebration of Infantry Day. A number of state governors proclaimed the day; and parades in army camps, posts, and cities marked the occasion nationwide. In New York alone there was a parade up Fifth Avenue by infantrymen which drew over 700,000 spectators, and Mayor LaGuardia of New York City held a ceremony involving the group decoration of eight infantry heroes. All of this gained widespread publicity. Mention of the infantry continued in connection with the Treasury's Fifth War Loan Drive which began in June.12

The board continued to follow up on this campaign in the succeeding months. However, the Army reported that the improvement in morale was so marked that the campaign was considered an immediate success. The WWB's role in this was acknowledged by General McNair:

I am writing this letter now because of the

11"Infantry Committee Progress Report," August 1, 1944, Cont. 30, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 8-9; Writers War Board Report, July 1, 1944.

The apparent success of the Infantry Day idea, which I am informed was originated by your committee. There appears to be no doubt that much was accomplished as a result of this idea toward bringing the Infantry nearer to its proper place in the people's mind.

In my opinion each member of your committee deserves a large share of the credit for an achievement which means much to this most important branch of the armed services.13

The infantry campaign succeeded so well that, to a degree, it caused another problem. The Army Medical Corps was the third largest division of the Army, but many Americans were under the impression that the Red Cross did much of the war's medical work. As long as the Army Ground Forces, with which the medics worked, were also forgotten, the morale situation was not so serious. However, when the WWB's campaign wrought a "sensational change" in the public attitude toward the ground forces the problem with the medics intensified.14

The board agreed to work on the problem and Christopher LaFarge was put in charge. Hastily, appropriate pieces were

13 McNair to Fadiman, June 21, 1944, Cont. 30, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Infantry Committee Meeting, August 7, 1944," Cont. 30, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to WWB, September 6, 1944, Cont. 32, WWB Records.

14 Mrs. Barach to the WWB, September 6, 1944, Cont. 32, WWB Records; Ernie Pyle in New York World Telegram, September 5, 1944, p. 17.
inserted into the board's own publications. The "Cartoonists' Bulletin" put the problem to the nation's artists:

One of the most dangerous and courageous jobs in any branch of the Army has been that of the Army Medical Department. Confused with the Red Cross it is only the medics, the enlisted men, and officers who tend the wounded on the field of battle. The work they have done has been given very little publicity, and in some instances their morale has suffered. Can we give these men some of the recognition they deserve?  

The board's editorial service, the Monthly Report, and the service to the NEA syndicate also devoted space to the medics. Then a spurt of newspaper stories emanating from sources other than the WWB soon began to call attention to the situation, and the board, convinced that the problem was under control, decided to reserve its other methods for more necessary causes. 

About the same time that the Army Medical Corps was requesting some assistance, the board renewed its campaign to aid in Merchant Marine recruitment. The board felt that it was extremely difficult to make the work of a merchant


16"Army Medics Report," Cont. 32, WWB Records; Writers' War Board Report, October 1, 1944, and January 1, 1945.
marine, though certainly vital, sufficiently dramatic and appealing, but it felt obligated to try. Robert Carse, the writer turned merchant seaman, was obtained to write a script for a movie short and a piece for the NEA syndicate. The board's editorial service, *Monthly Report*, and "Cartoonists' Bulletin," cranked out material; and mailings were sent to sports editors and radio commentators. Mrs. Kleeman of the WWB succeeded in placing in the *Saturday Evening Post* a brief story about a Merchant Marine captain. It was a rather pitiful effort, considering the need, and the board knew it. A contact by the Merchant Marine's Public Relations Office in November with a repeated request for help brought a blush of shame to the board's collective cheek; but they admitted that they could think of little else to do. A few references in obscure pulp magazines and the publications of fraternal orders seemed the best that could be managed.17

17"Merchant Marine Recruitment," Cont. 37, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Herbert Little, November 18, 1944, Cont. 37, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, November 13, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the Writers' War Board, November 20, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records; Mrs. Kleeman, "The Captain Lost His Leg," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCXVII (September 16, 1944), 111; Paul Gallico to Bill Stern, March 15, 1945, Cont. 40, WWB Records; Bill Stern, "Their Secret Weapon," *The Eagle Magazine* (May, 1945), 9, 19-20; Writers' War Board Report, August 1, 1944.
Two other requests for popularization of the services came in during 1944 but got rather short shrift. A request for publicity by the Army Air Forces Redistribution Center at Atlantic City was actually filled to an extent when the board found a spot for the commanding general on a nationwide radio show. When the board was asked in January, 1944, to stimulate interest in naval air gunners, the members were still smarting from what they felt was Admiral King's injustice in the matter of books on the submarine service. They almost ignored the request, mentioning it only in the least important of their publications, the "Cartoonists' Bulletin."\textsuperscript{18}

During 1944 the WWB also engaged in a number of activities which centered on the military in one way or another but which did not involve recruitment or publicity for any of the branches of the services. One such was a modest campaign undertaken partially at the behest of the Treasury. The purpose was to relieve points of friction between soldiers and civilians by informing soldiers of what the home front was doing to assist in the war effort. In a direct attempt to

inform the men in service, material was prepared by the Scripts for Soldiers and Sailors Committee demonstrating civilian contributions to the war.¹⁹

On the home front the board tried to stimulate anyone who had contact with a soldier overseas to send him news of local activities for the war:

And can you help? It's easy. Write to your local paper and suggest in that letter that your fellow citizens write to their husbands and sons overseas the news about the War Bond Drives—the local news. Not the big, glittery, hard to understand figures. But what the town did, the village did. What crotchety old Mrs. Blankus bought.

Tell them to put in a bit of positive good news to replace the negative bellyache that depresses. Good news that's true breeds good morale.²⁰

The board suggested to fiction writers that they show war workers "in physical and dangerous combat with saboteurs," standing in long lines for everything, living in uncomfortable housing, working themselves into exhaustion with long hours of overtime, complaining about their small take home pay, and similar things, to gain the sympathy of soldiers and

¹⁹"Home Front Information for Troops," May 1, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 12.

²⁰Writers' War Board Report, May 1, 1944.
convince them that the war worker's lot was not always a happy one.21

In an article published in the *Army-Navy Woman*, wives of servicemen were particularly urged to encourage their husbands with cheerful news of the home front support. Quentin Reynolds made a similar plea in an article distributed through the New York group's Brief Items service. Other articles and references in newspaper columns attempted to gain the same result.22

In the summer of 1944, the WWB involved itself in a controversy over the censorship of information being sent to soldiers overseas in that election year. Concerned that the Democrats might use their control over communications to soldiers for partisan purposes, Republican Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio, in March, 1944, had sponsored an amendment to the Soldier Voting Act which placed sharp limitations on the use of any means of communication to the soldiers paid for by the government. Books were most strongly proscribed. Any work containing political argument or political propaganda

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21 Alan Green to Jane McGill, March 22, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records.

22 "Home Front Information for Troops," May 1, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records; Christopher LaFarge, "Let Him Know," *Army-Navy Woman* (May, 1944), 26-27; Reynolds, "They Don't Know There's a War On," in "Brief Items to Army Camps," June, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records; WWB, *Third Annual Report*, 12.
designed to affect the results of any federal election was prohibited. Violations were considered to be criminal acts and were punishable as such. The War Department and particularly the Army began to apply this act very strictly, banning such works as Catharine Drinker Bowen's *Yankee from Olympus*, a biography of Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Charles Beard's *The Republic*. The motion picture biography "Wilson" was prohibited and eventually, either in an excess of zeal or in an attempt to demonstrate the absurdity of the law, the Army even banned its own *Official Guide to the Army Air Force*, because it contained a picture of the commander-in-chief, Roosevelt, who was running for re-election.23

The Council of Books in Wartime, which was publishing Editions for the Armed Services, was the first to take serious note of this provision. In June, it began to sound a warning about the dangers of censorship. The war board was soon advised, however, and threw itself into the campaign in cooperation with the Council. When the facts began to come to the attention of the public, there was an outcry against the

censorship sufficient to give even Taft second thoughts. He claimed that the Army was interpreting the provisions too strictly and agreed to meet with the Council, the WWB, and the Army. The meeting took place on July 21, and the amendment's opponents requested the dropping of criminal penalties and the liberalization of the law to exclude only books that were in their entirety obvious political propaganda. Taft would not commit himself.24

The board then undertook a hasty political campaign. Letters explaining the situation and asking for publicity were sent to 156 newspaper and magazine book reviewers and twenty-two radio commentators. The response, in many cases, was prompt and pointed. Machinery was set in motion to form a non-partisan front committee behind which a publicity campaign could push for revision of the amendment. The WWB consulted the American Civil Liberties Union as to the possibilities of a test case challenging the constitutionality of the law. Bernard DeVoto, editor of Harper's and a member of the WWB Advisory Council, was inspired to write a stinging

and sarcastic editorial on the whole situation. Numerous other projects were in the formative stage. However, Congressional action made further effort unnecessary. Faced with an increasingly aroused public, the Senate adopted a greatly liberalized version of the law, and the Army withdrew its prohibitions. There was no further attempt at censorship of this kind during the war.25

Particularly in the later period of the war, the WWB rendered assistance to the Army in the matter of orientation of soldiers. The board helped in two ways: the preparation and distribution of useful materials to orientation officers and the individual soldiers, and the provision of appropriate and informative speakers to address audiences of servicemen on pertinent issues. In 1942 and 1943 some activities of this nature had taken place. A number of speakers had been provided to military bases for single appearances. A certain amount of material, too, had been furnished. In 1943, for

example, the board was given the job of obtaining writers for and supervising composition of a series of pamphlets on various countries, designed to give a soldier entering them for the first time the background material and practical information that he needed to know. Among others, the board obtained the services of Janet Flanner for France, Hendrick Van Loon for Holland, and Francis Hackett for Denmark.26

Beginning in the spring of 1944, the board's activities in this area moved into a larger scale with the organization of the Orientation Committee under Alan Green. The Army began to see the wisdom of better informing its soldiers on such subjects as the history of the war, the nature of the enemy, post-war plans, and related subjects. Frequently, this orientation was carried out by army officers. To assist them the board prepared a kit which it dispatched to hundreds of orientation officers all over the country. This consisted of pamphlets on America's allies prepared by the public relations offices of those countries. On Germany, there was "Know Your Enemy" and "Cartels," the latter on the use of concealed

26 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, October 20, 1943," Cont. 34, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to WWB, March 29, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records.
international economic power by the Germans. Several other pamphlets were provided on one of the board's favorite subjects, the problem of racial balance. Orientation officers were also provided a variety of dramatic materials, such as Stephen Vincent Benet's "Letters to Adolph," and a carefully prepared bibliography of works which incorporated WWB-approved positions on the nature of the enemy and the post-war world.27

In addition, the board provided a number of specially written articles to "Army Talks," described as a fact sheet for orientation officers. Typical articles obtained by the board included "What Victory in Europe Means to the Home Front," by John Kenneth Galbraith, "Is International Organization Practical?" by Arthur Upham Pope, and "What Part Can Religion Play in the Fight for Democracy?" by Henry Atkinson.28

The Army found that the average soldier responded better to such orientation material when it was presented to him by a civilian, particularly by a civilian of some prominence. Whenever possible, therefore, the WWB cooperated by arranging speakers from the writers, correspondents, and

27Fadiman to WWB, May 28, 1944, Cont. 51, WWB Records; File 3C-6, Cont. 36, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 11-12.

28Copies of "Army Talks" in File 3C-8, Cont. 36, WWB Records.
lecturers of their acquaintance. In April and May, meetings were held at which prominent writers agreed to accept periodic speaking engagements. Many bases and hospitals in the New York area were covered regularly. In addition, beginning in May, one or two speakers per month were sent on two-week nationwide tours of the Air Transport Command, reaching posts in Texas, California, Montana, Michigan, and Kansas, among others. In the late summer of 1944 the twenty-six East Coast bases of the First Air Force were added to the WWB's agenda. The First Air Force provided so many speaking opportunities that the Orientation Committee divided it into eight areas so as not to overwork any individual speaker. By December, 1944, the load was so heavy that the war board was using fifty speakers per month, declining any further orientation assignments and limiting their activities to places where audiences of several thousand soldiers could be anticipated.29

29Green to Stephen Laird, June 30, 1944, Green to Bennett Cerf, August 15, 1944, and Mrs. Barach to Green, August 4, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records; "Report on Meeting with Prospective Orientation Speakers at Clifton Fadiman's Home, Tuesday Evening, April 25," Cont. 34, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 11-12; Green to Bert L. Shepard, December 4, 1944, Cont. 126, WWB Records.
These speakers addressed the soldiers on topics with which they presumably were familiar. Examples of orientation speeches included such titles as "Post-War Problems in the Balkans," "American Fascism," "The United States Is a Pattern for a United World," and "Nazism Is Merely One Expression of the German Spirit." Green told one prospective speaker to make "any talk which will give the boys a better understanding of the war's background and purposes. . . ." The board made occasional suggestions to its speakers, but there were no overt attempts to control their speeches. No speaker whose known views were not approved by the war board was invited to participate, of course.

The orientation effort did not maintain for long the high level of activity achieved by the end of 1944. At several locations speakers supplied by the board stirred up controversy when they discussed such issues as the race question, the problem of fascism in America, post-war relations with Russia, and hatred of the Germans. As a result the orientation programs were often cancelled or reduced by the

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30 Green to Katherine L. Bern, June 22, 1944, Cont. 128, WWB Records.
Army. By May, 1945, for example, the entire First Air Force circuit was dropped. The board felt that much of the difficulty was caused by the racial prejudice or isolationist sentiment of certain officers at these bases. However, many of the instances in which the program was dropped were undoubtedly due simply to the ending of the war. 31

As the war wore on and the number of veterans returning to civilian life began to increase, with a flood of returns expected after the victory, the New York group began to interest itself in the problem of rehabilitation. The board's activities in this regard took two approaches. First, it launched an information campaign designed to acquaint the public with the problem. Second, it began work directed at the returned men themselves. This last was a small local effort in the New York area. Several speakers per month were sent regularly to several military hospitals in the immediate vicinity in an effort to assist in the reorientation of the wounded men to civilian life. A special project was undertaken at the Mitchell Field Hospital near New York. There, for about a year, beginning in the fall of 1944, the New York

31Green to WWB, May 14, 1945, and Mrs. Barach to WWB, April 26, 1945, Cont. 34, WWB Records.
group regularly sent teams of writers to interview returned wounded airmen. The stories written from these interviews were dispatched to the men's hometown newspapers. The records showed an exceptionally high rate of coverage by these newspapers, resulting in a boost for the men's morale and a better reception upon their return home.32

The larger of the board's programs stemmed originally from a visit in July, 1944, to the New York group by two prominent psychiatrists, Dr. Lawrence Kubie and Dr. George Stevenson, the latter the Medical Director of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. Later, the WWB's work was further encouraged by an official request from the Surgeon-General's office to publicize its rehabilitation program. At their meeting with the WWB, the two doctors stated that rehabilitation had been badly handled after the First World War, becoming a political issue due to the interest of veterans' groups in keeping all care for veterans strictly separated from any facilities for civilians. General incompetence and inefficiency had also hampered the effort.

32WWB, Third Annual Report, 12-13; Barbara Bode to Maxwell Aley, December 7, 1944, Cont. 32, WWB Records; File 3-72, Cont. 32, WWB Records.
They considered the rehabilitation program then existing utterly inadequate and noted a number of specific problems. The war board agreed to help.33

The core of the board's campaign on this question was the distribution and publicization of a program for correcting the deficiencies of the rehabilitation system, drawn up by Dr. Kubie and Dr. Stevenson and sponsored by a number of professional groups. Among other things, the WWB program called for the psychological screening of all men released from the services in order to determine their mental fitness and aptitudes. This information, they said, should be made available to all rehabilitation agencies whose activities, in turn, would be carefully coordinated. Hospitals for veterans should be located close to large centers of population and to centers of medical research and teaching. The board explained in a covering memorandum at the behest of veterans groups facilities for veterans had been located isolated spots away from the benefits of existing civilian medical centers and civilian doctors. In general, the

33"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, July 12, 1944," Cont. 3, WWB Records; Alan Green to the Chief of the News Division, Bureau of Public Relations, October 13, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 12.
distinction between facilities for veterans and the general population should be constantly diminished. Employers and the general community should be carefully educated to accept returning veterans with both physical and mental disabilities. The GI Bill of Rights should be amended to provide for psychiatric and psychological appraisal so that the benefits it gave could be used to the greatest advantage of each individual veteran. Finally, there should be a crash training program to provide adequate numbers of psychiatric social workers and psychiatrists.  

To publicize these ideas, the New York writers utilized an unusual amount of space in its own publications. For example, in the nine-month period beginning October, 1944, five separate editorials on rehabilitation were sent in the regular issues to local newspapers in the hope of getting one or more in each paper reached by the war board. Large mailings of the rehabilitation program went out to magazine and newspaper editors, writers, and publishers as well as to likely sources of assistance in the radio industry. As

34"14 Point Program on Rehabilitation," Cont. 31, WWB Records; Carl Carmer and Alan Green (for the WWB), "Rehabilitating the Veteran to Civilian Life," Cont. 31, WWB Records.
always, the WWB made no particular effort to tabulate the results of its activities, but evidence that accumulated in the group's files is impressive. In one instance, the WWB's Alan Green persuaded the producer of the Mutual Broadcasting Company program, "American Forum of the Air," to conduct a debate on the merits of the GI Bill of Rights as applied to rehabilitation, giving Dr. Kubie the opportunity to present his program with a representative of the American Legion in the uncomfortable position of the defender of the status quo. Another WWB-arranged program, the interview by Mary Margaret McBride of disabled veteran Howard Rasher concerning his experience under the existing rehabilitation plan, created a sensation that reached the wires of the United Press, brought thousands of letters pouring into the network offices, and drew the attention of influential commentators Walter Winchell and Drew Pearson to the rehabilitation situation. There was considerable coverage in magazines and newspapers as well. Publicity and consequent pressure brought a general improvement in all phases of the rehabilitation program so marked that in June, 1945, the board was able to note approvingly that "we're getting somewhere."35

35Writers' War Board Report, June 1, 1945; "Rehabilitation Committee--General Promotion," "Rehabilitation Committee --Newspapers," "Rehabilitation Committee--Radio," and
No really new projects for the armed services were undertaken in 1945. Early in the year, the board had requested its writers to publicize the fact that the Coast Guard was not confined merely to patrolling the coastline and inland waterways. They were asked to call attention to some of that service's more hazardous duties such as operating barges in invasions, manning combat transport and supply ships, and supervising the loading of all munitions and arms. In July, the board put out a call for medical WAVES, citing the needs of the Navy's wounded and the belief that major loss of American life in the battles against Japan still lay ahead.

In neither of these cases was the original mention followed up by any other WWB efforts.\textsuperscript{36}

As a general rule, with the cessation of fighting in August, 1945, and the loss of the official subsidy that same month, the WWB felt that its full attention should be devoted to winning of the peace. Some orientation efforts continued into the fall of 1945. Also, the Committee on Scripts for Soldier and Sailor Shows was active for a time after the end of the war. With these exceptions the group considered its services to the armed forces at an end with the victory over Japan.

\textsuperscript{36}Writers' War Board Report, January 1, 1945, and July 1, 1945.
CHAPTER VII

THE NATURE OF THE GERMAN ENEMY

Of all the campaigns which the WWB undertook, both in cooperation with the government and as a private organization, none was so consistent and thorough as their campaign concerning what they called "the nature of the enemy." The board felt that unless the country was stirred up and informed of the evil and vicious character of the people it was fighting, the war effort might suffer, or the peace settlement might be too easy. As to the type of feeling against the enemy that the WWB wished to stimulate, the group usually did not quibble at the use of the word "hate."

These strongly held, hard-line opinions involved the board in the most serious controversy in its history. The WWB received, by far, more criticism over this issue than over all others combined. The controversy reached into the group's own ranks and into its Advisory Council, bringing about a difference of opinion that lasted far beyond the war itself. It brought the WWB to two of its few direct disagreements with government policies. Nonetheless, the board as a whole
stood fast, convinced of the ultimate rightness of its cause.

Most of the WWB had, of course, developed a strong dislike of Germany well before the war. There seems to be no evidence, however, that as a whole they had a long history of hatred for Germany. Stout, by far the most prominent in this area, had by his own account walked out of meetings during World War I because the speakers were too harsh on Germany; and he was sometimes accused of having been tardy in his opposition to them in the World War II crises.\(^1\)

Soon after the war opened with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the board felt, at least at first, that little needed to be done to stimulate feeling against Japan, though there was certainly no fondness for that country. In Stout's words, "Our chief concern is Germany because only a minority of us are under any delusions regarding the Japanese, while a large majority of us still believe that the Germans are on the whole people of good-will temporarily misled by the Nazi gangsters."\(^2\) Green said that besides


the fact that most board members simply felt more strongly against Germany, they thought that Pearl Harbor had done a better propaganda job against Japan than any agency could possibly achieve.  

The WWB's belief that the people of the United States were much more interested in the fight against Japan is borne out by public opinion polls of the period. The *Fortune* survey published in February, 1942, indicated that although 47.5 percent of the nation felt Germany to be more of a menace than Japan compared to only 10.2 percent which considered Germany less of a menace, 62.4 percent either wanted the United States to concentrate all its efforts on beating Japan as quickly as possible and forget about the war in Europe or direct its main efforts toward defeating Japan while sending some aid to Britain.  

The Gallup poll, taken in May, 1942, indicated that twenty-eight percent of the American people answered affirmatively to the question, "Do you personally hate the Japanese people?" as opposed to an

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3Interview with Green, August 8, 1968.

eighteen percent affirmative answer to a similar question on Germany. A 1943 poll showed that fifty-seven percent of the United States believed Japan the greatest military threat to America; just twenty-two percent said Germans always wanted war, but sixty-two percent believed that Japanese people always wanted war. Thirty-two percent believed Germans disliked war and could become good world citizens; only eleven percent thought the same of Japan.

The WWB was also concerned that Americans blame the entire German nation, not just Nazi leaders, for the activities of the nation. That this was also a valid concern is borne out by the Gallup poll for June, 1942, which discovered that only six percent of Americans felt that their chief enemy in the war with Germany was the German public, while seventy-nine percent held it was with the German government.

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5 Harry H. Field and Louise Van Patten, "If the American People Make the Peace," Public Opinion Quarterly, VIII (Winter, 1944-45), 509.

6 "Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, VII (Fall, 1943), 755-756. 40% for Germany and 27% for Japan said that the people might not like war but were too easily misled.

7 "Gallup and Fortune Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, VII (Spring, 1943), 173. Some 12% said "both" while 3% had no opinion.
Perhaps as indicative as anything of the comparison in feelings toward the two countries was a January, 1943, poll which indicated that five times as many people advocated complete extermination for the Japanese as for the Germans.\(^8\) Two experts on public opinion stated flatly in 1944 that "public opinion in the United States is definitely more hostile toward the Japanese people than toward the Germans, and a clearly smaller proportion of the public distinguishes between the Japanese people and their war leaders."\(^9\) This was the situation the WWB set itself to combat.

The WWB undertook a few minor tasks in its early months which may have been intended to stir up anti-German feeling, but the first really important project did not get underway until April, 1942. On May 10, 1933, in Germany shortly after the Nazi take-over, a list of forbidden books and authors was made public and a gigantic book-burning held at which some 25,000 volumes were destroyed.\(^10\) To the WWB

\(^8\)The National Opinion Research Center poll, as cited in Field and Van Patten, "If the American People Make the Peace." 510.

\(^9\)Field and Van Patten, "If the American People Make the Peace," 509.

"the burning and banning of these books, as symbolic as the Crucifixion itself, was a declaration of war, a war against mankind, waged by that part of mankind that wishes to be less than itself."\textsuperscript{11} They felt that the anniversary of this event might be successfully utilized to remind the nation of the kind of people they were fighting.

The idea was developed in cooperation with the Council on Books in Wartime, a newly formed group made up of representatives from the publishing industry. According to the official history of the Council, the original idea came from Chester Kerr, Chief of the Book Division of the Office of Facts and Figures at a March 24, 1942 meeting of the group; and the WWB was later asked to lend assistance.\textsuperscript{12} However, that may be, a committee was formed for the purpose, under the chairmanship of publisher Bennett Cerf of Random House.

The committee and Kerr felt that a radio dramatization of the original events might be the most effective commemoration. The WWB contacted writer Stephen Vincent Benet, who, having made a name for himself in literary ventures,\textsuperscript{11,12}

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\textsuperscript{11} Writers' War Board, Foreword to Stephen Vincent Benet, They Burned the Books (New York: Farrar and Rhinehart, 1942), vii.
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was well known for effective propaganda writing. He was persuaded to undertake the task. The result was Benet's radio drama, "They Burned the Books." National Broadcasting Company official Orin Tovrov was a member of the committee, and he arranged for the nation-wide broadcast of the script over NBC's Red Network from 10:30 to 11:00 P. M. on Monday, May 11.\textsuperscript{13}

The script itself was a re-enactment of the original book burning, evoking the voices of the authors whose books were burned to protest against the outrage and to speak against the oppression and tyranny of the German "New Order." It went on to show what America would be like under the book burners. The spirit of the script may be gained from its beginning, with the Narrator speaking:

\begin{quote}
Nine! Nine iron years of terror and evil!
Nine years since a fire was lighted in a public square in Berlin
Nine years since the 'burning of the books!' Do you remember?
Write it down in your calendars, May 10th, 1933
\end{quote}

And write it down in red by the light of the fire
These are people who work by fire.
The Reichstag went up in flames that February
And in March they got their majority and moved in,
The storm-troopers, the heroes of the beer-hall Putsch,
The boys with a taste for beatings and executions,
The limping doctor, the swollen ex-Army pilot,
Gangster and brave, hoodlum and trigger-man,
Led by the screaming voice that is war and hate,
Moved in on Germany like a cloud of locusts,
Having planned and plotted for long.
They strangled the German Republic and moved in.
And people said, "Well, that's interesting, isn't it?"14

The program provoked such a successful reaction that
the WWB arranged for repeat performances. It had the script
translated into foreign languages and dispatched overseas;
and it arranged for abridged versions to appear in the
Saturday Review of Literature and, for high school students,
in Scholastic magazine. Farrar and Rinehart published the
entire script in book form. In addition, the Benet work be­
came the first WWB war-script-of-the-month and went out to
radio stations and schools all over the country.15

14 Benet, They Burned the Books, 3-4, and passim.
15 WWB, Foreward to Benet, They Burned the Books, vi;
WWB, First Annual Report, 20-21; "War-Scripts-of-the-Month
Selections," Cont. 21, WWB Records; Benet, "They Burned the
Books," Saturday Review of Literature, XXVI (May 8, 1943),
3-5; Benet, "They Burned the Books," Scholastic, XLI (Septem­
ber 14, 1942), 25-28; "Report on Activities of the May 10
Book Burning Committee," Cont. 5, WWB Records.
Council on Books in Wartime history stated that many who heard the broadcast "have called it the best radio program which ever issued from the Council on Books in Wartime." 16

The WWB also sponsored another script for the May 10 commemoration. This script, by Tovrov, entitled "The Nature of the Enemy," made reference to the book burning but was designed to produce an even wider indictment of the Germans. It was also intended for easy presentation at the local level. It went out to 210 radio stations around the country. The board had on file several letters attesting to its use in various places. 17

In other activities associated with the project, the WWB sent out letters to 130 commentators and columnists, obtaining what it called a "fair response," including a strong statement by radio commentator Raymond Gram Swing. Letters also went to presidents of American colleges and universities, calling their attention to the anniversary suggesting that appropriate ceremonies might be held. There is evidence that at least a few colleges took action. Further, the New York


group prepared special lists of banned books to assist bookstores and libraries in setting up displays on the subject, and a number of such displays were arranged. Finally, Stout and Fadiman, among others, addressed a meeting of the Council on Books in Wartime on the general topic "Books as Weapons in the War of Ideas," and Stout discussed the book-burning before the convention of the American Booksellers Association.18

After this utilization of the anniversary, the WWB largely turned over the idea to the Council on Books in Wartime. In 1943, the tenth anniversary of the book-burning was again widely promoted, but the only WWB connection was to permit the use of the materials it had compiled and the mailing of over a thousand postcards to their local writers asking them to publicize the event in any way possible.19

The next major effort of the board to blacken Germany's name also derived from an action of the Germans themselves,

18"Report on the Activities of the May 10 Book-Burning Committee," Cont. 5, WWB Records; Writers' War Committee to Presidents of American Colleges and Universities, April 24, 1942, Cont. 5, WWB Records; WWB, First Annual Report, 21; History of the Council on Books in Wartime, 6, 16.

this time one which had just taken place. From this particular event, the WWB managed to score one of the major propaganda successes of its entire existence. Early in June, Reinhard Heydrick, a notorious Gestapo official known as "Hitler's hangman," was assassinated in Czechoslovakia. On June 10, on a suspicion that it had given refuge to the assassins, the Germans leveled the small Czech village of Lidice, executed its male population, and removed all other inhabitants to prisons or institutions. The Germans claimed to have erased it from the map of the world.20

The fate of Lidice seemed to the WWB to present an ideal opportunity for focusing the unfavorable attention of the nation on the doctrines and practices of Germany. To pursue this, the board appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Fadiman. Among the more active members were Green and Mrs. Kleeman. The first official directive of Elmer Davis as the newly appointed head of the OWI ordered the agency to cooperate with the WWB in its Lidice campaign, and

three OWI workers became official members of the Lidice Committee as well. The Fadiman committee first met on June 26. It immediately decided that a "front" committee should be formed, which, for purposes of publicity and pressure, should seem to do the work, while actually all the effort and control would remain a function of the WWB group. The committee quickly undertook to obtain well-known names for its sponsors. The Lidice Committee lost no time in setting up definite lines of propaganda which they intended to pursue:

a. The campaign will be continuous, that is to say, it will last the duration of the war or as long as seems necessary.

b. Its purpose will be not so much to arouse sympathy, as the emotion of horror to be followed by the emotion of anger. Thus the net effect will be militant and aggressive.

c. The Czech aspect is not to be stressed. Lidice is merely chosen as a symbol. Whenever possible this symbol is to be used as a method of further uniting the United Nations.

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The first activities centered on a small unincorporated village called Stern Park Gardens, located on the outskirts of Joliet, Illinois. This town, originally a federal housing project largely populated by Czechoslovaks, agreed to change its name to Lidice, so that Germany's announced intent of erasing that word off the map might not come to pass. The Chicago Sun, a newspaper acting at the inspiration of the WWB, actually had obtained the town's consent, but the WWB committee had charge of arranging nationwide publicity. This it was able to do exceptionally well. As soon as the announcement appeared that the renaming would take place, the New York Times commented in a favorable editorial, "We need tanks, planes, and guns. We need symbols, too."23

The actual renaming ceremony occurred on July 12, 1942, at the new Lidice before a crowd estimated by Fadiman to number 35,000. A national radio hook-up was set up to broadcast the ceremonies coast to coast. It was also sent overseas by short-wave and translated into several languages,

23June 30, 1942, p. 20, also see p. 3; "Summary of Writers' War Board Activities--September, 1942," Cont. 8, WWB Records; Chicago Sun, July 11, 1942, p. 1.
including Spanish and Portuguese. Wendell Willkie, secured as the principal speaker, delivered the message that the WWB wished the nation to hear, although the members played no role in its composition. After reading the official German announcement of the extermination of Lidice, Willkie said:

Let us here highly resolve that the memory of this little village of Bohemia now resurrected by the people of a little village in Illinois will fire us, now and until the battle is over, with the iron resolution that the madness of tyrants must perish from the earth so that the earth may return to the people to whom it belongs, and be their village, their home, forever.

But these great objectives cannot be accomplished unless every citizen of this country learns to think in terms of attack. For we must carry this battle to the enemy. We must fight him on his own ground. We must teach a lesson for all time to barbarians who seek in their arrogance to restore the rule of torture chambers and the whip. We must win a total victory.24

In addition to Willkie's, there were speeches by Fadiman, as master of ceremonies, and Colonel Vladimir Hurban, Czechoslovak Minister to the United States. Messages were sent and read from Dr. Eduard Benes, Czechoslovakia's President in Exile, Vice-President Henry A. Wallace and President

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Roosevelt. Colonel Hurban lit an eternal flame on a granite shaft monument dedicated to the original Lidice. In addition to the radio network, the event received full photographic, newsreel, newsmagazine and front page newspaper coverage.25

The WWB considered the resulting publicity excellent. For example, the New York Times editorially made exactly the point that the New York writers wished to emphasize: "We may in the meantime remember that what Hitler do to the men, women, and children of Lidice, Czechoslovakia, he would do to those of Lidice, Illinois, or of any American town if he could."26 Much encouraged, the Lidice Committee began to look for other opportunities to hold renaming ceremonies.

In the meantime, the search for sponsors of the "front" Lidice Lives Committee moved ahead. Joseph E. Davies, a well-known lawyer, politician, former ambassador to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and, since the American


26 July 14, 1942, p. 18.
intervention in the war, chairman of the War Relief Council, was persuaded to accept the chairmanship of the WWB group. The board obtained a long list of sponsors, including such diversified individuals as physicist Albert Einstein, motion picture magnate Samuel Goldwyn, Russian Ambassador Maxim Litvinov, poet Carl Sandberg, Supreme Court Justices Hugo Black, William O. Douglas and James F. Byrnes, music critic Deems Taylor, French writer Andre Maurois, and actress Tallulah Bankhead. The board's appeal did not always work. British playwright George Bernard Shaw, for example, declined to become a sponsor saying "I am not such a mischievous fool as to waste time in preserving the memory of atrocities of which we are equally guilty. They are better forgotten."27 Nevertheless, the disgust at the Lidice incident was very strong, and the WWB's Lidice committee usually obtained the consent of individuals whose names it desired to use. Some 110 individuals were a part of "Lidice Lives" in the end. The formation of the committee was formally announced on September 21, 1942.28


28Fadiman, "Committee Report: Lidice Lives Committee," October, 1942, Cont. 54, WWB Records. The complete sponsorship list of the committee was: Louis Adamic; Franklin P. Adams; Miguel Aleman; Faith Baldwin; Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai,
Meanwhile WWB committee members had been traveling extensively in an effort to arrange other Lidice remembrance

Agent General for India; Tallulah Bankhead; Eduard Benes, President, Czechoslovak Republic; Justice Hugo L. Black; Roark Bradford; Louis Bromfield; Van Wyck Brooks; Sidney Buchman; Justice James F. Byrnes; Julian R. Caceres, Minister from Honduras; Henry Seidel Canby; Carl Carmer; Charles Chaplin; Mary Ellen Chase; J. Circhanowski, Ambassador from Poland; Aurelio F. Concheso, Ambassador from Cuba; Marc Connelly; Norman Corwin; Russel Crouse; Frank Crowninshield; Count Ferdinand Czernin; Jo Davidson; Leon DeBayle; Justice William O. Douglas; Walter D. Edmonds; Albert Einstein; Major George Fielding Eliot; Edna Ferber; Don Luis Fernandez, Minister from Costa Rica; Lion Feuchtwanger; Marshall Field; Dorothy Canfield Fisher; Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick; Constantin Fotitch, Minister from Yugoslavia; Rose Franklin; Paul Gallico; Lewis Gannett; Adelard Godbout, Premier of Quebec; Samuel Goldwyn; Jack Goodman; Ernesto Jaen Guardia, Ambassador from Panama; John Gunther; Lord Halifax, Ambassador from Great Britain; Madeleine Carroll Hayden; Professor Ales Hrdlicka; Joseph L. Hromadha; Langston Hughes; Col. Vladimir S. Hurban, Ambassador from Czechoslovakia; Hu Shih; Robert M. Hutchins; William Koska; Fiorella LaGuardia; Robert J. Landry; Albert D. Lasker; Frank J. Lausche; Margaret Leech; Hugues Le Gallais, Minister from Luxembourg; Herbert J. Lehman; Howard Lindsay; Lin Yutang; Walter Lippmann; Maxim Litvinov, Ambassador from U.S.S.R.; Alexander Loudon, Ambassador from the Netherlands; William Kingsland Macy; Thomas Mann; Bishop William T. Manning; John P. Marquand; Jan Masaryk; Raymond Massey; Andre Maurois; Leighton McCarthy, Minister from Canada; Edna St. Vincent Millay; Mrs. Harold V. Milligan; Robert A. Milligan; Wilhelm Morgenstjerne, Ambassador from Norway; Dr. Walter Nash, Minister from New Zealand; Robert Nathan; Adrian Recinos, Minister from Guatemala; Fritz Reiner; Quentin Reynolds; Elmer Rice; Mary Robert; Rinehart; Angelo J. Rossi; Carl Sandberg; Prince and Princess Paul Saphieha; Count and Countess Carlo Sforza; Robert Emmet Sherwood; William L. Shirer; Krishnalal Shridharani; Luise M. Sill; Robert Gordon Sproul; Rex Stout; Frank Sullivan; Arthur Hays Sulzberger; Booth Tarkington; Deems Taylor; Alexandra L. Tolstoy; J. M. Troncoso, Minister from the Dominican Republic; Sigrid Undset; Count Robert van der Straten Ponthoz, Ambassador from Belgium; Carl Van Doren; Mark Van Doren; Hendrik William Van Loon; Wei-Tao-Ming, Ambassador from China; and Franz Werfel.
projects. After considerable frustration and difficulty a second ceremony was set, this time in Mexico. There, on August 30, the farm village of San Geronimo changed its name to Lidice. Once again, a nation-wide broadcast was made, this time on the NBC network. Besides Mexican and South American dignitaries who spoke, Vice President Wallace impressed the assembled crowd by addressing them in both English and Spanish, saying that "as symbols of the unbreakable spirit of the common man, Lidice in Mexico and Lidice in the United States are immortal."\textsuperscript{29} Once again, there was full photographic, newsreel, and newspaper coverage. The amount of attention given the ceremony in the Mexican and South American press was, in the board's opinion, "astonishing."\textsuperscript{30}

The WWB attempted to arrange a similar ceremony for Canada. The premier of Quebec province was a Lidice Lives Committee sponsor. With his aid, the authorities of that province agreed that the town of Frelighsburg would be used for


\textsuperscript{30}Summary of Writers' War Board Activities - September, 1942," Cont. 8, WWB Records.
the change. Fadiman duly made the announcement in Washington, and the committee began to prepare for yet another well publicized ceremony. Unfortunately, no one had thought to ask the inhabitants of Frelighsburg and, as it happened, they objected strenuously to the change. The provincial authorities and the WWB committee had no choice but to back down. Eventually arrangements were made to name a Quebec lake for the Czech village.31 The last remaining ceremony directly inspired by the committee's efforts took place in Brazil on the first anniversary of the Lidice destruction when a locality near Rio de Janeiro received the name in full ceremonies.32

The Lidice Committee was able to stimulate memorials to Lidice in several of the art forms. A statute showing a Lidice man facing his Nazi executioners was created by sculptor Jo Davidson and presented to the Lidice Lives Committee.

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represented by actress Madeleine Carroll, at the American Associated Art Galleries in New York, in ceremonies on October 12, 1942. After the sculpture was shown in New York, it was sent on tour to places throughout the nation where, in Fadiman's words, "it will do the most good." Cartoons by various artists, including the famous painter-cartoonist, William Gropper, were also created and given wide promotion. These, together with a model of the monument that had been dedicated at Lidice, Illinois, were first displayed in an exhibit at the Colonial Bank and Trust Company in Rockefeller Center in New York with the usual publicity and then also sent on tour throughout the country.

Among the memorials to Lidice inspired by the WWB Committee, perhaps the poems reached as large an audience as any. Quite a number were written, but two seem to have been of greatest importance. The first was by poet and novelist

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Robert Nathan. Entitled simply "Lidice," it was read at some of the ceremonies, published with a full page spread in the Sunday supplement magazine This Week, and ultimately published as part of a Nathan collection of poems. It was, however, a little mild for the taste of some members of the WWB.  

More in direct accord with the WWB propaganda line was Edna St. Vincent Millay's dramatic poem, "The Murder of Lidice." Miss Millay had never written poetry to order before, but when the specific request came from the WWB it was so persuasive that, according to the poet herself, "I knew I should not be able to draw one contented breath unless I tried to do the job." This poem probably drew more public attention than any other single project of the Lidice Committee. It was aired nationwide over the National Broadcasting Company network at 10:30 P. M. on Monday, October 19, 1942. The production was lavish. Poet and Critic Alexander Woollcott

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made the introduction as master of ceremonies, and the narrator was the distinguished actor Paul Muni, who headed the cast of nine. A special musical script was composed by Frank Black, who conducted the orchestra. The program, given before an overflow crowd, was simultaneously shortwaved to Hawaii, Alaska, Australia, and New Zealand, and a Spanish translation was sent to most of South America. The next day, delayed broadcasts were sent to the British Isles and the Middle East and, in Portuguese, to Brazil. The pamphlet form of the poem was published by Harper and Brothers. There were subsequent rebroadcasts; and transcriptions were sent to independent radio stations.37

The lines of the poem itself are harsh and direct, well designed to fit the WWB purpose:

Now, how did the year turn--how did it run
In the year of nineteen-forty-one?—
In the village of Lidice?

First came Spring, with planting and sowing;
Then came Summer, with haying and hoeing;

Then came Heydrich the Hangman, the Hun. . . .

"Husband, why is your face so gray?"

"My face is gray from fear. 
Heydrich the Hangman died today 
Of his wounds, the men in Kladno say."

"Good riddance to wicked rubbish, I say ... 
No man was he, but a beast of prey! 
Do they know who killed him?"

"Not yet, they say; 
Though they've smoked him out for many a day ... 
But they claim we hide him here." ... 

Heydrich the Hangman howls tonight, 
He howls for a bucket of bubbly blood— 
It may be man's or it may be of woman, 
But it has to be hot and it must be human! ... 38

The poem goes on to speak of individuals and their reactions to the news. Then, the Germans arrive on their mission:

They marched them out to the public square, 
Two hundred men in a row; 
And every step of the distance there, 
Each stone in the road, each man did know, ... 

Oh, many a faithful dog that day 
Stood by his master's body at bay, 
And tugged at the sleeve of an arm outflung; 
Or laid his paws on his master's breast, 
With panting jaws and whimpering cries,

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38 Millay, Murder of Lidice, 7, 12-13, 15. Numerals and other symbols indicating internal divisions of the work have been omitted throughout.
Gazing into his glazing eyes
And licking his face with loving tongue;
Nor would from his master's body depart,
Till they kicked in his ribs and crushed his heart.

The women and children out to the square
They marched, that there they could plainly see
How mighty a state is Germany!—
That can drag from his bed unawake, unaware,
Unarmed, a man, to be murdered, where
His wife and child must watch and see;
Then carted off in truck and cart
Into Germany, into Germany,—
The wives to be slaves of German men;
The children to start life over again,
In German schools, to German rules,
As butchers' apprentices;
And hail and salute the master-mind
Of Hitler, Butcher of Human-kind.39

The poem then marches directly to its ultimate point:

The whole world holds in its arms today
The murdered village of Lidice,
Like the murdered body of a little child,
Innocent, happy, surprised at play,—
The murdered body, stained and defiled,
Tortured and mangled, of a helpless child!

And moans of vengeance frightful to hear
From the throat of a whole world, reach his ear—
The maniac killer who still runs wild—.

Careless America, crooning a tune:
Catch him! Catch him and stop him soon!
Never let him come here!
Think a moment: are we immune? ...

39Ibid., 22, 24-25.
Ask yourself honestly: what have we done?—
Who, after all, are we?—
That we should sit at peace in the sun,
The only country, the only one
Unmolested and free?
Catch him! Catch him! Do not wait!
Or will you wait and let him destroy
The village of Lidice, Illinois?
Oh, catch him! Catch him, and stop him soon!
Never let him come here! 

The board itself felt that this was "one of the finest pieces of true propaganda to come out of the war."\(^{41}\)
The *Newsweek* review spoke of the poem's dramatic "challenge to freedom loving people,"\(^{42}\) The *Christian Science Monitor* called it "war propaganda of the right kind."\(^{43}\) *Theatre Arts* reported that the program was so effective that it greatly increased enthusiasm for radio as a medium for drama due to the "emotional impact on the audience reported over and over again. . . . There is no doubt that it was the theme of the poem and the poet's dramatic attack on that

\(^{40}\)Ibid., 31-32.

\(^{41}\)WWB, quoted in "Miss Millay's Lidice," 72.

\(^{42}\)Ibid.

theme that created the effect." Finally, the Variety review found the program to be

the most eloquent piece of righteous wrath heard on this side of the ocean in the war. It had the intensity of a blast furnace, the scorn of a trial lawyer, the mood-building power of a Beethoven symphony. ... Seldom has the gangster mentality of Prussianism been so cleverly exposed, so scathingly detailed in all its offensive arrogance and practical cruelty. ... [Miss Millay] produced an indictment with philharmonic orchestration. 45

It should be said that the poet herself was dissatisfied. She called the work "merely propaganda" and hoped that it would be "allowed to die along with the war that provoked it." Other critics agreed and as a literary work, the poem received the fate its author desired. The WWB, however, was far more interested in propaganda effect than literary value, and effect the work unquestionably produced.

44 "Radio, the Poet and the News," 735.

45 Review of "The Murder of Lidice," Variety, CXLVIII (October 21, 1942), 34.


47 See, for example, Untermyer, Private Collections, 71.
Without any direct contact from the Lidice Committee, Paramount Pictures produced a one-reel movie on the subject entitled, "We Refuse to Die." The committee was, however, responsible for the adaptation of the movie into a radio play by Justin Herman under the same title. This was performed on October 25, 1942, over New York radio station WNEW and its chain of affiliates. The committee assisted in the production and in obtaining a top line cast of actors. The board then sent out "We Refuse to Die" as part of the war-script-of-the-month series for December, 1942.48

The Lidice Committee cooperated with the government when it chose to utilize Lidice for its purposes. The OWI asked for and received assistance in preparing a pamphlet on the atrocity for propaganda purposes at home and abroad. The Treasury Department set aside the week of September 13-19 as 'Lidice Week. The Brief Items Committee, headed by Jack Goodman, furnished radio and slogan material using the fate of the town as an example of why the public ought to

buy war bonds. There was also cooperation with the Czech Information Bureau. Most of the effort, however, was left to the private committee.49

By the end of October, the Lidice Committee felt that the propaganda angle of Lidice had been utilized to its full effectiveness and began to subdue its activities in order not to destroy Lidice as a symbol by overdoing the emphasis, particularly since the committee's projects had inspired numerous imitators. The "front" Lidice Lives Committee was officially dissolved in March, 1943, in the belief that its task had been successfully accomplished. The entire propaganda effect was achieved for an expenditure of $450, including traveling expenses. In return for the effort, Fadiman wrote, "the word Lidice has meaning; it crops up continually and our record of achievements has been praised by responsible Office of War Information officials as one of the most effective single pieces of propaganda since the war started."50


While the Lidice activities were underway, the board also undertook several other projects of smaller scope, but with the same goal of demonstrating the nature of the enemy. One of these concerned the board's Poster Committee, under the co-chairmanship of Thomas Craven and Reeves Lewenthal, with a membership including artists Gropper and Thomas Benton, as well as WWB members Fadiman and Goodman. This committee's purpose was to stimulate artists to work in all phases of the war effort; but in August, 1942, some particular attention was given to posters concerning the enemy. The New York group felt that current efforts in this area were insufficiently forceful. A bulletin sent to writers asked for captions and ideas for posters, and specified the general slant desired:

These posters should expose the brutality of our enemy. Don't pull your punches. Bring the cruelty of the Nazi or Jap home to the suburban housewife, to the Midwestern farmer, to those Americans who, no matter how patriotic, are actually untouched by this battle for survival. . . . Make them realize we can lose this war and what will happen if we do.51

Just in case the writers still did not understand what was desired, one of Goodman's sample ideas was included: "Picture:  

51Form letter, Craven to writers, August 17, 1942, Cont. 9, WWB Records.
Several bodies just after they have been shot and firing squad is just marching away. Caption: Severance pay—the Fascist way?52

Hundreds of ideas and captions poured in. These the board sifted down into various categories. Some of the ideas had double purposes, often designed for selling war bonds as well as exposing enemy brutality. In the end some six or seven posters meeting the group's standards reached final completion and were turned over to the government for distribution. A planned formal exhibition of the posters with more publicity, however, apparently never took place.53

Another of the WWB's activities concerned an effort, in cooperation with the Polish Information Center, to utilize atrocity stories in order to stimulate hostile feeling toward Germany. Mailings went out in August, 1942, to the WWB Advisory Council and other selected writers. These presumably authenticated stories were for use in articles and other writings which might be undertaken. The board also

52Ibid.

53"Summary of Writers' War Board Activities—September, 1942," Cont. 8, WWB Records; WWB, First Annual Report, 21-22; File 1-37, Cont. 9, WWB Records.
requested comments on the atrocities to use for its own purposes. A variety of comments and manuscripts were sent back to the New York group as a result, together with evidence of some use of the material in local productions. Perhaps the most prominent result of this project was the placement of a Ben Hecht article, "Remember Us," on the plight of the Jews in the *American Mercury*, together with a simultaneous abridgement in the *Readers' Digest*.54

Typical of the material utilized was this incident:

In Szczycin in Poland on the morning of September 23, which is the day set for our Atonement, we were in our synagogue praying God to forgive us. All our village was there. Above our prayer we heard the sound of motor lorries. They stopped in front of our synagogue. The Germans tumbled out of them, torches in hand, and set fire to us. When we ran out of the flames they turned machine guns on us. They seized our women and undressed them and made them run naked through the market place before their whips. All of us were killed before our Atonement was done. Remember us.55

The mailings on German atrocities continued whenever the board felt it had something appropriate. One such was the mailing of 1000 copies of the magazine supplement from the


55Hecht, "Remember Us," *Readers' Digest*, 108.
Philadelphia *Inquirer* of October 22, 1942, which was devoted to the subject "Axis Crimes--Don't Let Them Happen Here," and which supported the title with a series of rather gory pictures.56

In accordance with their usual procedure, the board formed a committee to deal with the promotion of the campaign exposing the enemy. In September, 1942, the Committee on Creating a Stronger Feeling Against the Enemy was officially created. Unofficially, it was referred to as the "Get Tough" Committee, sometimes even more bluntly as the "Goddam Truth" Committee. The chairman was Goodman; other members included Fadiman, Carl Carmer, Robert Landry, and Margaret Leech. The activities of the committee were almost completely confined to speeches before audiences in various parts of the country. Goodman, for example, spoke in Bridgeport, Connecticut; Syracuse; Flushing, New York; New York City and Pittsburgh in the fall of 1942. The Committee also collected a great deal of anti-German material.57

56*Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 22, 1942; File 1-42, Cont. 10, WWB Records.

However, some of their ideas failed to work. There was a project for a full-page newspaper ad concerning Nazi atrocities with many signers to convince Americans that hatred was a just and indispensable weapon. A sufficient number of signers, however, could not be obtained. The committee also arranged for a series of talks to be given over the radio on the popular Kate Smith program by prominent Americans primarily on the nature of the enemy. Individuals such as Willkie and Woollcott agreed to appear and give WWB-written addresses. Unfortunately, due to the shortening of the program's length and scheduling difficulties with the show's producer, this never became a reality. The committee soon ceased to function. However, its demise was not so much due to its failures as to the fact that the nature of the enemy campaign was so important to the writers' group that the full membership of the board worked constantly on it.

By this time, some opposition to the WWB's hard line was beginning to surface. In late October, Stout and Fadiman appeared at a dinner of the P.E.N. Club, an international writers' organization, to review the work of the board.

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Stout, and then Fadiman, commenting on the Lidice Lives Committee, called on the writers assembled to generate an active hate against all Germans, not merely the Nazi leaders. Literary historian and critic Henry Seidel Canby, a member of the WWB Advisory Council, took exception to this type of hatred, and soon there was a shouting, table-pounding discussion. Writer Arthur G. Hayes made the most strenuous objection, calling the board's position "hysterical." But Fadiman insisted that he knew of "only one way to make a German understand and that's to kill them and even then I don't think they understand."\(^{59}\) The debate ended in no decision, but it was indicative of the fact that in this area the board could not expect unanimous support or appreciation. Certainly public opinion was not entirely in accord with their views. The New York group was appalled at the survey findings of the National Opinion Research Center for November 22, 1942, which indicated that a majority of U. S. citizens believed that the German people should not be blamed for war atrocities.\(^{60}\) Perhaps with the results of this


\(^{60}\)See File 1-42, Cont. 10, WWB Records.
survey in mind, together with the previously mentioned survey indicating the small amount of hatred for the enemy, the WWB decided to be somewhat more specific about the "stronger feeling" against the enemy.
CHAPTER VIII

HATE THINE ENEMY

In the face of the comparatively mild public antipathy toward Germany, many of the New York writers decided to do their best to stimulate complete hatred of Germany among Americans. The intensified campaign apparently began with the war-script-of-the-month for November, 1942, Norman Corwin's "To the Young," a sweeping, all-purpose script, originally performed on Corwin's radio series, "This Is War." It touched on several of the board's campaigns: the Russians are good, the English are good, we should be united with all of them. It got in a few hard licks against Germany, however, since, as Fadiman said, "Corwin hates Fascism (domestic as well as foreign), knows why he hates it, and knows how to make you hate it, too. When I say hate, I mean hate, and not dislike or disapproval."¹ The December script selections were even more directly a part of the nature of the enemy campaign. They were "We Refuse to Die,

¹Fadiman, Introduction to Corwin, More By Corwin (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1944), xi; see also "To the Young," in ibid., 274-87.
mentioned earlier, and Janet Brandus's "The Nazi," another portrayal of the German character as the board saw it.²

In January, with the board's approval and support, Stout published an article in the New York Times Magazine. Its title bluntly proclaimed its message, "We Shall Hate, or We Shall Fail." Though written from a personal point of view, it was a frank exposition of the WWB position. It revealed the undoubtedly sincere passion which Stout and his colleagues felt regarding the subject:

Love your enemies. Fight your enemies, shoot them, starve them, kill them, destroy their cities; bomb their factories and gardens—but love them. That may make sense to the Tuesday Evening Culture Club but not to me. The Christian imperatives and ideals are the noblest expression of man's highest aspirations, but when men shrink from the hard necessities imposed upon them by human defects and stupidities by hiding behind the skirts of these imperatives there is nothing noble about that. . . .

Shall we hate Germans? Each of us must answer that question for himself. But to kill them while pretending to love them is dishonest, to kill them and remain emotionally indifferent is abhorrent, and to kill them with an assumption of the attributes of God is inadmissible. As fairly decent and responsible human beings, we cannot and must not kill them unless we do hate them.

Some will say, indeed have said, listen to him, the fiend, he is trying to fill our breasts with blind and vindictive passion. . . . The hate I am thinking about is a feeling toward the Germans of

²"War-Scripts-of-the-Month Selections," Cont. 21, WWB Records.
deep and implacable resentment for their savage attack upon the rights and dignity of man, of loathing for their ruthless assault on the persons and property of innocent and well-meaning people, of contempt for their arrogant and insolent doctrine of the German master race.

If anyone, agreeing with all that, wants to pick another word for it, I can't stop him; but, having consulted my dictionary, I call it hate. I see nothing admirable in aiding and abetting the death by violence of millions of fellow beings but fleeing in repugnance from a four letter word. I hate Germans, and am not ashamed of it. On the contrary, in view of what the Germans have done, and of what my countrymen are preparing to do to them, I would be profoundly ashamed of myself if I did not hate Germans.3

Stout went on to mention a theory that was central to the whole WWB position on the German question:

A close student of German history, if sufficiently acute, might in the year 1900 have predicted a Hitler as the culmination of the deep rooted mental and nervous disease afflicting the German people. The adoration of force as the only arbiter, and skulduggerly as the supreme technique in human affairs, which is the essence of Nazism, was fully expounded by Clausewitz over a century ago and Clausewitz has been the political bible of four generations of German leaders. A people who dined on Clausewitz for 120 years was bound to have Hitler for dessert.4

Stout felt that it was not possible to hate things, such as cruelty and injustice, without hating one's fellow

3"We Shall Hate, or We Shall Fail," 6.

4Ibid.
beings: "A man who tells you he hates evil but not the doer of evil is kidding either you or himself and in any case is gibbering."\(^5\)

In the article, he also raised the question, should Americans hate all Germans and, if not, which Germans?

I find no great difficulty. I hate all Nazi Germans. I hate all Germans who accept, either actively or passively, the doctrine of the German master race, the doctrine which has permeated German thought long before Hitler was born, the doctrine by which the Germans justify their contempt of all other people and their domination of all other countries by force. I hate all Germans who have joined with the Nazis to bring that doctrine to its inevitable culmination of brutal disregard of the rights and dignities which distinguish a man from a beast. I hate all Germans who, reluctant to join the Nazis, nevertheless failed, through lack of courage or conviction, to prevent the Nazis from seizing power and plunging the world into this filthy swamp of destruction, misery, and hatred.\(^6\)

Finally, to those who saw hatred on the American side as inevitably harming the country, Stout answered:

It is not true that if we hate the Germans now we are helping to fill a reservoir of hate-poison that will infect the future beyond all hope of antisepsis. On the contrary. If we do not hate the Germans now, we shall inevitably fail in our purpose to establish the world on a basis of peace. If we do not see the evil clearly enough to hate it as it deserves, which means, make no mistake, hating those who do or tolerate the evil, the temptation will be

\(^5\)Ibid., 6, 29.

\(^6\)Ibid., 29.
irresistible, at one point or another, to compromise with it instead of destroying it.7

Stout's attitude provoked a storm of controversy. Four days after its publication the New York Times had received a large number of letters which the newspaper said almost unanimously opposed Stout's views. Of the letters published, the objections to the article ranged from a fear that hatred would interfere with the technical efficiency of American soldiers, to a protest that Stout was "going Nazi" in order to conquer Nazism, to the evocation of Christ's refusal to express hatred on the cross and the belief that the Nazis "know not what they do."8 Stout replied to these letters, re-emphasizing the points made in his article, and stating that the writers of the letters "are as well meaning as anybody else, but they are incapable of facing the ugly facts regarding our enemies."9

On January 31, the New York Times Magazine published a rebuttal article by Walter R. Bowle entitled, "Hate Is Moral Poison." Bowle argued that if Stout's "words were listened to, they would twist this war away from any hope

7Ibid.
of a decent result. . . . Mr. Stout's argument runs to an indiscriminate ferocity."¹⁰ Soldiers use "costly courage" as an outlet, but only "professional pamphleteers" needed to get their "emotional release" in their "sort of insanity." He concluded that "the truth is that wars are not won by dosing people up with a lot of synthetic hatred. They can be lost that way, as Hitler will find out. . . ."¹¹ Stout, undaunted, pointed in his reply to such men as John Brown, William Lloyd Garrison, Oliver Cromwell, and Martin Luther as "powerful and effective haters" who "knew quite well that hate is not always a moral poison; it may be and sometimes is a moral necessity."¹²

Despite the fact that forays into the public forum had brought something less than overwhelming support, neither Stout nor the board backed off in the slightest. They were convinced of the necessity of their position and even opposed efforts to make Hitler seem ridiculous because it might distract from the seriousness of the nation's purpose.

¹¹Ibid., 31.
Fadiman said "it is very true that a sense of humor is one of the most valuable possessions; and I am of the opinion that we should resume our exercise of it when the peace is won."\textsuperscript{13}

In order to help condition the public to thinking of Germany and the other fascist nations in harsher terms, the board held a meeting on March 4, 1943, with several radio commentators such as Cecil Brown, John Gunther, Larry LeSeuer, George Fielding Eliot, and others. The board advanced suggestions for altering radio vocabulary along suitable lines. For example:

Use German for Nazi except where specific reference is made to the Nazi party.
Use enslaved for occupied whenever reference is made to territory held by the Germans.
Use liberated or some synonym for occupied whenever reference is made to territory won by any of the United Nations, including Soviet Russia.
Use Russian for Reds. War job for war effort.
Until victory for for the duration. Murder for execute (when it is a question of Germans killing civilians.)
Whenever feasible introduce an emotional slant into references to the fascist leaders. If reference is made to Franco, qualify the name with a phrase such as, "the head of the party that has sworn to exterminate one third of the male Spanish population." . . .
A judicious, but more extended, use of fortified atrocities always making clear that atrocities practiced in one race or nation are always constantly being practiced in others. . . .

\textsuperscript{13}Fadiman to Leo Rosten, March 6, 1943, Cont. 53, WWB Records.

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The use of the word—exterminate in connection with the killing of Japs and Germans has been suggested and seems feasible.14

Many other suggestions were made. Letters in the WWB records indicate that some of these suggestions were, in fact, employed.15

In order to indicate with perfect clarity for its writers the attitude which the WWB desired to stimulate, a "slant on hate" was written for the board by Paul Gallico. This was not published but was used as a working memorandum. It was, perhaps, as strong a statement of this aspect of the board's case as was ever set down:

We must learn to hate our enemy. We must learn to hate his guts. . . . But we at home who are working for their lives, the lives of our own, cannot give every ounce of what it takes to preserve these lives until we hate, abominate and abhor the enemy, Nazi, Wop and Jap, with a loathing that grips us night and day. To think a single kindly thought of the revolting crew attacking us, to harbor the breath of an excuse upon their motives, to say that they are human like ourselves, but misled, is to send a bullet whistling through the body of some American.

We must learn to hate their faces, their forms, their customs, their women and their brats. We must learn disgust at sight of them, and repugnance at the sound of their voices. We must say farewell to good sportsmanship, reason and fair dealing and cultivate black anger, bitterness and loathing at the thought of him. His presence on earth must stink in our

14"Cooperation with Commentators: Memorandum of a Meeting held March 4, 1943," Cont. 78, WWB Records.

15See, for example, Fadiman to LeSeuer, March 9, 1943, and other letters in Cont. 78, WWB Records.
nostrils like carrion. We must bend our minds not to educating, winning or reforming him, but to wiping him out. We must learn to distill and spew forth a venom that is more powerful and deadly than his und trust in God for the saving of our own souls. For without this hatred there will be nothing for us to save and none of us will survive.16

By 1943 the WWB had its considerable number of routine outlets and was, therefore, less dependent on one-shot performances or occasions. The scripts-of-the-month included "Reminder to the Free," by Michael Greenwood, and "The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto," by Morton Wishengrad, the latter a reuse of the material from the German invasion of Poland involving what was, presumably, a "judicious use of atrocities."17 The Committee on Speeches and Speakers was organized under Green

16Gallico, "Slant on Hate," Cont. 79, WWB Records. It should be noted that there is some question as to the general agreement of the WWB to such a statement. Carl Carmer, in a letter to the author, stated that it would be "unfair" to indicate that this represented the majority feeling. While agreeing that there were certain individuals who "had become for individual and personal reasons as hysterical as the statement indicates," he was "positive from my knowledge of the personnel of the group that these extremists were not in the majority." He was, furthermore, "certain . . . that the Board did not release this as in any way identified with its own feelings." Carmer to the author, April 10, 1969. The author agrees, and wishes to emphasize, that this was not an "official" statement of WWB opinion (such statements are rare). However, the "Slant on Hate" was discussed and circulated within the group, and there is no evidence that any member of the WWB itself objected at the time to the campaign to develop hatred for the enemy.

17"War-Scripts-of-the-Month Selections," Cont. 21, WWB Records; File 1-41, Cont. 10, WWB Records.
and turned out two speeches on a stronger feeling toward Germany, one simply called "The Nature of the Enemy"; another by Fadiman, "Who Is Our Enemy?" tells who our enemy really is - the man on the street of Berlin or Tokyo - because of his basic nature.  

A recorded speech was prepared by Rex Stout on "Are There Any Home-Grown Fascists?" for distribution to local radio stations. Needless to say, he found quite a number.  

The WWB's Assignments Committee was organized in January, 1943, to work with selected writers who had extensive local outlets or contacts. One of its first "war messages" to those writers concerned the "Decade of Death," the implications of Hitler's ten years in power. Special editorials, discussion groups, and some local radio shows resulted.

When the board began to publish the Monthly Report, the successor to the Assignments Committee, it inaugurated a program of reviews, primarily of movies concerned with the war. Their guidelines for approval or disapproval largely

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18 "Writers' War Board Catalog of Speeches," Cont. 13, WWB Records; "Report to Date on Activities of the Committee on Speeches and Speakers," November 5, 1943, Cont. 13, WWB Records.

19 WWB, Second Annual Report, 15.

20 WWB, Third Annual Report, 2; "Activities of the Assignments Committee," Cont. 13, WWB Records.
concerned the nature of the enemy. For example, films were to be given "duds" for hurting the war effort if they portrayed (1) "Hitler and the Nazis as our chief enemy, instead of the German people. (2) The Germans as an innocent people misled by Hitler and the Nazis. (3) Any German or Japanese whatever as a sympathetic character. . . . (4) Former cultural achievements of the Germans or Japanese. . . ."21

In an effort to do something about the content of the films, letters were sent to producers requesting a modification of the propaganda line during and even after production. Fadiman felt that "frequently the film producers have been quite cooperative."22 When the board found a film which it believed supported its policy, it provided promotion. Such a case was "Hangmen Never Die," on the death of Heydrich, a United Artist's production. For publicity use, the board obtained favorable quotes from prominent individuals, most of whom never saw the film.23

21"Guidelines for Movies," Cont. 12, WWB Records.
22Fadiman to W. Fadiman, April 24, 1944, Cont. 12, WWB Records.
23File 23-9, Cont. 78, WWB Records.
The board by its make-up was more familiar with the world of books. Thus another part of its nature-of-the-enemy campaign was to promote books that it felt would contribute to the public education on the subject. Several books were specifically promoted in 1943 for their value in revealing the nature of the enemy. One was Under Cover by John Roy Carlson (a pseudonym for Arthur Derounian). The work was a rather sensational expose' of various Fascists' organizations in the United States, to which the author, as an undercover agent, had belonged. This was in accord with the New York group's campaign to expose Fascism at home and abroad, and was in keeping with the activities of Stout who was at that time president of the Friends of Democracy, an organization devoted to that purpose.24 A second work was edited by one of the WWB's own members, Carl Carmer. The War Against God was primarily a collection of statements from the Germans, the Japanese, and their sympathizers, declaring that they

were at war with Christianity, and statements from Christian leaders identifying the Allied cause with Christ.25

The remaining books directly examined the German tradition. F. W. Foerster's *Europe and the German Question* was an unfavorable examination of recent German history by a German long exiled from his country and a strong anti-Fascist.26 The other four analyzed the condition of Germany and considered in various ways what should be done with her.

The board had high regard for Richard M. Brickner's *Is Germany Incurable?* Brickner, a psychiatrist, argued that Germany as a nation exemplified in the past and present traits comparable to those of a paranoid individual, and its future actions could be predicted on the behavior pattern characteristic of the disease. This argument, with Brickner's gloss of medical terminology, was almost precisely that of the board. Brickner also presented a plan to cure Germany by a complete re-education.27


Hidden Enemy, by Heinz Pol, expounded a favorite WWB theme by declaring that the Nazis alone were not the enemy. Instead, solution to the German problem must involve the elimination of the pan-Germans, the advocates of German imperialism since the nineteenth century who might or might not be associated with the Nazis. Similar was Louis Nizer's What to Do with Germany, which found Nazism to be an inherent characteristic of the German people and then presented a rather harsh and detailed plan for Germany in the post-war period.

Another favorite of the board was Lessons of My Life by the controversial British statesman, Lord Robert C. Vansittart, who had stirred up a storm in British circles by what has been called "the most sweeping condemnation of the German people ever made by a literate man." The WWB felt it was the "ablest, Wittiest, most solidly documented demonstration in English of the inadvisability of making any

28Pol, The Hidden Enemy: The German Threat to Post-War Peace (New York: Julius Messner, 1943); see especially pp. 8-10.

29Nizer, What to Do with Germany (Chicago: Ziff-Davis, 1944).

30"Humanity vs. Germany," Newsweek, XXII (November 1, 1943), 94.
distinction between Germans and the Nazis."31 Advocating the complete annihilation of the German people, Vansittart traced German history from the sixteenth century, found the people growing steadily more evil, and advocated the occupation of Germany for generations, if necessary, in order to complete their demilitarization and re-education.32

Many means of promotion were applied to these works. The books usually would be reviewed in any case, but WWB's members were in a position to help out. Until 1944, for example, Fadiman was the book editor of the New Yorker. The board would usually mention the work in its own publications and often help on publicity, since it was in an excellent position to get a number of suitable quotes from well-known figures in the fields of literature and entertainment. It would arrange radio interviews or forums for the author and call the book to the attention of radio commentators and writers who might give it favorable mention. So many different methods were utilized at one time or another that when the WWB asked its staff for a simple list of its various types

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31 *Writers' War Board Report*, November 1, 1943.

of book promotion, the resulting report covered two type-
written pages.33

On occasion, a little special effort was necessary. The Brickner book had the usual WWB support. Favorable quotes had been obtained, Stout had discussed and praised the book in an article in the New York Times Magazine, and Carmer had arranged for Brickner's appearance on a radio show, "Author Meets Critic." When the book was reviewed in the Saturday Review of Literature, however, in a panel discussion of the work by six individuals, including Bertrand Russell and Erich Fromm, it was attacked and there were several challenges to Brickner's basic argument.34

In order to refute this criticism and to re-establish the credibility of the book, the New York group labored to

33Cecily Geyelin, "Writers' War Board Book Promotion," November 13, 1944, Cont. 10, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual Report, 12. On obtaining these quotes, actor Humphrey Bogart once wrote the board, "Fortunately for me and my peace of mind and conscience, I think the way you fellows think--so as soon as the book gets here, I'll send you my weighty and considered endorsement which you'll have to write." Bogart to Fadiman, September 7, 1944, Cont. 10, WWB Records.

34"Panel Discussion on Is Germany Incurable?," Saturday Review of Literature, XXIII (May 29, 1943), 6-10; Stout, "Books and the Tiger," 11; File 23-3, Cont. 78, WWB Records.
inspire an authoritative rebuttal. Working through Dr. Lawrence Kubie, the husband of one of the board's workers, Mrs. Nora B. Kubie, the group obtained a long letter reaffirming Brickner's argument as "wholly valid." Signed by Kubie and five other psychiatrists, it eventually appeared in the Saturday Review.  

The WWB's nature of the enemy campaign touched on comic books. Correspondence went out urging all comic strips from "Terry and the Pirates" to "Superman" to give the Germans and Japanese proper treatment, as well as to concentrate on other war themes. The most direct comic book treatment of the WWB position was a publication by All-Star Comics entitled "This Is Our Enemy," an outline of German history which showed the Germans as a belligerent nation whose leaders were always taking it into endless warfare. Various standard comic book characters, such as "Hawkman," "Wonder Woman," "The Atom," "Dr. Midnight" and "Mr. Terrific," formed the "Justice Society of America" and eventually routed the villains.

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36 See File 1-52, Cont. 11, WWB Records, for copies of the correspondence and the comic book described above.
In October, 1943, the WWB felt that "pan-German propaganda" was beginning to show up in various publications. In order to combat this, they organized a campaign to get letters to newspaper editors written by prominent people. They agreed to do all of the work if the individuals would give their consent and furnish letterhead stationery. The letters were to warn that a campaign to be nice to Germany was underway, that all Germans, not just Hitler, were responsible for war crimes, and to urge that there be no negotiated peace. It was the standard WWB line and the letters that resulted contained the basic message. One, a poem by Franklin Pierce Adams, went as follows:

Some people pity the poor Germans
    I hate 'em.
Some people turn the other cheek in sermons
    I hate 'em.
Pity for them I haven't got:
    I do not pity them a jot.
I mean the whole pan-German lot.
    I hate 'em. 37

Letters were also obtained and sent to newspapers from numerous others, among them Channing Pollock, Dale Carnegie,

and Booth Tarkington. The board had evidence of a fairly high rate of publication.\(^\text{38}\)

In November, the WWB was able to get a nationwide audience for its point of view on the German enemy. They had the opportunity to present the American debut of a song by Noel Coward, "Don't Let's Be Beastly to the Germans." This satiric work had caused considerable controversy in Britain after its original performance in July, with some rather literal-minded citizens believing it to be pro-German, and others objecting to its real meaning, which expressed a view close to that of Lord Vansittart. For both reasons the song was withdrawn from British radio, and the American publishers withdrew it from circulation.\(^\text{39}\)

Primarily at the instance of Fadiman, the WWB was able to obtain the rights to put the song on the air in the United States. Fadiman, in a letter to Frank Sullivan, who wrote the show's script, carefully explained what was desired:

> The script should be light, make fun of the pious folks who want us to be sweet to the Germans both now and after the war, and should explain

\(^{38}\)File 23-12, Cont. 79, WWB Records.

\(^{39}\)"How Should the United States Deal with Conquered Germany?" Newsweek, XXII (November 8, 1943), 106; Coward, Short Stories, Short Plays and Songs, (ed.) Gilbert Millstein (New York: Dell, 1955), 307; New York Times, October 25, 1943, p. 3.
enough about the song to get over to the old lady from Dubuque that it is ironical and not meant to be taken seriously. . . . All I know is that this is a wonderful chance to put over our propaganda with plenty of chocolate syrup, and we must not muf it.40

On Tuesday night, November 23, the fifteen-minute program went on over the National Broadcasting Company network. Fadiman was the master of ceremonies. He read a preamble to make absolutely sure that there was no misunderstanding. Sarcastically he said, "If the Germans have murdered millions of their fellow men it was all done in a spirit of innocent fun . . . We must not blame the poor darlings of the master race. . . . Let's have no mistake about it; this song is satiric, tongue-in-cheek and bludgeon in hand."41 Next came the rendering of Coward's entire song by a Broadway star, Celeste Holm, and finally Fadiman read an Americanized verse to the song which he had written for the board.42

The message the board delivered via Coward's words was, in part:

Don't let's be beastly to the Germans
When our victory is ultimately won.

40Fadiman to Sullivan, November 8, 1943, Cont. 79, WWB Records.
41"Coward with Bludgeon," Newsweek, XXII (December 6, 1943), 93-94.
42Ibid., 94.
It was just those nasty Nazis who persuaded them to fight.
And their Beethoven and Bach are really far worse than their bite.
Let's be meek to them
And turn the other cheek to them
And try to bring out their latent sense of fun,
Let's give them full air parity
And treat the rats with charity
But don't let's be beastly to the Hun.

Don't let's be beastly to the Germans
For you can't deprive a gangster of his gun
They've been a little naughty to the Czechs and Poles and Dutch
But I don't suppose these countries minded very much
Let's raise a fund again
To help them build the Bund again
We mustn't prevent them basking in the sun
Let's help them feel they're swell again
And bomb us all to hell again
But don't let's be beastly to the Hun.

One of the WWB's own verses was:

Don't let's be beastly to the Germans
Among them all I really know of none
Who isn't quite aware that he is quite a special case
Because he is a member of the German master race
Let's all dance to them
And give our shirts and pants to them
Remembering the good Samaritan
Let's take them on our laps again
And be a bunch of saps again
But don't let's be beastly to the Hun.

43 Coward, Short Stories, Short Plays, and Songs, 308-3-9; "Coward with Bludgeon," 94.

44 Writers' War Board Report, January 1, 1944.
The presentation the WWB regarded as highly successful. The performance was recorded and several hundred of the recordings were sent out to stations throughout the nation.45

Late in 1943, the board had begun to arrange the program material for "Opera Victory Rallies," a program that went on at intermission in the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts. Most of these were concerned with post-war planning but, in December, the New York group arranged for the appearance of Jan Masaryk, vice premier and minister of foreign affairs for the Czechoslovak government-in-exile. Masaryk, speaking on "The Aggressor Nations," gave a strong reminder of what the German way of life meant and the atrocities that had resulted.46 Thus the WWB moved on to 1944 with its nature-of-the-enemy campaign steadily at work.

45Ibid.

THE WRITERS' WAR BOARD: WRITERS AND WORLD WAR II

VOLUME II

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agriculture and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

by

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B.A., Louisiana College, 1964
M.A., Louisiana State University, 1966
January, 1971
CHAPTER IX

WHAT TO DO WITH GERMANY

Late in 1943 and in the early months of 1944, a subtle change took place in the WWB's perspective and activities regarding the enemy nations. This reflected no basic change in the group's position. Rather, it was the natural consequences of the successful prosecution of the war being carried on by the United Nations. The board, less concerned now about an all-out war effort, continued to inveigh against Germany and, to a degree, against Japan but now demanded suitably stringent postwar treatment of these countries to prevent their again endangering world peace.

The board's hard-line policy, advocated consistently throughout the war, was objectionable to a number of individuals, as has already been noted. In 1944, its policy led to the only really major controversy in which the group was embroiled and which involved disagreement within the WWB's own circle as well as with outsiders. The central figure in this, as in most board activities, was the group's strong-minded and forceful chairman, Rex Stout.

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The New York writers' interest in the postwar treatment of the enemy nations was not new, as their promotion of Vansittart's *Lessons of My Life* and Nizer's *What to Do with Germany* indicates. In 1944, their routine methods, therefore, continued much as before. Early in the year, they undertook promotion of two more books. The first was Henry Hoke's *Blackmail*, covering much the same material as *Undercover* by Carlson. It was another expose of Fascist underground movements within the United States.\(^1\) The other was *Germany Will Try It Again*, by Sigrid Schultz. The author, who had lived extensively in Germany, traced the origins of the Second World War to a secret plot begun by the pan-German general staff of the army before the end of the First World War, and suggested that a similar plot was underway to prepare for a third such war.\(^2\) The customary assistance in promotion

\(^1\)Hoke, *Blackmail* (New York: Readers' Book Service, 1944); WWB, *Third Annual Report*, 21. It might be argued that in continuing to fight domestic Fascist movements, the WWB was opposing a threat that did not exist. If so, they were not alone in their error. See, for example, F. Stuart Chapin, "Some Psychological Cross-Currents That May Affect Peace Plans," *American Sociology Review*, IX (February, 1944), 21-27.

\(^2\)Schultz, *Germany Will Try It Again* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1944).
of the books was rendered: mention in the WWB organs, arrangement of radio interviews, and dispatch of display materials to book stores.\(^3\)

The regular WWB outlets continued their campaign against the enemy. The WWB Monthly Report regularly ran a feature, "Around the Cracker Barrel," which discussed reports put out by the enemy presumably as part of his campaign of psychological warfare.\(^4\) Another feature, run regularly in "Brief Items for House Organs" and periodically in the Monthly Report, was "Take Your Pick," containing quotations from German leaders and scholars contrasted unfavorably with quotations from prominent Americans.\(^5\)

In March, when "Brief Items to Army Camps" began, it got off to a strong start by running Coward's song, "Don't Let's Be Beastly to the Germans," together with "How to Tell a Fascist," by Cecil Brown, an article later reprinted in See

\(^3\)See File 23-41, Cont. 79, and File 23-25, Cont. 80, WWB Records.

\(^4\)See Writers' War Board Report, January 1, 1944, and February 1, 1944, for examples; WWB, Third Annual Report, 20-21.

magazine and distributed in pamphlet form. In April, in the same publication, Carlson summarized the findings of Undercover in "The Enemy in America," while Nizer took on objections to a hard peace for Germany in "What about the Good Germans?"\(^6\)

The WWB editorials for February, 1944, utilized Coward's song as a springboard to remind Americans not to have soft hearts and short memories. In March, a plug for Miss Schultz's book was mixed with a statement as to the lessons of the story she told. The April editorials introduced a new theme for the board in its campaign against the enemy, an attack on Japan, to be discussed later. In May, in a Stout essay, "Guilty or Innocent?" the WWB editorialized in favor of sedition trials for American Fascists.\(^7\) In the meantime, the war-script-of-the-month was devoted to other subjects, but in June it made up for lost time, presenting two scripts on the nature and prospective fate of the German enemy, "Judgment," by Norman Williams, and "Der Fuhrer,"

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\(^6\)"Brief Items to Army Camps," March, 1944, and April, 1944, Cont. 34, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 21.

\(^7\)"List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
During the first part of 1944, the WWB was able to place six articles in the American Legion Magazine, which circulated to about 1,300,000 veterans. Each of these works, described by Fadiman as "tough propaganda pieces," was written by a different well-known author. For example, William L. Shirer, just returned from the front, wrote "Soft Peace - World War III," another attempt to demonstrate how German culture culminated in the German people's wholehearted support of the conquest of much of Europe. Other articles were by such men as statesman Sumner Welles, historian Allan Nevins, and WWB member Gallico.9

The WWB began direct consideration of the fate of the enemy in January, 1944, when at a regular meeting Margaret Leech raised the question of what Germany should be told when the day of surrender came. All of the group submitted memoranda which generally agreed that Germany should be impressed with the magnitude of her defeat as well as with

8"War-Scripts-of-the-Month-Selections," Cont. 21, WWB Records.

9Fadiman to Goodman, July 12, 1944, Cont. 79, WWB Records; File 23-22, Cont. 79, WWB Records, contains copies of all the articles written for the series.
the power and determination of the United Nations not to permit her to prepare for a third world war, but also that she would be treated with justice and not revenge. The group agreed, however, that the time was not right to make this kind of material public, lest it foster the attitude that the war was already won.10

Even as the routine propaganda on the nature and fate of the enemy continued to flow from WWB sources early in 1944, the New York group had to face the reality that for the first and only time in their history, major opposition to their views had developed, and they were receiving unfavorable publicity. Some of the first opposition came from syndicated newspaper columnist and radio commentator Dorothy Thompson, a member of the WWB Advisory Council. As early as the fall of 1943, she was writing publicly against the board's point of view on Germany, though without mentioning names, as she did in private.11

10"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, January 12, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, January 19, 1944," Cont. 79, WWB Records.

11See, for example, "Dorothy Thompson Column," cited from the San Francisco Chronicle, September 20, 1943, p. 12, September 29, 1943, p. 18, and October 7, 1943, p. 18; "The Stout Ire," 43.
In January, 1944, however, came a more direct assault in the form of an article by Milton Mayer of Common Sense, a leftist-oriented periodical. Mayer was a journalist on the staff of the University of Chicago, a regular contributor to several of the more radical periodicals, and a conscientious objector, on political grounds, to the war. His article began in the form of a pseudo-facetious attack on WWB member Clifton "Kip" Fadiman and contained statements that convinced the board that it was an attempt to stimulate internal dis-sension among the WWB members.¹²

Mayer, an old acquaintance of Fadiman, said that

Fadiman

... finally got so mixed up that he got mixed up about Hitler and confused Hitler with the people of Germany. The next thing he knew—or thought he knew—the people of Germany were all double-distilled stem-winding devils. Germans, Kip discovered, were bad people. They were bad because they were Germans. An this, mind you, in spite of the fact that Kip's ancestors, like mine, either came from Germany, or claimed they had.¹³


¹³ Mayer, "War Guilt of Fadiman Kip," 34.
As for the WWB, it was a group "where for a variety of irreconcilable reasons, a variety of irreconcilable people who had always hated each other—and for good reason—have submerged their enduring hates in a united effort, thus far unsuccessful, to transform the American people into mad dogs."\(^{14}\)

The hatred, Mayer implied, was between "Jack the Rip" Stout and Fadiman:

Like Plato's two steeds of the soul, Kip and Rip are pulling in alien harness in this crusade to sub-humanize the American people by persuading them that the German people are subhuman. But Kip, who used to make noises like a liberal, is pulling one way, and Rip, who used to make noises like a reactionary, and meant them, is pulling the other. The outcome of the war being reaction, as Kip used to realize when he read history instead of making it, Kip and Rip will wind up in tandem, with Rip prancing proudly in front and Kip trotting pathetically behind, his ears drooping and a look of almost human suffering in his eyes. . . .\(^{15}\)

The WWB position, Mayer suggested, would eventually produce a tremendous, and deserved, feeling of guilt:

\(^{14}\) Ibid.

\(^{15}\) Ibid.
Though some of us, like Kip, succeed in suppressing this guilt better than others, each of us feels bits of blackened flesh clinging to our fingers when we read that the great brick air-raid shelters of Berlin have become coke-ovens. Each of us struggles, with the Writers' War Board manfully at our side to stifle the voice that whispers, whispers, "Murder, murder; Cain, Cain; where is thy brother, where is thy brother?"

The war will be won, anon, and our guilt will have been so well suppressed, with the assistance of the Writers' War Board, that we will let the Blood and Guts boys impose a murderous peace on the ashes of Germany and Japan, a peace that will make Versailles look like St. Francis' Sermon to the Birds. This will be the triumph of Kip.16

But then, said Mayer, the feeling of oppressive guilt would come. He felt that the pre-war triumphs of Hitler were permitted by the Western democracies due to guilt feelings on their part resulting from the Treaty of Versailles:

I am not saying that the dismemberment of Germany, or the enslavement of Germans to rebuild France and Russia will be unjust. I am saying only that if, when this war is won, we feel unjust, we will then feel guilty, and in the terror of our guilt, real or imagined, we will allow new Hitlers to relieve us of our guiltiness by committing new enormities. . . . 17

Even ignoring the personal references involved, Mayer's was precisely the kind of viewpoint that the board was

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid; see also, Mayer, "How to Win the War," 45-46.
trying to combat. Fadiman, who felt that his presence might now be harming the group, offered a letter of resignation but was persuaded to withdraw it.\textsuperscript{18}

A little over a month later, the WWB was criticized in the \textit{American Journal of Sociology} by Carl J. Friedrich. He stated that "perhaps the most marked forms of undemocratic, pro-Fascist mentality are today to be observed in certain traditionally liberal circles when they discuss the treatment of the enemy. The Writers' War Board is permeated with such influences. . . ."\textsuperscript{19} In April, 1944, Mayer returned to the attack, referring to the WWB as "maniacs" and commenting, "Those members of the Writers' War Board who want to sterilize all Germans are premeditating an atrocity, and yet the time will come when we will all say that they, the Bloody Writers, should be forgiven because they were mementarily crazy even in their premeditation."\textsuperscript{20}

To add to the difficulties, there were some WWB connections with other controversial organizations, both in

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{18}"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, January 19, 1944," Cont. 79, WWB Records.
  \item \textsuperscript{19}Friedrich, "The Role and the Position of the Common Man," \textit{American Journal of Sociology}, XLIX (March, 1944), 424
  \item \textsuperscript{20}Mayer, "Are Japs Human?" \textit{Common Sense}, XIII (April, 1944), 140-41.
\end{itemize}
terms of overlapping personnel and technical assistance. Stout was involved with the founding of an organization called the "Society for the Prevention of World War III," and became its president. This group was a "non-profit educational organization," whose announced purpose was to study the causes of previous wars and to publish any findings or conclusions that might prevent future world wars.\textsuperscript{21} It soon was known, however, for its advocacy of a very hard peace with Germany. At one of its rallies, held somewhat later, for example, the execution of some 1,500,000 Germans was recommended.\textsuperscript{22}

On April 22, 1944, the Society published an advertisement in the New York Times attacking a group of German exiles sponsored by prominent Americans who were forming another organization, the "Council for a Democratic Germany," which asked for "political leeway to those who might best be able to create a democracy in Germany."\textsuperscript{23} The Society


\textsuperscript{22}New York Times, May 23, 1945, p. 11.

declared: "We have been fooled once by a so-called German 'democracy.' Must we be fooled again? This is no time for Americans to work on the manufacture of a device for Germany's escape. It is time to teach Germany and the German people the only lesson they apply to others, the only lesson they understand: Force."24

This ad apparently triggered a full condemnation of Stout and his policy, and with it the WWB itself, in the pages of Common Sense. An editorial, presumably reflecting the views of editor Sidney Hertzberg, entitled "The Shame of American Writers," charged that "under the chairman and spokesman, Rex Stout, the Writers' War Board has . . . acquired an ideology. Mr. Stout is the heart of the Writers' War Board and Mr. Stout's heart seethes with hatred for all Germans."25 An evidence for its charges, Common Sense cited some of Stout's own writings and argued that most of the books promoted by the New York group in 1943 were "indiscriminate condemnations of the German people, or lend


themselves to this view..." 26 The Society for the Prevention of World War III advertisement, "reveals an attitude toward democratic organizations that is shared by Goebbels and Himmler. Its appearance is perhaps unique in the history of responsible journalism... It is virtually incitement to lynching." 27

Admitting that the group was useful as a clearing house for writers, the editorial pointed out that:

... the influence of the Board is far-reaching. It has direct access to all media of mass communications. It cooperates with various official agencies... Rex Stout, the mystery writer, is not important. But Rex Stout, Chairman of the Writers' War Board is--because he can use his position to pose as the spokesman of American writers, and because he can use his position to gain access to publications and radio stations through which he can reach millions with the propaganda of hatred and vengeance... There is a danger that we will come through this war victims of rampant racism--hating the Germans as Germans, crying for blood vengeance. If we do, the fault will lie partly with American writers who, by their silence, are condoning an international vendetta now being carried on in their name. 28

26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid. The last two sentences were transposed for purposes of clarity.

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The editorial ended with a call for action by American Writers, in general, other WWB members, and OWI Director Elmer Davis.29

The WWB, upon hearing of the editorial, felt little shame. At the next regular meeting, May 17, all present signed a letter to Common Sense completely rejecting that periodical's arguments:

The editorial is largely based upon falsehood and such truth as it does contain has been distorted to emerge as falsehood.

One point which should be made clear for the record: Rex Stout, our chairman, makes public his personal views on his personal stationery. He never speaks for the Board except with the prior knowledge and democratic consent of its members by formal vote.30

They persisted in their point of view. At the same meeting where the letter was composed, the board approved a script by LaFarge for a broadcast in cooperation with the Society for the Prevention of World War III. The script asked, "What good Germans do you expect to find still in Germany? You will find none. You will find only those who

29 Ibid.

30 Common Sense, XIII (June, 1944), 206; the letter also may be found in Cont. 109, WWB Records.
can be led and led again to war, to rape, to murder. Remember this, the Nazis are but Germans."  

The New York group was troubled by the rising opposition, however. They feared that if the writers became hostile to their views, much of their other effectiveness might diminish. They also felt that much of the controversy derived from a misunderstanding of the viewpoint of the board and chairman. At the May 24 meeting, therefore, at the instance of Stout, the group resolved to draw up a formal statement of their position on the German question. Two of those who took the strongest stand, Stout and Fadiman, were appointed to do the job. Sufficient questions arose among the board members for Green to devise a questionnaire which he submitted to Stout and Fadiman, as hard-liners, and to Goodman and Crouse, as moderates, in order to see which differences of opinion were real, and which only superficial.32

31 LaFarge, "Postscript to 'Meet the Bruckners' by Max Lerner," Cont. 21, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 17, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.

32 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 24, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records; Green, "Questionnaire on 'What to Do with Germany'," Cont. 78, WWB Records; interview with Green, August 8, 1968.
In the meantime, Hertzberg and Common Sense, anticipating that the WWB would do nothing to curb the chairman, had contacted Elmer Davis as well as a representative group of American writers and printed their replies in the June issue. Hertzberg himself also made further comments. He apparently deliberately misinterpreted the board's reply as a repudiation of Stout's attitude toward Germany, saying that

... we assume that Mr. Stout's views on Germany are not shared by a majority of the Board. ... Presumably this also means that, in writing articles and making radio speeches in which he expresses his personal views on Germany Mr. Stout will not present himself as Chairman of the Writers' War Board. ... ³³

In his comments Davis disclaimed any official policy status for the WWB's private announcements. Speaking as a private citizen, however, he supported the board, mentioning German barbarisms and pointing out that

... there were not enough Nazis to do it all; the non-Nazi Germans went right along with them, and I recall no evidence that any noticeable number of

³³ Hertzberg, "The Points at Issue," Common Sense, XIII (June, 1944), 206.
them ever displayed any dissatisfaction with the things their leaders were doing. . . . if there is any validity in this distinction between the bad Nazis and the good Germans, it is about time the good Germans did something to prove it.34

Some of the writers contacted also supported the board. Poet and educator Mark Van Doren said, "Rex Stout has my full sympathy and support. . . . You have invited me to make a protest. Very well, I protest against the lack of candor and common sense in your report and against the poisonously sentimental nonsense by Milton Mayer which you have printed."35 Author Struthers Burt, who said that he completely agreed with the WWB, objected

. . . to the use of such terms as "racism" etc. in this discussion. Stout does not hate the Germans because they are Germans, he hates them, as I do, because they have endorsed evil, and because for many generations they have subscribed, save for a few great men and women, to evil doctrines.36

Two more writers, William McFee and Louis Bromfield, largely concurred.

34Davis in "American Writers on Germany," Common Sense, XIII (June, 1944), 206.

35Van Doren in ibid., 208.

36Burt in ibid., 207.
Other writers took a middle position. These included John P. Marquand, still a WWB member, though relatively in-active, who saw no harm in Stout's expression of private views but who worried about Stout's mention of his position as WWB chairman. Henry Seidel Canby, caught in the middle as both a member of the WWB Advisory Council and the Sponsors for the Council for a Democratic Germany, agreed that all Germans were responsible for their history but thought the implications of some of Stout's remarks, "impractical, unpoltic, and fundamentally absurd. . . ." Editor-author Frederick Lewis Allen said that he disagreed with Stout but felt that the issue was "not vital" and should not be used to discredit the "manifold and useful services" of both Stout and the WWB.

The majority of the writers, however, were critical, sometimes strongly so. Literary critic and historian Alfred Kazin said that "it is sickening that the war, and some of the most important political problems of our time, should be

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37 Canby in ibid., 206-207; Marquand in ibid., 208.
38 Allen in ibid., 210.
exploited by detective-story writers, puffed up with letter-heads and nominal official 'contacts' when so many honest writers are silent."\(^{39}\) Historians Carl Becker and William Henry Chamberlin also disagreed with the WWB. Becker called their views "romantic and deluded," while Chamberlin said the elementary facts of recent European history would repudiate Stout's ideas and that "the hatemongering outbursts of the noncombatant Rex Stout, with their bad history and bad logic and inverted racism, are a direct challenge to every member of the Writers' War Board..."\(^{40}\) One of the New York Herald-Tribune editors said, "I fail to see how any self-respecting writer can serve on the Writers' War Board under Mr. Stout's chairmanship."\(^{41}\)

Other writers used words such as "pernicious," "infantile and effeminate," "ignorant and immoral," "shameless betrayal of the truth," "rubbish," and "idiocy," in

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\(^{39}\) Kazin in \textit{ibid.}, 207.

\(^{40}\) Becker and Chamberlin in \textit{ibid.}, 211.

\(^{41}\) Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, in \textit{ibid.}, 212.
speaking of the position of Stout and the WWB. Literary critic Granville Hicks made one of the strongest statements:

As one who receives material from the Writers' War Board, I know that the situation is rather worse than your editorial suggests. Month after month writers are urged to preach hatred of the German people not only in their books and articles but also in anonymous paragraphs to be distributed by the board and in speeches that are to be ghost-written for delivery by persons of influence. I believe that the Writers' War Board should be repudiated by both the Authors' League and the Office of War Information unless Mr. Stout can demonstrate that he is speaking for the majority of American writers and for the government.42

Editor Hertzberg himself concluded that "we must not allow the brutality of the Nazi to blind us to the fact that the guilt for this war rests ultimately with all men who failed to build a world in which demagogues could not triumph." His suggested solution was to eliminate the world's reactionaries and carry out the "world revolution."43 Later,

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42 Hicks, in ibid., 208. The other individuals who wrote in opposition to the WWB were Quincy Howe, William L. White, Babette Deutsch, Hiram Motherwell, Lenore G. Marshall, Muriel Rukeyser, Varian Fry, C. Hartle Grattan, Francis P. Locke, Edward J. Meemen, James Burnham, and Max Eastman.

looking back at his work during the year 1944, Hertzberg concluded that "on the subject of postwar Europe, perhaps our most useful achievement was the destruction of the notion that Rex Stout's hatred propaganda against Germany represented the sentiment of American writers or even of the handful of writers on the Writers' War Board of which Stout is chairman."44

As the writers' comments were being published, the WWB was finding difficulty in precisely defining its own position. At the regular meeting on May 31, Stout and Fadiman presented their draft of a prospective statement on Germany. There was general objection that it was far too emotionally expressed. Furthermore, Crouse and Goodman particularly voiced objections to some of the points it made. Goodman disagreed with the implication that the German people as a whole concurred in the pan-German theory. He was promptly advised by Stout and Fadiman that a reading of German history sustained that view. However, he also opposed the

44Hertzberg, "Review of the Year," Common Sense XIV (February, 1945), 2.
overtones of racism in the statement and obtained agreement for a revision, making clear that Germans were not born different and that the problem lay in the circumstances of their culture.45

On June 7, after the revision had been implemented, the statement was formally adopted. Goodman declined to vote but was finally persuaded to add his name to the document. By June 14, the statement had been sent to all absent WWB members; and all had signed with the exception of columnist Samuel Grafton, who rarely attended WWB meetings in person. Grafton's objections were not substantial. He agreed with the statement except, as he put it, for "some points of political theory." In order to achieve unanimity, he offered his resignation. The war board declined it, however, and sent the statement to its advisory council.46

The statement as adopted covered five typewritten pages. It sharply denied the most extreme charges leveled

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45"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 31, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.

46"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 7, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 14, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
at Stout or the board: "The Writers' War Board has on occasion been accused of advocating such absurd measures as sterilization and extermination in dealing with the German problem. These charges are either dishonest or irresponsible, or both."47

The group stated its theory of German history:

Nazism is merely a recent manifestation of Pan-Germanism which for a century has been the prevailing political doctrine in Germany and has determined the attitude and purpose of German foreign policy. The two basic characteristics of Pan-Germanism have been and are (a) the belief that the Germans are a master race, and (b) the conviction that the master race Germans should and will dominate the world.

The Nazis differ from other Pan-Germans only in method (both strategy and tactics), not in fundamentals of doctrine and objective.48

Once again, the WWB attacked the view that to take a hard line against the German enemy was to punish the innocent with the guilty:

The German people, as a political unit . . . cannot be absolved from war guilt. They have accepted some actively, some passively, Pan-Germanism as a political philosophy and as a cultural standard for

47 "The Position of the Writers' War Board on the German Problem," June 7, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records.

48 Ibid.
many years. . . . If our sympathy for an innocent minority prevents us from dealing effectively with the guilty majority . . . we are convinced it will lead to another world war.49

All major German political parties in 1931 were "colore­
ed by Pan-Germanism." Germany must prove over a period of years that she has become democratically oriented. The statement sharply attacked German political exiles in the United States, naming specifically the Council for a Democ­ratic Germany. It was, they argued, easily possible to be anti-Nazi and still be a pan-German trying to prevent a com­plete victory over Germany. The founders of the so-called democratic Weimar Republic "betrayed us by signing an alli­ance with the German high command on November 10, 1918, the day before the armistice."50

The WWB closed with a statement of its principles on the treatment of Germany after the war's end:

1. In our attitude toward Germany in the peace and post war world we should be guided not by senti­ment and assumption but by documented facts.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.
2. The severity of our treatment of Germany shall be no greater and no less than is necessary to convince the Germans that the master-race theory will not work and that Pan-Germanism and militarism lead inevitably to disaster.

3. The burden of proof of good intentions must be upon Germany.

4. In the alleviation of suffering the victims of German aggression have a claim on us prior to that of aggressors.

5. Every encouragement should be given all Germans who have proved themselves not in sympathy with Nazism and Pan-Germanism to obtain and maintain control and leadership of the German government.\footnote{Ibid.}

By June 28 the returns were in from the advisory council, and though a considerable majority agreed to sign, there was a significant amount of dissent. Objections came from Henry Seidel Canby, Dorothy Thompson, Lewis Gannett, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Louis Adamic, and Walter Edmonds. Perhaps the most serious dissent came from Gannett and Miss Thompson. Gannett, the book reviewer for the New York Herald-Tribune, had expressed his dissent by letter, but was sufficiently disturbed to come to the board's June 28 meeting to express his views in person. He questioned the propriety of the WWB's issuing any kind of statement on this matter.
He was most concerned, however, with the attack on the Council for a Democratic Germany, terming it "malicious." He claimed the statement associated the Council with pan-German views "in a manner that verges on sheer dishonesty." He also argued that the Nazis differed from other Germans in ways more farreaching than simply their method.\textsuperscript{52}

Miss Thompson asserted, "I cannot possibly sign the statement because it is as a whole an insult to my intellectual integrity. Its "niveau" especially as regards historical scholarship, is far below the level to which any body of American writers should aspire. . . . I protest against this statement being put out as representative of the thought of American writers."\textsuperscript{53} She went on to challenge the competence of the board to speak on German history and the right of the group to provide guidance to other writers and the public on highly controversial questions. She also

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{52}"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 28, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records; Gannett to Stout, June 19, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records.
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\textsuperscript{53}Miss Thompson to the WWB, June 21, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records.
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strongly objected to the attack on the Council for a Democratic Germany. 54

Simultaneously, she dispatched a memorandum to the rest of the advisory council claiming that she had become a council member in the understanding that the WWB would "confine itself to propagandizing for non-controversial war activities such as recruiting, bond-selling, war relief, etc." 55 Now, she charged, "this statement so clearly reflects the views of the Society for the Prevention of World War III that it looks as though the latter organization, which has many vehement opponents amongst patriotic writers and especially among liberals, has captured the Writers' War Board and turned it into an instrument for its own propaganda." 56 She also criticized the lack of historical accuracy in the statement.

The WWB was impressed by some of the points made in opposition to its statement. Gannett had left the meeting of

54Ibid.

55Miss Thompson to the Advisory Council of the Writers' War Board, June 21, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records.

56Ibid.
June 28 after threatening to resign from the advisory council if the document was published as written. Carmer led a move to have the name of the Council for a Democratic Germany removed and the focus of that part of the statement broadened but not weakened.57

The New York group also had to face up to the fact that rumors of their internal dissension were beginning to circulate. For example, on June 26 nationally syndicated columnist Leonard Lyons wrote that "a revolt is brewing at the Writers' War Board as a result of Rex Stout's statement on 'What to Do with Germany'. Dorothy Thompson, William Shirer, Lewis Gannett, Henry S. Canby have registered dis­­sents and eight resignations may follow."58 The board authorized a reply to Lyons informing him that the group, not Stout, wrote the statement, that Miss Thompson, Canby, and Gannett were not WWB members, and that Shirer had signed it. The board also agreed that a reply to Dorothy Thompson's letter to the advisory council should be drawn up, refuting her charges.59

57"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 28, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.


59Fadiman to Lyons, June 30, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB
A week later, with Stout absent from New York in order to write a new Nero Wolfe story, the board was even less sure of its position. Margaret Leech and others, on further study, had decided that the use of the term "pan-Germanism" was an over-simplification from an historical point of view. The ultimate result was an agreement to withdraw the statement entirely and submit it to historians for their expert opinions. The board also considered its tentative reply to Miss Thompson, written by Stout, which called her a "German apologist," and decided not to send it. At the next meeting, a strong letter from Stout was read, objecting to this course of action, particularly the failure to reply to Miss Thompson, whom he characterized as a "liar." Nevertheless, the group stuck to its decision.60

If the WWB was having some qualms about its position, it maintained a steady attack on those whose writings might be considered sympathetic to Germany. In early June, the WWB protested against an article scheduled for the Ladies

Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 28, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.

60 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, July 5, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, July 12, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records; Stout to Fadiman, July 10, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records.
Home Journal on the "Rehabilitation of German Universities after the War," which indicated that the German educational system might have some good qualities. According to Stout, the group's influence was sufficient to have it dropped. On June 12, Stout and Mark Van Doren engaged in a violent public debate with Miss Thompson and others, in which they advocated their same hard-line position. With the approval of the group, Fadiman protested to the editor of the New York Times Magazine against an article by Herman Rauschning as "pan-German propaganda" coming from "an ex-Nazi using as a blind his supposed disillusionment with his former boss." Fadiman, as acting WWB chairman, protested an article in the New York Herald-Tribune by Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, "Many Reich Women Seen Favoring U. S.," as promoting the wrong kind of peace settlement. Moreover, in June and

61 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 24, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 21, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.


63 Fadiman to Lester Markel, June 21, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records; the article referred to may be found in the New York Times, June 18, 1944, VI, 11.

64 Fadiman to Mrs. Ogden Reed, June 30, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records.
July the board's anti-Japanese campaign was underway. It seems fair to say, therefore, that the group was raising mainly a question of semantics, that there was no consideration of a change of basic attitude.

The WWB statement was sent to Charles Cole of Columbia University, Edward Earle of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, Bernadotte E. Schmitt of the University of Chicago, and Frederic Schuman of Williams College, all historians or political scientists familiar with German history and international relations. These scholars replied with considerable criticism of the board's statements on pan-Germanism, particularly as to whether it was accurate to classify Nazism simply as an outburst of pan-Germanism. They also denied the group's statement concerning the alliance between the Weimar Republic and the German High Command.65

When the board met to consider the matter on July 12, there was more disagreement. Stout had been informed of Schuman's comments and in a letter strongly criticized the

65 Schuman to WWB, July 1, 1944, Earle to Fadiman, July 10, 1944, Schmitt to Fadiman, July 11, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records.
political scientist. Fadiman and Green proposed that the historical evidence be ignored and the statement frankly rewritten as a propaganda document. Miss Leech and Goodman, among others, flatly refused to sign such a statement. The board finally accepted the suggestion of Luise Sillcox that the document be entirely rewritten omitting any mention of "pan-Germanism."

The revised document, expanded in length by about a page, was submitted to the board and accepted in its meeting of July 19. Subsequently all the board signed it, including Stout, despite his earlier comments, and Grafton, who had not signed the first version. As for the changes, the specific reference to the Council for a Democratic Germany was omitted and a fuller, and presumably more accurate, statement relative to the relationship between the Weimar Republic, the German High Command, and the Allies was given. The most important change was the elimination of the term "pan-Germanism" in accordance with the advice of the historians and its replacement by the term "German Will-to-Aggression."

66 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, July 12, 1944," Cont. 80, WWB Records; Stout to Fadiman, July 10, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records.
A more complete definition of the meaning of this term in regard to Germany's record was included, and some of the language of the text, which had seemed to some to still imply a racist viewpoint, was modified. The statement on German history, which had provoked the most controversy, was changed to read as follows:

Nazism is the current manifestation of the German Will-to-Aggression.

The German Will-to-Aggression has expressed itself practically in a series of aggressive wars. Naming only those within the last century, there were the Danish War of 1864, the Austrian War of 1866, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, the First World War of 1914, and the Second World War of 1939.

The German Will-to-Aggression has expressed itself ideologically in a series of closely related movements and systems of thought. These movements and systems of thought have at various times been designated as "Prussianism", "Junkerism," "Nordicism," "Militarism," "Kaiserism," "Pan-Germanism," and the theory of Master-Race Germans pre-destined to dominate the world. They culminate in that German version of Fascism known as Nazism.67

The revised statement went out again to the sixty-four members of the advisory council. Forty-four signed, including Adamic, Edmonds, and Miss Fisher, who had previously objected.

67"The Position of the Writers' War Board on the German Problem," July 19, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records; also printed in WWB, Third Annual Report, 32-36. The full text will be found in the appendix.
Some, such as Marquand, who supported the statement on principle, still wondered about the propriety of the war board taking a position at all.68

Of those who did not sign, thirteen just failed to answer. Only four of the remaining seven could be said to oppose the statement on principle. These were Miss Thompson, Gannett, dramatist Clifford Odets, who simply saw the statement as "bad propaganda," and journalist Elmer Rice, who thought the group should "rise above anger."69 Ironically, the board lost the support of two individuals, Edna Ferber and George Kaufman, because they believed the statement was now too easy on the enemy. Kaufman, for example, complained:

Not a word about the punishment of the guilty . . .
I am for the liquidation or banishment of all Nazi officials. . . . The problem of Hitler youth calls for a better psychologist than I am. These evil little bastards are beyond changing, according to those who have encountered them. I am for their deportation from Germany and for their settlement on some distant island.

68 Marquand to Green, August 8, 1944, Cont. 128, WWB Records; "Report on 'The Position of the Writers' War Board on the German Problem'," Cont. 80, WWB Records.

69 Rice to Fadiman, August 22, 1944, Odets to WWB, August 23, 1944, Cont. 128, WWB Records; "Report on 'The Position of the Writers' War Board on the German Problem'," Cont. 80, WWB Records.
This will be a hard punishment and the Germans will resent it, as they resented Versailles. Let them resent. If they have no Army, no Air Force and no guns, they can resent to their heart's content.70

The controversial statement finally saw publication on November 1, 1944, when it was sent out with the WWB Monthly Report to the group's list of writers. It was rejected for publication by Life magazine early in September. It was then dispatched to Look magazine, where its phrasing was utilized several times in Look's own peace plan, which was similar to the board's, and the WWB was specifically cited once.71 It was summarized in the columns of the New York World-Telegram. After its release to newspaper editors early in 1945, several papers printed the statement in whole or in part.72

70Kaufman to Fadiman, August 12, 1944, Cont. 128, WWB Records; "Report on 'The Position of the Writers' War Board on the German Problem'," Cont. 80, WWB Records. The other council member who declined to sign was Katherine Brush, who, calling herself a "notable bubblebrain," felt unqualified to pass judgment. Miss Brush to Fadiman, August 10, 1944, Cont. 128, WWB Records.

71"How to Keep Peace with Germany," Look, VIII (November 14, 1944), 21-25; Mrs. Barach to LaFarge, December 26, 1944, Cont. 81, WWB Records; Writers' War Board Report, November 1, 1944.

72Harry Hansen in New York World-Telegram, November 9, 1944, p. 16; Stout to Hansen, November 13, 1944, Cont. 81, WWB Records. See, for example of reprinting, Carrollton (Kentucky) News, February 8, 1945, (clipping) File 23-62, Cont. 81, WWB Records.
There was little chance of an end to controversy. In her column of August 9, Dorothy Thompson used the occurrence of the generals' revolt against Hitler in Germany as a springboard to advance her views that no continuing German tradition of devotion to aggression existed and to attack the WWB:

We are impeded in understanding clearly what is happening by the nonsense that has been put out by a chorus of publicists, many of them, I regret to say, in the writers' war board. They have concocted a mythical picture of the last war, the present war, and even the next war.73

She went on to argue that the generals' revolt destroyed this WWB-perpetrated myth. Her views were attacked by several individuals outside of the WWB itself, and the debate continued.74 In August, Mayer took another swipe at the WWB view, linking Stout and isolationist, neo-Fascist, radio priest Father Charles Coughlin, as experts in hatred.75

73 Miss Thompson, cited from San Francisco Chronicle, August 9, 1944, p. 12.
74 Ibid. See, for example, Joseph Henry Jackson, "Bookman's Notebook," San Francisco Chronicle, August 10, 1944, p. 12.
75 "Too Poor to Tote It," Common Sense, XIII (August, 1944), 281.
At the same time in its August Monthly Report, the WWB re-emphasized its position while trying to back off from the "hate" controversy:

A great many people hate the Germans and say so. A great many others think it wrong to hate. Don't let us get mixed up in this irrelevant debate. Let us concentrate on the importance of fearing the Germans. Let us fear what they believe about themselves and have always believed—long before Hitler. . . . The softies have had their innings, and our sons are being killed again . . . Strength! The Germans love it. We must show them plenty.  

Protests were made to the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a group that had objected to the massive bombing of German cities, and to the publishing firm of W. W. Norton for having published a book called Germany: A Short History by George W. Schuster and Arnold Bergstraesser, which the New York writers felt was too sympathetic to its subject. On the other hand, the editor of The Protestant was praised for his opposition to a soft peace.

76 Writers' War Board Report, August 1, 1944.
77 Fadiman to the Fellowship of Reconciliation, August 17, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records; Arno Herzberg to Leland Stowe, August 20, 1944, Fadiman to W. W. Norton, August 25, 1944, Cont. 81, WWB Records; Green to Kenneth Leslie, July 31, 1944, Cont. 81, WWB Records.
There was also a problem with the Columbia Broadcasting System. Stout was scheduled to go on the Edwin C. Hill radio program on August 17, to present the WWB view of the German problem. CBS, however, read his advance script, then declared it "a plea for a very hard peace" and thus very controversial. The network declined to permit him to go on the commercial broadcast unless he would agree to present, with equal force, the directly opposing view. Stout, of course, refused. CBS then offered fifteen minutes of non-commercial time at another hour, but Stout also declined. The board decided that CBS was too important a channel of communication to offend by a public protest. However, a Variety editorial criticized CBS, questioning the fairness of the decision and asking whether Hitler should be granted equal time with Stout. No accord was reached between the board and the network.78

78CBS, "Fairness of the Air," pamphlet found in Cont. 25, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, August 23, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Fadiman to WWB, August 24, 1944, Cont. 25, WWB Records; "Time for Decision," Variety, CLV (August 30, 1944), 25.
Further controversy ensued in October. Milton Mayer made his now customary slap at the New York writers, referring to them as one of the groups that would have to be kept in hand at the war's end to prevent them from "torturing, castrating, or exterminating" Germans.79

Also in early October, Dorothy Thompson took another public swing at the WWB view:

> It cannot possibly be intelligent tactics to furnish Dr. Goebbels with the only propaganda with which he can hope to unite despairing German forces to continue the war to the death. Yet that is what we have been doing. . . .

> If I am proud of anything, it is that Dr. Goebbels has made great efforts to prevent the re-publication of what I have written not only in Germany but in the countries around Germany. In contrast, Lord Robert Vansittart, Rex Stout and associates, and many others have been furnishing Goebbels with his most effective propaganda.80

The above passage provoked Stout to extra wrath. He denounced Miss Thompson's charge as "fantastic" and offered his resignation to Freedom House, an organization which he had helped to found but which was now headed by the lady

79 "Teach Them a Lesson," *Common Sense*, XIII (October, 1944), 358.

80 Thompson, cited in the San Francisco Chronicle, October 4, 1944, p. 12.
columnist. After several days of public disputation, the disagreement was smoothed over, but the basic rift remained.\textsuperscript{81}

In addition, the controversy flared up again within the board's own ranks. Robert L. Duffus, who had handled the board's editorial service since its inception, declined to write any further editorials on the German question and asserted, "I don't believe in a race theory for Germans any more than I do for Americans, English, Chinese, or Jews; I don't believe we can punish the innocent—meaning children and some others—without bringing on what we want to avoid; I think we have got to make a settlement that will seem just to the Germans themselves ten years from now."\textsuperscript{82} In a reply Stout agreed that Duffus should not write what he did not believe but argued that the group did not advocate a race theory or enslavement.\textsuperscript{83} After the issuance of the


\textsuperscript{82}Duffus to Barach, October 1944, Cont. 48, WWB Records.

\textsuperscript{83}Stout to Duffus, October 31, 1944, Cont. 58, WWB Records.
editorials for November, Duffus did not participate in WWB activities again.

November saw a renewal of the hostility toward the Council for a Democratic Germany. Theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, the vice-chairman of the organization, circulated a letter to writers in which he said that "we believe it possible to demonstrate to the American people that there are helpful and democratic forces in Germany which ought to be encouraged and supported." This sent the WWB into a predictable uproar, and Gallico was designated to write an open letter to Niebuhr. He called the latter's statements untrue and apologetic and argued that no forces in Germany could be supported and encouraged without hindering the Allied military effort. The Council's reply charged that the WWB and Gallico were making a case only by pulling statements out of a context which would have indicated that they were referring strictly to a post-war program.

84 Niebuhr to Margaret Widdemar, November 3, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records.

85 Gallico to Niebuhr, November 17, 1944, Hiram Motherwell to Gallico, November 29, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records; Christopher LaFarge to Louis Cannon, November 26, 1944, Cont. 100, WWB Records.
In January, 1945, after being attacked by the political left, in *Common Sense*, the New York group had the unusual experience of being attacked from the political right on precisely the same grounds. The new attacker was columnist George Sokolsky. Arguing largely as did previous WWB critics, he asked how we could prevent another war "if we go on everlastingly hating sixty million Germans and Japanese. . . . When Rex Stout and the Writers' War Board issue such reports, they do mischief, well intentioned perhaps, but nonetheless senseless and vicious."86

In stimulating hatred for Germany and blaming the German people in general for all German actions, the WWB, was, as the group admitted, not in accord with the official policy of the United States government.87 More than one of their

86 Sokolsky's "These Days" column, New York *Sun*, January 16, 1945, p. 15.

87 See, for example, "Digest of Comic Magazine Conference," December 7, 1944, Cont. 11, WWB Records.
critics, of course, had felt it improper for the board, associated as it was with the government by virtue of close cooperation and by subsidy, to advocate such a controversial position. Neither this difficulty, nor all of the controversy, however, caused any de-emphasis of the campaign.

In August, the New York group was offered the opportunity to repeat the Lidice campaign. Late in June some 1,100 persons, the entire population of the Greek village of Distomo, were machine-gunned to death in reprisal for a guerilla raid. A "Committee for the Rebirth of Distomo" was formed, under the chairmanship of Maxwell Anderson; and early in August, leaders of the committee consulted Alan Green, one of the principal movers behind the Lidice Committee, to see if the WWB would try a repeat performance. Green advised against it, believing that the time was too late, and the board concurred. They did agree, however, to lend whatever assistance was possible without a special effort. "Distomo--Successor to Lidice," was included as one of the WWB editorials for September, 1944. That same month, "Brief Items for House Organs" and "Brief Items for Army Camps" carried the Distomo story. The WWB also cooperated with the Distomo Committee in getting some well-known writers to do commentaries for the newspaper syndicates. However, the response to the Distomo Committee was not great and was
sometimes even critical, lending support to the board's
decision against an attempt to reührse the Lidice approach.\footnote{88}

There was no thought of dropping the judicious use
of atrocity stories. For example, in September the New York
writers undertook to publicize newspaper accounts of a
German concentration camp discovered near Lublin, Poland,
where 1,500,000 prisoners were killed. The war board suc­
cessfully urged the \textit{Reader's Digest} to reprint this story,
and the condensed version went out in November to that maga­
zine's vast audience. The story was one of unparalleled
horror, "the most terrible place on earth," in the author's
words, and there were full details of mass execution and
individual cruelties, such as instances of persons burned
alive.\footnote{89}

\footnote{88}{New York Times, July 9, 1944, p. 1, July 13, 1944,
p. 16, July 15, 1944, p. 3, August 31, 1944, p. 19, Septem­
ber 26, 1944, p. 17; "List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58,
WWB Records; "Brief Items for House Organs," September, 1944,
and "Brief Items for Army Camps," September, 1944, Cont. 34,
WWB Records; Green to WWB, August 4, 1944, Cont. 81, WWB
Records; WWB, \textit{Third Annual Report}, 21; File 23-44, Cont. 81,
WWB Records.}

\footnote{89}{W. H. Lawrence, "Lest We Forget," \textit{Reader's Digest},
XLV (November, 1944), 32-34; New York Times, August 30, 1944,
p.1; WWB, \textit{Third Annual Report}, 21.}

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The board used its contacts with its members and other writers who had served as correspondents overseas to get speeches on the German enemy. Under WWB auspices, for example, Gallico addressed the National Press Club on German prisons. The Speeches and Speakers Committee arranged for writers Quentin Reynolds, Robert St. John, and several others to give Army orientation lectures.  

In the regular publications there appeared in August an editorial, "Preparing for 1964," by Stout, the usual story of German plots for the future. In September, there was "Recipe for Civil War," by Fadiman, another expose of American fascist movements, as well as a plug for the book Blackmail. The October editorials included "... But the German General Staff Goes on Forever," by Joseph Jackson, and "Don't Say We Weren't Warned," by Green, a reiteration of the WWB point of view. In December, Gallico used the newly developed Nazi rockets, the "buzz bombs," in an effort to paint a frightful picture of what the next war with Germany would be like.  

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90WWB, Third Annual Report, 21.  
91"List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
The August, 1944, war-script-of-the-month was "War Criminals and Punishment," an adaptation by Richard McDonough of parts of the George Creel book by the same title. It detailed the deeds of German and Japanese officials and recommended extremely stern punishment. The October script, "Promise vs. the Deed," by William K. Clarke, was also an adaptation of parts of the Creel book. In the "Brief Items" series, besides reprints of some of the editorials on Germany, there were included Sigred Undset's "True Justice for the Germans," in October, 1944, and in January, 1945, Gabriel Heatter's "Sanity—German Style." In the January, 1945, "Bulletin to Cartoonists," Fadiman called for drawings on the subject "Hitler or no Hitler—Doesn't Make Any Difference." Among other items in the anti-German campaign involving magazines, the board sponsored a contest in See

92 "War-Scripts-of-the-Month Selections," Cont. 21, WWB Records.

magazine for the best essay on the question, "What to Do With Germany After the War." The German army was not out of Holland before Christopher LaFarge had an article in *Cosmopolitan* describing brutalities during the German occupation there. The group also arranged to place in *Pic* magazine an article by Creel urging America to "Let Us Not Be Fooled Again." 94

A special WWB promotion effort involved the March of Time film, "What to Do with Germany." The film was a documentary of German atrocities, showing scenes from concentration camps and pointing out that the German mass murder technique gave her an excellent chance for a biological victory even in defeat. It also presented the views of Sumner Welles, Lord Vansittart, and others whom the board favored as "hard peace" advocates. The WWB arranged for four special previews in New York for key figures from the press and radio. It planned another special showing in Washington at the National Archives, hosted by Henry Pringle, a WWB member serving as an official in Washington, attended by over

94 "What to Do With Germany After the War—Contest," Cont. 81, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 21; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, December 27, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
a hundred diplomats, press representatives, and government officials. As a result of this, the Treasury and State Departments requested their own previews. Quotes from prominent writers were obtained for use in the advertisements for the film. A special notice was arranged in *Variety*. In its own publication, the *Monthly Report*, the board first reviewed the film, giving it a high "four bomb" rating, and then asked the writers around the country to make favorable mention wherever possible.\(^5\)

Despite all the controversies and the fact that the war was moving to a successful climax, the WWB's enthusiasm for attacks on Germany remained undimmed. When Stout took a survey in November, 1944, asking what the group thought were the issues that should be emphasized from that point on, all but one or two listed the German problem as most important.\(^6\)

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\(^5\)"Progress Report on 'What to Do with Germany'," Cont. 81, WWB Records; *Writers' War Board Report*, November 1, 1944, and December 1, 1944.

CHAPTER V

THE FATE OF JAPAN AND GERMANY

Throughout the first two years of the war, for reasons mentioned earlier, the Japanese had received little WWB attention. There were occasional passing references to them in the nature-of-the-enemy campaign, but this occurred only when the concept of "enemy" was generalized. Specific references and indictments were always aimed at Germany. Beginning in 1944, however, the Japanese did begin to attract a small amount of the board's interest. Even then, the anti-Japanese campaign never approached either the vehemence or the quantity of material of the anti-German effort.

In January, 1944, Stout and Fadiman held a conference with a "high government official" whose name they declined to reveal even to the WWB itself. This official urged the New York writers to do something to arouse the American public to hatred and distrust of the Japanese god-emperor and to awaken it to the dangers involved in that type of government. The WWB was a little skeptical but agreed...
that a committee, chaired by Christopher LaFarge, would be formed to study the matter and recommend action if the advantages of attacking the emperor appeared to outweigh the disadvantages.¹

Upon due consideration, the response was favorable; and throughout the entire anti-Japanese campaign the method of approach was generally an attack on the Japanese emperor. The board was convinced that the American people hated the Japanese people but respected the Japanese hierarchy. As a result, even though their approach disagreed with the American government's official policy, the New York group consistently demanded that the Japanese emperor, Hirohito, be held responsible and made to pay the penalty for all Japanese actions.²

¹"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, January 19, 1944," Cont. 5, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 29.

²"Digest of Magazine Conference," December 7, 1944, Cont. 11, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 19. The WWB's view of how the American people felt was not necessarily accurate. The Office of Public Opinion Research Poll, taken June 7, 1944, showed that only 11% of Americans felt that the Japanese people were the chief enemy, while 55% saw the Japanese government as the chief enemy. "Public Opinion Polls," Public Opinion Quarterly, VIII (Fall, 1944), 448.
In February, as a means of carrying this into effect, Green suggested that a file of political cartoons, brief items, editorials, and scripts be prepared immediately, all aimed at Emperor Hirohito. These would not be used, however, until Hideki Tojo, the Japanese premier, fell from power, an event expected to take place shortly. Then, the file could be rushed into action in order to help shift American hatred from Tojo to Hirohito. The suggestion was accepted by the board, and the accumulation of the file was begun.\(^3\) Stout, in his characteristically forceful way, explained what was desired:

We say nuts to the state department policy saying Hirohito is a nice little boy and that we can count safely on dealing with him some day. In the not too distant future Tojo will probably have a great fall. We think it would be well to accustom Americans to the idea of selecting Hirohito as a symbol of Japanese iniquity when Tojo is gone.\(^4\)

Tojo did not depart as quickly as anticipated, retaining his position until July. By that time the board had sent out an editorial in April, "Hirohito Must Go," an argument against the retention of the ruler. Two speeches had

\(^3\) Green to Stout, February 25, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 1, 1944," Cont. 5, WWB Records.

\(^4\) Stout to Julian Brodie, March 9, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records.
also been written and added to the WWB catalog, "Our Enemy--Madame Butterfly," and "A Story from the Pacific," the latter a commentary on certain Japanese atrocities.\(^5\)

The controversy over the WWB statement on the German question as well as certain other projects occupied much of the group's time during the summer of 1944, and Tojo's departure went unmarked by any special board reaction. When the subject came up again, in late August, Jack Goodman pointed out that the group had been criticized for misinterpreting German history and should not make the same mistake with Japan. The writers agreed that they should make some effort to educate themselves before undertaking to combat pro-Japanese feeling. LaFarge, chairman of the Japanese Committee, accordingly prepared a bibliography of books and articles for the use of the group.\(^6\)

At the meeting of September 6, Stout reopened the question. He thought that there was a good chance that the


\(^6\)"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, August 23, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
war against Germany might end before winter came, and argued that an anti-Hirohito campaign should be begun immediately in order to help prevent any slump in war feeling. There was still disagreement over ways and means to achieve anti-Japanese sentiment, however; and nothing concrete was decided.\(^7\)

Two weeks later, Robert Eunson, an Associated Press correspondent recently returned from the Pacific, visited the board. He urged the group to obtain the release of the many unpublicized Japanese atrocity stories and to fully exploit them. These incidents, according to Eunson, had not been released early in the war since it was felt that they were so gruesome as to discourage recruiting for the Air Force, against whose members the worst atrocities were committed; and, too, they would have hurt morale among relatives on the home front. Now, he argued, a public accustomed to the brutalities of war needed to read the more horrible stories which still might retain some shock value.\(^8\)

\(^7\)"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, September 6, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.

\(^8\)"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, September 20, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
The WWB undertook to get publicity for the atrocity stories but was successful only in becoming involved in a good example of government buck-passing. A suggestion to Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall that accounts of authentic Japanese atrocities ought to be published brought only a reference to the Department of War. Secretary of War Henry Stimson affirmed that his department favored the release of such stories "provided that the reports have been substantiated and such releases are consistent with military security." Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal agreed but pointed out that the State Department had asserted the primary interest, due to the status of current negotiations. Secretary of State Edward Stettinius would only say that the matter would be considered by his department and refused to set a time for a decision on the matter. OWI Director Davis finally killed off this particular WWB effort when he pointed out the dangers of an atrocity campaign. He noted

9Stout to Marshall, October 19, 1944, Stimson to Stout, November 15, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records.

10Stout to Forrestal, November 21, 1944, Forrestal to Stout, November 23, 1944, Stout to Stettinius, November 21, 1944, Stettinius to Stout, November 24, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records.
that German atrocities in the First World War were demonstrably exaggerated. In order that no one could impugn the accuracy of news bulletins this time, a special effort should be made to stick to completely correct reports. He also argued that reports of Japanese atrocities might increase the harshness of the treatment of American prisoners of war or might cause the Japanese to circulate falsified reports of American atrocities among their own people and territories.\(^{11}\) It is doubtful that such arguments would have dissuaded the WWB from a private campaign, but since government cooperation was necessary in this case, the matter was dropped.

The board made some effort in the anti-Hirohito campaign, though at this point it was suggestive rather than blunt, unlike much of the anti-German material. The Monthly Report for October stated, for example:

A group of government advisers and consultants on the policy level, headed by a high official of the State Department, want no hair touched on Hirohito's head. They say the Japanese regard him as divine, so we should preserve him, in order to use him--to

\(^{11}\) Davis to Stout, December 1, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records.
lead the Japanese into and along the path of righteousness. But what if he is not divine to us? He either leads the Japanese or he doesn't. If he does, he led them to Pearl Harbor and Bataan.12

A month later, some of the board's reading in Japanese history resulted in "A Japanese Quiz for Writers," also in the Monthly Report. The quiz asked such questions as, "What would have happened to Hirohito if he had refused to sign the Declaration of War against Great Britain and the United States?" Other questions were: "How many Japanese Emperors have been assassinated?" and "What extremes of Japanese policy have used the Emperorship as justification of their excesses?" The board concluded, "If you can answer these after looking them up, you've begun to know something about (a) Japanese history and (b) what we shall have to do with Hirohito or his successor after victory."13

One of the relatively small number of things done in regard to Japan outside the war board's own publications was a series on Japan in the American Legion Magazine. The general purpose of these articles, as well as the WWB

12Writers' War Board Report, October 1, 1944.
13Writers' War Board Report, November 1, 1944.
viewpoint, was expressed in a letter from Fadiman to one of the writers for the series:

There is not much doubt that as soon as Germany is licked there will be, in addition to a spurt in the propaganda for the appeasement of Germany, a definite movement to let Japan down easy also. The marks by which the movement may be recognized are (1) the attempt to put over the "gangster theory" (it is a military clique that is causing all the trouble); (2) the urging of the claims of Hirohito to retain power...; (3) a "stable" Japan is necessary to offset the prepondering population of China; (4) if we are going to do business in the Far East there is no sense in destroying a good customer; (5) the missionary folks, in particular, will take the line that some of the Japs are awfully nice people, particularly those converted to Christianity.

It is the War Board's intention to show up these arguments one by one, and any other arguments against a hard peace. I don't think we should do so by exploiting color or race prejudice, because that is irrelevant to the issue.14

J. B. Powell, who received the letter, eventually wrote the requested article, "After We Have Occupied Japan," and it appeared in the magazine. Other similar articles sponsored by the WWB were by Wallace Irwin and Carl Crow, the latter's "The Emperor Must Go," being almost a restatement of the New York writers' own commentaries.15 To help

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14 Fadiman to J. B. Powell, August 28, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records.

other writers and editors, the WWB was able to arrange a briefing for twenty persons in the private offices of General Marshall and Admiral Ernest King.16

In support of the anti-emperor position, Stout had a background memorandum prepared by Edgar Salinger, a Far East expert. Entitled "A Statement Concerning the Emperor of Japan," the eleven-page document was a hostile examination of the emperor in history and an attack on Allied policy which spared him from harm as a religious symbol and as a possible center for a new democratic concept of government in postwar Japan. Salinger offered basically a short-term and a long-term argument against Hirohito. The short-term argument dealt with military objectives:

Military collapses, like panics, can be engendered by confusion; and this confusion can be abetted by breaking down, with every available means, these established authorities, myths, and national ideals from which the enemy derives his moral support. Destroy the idea and symbols of national unity, the bonds which unite a people to defend sacrosanct ideals and the fanaticism and will-to-fight suffer corresponding

16"Writers and Editors Meeting, December 4, 1944," File 23A-4, Cont. 82, WWB Records.
diminution. . . . The Emperor of Japan is the central personage about whom the entire Japanese government revolves.17

As long-range support for the idea, the document held up the goal of a lasting peace:

We must choose between an eventual resumption of the struggle, involving tremendous cost in American lives and treasures or of completely and scrupulously eradicating their pre-war concepts and forms of education. Defeat will not make them docilely renounce old loyalties; we cannot expect the Japanese to think outside their usual thinking routes. . . . At the time of their defeat, the greater part of the Japanese people will not know what they have been fighting for or why they have been defeated. They will be in a bewildering welter of desperate emotion and their Emperor and ancient institutions will seem all the more attractive to them as their link with national feeling and outraged patriotism. It would be fatal to allow the Japanese to maintain animosities and interests at variance with the conditions of peace. . . . The moment of total defeat and consequent collapse is our supreme opportunity for ending the menace to humanity inherent in the God-Emperor cult of Japan.18

Events in late 1944 and early 1945 prevented much further anti-Japanese activity. The Battle of the Bulge made it clear that Germany would not collapse as she had in World War I and that her defeat was still months away. The

17 Salinger, "Statement Concerning the Emperor of Japan," Cont. 82, WWB Records.

18 Ibid.
board was still far more concerned with Germany and did not wish to distract attention from that nation in the last crucial weeks when the precedents for the treatment of her people would be established. The memorandum mentioned above was written in October, 1944; and it embodied, for the most part, the views of the New York group. It was not released, however, and remained in the board's files for the next seven months. In its public announcements the WWB was unusually circumspect, saying only that it was studying Japanese history and the Japanese government "in order to be in a position to clarify that issue. . . ."19

The Japanese theme disappeared from the regular WWB publications. A project underway for an anti-Japanese comic book was allowed to lapse. Indeed, the only concern with the Japanese that the was board displayed at all in the spring of 1945 was an attempt to prevent racism that became evident in outbursts against Japanese-Americans. In an editorial in March, "Hood River Incident," written by Fadiman after the subject was brought to the board's attention by Kobe Morrison,

19LaFarge, "What Is the Writers' War Board?" November, 1944, Cont. 93, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 19.
the group protested the removal of names of Japanese-American war veterans from an American Legion war memorial in Oregon. The Monthly Report for April ran a paragraph under the heading, "An American is an American is an American," praising the activities of loyal Japanese-Americans and deplored racist attacks on them. The war-script-of-the-month for May was Millard Lampell's "Boy from Nebraska," telling of the homecoming of a Japanese-American war veteran. LaFarge's "The Blood of Freedom," in the May editorials, was a moving account of those Japanese-Americans who died defending America's freedom.

When the war against Germany ended, there was some return to the anti-Japanese campaign. The Monthly Report for June conceded that most writers had "laid off" Emperor Hirohito during the war since they felt that it might only increase Japanese fanaticism and make a martyr of the Japanese American.

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"god." However, the Report argued that the time would soon be at hand when the imperial system must be destroyed in order to protect future American generations. Simultaneously, an editorial by Robert Bellaire, a Japanese Committee member, was sent out asking the question, "Why Coddle Hirohito?" If any thoughts were creeping into the American mind about making some kind of settlement with the Japanese, the war board sought to drive them out with the July editorial, "Shall We Let Japan Off Easy?" a call by Millard Price for unconditional surrender.22

On July 9, 1945, the board sent out its anti-Japanese kit to a large number of editors, writers, and commentators. It contained as its main piece the Salinger memorandum. The WWB stated that the document reflected their sentiments entirely, except for a passage which called for the bombing of Hirohito's palace. This was opposed, not out of regard for Hirohito, but because the group felt that if the United States announced that it intended to kill him, and

22Writers' War Board Report, June 1, 1945; "List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
failed, it would lose face. If the Americans did get him, it would do no good because his twelve-year old son would replace him. The kit also included a small amount of material publicizing atrocities.23

After this brief revival of activity, the board did little else in regard to the Japanese. Enthusiasm for the campaign was never high; the emphasis that the board gave to matters it considered important was never present. Italy, the other wartime opponent of the United States, was, for all practical purposes, totally ignored. Outside of one or two casual references the only WWB action that might possibly be termed anti-Italian was a protest to the Radio City Music Hall in New York when it declined to show the March of Time's report on Fascist Italy out of consideration for its Italian-American audience.24 The war board was German-oriented from first to last.


24"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, January 24, 1945," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
Late in September, with the controversy over the WWB's position in regard to Germany still raging, the group became involved, though much less publicly, in one of the major political arguments at this time dealing with the fate of Germany. The Treasury Department, under the leadership of Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, had conceived a rather dramatic plan for the future of Germany. Summarized briefly, the Morgenthau Plan called for the removal from Germany of all industrial machinery which any liberated country desired and destruction of the rest, including the closing of the German mines. All land holdings would be broken up into small farms; nothing would be done to sustain the German economy. No relief supplies would be furnished the German people; conversely no reparations would be demanded, since Germany would have nothing with which to pay and would not be allowed to earn payments in the future.²⁵

of War Stimson, but early in September it apparently had President Roosevelt's support. At the Quebec Conference, on September 15, Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill initiated a statement of intent that embodied the Morgenthau Plan.\(^26\)

Morgenthau's apparent victory proved to be only temporary. Roosevelt backed away from the strong stand he had taken. There was continued opposition within the cabinet, but "the precipitating factor in the president's new caution about German policy was the public reaction to a series of leaks that divulged the contents of the Morgenthau Plan and of the Quebec agreement. \ldots\).\(^27\) This public reaction was evidenced in hostile comment on the plan itself and in reports of dissension among the cabinet and the White House by newspapers, magazines, and radio commentators. Thomas Dewey, the Republican candidate, also opposed it.


\(^{27}\)Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, III, 377.
It was at this point that the WWB entered the picture. On September 28, Fadiman, as the board's representative, met with Secretary Morgenthau, who summarized the situation and, knowing that the WWB was sympathetic with his position, requested the group to do what it could to counteract the adverse reaction. Fadiman promptly contacted Stout who, acting for the New York writers, sent a telegram to Roosevelt stating:

We are deeply concerned by the success of the effort to use official consideration of the post-war treatment of Germany as a peg on which to hang implications of violent dissensions among members of the cabinet and the White House. This tends to discredit your administration not only as a source of effective preparation of post-war plans but also by inference in its effective prosecution of the war.28

In a reply, Stout was invited to Washington for a briefing. On October 4, presidential associate Robert Sherwood attended the WWB's regular meeting. He requested the group to do everything possible to counteract the unfavorable publicity fomented by anti-administration forces.

in the presidential campaign in regard to the plan and to help put over the ideas contained in the plan. The board agreed it would do everything possible to combat the use of the term "Morgenthau Plan" but at the same time to support the ideas it expressed. However, they held out little hope of effecting any change in public attitude by the time of the presidential election on November 7, which was one of Sherwood's primary concerns.

The New York group was enthusiastically in favor of promoting ideas of the plan and immediately considered ways and means of approach. They decided to conduct an offensive rather than a defensive campaign by attacking "the fallacy of rebuilding Germany economically in order to obtain for a few years an inadequate amount of reparations." They discussed

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30 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, October 4, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.

31 Ibid.
new names for the Morgenthau Plan, finally settling on the term "Security Plan." Stout advocated calling the opposition's plan the "Third World War" or "Pro-Germany" plan, but the group felt that such a label could not be arbitrarily attached.\(^{32}\)

In a previously arranged appearance on the radio program "Town Meeting of the Air," Stout included in his statement a strong attack on the concept of reparations. This elicited a letter from Morgenthau, who felt he saw a favorable trend in public sentiment. He also offered his thanks and "compliments on your vigorous and convincing appearance on the Town Hall [sic] program last night. The impression here is that 'our' side had all the best of it."\(^{33}\)

Beginning on November 1, the regular WWB publications contributed to the campaign. The Monthly Report carried a paragraph under the heading, "If He Yells for Reparations He's

\(^{32}\)Ibid.

\(^{33}\)Morgenthau to Stout, October 6, 1944, Cont. 81, WWB Records; "Report on Reparations and Security Campaign," Cont. 81, WWB Records.
Giving a Helping Hand to World War III." The paragraph read:

Watch out for the boys who get red in the face demanding: a) Heavy Reparations - "Make 'em Pay!" b) Punishment - "Hang Hitler," c) "Control" of German armaments. These are the boys who are laying the groundwork for the next war.

a) The Germans want to pay reparations - because they can't pay them unless we lend them money to rebuild the plant. b) They want a few thousand Nazis hung - so that our indignation will thus expend itself - and so that we will assume the remaining Germans are "good" Germans. c) They want us to "control" German armament - because they know that sooner or later it is human nature to relax those controls.

Watch out for the Reparations boys! They are your enemy - and the Germans' friends.\(^{34}\)

Stout expressed similar sentiments in an editorial, "The Reparations Booby Trap," also distributed in November.\(^{35}\)

Much of the WWB's effort in this campaign during the first six weeks was devoted to drawing up a memorandum designed to clarify differences between the reparations school of thought and the Morgenthau or security school, to attack the former and defend the latter. Entitled, "Notes on Current Thinking on Post-War Germany," it was sent, on November

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\(^{34}\)Writers' War Board Report, November 1, 1944.

\(^{35}\)"List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
20, 1944, to members of the WWB and its advisory council, to approximately one hundred men who served as directors for industrial corporations and to seventy-five columnists and commentators who might possibly be sympathetic.36

The memorandum defined the "reparations school" as including those who advocated heavy reparations from Germany for about five years, punishment of Nazi criminals, control of German armament (which would involve the refusal to permit manufacture of planes and other major weapons), and perhaps a few slight territorial losses for Germany. In contrast, the board said, "the Security School is interested in one thing: to make the world secure from further German aggression. . . . It therefore proposes to destroy German autonomy as presently constituted, without denying the German people a livelihood."37 To achieve this they proposed splitting off the Ruhr and Saar areas, as well as parts of the left bank of the Rhine, East Prussia, and Upper Silesia,


37 "Notes on Current Thinking on Post-War Germany," Cont. 81, WWB Records. See also Shephard B. Clough, "What about Reparations This Time?" Political Science Quarterly, LIX (June, 1944), 220-26.
and dividing the remainder of Germany into two states. All heavy industry would be eliminated by removal to other areas of Europe, while light industries, such as textiles, and agriculture would be encouraged. The security school believed that the execution of the Nazis was of little importance and a useless expenditure of the world's indignation. Also, they regarded as of lesser importance any effort to forcibly re-educate the Germans with democratic ideas. This plan would guarantee that Germany, like it or not, could not start another world war.  

The memo listed objections to the idea of demanding reparations. If Germany was to provide any reparations, she must be assisted in rebuilding her heavy industries; and this would give Germany full employment and prosperity while the victor nations receiving German goods would suffer from unemployment. Long-term controls could not be depended upon, and Germany would eventually have both the political autonomy and the technological means to do exactly as she wished, presumably to start another war.

38"Notes on Current Thinking on Post-War Germany," Cont. 81, WWB Records.
In reply to objections against the security plan, the memo denied that Germany would become a nation of peasants or that the economy of Europe would be upset. In regard to the charge that it would strengthen Russia, the memo stated that the "Security School assumes that Russia intends to be a non-aggressive power after its present legitimate claims have been satisfied." The security plan, it was argued, would reassure Russia by demonstrating trust in her, while the reparations plan would serve as an irritant and "possible cause of future wars" by indicating distrust.39

In addition to the mailing already mentioned, this memorandum was used by the Society for the Prevention of World War III and the Philadelphia United Nations Council in materials which they distributed. Furthermore, it was the basis for a newspaper article by Norman Littell distributed through the NEA Syndicate. Unsuccessful attempts were made to get the memo or material based on it into Look and Collier's magazines.40

All of the WWB publications eventually were utilized. In January, for example, in an editorial, "What Do We Want?"

39Ibid.
Stout argued that the simple restoration of machinery stolen by the Germans from various countries would be sufficient to completely decimate all remaining German industry. ⁴¹ Both of the "Brief Items" series carried articles on the subject over Stout's byline. Numerous individual letters were written, particularly to news commentators thought to be particularly influential. ⁴²

Beginning in December, at the suggestion of Paul Gallico, recently returned from the war zone, the New York group gave some thought to developing a comprehensive and detailed plan intended to be far more specific than the general principles given in the "Notes on Current Post-War Thinking." ⁴³ A computation of various points of view from members of the WWB was taken. These individual statements reveal a wide diversity of views on some points. For example, there was considerable discontent about the lack of emphasis on the punishment of war criminals. Gallico, for one, felt that

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²"Report on Reparations and Security Campaign," Cont. 81, WWB Records. See, for example, "Brief Items for House Organs," January, 1945, Cont. 34, WWB Records; Stout to Edward R. Murrow, December 26, 1944, Stout to Sumner Welles, December 26, 1944, Cont. 81, WWB Records.

⁴³"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, December 6,
it is most important that the arrest, trial, and execution of members of the German Gestapo and Reichwehr involved in torture and manslaughter of European people be continued over a period of years until the job is done, and that the "innocent little men" who were just carrying out orders be punished as severely as the higher ups who planned and gave the orders. The more German homes into which this punishment reaches, the more it will be remembered. This needs to be said to the American people as not taking place for revenge but for future protection.44

Samuel Grafton held that the exile of at least one hundred thousand members of the Nazi apparatus must be a condition of the armistice.45 Robert T. Colwell argued that "since some 99% of the Germans went on record as supporting the current regime, they are war criminals and must be treated as such."46

There was also considerable question about the lack of an attempt to re-educate the Germans. Several felt that it should at least be tried.47 Milder dissents and

1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.

44 Gallico, quoted in "Memoranda on Post-War Germany," Cont. 81, WWB Records.

45 Grafton, quoted in ibid.

46 Colwell, quoted in ibid.

47 See Colwell and LaFarge, quoted in ibid.
modifications were recorded in other areas. The board accordingly made a tabulation of the various views on each point, decided all questions strictly by a majority vote, and published a somewhat more detailed set of suggestions for post-war Germany in its Third Annual Report. Almost none of the points was determined unanimously, but there was no serious opposition within the board. No attempt was made, this time, to gain Advisory Council approval.

This procedure resulted in some modification of the previous security school approach. In regard to the dismemberment of Germany, the WWB no longer favored its division into two or more states, though peripheral territories still might be separated from it. The ban on reparations and the complete de-industrialization of Germany were still advocated. The board added a provision permitting the use of German labor battalions in rebuilding the destroyed areas of countries they had occupied and the detention of German men outside the country for up to five years in order to counteract the results of German biological warfare. The board now advocated punishment by military tribunals of war criminals who had violated accepted military codes. Relief assistance would be given to Germany only after all other countries were satisfactorily supplied.
Germany was to be allowed eventual political autonomy, beginning on the local level and working up finally to a federal government. Lastly, the question of when she would get such political autonomy would be determined by a vote of all members of the United Nations.48

By the end of January, 1945, when the Annual Report came out, the WWB seems to have concluded that it had done about all of which it was capable in this area. Early in February the Yalta Conference got underway where the final decisions in regard to Germany were made, and the board felt that further efforts to influence American public opinion were of little value. Any attempt to influence the decisions in regard to reparations had to be left for the time being to political and diplomatic infighting. When the results of Yalta became known, the board concluded that as much as possible had probably been accomplished.49

48"Tabulation of Results on What to Do With Germany," Cont. 81, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 36-37.

The WWB's general anti-German campaign did not significantly slacken. The December editorials contained an article by Green, "Maybe It's Just Some Guys Named Schmidt," debunking the idea that the ordinary German might be a thoroughly likeable human being. The December war-script-of-the-month was Millard Lampell's "Talk Their Language," which re-emphasized that the only language the Germans understand was force. The January script, Mortimer Frankel's "The Dead Are Not Liars," revived the memory of German atrocities against the Jews.50

The January **Monthly Report** carried excerpts from a writer overseas who had written the board his personal eyewitness account of what the Germans had done:

Don't let anybody tell you about the Germans being really nice people at heart. Their whole trail is absolutely unspeakable . . . They practice the most unthinkable varieties of civilian looting, torture, and everything else . . . the whole damn thing is just rotten from top to bottom and everybody who is here knows it.51


51**Writers' War Board Report**, January 1, 1945.
Gallico, in a February editorial, "Metamorphosis," strongly criticized those who stopped short of demanding the unconditional surrender of Germany.52

The Comics Committee of the WWB made its own contribution when, at their instigation in the spring of 1945, several anti-German stories appeared in comic books. One such example was Sigrid Schultz's "The Story of Fritz," published in the March issue of Real Life Comics. This concerned a German boy who, though greatly befriended by Jews early in life, nonetheless brutally participated in and encouraged atrocities against them. It was the usual theme, this time expressed on the level of the average eleven-year old child.53

The war board became seriously disturbed in January when William Shirer, just back from overseas, reported to them his observations of American treatment of German prisoners. He contended that the circulation of democratic

52"List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.

53Alex Somalman to Selma Hirsch, August 15, 1944, Sylvia Brodow to Sigrid Schultz, January 12, 1945, Cont. 81, WWB Records; a copy of the comic book referred to may be found in File 23-27, Cont. 81, WWB Records.
literature was forbidden in prison camps and that German prisoners were often better fed and clothed than the troops of America's ally, France. Apparently, Nazi propaganda was blatantly circulated, and the hard-core Nazis ran the camps. Angered, the board agreed to try to get publicity for these facts and to demand stricter policies in the treatment and guarding of the prisoners. A Prisoner-of-War Committee was organized under the leadership of Green to investigate and take action.54

Before anything more than the most trivial beginnings were made on this issue, events passed the committee by. Congressmen, informed of the circumstances which Shirer mentioned, began making charges of scandal, and a Senate committee undertook an investigation. The board decided that the American public was sufficiently aroused without its help. On the grounds that the time could be better spent on other issues, the campaign was dropped with just a

54"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, January 17, 1945," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
single mention in the Monthly Report.  

The end of the war against Germany did not mean the end of the board's anti-German campaign. No sooner did the shooting stop than the group took note of recently discovered German atrocities. In an editorial, "The Shock Is Late," LaFarge said:

What should shock us most now about the revelation of recent German atrocities is that we are so shocked. . . . Does anyone think this is a new manifestation of Germanism? . . . Did no one ever stop to consider that the extermination of the Jews of Europe by the Master Race would lead straight to the scarred skeletons of French, Russian, British, and American Prisoners of War? . . . Germanism has merely reached its logical and inevitable conclusion.  

In order that no one might question the authenticity of the German atrocity stories, the New York group undertook the promotion of two army films "Your Job in Germany" and "German Atrocities Unexpurgated." These films were selections from the official documentaries of the activities of concentration camps and other sites of German horrors. The board


56 LaFarge, "The Shock Is Late," File 23-72, Cont. 81, WWB Records.
arranged with the Army pictorial service to show them to a selected list of guests; they then asked the guests to send letters to Secretary of War Stimson requesting release of the films to the general public. WWB files contain evidence that the guests came away horrified and that a number of such letters were actually sent. The board also dispatched letters to almost 200 newspapers throughout the country asking them to request public showings of the films. Later, they received clippings of numerous film showings arranged in response to the request.57

In July there was a last surge in anti-German activity. All of the WWB's publications carried appropriate materials. A good example of the post-war approach to the same anti-German theme is the war-script-of-the-month for July, 1945, Arnold Hartley's "Loving Cups for Murderers." This dealt with the situation in Germany after the surrender. The narrator of the script speaks:

57 File 23-72, Cont. 81, WWB Records.
He took it all in, this gullible American. The Berlin gang played him for a sucker—the great American sucker. . . . He really believed the greatest of German propaganda lies: that Germans didn't want to conquer the world. That Germany just wanted to save the world from Bolshevism.

Before being interviewed by reporters, Field Marshal Goering insisted on a bath and a change of uniform, and later he ate heartily of a chicken dinner with peas and potatoes. When American General Stack entered the room, Goering gave him the Nazi salute. General Stack shook hands with him. . . . Is it any wonder that the Germans are boasting they haven't lost the war—that this is only an interlude before we all join up to jump the Russians. Aren't these new-born anti-Nazis spouting the old Hitler line? Are we forgetting already? . . . 58

There was no discernible change in the theory the board had maintained about Germany from the beginning:

It is time to remember the startling truth expressed by the American Gen. Lucius Clay when he said, "We haven't modified the non-fraternization order because we haven't found any decent people in Germany." No decent people in Germany! Are German generals decent enough to have lunch with? . . . We must not make the error of imagining that these atrocity camps were the sadistic playgrounds of a few perverted Nazis. Nothing of the kind. They were part and parcel of a deliberate German—repeat German—policy. The Nazis were simply the instruments for carrying the policy out. Who set this policy into motion? Anyone who knows Germany will tell you: the German General Staff. . . . The German generals undertook a deliberate policy of

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reducing the population of the countries surrounding Germany to a point where they would no longer be capable of supplying enough manpower to wage war on Germany for generations to come. . . . And we are still discussing whether we should deal with the German generals. There's something very wrong somewhere, ladies and gentlemen, very, very, wrong. 59

The script cited instances of German atrocities, examples of American "politeness to murderers and hangmen," and, approvingly, examples of demands by angry Americans for mass executions of Germans. It ended with the classic American radio request to the audience to send postcards or letters giving their opinion of what should be done to German generals, prisoners-of-war, and industrialists. 60

Similar in theme and material was one of the editorials for July, "The Neatest Trick of the Month," by Gallico. The other anti-German editorial was "The Pastor Couldn't Fool the GI," by Green. This was an attack on Pastor Martin Niemoeller, leader of Germany's Lutheran Confessional Church, and, according to Time, "the one German whom Christians everywhere had respected." 61 He had been an early member of

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

61 "For What I Am," Time, XLV (June 18, 1945), 26; "List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.

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Hitler's National Socialist Party but had turned against Hitler, denouncing him, and had spent eight years in confinement, four of them in a concentration camp. At the end of the war he was often regarded as the kind of man who should lead Germany in the years to come.  

In the editorial Green pointed to Niemoeller's record as a submarine commander in World War I and stated that the Lutheran pastor had made "repeated" attempts to enlist in World War II. According to Green, "when the National Socialist party was formed Niemoeller became a member. He preached Anschluss from his pulpit; he preached Germany's right to the Sudetenland, the Ukraine, and other sections of non-German central Europe. In other words, he was a confirmed and potent pan-German." He remained a Nazi "until Hitler attacked the church." Green pointed out that Niemoeller had led a relatively easy life in concentration camps, having been neither starved nor beaten. Asking


63 "The Pastor Couldn't Fool the GI," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
the question, "Who reserved him and what for?" the editorial suggested that the answer was the German high command, who, unsure of a Hitler victory, "did not place all its eggs in the Nazi basket." It "needed other leaders in reserve, men of different outward stripe but of a similar inward political heart. Pastor Niemöller is one such reservist."64 At a Rome news conference, Niemoeller had made the statement, "It may be that Germany can become democratic, but you have got to face the fact that the German people are not adapted to the sort of democracy which exists in Britain and the United States. The German people are different. . . . They like to be governed; they like to feel authority."

This Green interpreted in the editorial as implying "that the new Germany must in basic principle be no different from the Germany of Bismarck, the Germany of Kaiser Wilhelm, the Germany of Hitler."65

This editorial proved to be rather controversial. A nationwide attack developed against Niemoeller which

64Ibid.

included in its ranks the widow of the president, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who was quoted as calling him "a dangerous pan-German . . . looking down at us Americans."66

At least one national publication investigating this attack decided that the sole source from which it emanated was the WWB editorial. The Christian Century claimed that the WWB, by the medium of its editorials alone, "blankets the nation." It called Green's editorial a "mixture of plain untruths and unwarranted inferences."67 The Christian Century argued that no proof was offered that Niemoeller was a member of the Nazi party and that there was no documentation for the statement that the German high command was holding him in reserve as a future German leader. Any offers that Niemoeller made to serve in World War II were made under compulsion. It claimed that the interviews to which the WWB pointed were held under hostile conditions with reporters who did not understand Niemoeller's situation.


67"Why Attack Niemoeller?" Christian Century, LXII (September 12, 1945), 1031-32.
After quoting men whose opinion of Niemoeller differed from the board's, the magazine demanded to know why the New York group was making its attack.\(^6\)

The *Christian Century's* comments drew replies that attributed the board's acts to "pathological hate" and the influence of the Society for the Prevention of World War III.\(^6\) In the WWB's own reply Stout cheerfully admitted responsibility for the attack, adding merely that "we attacked Niemoeller only as a proposed leader of the German people into the way of democratic decency, and we had ample documentation for that attack."\(^7\) Stout cited an article from the *Christian Century* itself and another by Paul Hutchinson, the managing editor of the *Christian Century*, to the effect that "Niemoeller had been (and is) a fanatical German nationalist. . . . Eventually he enrolled as a member of the Nazi party. . . . If Germany is to go forward, it can

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\(^6\) Ibid.

\(^6\) See, for example, George Rosen, Letter to the Editor, *Christian Century* LXII (September 29, 1945), 1097-98.

\(^7\) Stout, Letter to the Editor, *Christian Century*, LXII (November 21, 1945), 1290.
no more go through Niemoeller than through Hitler." It was a devastating rejoinder. The editor of the Christian Century could only reply lamely that Stout was "superficially clever, but misleading" and that Niemoeller was now a different man.  

The controversy over Martin Niemoeller went on long after the WWB had ceased to exist. It should be said that some individuals and groups other than the WWB, with different sources of information and perhaps without the board's strong preconceptions, reached conclusions regarding Niemoeller which, allowing for differences in rhetoric, were quite similar to those of the WWB.

The WWB was also responsible for another attack on presumed anti-Nazi Germans. This was an article in the Saturday Review by Louis Mumford. Entitled "German Apologists and the German Record," it was a review of books on

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71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
Germany by exiles and was written at the request of Stout who had told Mumford that no one "has pointed out that they are apparently part and parcel of an organized pro-German propaganda movement exactly similar to that which began directly after the close of the first World War." In his article Mumford followed Stout's suggestions closely, pointing to the World War I example of being oversympathetic to the Germans and overlooking evidence that they intended to try it again. Reviewing the books published recently by Germans, he said:

Even the most carefully documented volumes bear the common taint of German apologetics: covertly or openly, they seek to lessen the world's sense of Germany's guilt, to soften her punishment, to diminish the term of military occupation, to transform the Black Record into a grey one, and to lose the greyness itself in a picture of an international twilight in which all cats are of the same color.

Mumford attacked the illusions which he said were being fostered about Germany:

74 Stout to Mumford, May 19, 1945, Cont. 81, WWB Records; "German Apologists and the German Record," Saturday Review of Literature, XXV (August 11, 1945), 5-6, 28, 30.
75 Mumford, "German Apologists and the German Record," 5-6.
... that Germany does not differ in its background, its culture, or its purposes, from any other European state... that Germany was treated with flagrant injustice after the first World War; and that an honest attempt to deal generously with democratic Germany would have promptly made that nation happy, cooperative, and peaceful... that there is a good Germany and a bad Germany; the good Germany contains the majority of the German people; the bad Germany is the Germany of the ruling classes... 

By the time the Mumford article appeared and the controversy over Niemoeller occurred, the WWB was finally all but finished with its anti-German campaign. The reason was not at all that the board's feeling against the Germans or even its feeling that such a campaign was still necessary had decreased. The explanation lay in the fact that when the government's subsidy was withdrawn, the group expected for a time that it would cease to exist almost immediately. Arrangements were made for halting or transferring all WWB activities, and the board understood at the time that the anti-German effort would be taken over by the Society for the Prevention of World War III and the Friends of Democracy, organizations in which Stout was prominent and which would continue such a campaign enthusiastically. When the board

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76 Ibid., 5, 29.
did decide to continue for a period, it concentrated most of its work in other areas.\textsuperscript{77}

Numerous questions could be raised about the WWB's activities in regard to the enemy nations, and Germany in particular. Many questions were, of course, raised at the time, from sources within and without the board. It might be asked, for example, whether the group's position on Germany was entirely consistent with the other positions that it held. This question, along with a few other aspects of the WWB's activities in this area, will be discussed briefly in the conclusion.

As in most such instances, there is no available method to tell just what the results of the group's campaign were. The possibility must be considered that if their propaganda did have an impact, the result might have been precisely the opposite of what they wished. Political scientist Hannah Arendt wrote in the winter of 1945:

The only propaganda result of the revival of the "German problem" is, therefore, negative: many who have learned to discount the atrocity stories of the last war simply refuse to believe what this time is a gruesome reality because it is presented in the old form of national propaganda. The talk of the "eternal Germany" and its eternal crimes serves only to cover Nazi Germany and its present crimes with a veil of scepticism (sic) . . . . Thus the notion that the source of international conflict lies in the iniquities of Germany (or Japan) has the effect of masking the actual political issues. By identifying fascism with Germany's national character and history, people are deluded into believing that the crushing of Germany is synonymous with the eradication of fascism. . . . Thus all attempts to identify Hitler with German history can only lead to the gratuitous bestowal upon Hitlerism of national respectability and the sanction of a national tradition.78

The war board often stated that its only goal was to call attention to the well-established German record, contending that the record would speak for itself. Frequently, of course, they did take the liberty of speaking for the record, but it must be conceded that whatever else may have ensued, they gained a considerable amount of attention.

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78 Arendt, "Approaches to the 'German Problem,'" Partisan Review, XII (Winter, 1945), 94. Miss Arendt was not, of course, referring here specifically to the WWB.
CHAPTER XI

RACIAL TOLERANCE

The history of things past is inevitably written in the light of the events which have subsequently occurred. Nowhere in this study of the Writers' War Board is this principle more evident than in regard to the board's campaign to attack racial prejudice. Smaller in scope than the other major private campaigns, the board nevertheless at the time and in retrospect regarded this as one of its most important objectives, both in the late stages of the war and in the post-war period. For example, in the fall of 1944 Stout asked the most active WWB members what, in their opinion, would be the most important objectives of the board from that point on. As an objective, achievement of racial tolerance was usually ranked second only to pressing the war to a successful conclusion. Typical was Christopher LaFarge's reply in which he placed racial tolerance next in importance to the "German Menace" until the war ended. He said that such a campaign for toleration "will go on for some time but is 2nd place [sic] because it [the racial situation] is in a dynamic state and

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may go boom in our faces any day now." Mrs. Barach later recalled that the achievement of racial harmony was selected as one of the two objectives of the board when it decided to remain in existence after the end of World War II.2

There was no question that a need for the board's efforts existed. Even the most cursory examination of the materials dealing with the racial situation during World War II reveals the depth of the problem. At the beginning of the war even the emergency failed to mitigate the customary discrimination against Negroes, Jews, and aliens. In 1940, the only reaction of the federal government to pressure from an imminent Negro march on Washington had been the issuance of the President's order forbidding discrimination in defense employment and establishing the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practices to deal with violaters. The Committee proved to have limited effectiveness due to the lack of both power and funds. Racial tension increased in many areas,

1Christopher LaFarge to Stout, November 5, 1944, Cont. 20, WWB Records; see also Luise Silcox to Stout, no date, Russel Crouse to Stout, no date, and other similar memoranda in File 1-92, Cont. 20, WWB Records.

2Mrs. Barach to the author, July 19, 1968.
climaxing in a serious riot in Detroit in June, 1943.3 Negro historian John Hope Franklin summed up the situation by stating that "experiences on the home front during the war drove the morale of the Negroes to a new low."4

The WWB apparently did not decide to make racial tolerance one of its major objectives until well after its other policies had been set. The First Annual Report makes no mention of substantial concern for racial problems, though it touches on practically every other activity of the board. Indeed, the New York writers considered and apparently passed up an opportunity to become involved in one of the war's most important racial controversies. This dispute resulted from the American Red Cross practice, under heavy social and political pressure, of maintaining racial segregation of the blood contributed for the armed forces. This was, of course, a humiliation to the blacks, and they raised as much protest


4Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, 577.
against this as against any other single matter during the war.5

In August, 1942, the board was contacted by several persons interested in obtaining help to change this blood segregation practice. Questionnaires were sent to members of the WWB Advisory Council asking for their opinion. The result was overwhelming disapproval of the Red Cross practice and agreement that something should be done, though one advisory council member, Howard Lindsay, dissented strongly from the majority views. He pointed out that most Americans had been raised on a superstition regarding "Negro" blood and stated, "I cannot ask any person, however ignorant, prejudiced, or superstitious, to incur wounds in battle in my defense . . . and be subjected to a blood transfusion which horrifies and revolts him." He added that to make the matter a public issue would be a disservice to the war effort because the average soldier would have his morale shaken.6 He convinced Stout, who replied, "For myself, I have never seen a case better put than you put that one; and I agree with you."7


6Lindsay to Stout, August 17, 1942, Cont. 72, WWB Records.

7Stout to Lindsay, August 24, 1942, Cont. 72, WWB Records.
The issue was, therefore, allowed to drop.

The board did make one small gesture toward racial harmony. In September, 1942, the war-script-of-the-month was "Brothers" by Negro poet and dramatist Langston Hughes, a story of the exploits of heroic black seamen. More characteristic of the WWB's 1942 contact with Negroes, however, was an attempt to get the Negro press interested in the war effort. Black newspapers were more concerned with discrimination and violation of rights. In December the WWB met with the Negro leader Adam Clayton Powell, then pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church, member of the New York City Council, and editor of the paper Peoples' Voice, who had written Is This a White Man's War? in order to stimulate Negro interest. If the meeting produced noteworthy results, they are not apparent.8

One of the earliest activities in the area of race tolerance came in the summer of 1943 at the request of New York mayor Fiorella LaGuardia. The mayor had organized a committee to plan a series of radio programs called "Unity at Home—

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Victory Abroad" to be broadcast in New York. Several of the programs were to be dramatic presentations. The Radio Committee of the WWB arranged for seven scripts by Hughes, Milton Geiger, Eve Merriam, Ruth Adams Knight, Hughes Allison, Fannie Hurst, and Theo Ferro, all leading radio writers. Considered particularly effective in their attack on prejudice were the scripts by Miss Merriam, "What's Wrong with Me?" and especially that by Hughes, "In the Service of My Country," which showed all races working successfully side-by-side during the building of an Alaskan highway. Both of these were later sent out as war-scripts-of-the-month.9

Throughout much of the rest of 1943, the board utilized occasional opportunities to advance this cause. For example, whenever the board noted a good speech combatting race or creed prejudice, it tried at least to include a summary in the "Brief Items for House Organs" publication. Usually the by-line was given to some well known individual, rather than to the real author, to insure a high rate of usage by the various

house organs. The December issue of this publication contained an article actually written by its public author, clergyman Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Will We Solve Our Negro Problem?" Surprisingly it proved to be one of the most popular "brief items" in the entire series with a high rate of "pick ups." Also in August, 1943, the editorial service in its first mailing included a plea for racial tolerance, "Democracy's Way with a Problem," by Robert L. Duffus.

It was not until 1944, however, that the board launched any semblance of an organized attack on racial problems. Early in February, 1944, the WWB Committee to Combat Racial Hatred was formed under the chairmanship of radio executive Robert J. Landry. Other members of the committee included Alan Green, Mrs. Rita Halle Kleeman, Mrs. Margaret Leech, Mrs. Pat Selwyn Klopfer, Mrs. Jean Ellis Poletti, and Hobe Morrison. The committee began to actively seek ways and means to promote

10See, for example, Fadiman to Leo Rosten, December 17, 1943, Cont. 6, WWB Records.


12"List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
On March 8, 1944, at its regular meeting the WWB was visited by Ted Posten, a veteran Negro journalist, who headed the Negro Press section of the News Bureau of the OWI and was also racial adviser to the entire information operation. Posten asked for WWB help in handling certain problems out of the strict boundaries of OWI functions. His main complaint was that while the Negro press was being given full information on the Negroes in the war effort, due to the work of his office, the white newspapers and magazines, as well as movies and the radio, were receiving little or no such information, leaving whites with the feeling that Negroes were not contributing their share.

Posten was particularly disturbed by two specific instances in which pro-Negro government activities had been stymied by criticism. The Special Coverage Section of the United States Army Signal Corps had made a film, "The Negro Soldier," intended for general distribution to as wide an audience as possible in order to document the Negro's role

13"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, February 9, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 28.

14"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 8, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, 579.
in the war. The War Activities Committee of the movie industry had agreed to distribute the film but had taken no active steps except to urge that it be drastically shortened, and no showings were underway. Also, just two days before Posten's appearance, the War Department had bowed to the criticism of Southern Congressmen, particularly Representative Andrew J. May of Kentucky, Chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, and had withdrawn from use in the armed services a pamphlet supporting the idea of racial equality entitled *The Races of Mankind*, by Ruth Benedict and Gene Weltfish.15

The board decided to give Posten what assistance it could. Since the War Activities Committee would distribute "The Negro Soldier" upon request, it was agreed that requests would be stimulated. Accordingly, mailings were undertaken to columnists, schools, house organ writers, and movie reviewers, asking them to endorse the film and stimulate

interest. In addition, the WWB in its regular mailing to its cooperating writers asked them to bombard their local theater manager and local newspaper editor with requests for a showing. As in practically all instances involving the WWB's work, results are almost impossible to demonstrate, but this effort does seem to have met with some success. By July, the film was widely distributed. It played in more than three hundred theaters in New York City alone. Many of the showings were non-commercial, but the widespread interest in the film attracted the attention of commercial exhibitors who originally had rejected it. Also, U. S. Army Orientation ordered the film shown to all its troops, not simply to its black contingent.16

In a further attempt to promote Negro recognition through movies, the board sent out letters to five newsreel companies and seven movie producers, asking them to use well-dressed, respectable Negroes in the backgrounds of their

16"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 8, 1944," form letters signed by Rex Stout and Robert Landry to assorted individuals, replies and clippings, File 1-79C, Cont. 16, WWB Records; John T. McManus in New York P. M. July 12, 1944, p. 20.
shots and in small parts without being obvious. There is no mention of results.\textsuperscript{17}

In connection with their attempt to help out on \textit{The Races of Mankind}, the board immediately became involved in the already raging controversy. The pamphlet was under attack because it indicated that certain intelligence tests had shown that Northerners, white and black, scored higher than Southerners, white and black. The point was, of course, that economic circumstances and educational opportunities made the difference, not race; and Benedict and Weltfish clearly stated that Southerners were the "inborn equals" of Northerners. But that was quite insufficient to quell Southern ire.\textsuperscript{18} Besides the banning by the Army, Chester Barnard, president of the United Service Organizations for the National Defense, on February 14, 1944, ordered the pamphlet banned from USO centers on the grounds that its contents were political and that since

\textsuperscript{17}Stout and Landry, letter to assorted companies and individuals, File 1-79-3, Cont. 17, WWB Records.

the USO served persons of many differing beliefs it should not become involved.

It was at this point that the board entered the controversy. On March 14, 1944, Stout sent a letter to Barnard protesting the decision, a letter that perhaps indicates why a "war" board should be concerned with race:

Our disagreement is simple: The Races of Mankind is an educational pamphlet. . . . The Writers' War Board believes that the suppression of scientifically established facts concerning racial equality tends to the defeat of one of our outstanding war aims. We believe that inter-racial strife in our own communities is part of the war overseas and indivisible from it. We cannot combat the master race theory in Europe and appease it at home.19

Barnard replied immediately, citing "the element of dishonesty involved in taking the money and services of people and using it for purposes to which they did not agree."20 The WWB and Stout dismissed this argument as "absurd and inadmissible."21 Later, a meeting was held between some members of the WWB and Barnard on May 22. Its results in achieving

19Stout to Barnard, March 14, 1944, Cont. 16, WWB Records.
20Barnard to Stout, March 15, 1944, Cont. 16, WWB Records.
21Stout to Barnard, March 17, 1944, Cont. 16, WWB Records.
some sort of agreement were as unsuccessful as the correspondence, even though the New York group's representatives pointed out that there had been no complaints prior to Barnard's original move against the pamphlet.22

The board undertook a campaign to pressure Barnard by publicizing the incident. Its own objections were made public simultaneously with Stout's letter of March 17. The booklet itself and mimeographed copies of the entire Stout-Barnard correspondence were sent out on April 4 to fifty-four officers and board members of the USO, thirty-nine selected organizations, and twenty-four book reviewers. Within two weeks this had produced twelve letters of protest. The WWB editorial for April included "Exploding the Myth," a blast at Races of Mankind opponents. When the Detroit USO center announced that it would defy Barnard and continue to distribute The Races of Mankind, the WWB sent letters to over eleven hundred USO clubhouses and other organizations suggesting that they follow the Detroit example. Forty-one USO centers agreed to

22"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 8, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 24, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.
examine the pamphlet and then decide, while nine others agreed to cooperate or actively promote its distribution immediately.\textsuperscript{23}

Furthermore, the WWB was able to have The Races of Mankind made into a filmstrip entitled "We Are All Brothers—What Do You Know About Race?" produced by New Tools for Learning of New York, and to promote its distribution. The filmstrip was eventually adapted into a comic strip as well. Perhaps the widest circulation was gained for the pamphlet when the board had the original authors write a dramatized version, entitled "Meet Your Relatives," which was distributed as the June war-script-of-the-month to over 700 schools, local radio stations, and educational organizations and was retained in the WWB script catalog for further circulation.\textsuperscript{24}

No one can accurately state the degree of the board's responsibility, but despite continuing attacks, including

\textsuperscript{23}Stout to assorted individuals and organizations, form letters, April 4, 1944, Stout to USO centers, form letters, June 21, 1944 and miscellaneous reports, File 1-79-2, Cont. 16, WWB Records; New York Times, March 16, 1944, p. 17; New York P. M., April 9, 1944, p. 9; WWB, Third Annual Report, 17-18; "List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.

\textsuperscript{24}WWB, Third Annual Report, 17-18; File 1-79-2, Cont. 16, WWB Records; Edwards, "Note on The Races of Mankind," 167-68; Alice Dagleisch, Review of Meet Your Relatives, Parents' Magazine, XIX (September, 1944), 153.
the routine charge that it was "communist inspired," The Races of Mankind went on to be utilized in a variety of creative ways; thousands who would never otherwise have heard of the booklet read it, and the title itself became something of a household phrase.25

Just as soon as the board became interested in the problem, its regular publications began to include appropriate material. For example, the WWB editorials for March, 1944, included "Too Hot to Handle," a straight-forward attack on the dangers of prejudice written by Duffus. This was followed up by The Races of Mankind editorial in April and another broadside in July, "Bigotry Must Not Win the War," by Landry. Simultaneously, the monthly war script sent out for May, 1944, was Chet Huntley's "Is Fair Play Controversial?" which demonstrated that, given equal opportunities, Negroes learned as fast as whites. In March, 1944, the first issue of "Brief Items for Army Camps" appeared; and one of its articles was a reprint of "Will We Solve Our Negro Problem?" by Fosdick. The same series included in May, 1944, the article

"We Have Racial Equality — Do You?" over the signature of actress Helen Hayes.26

The Writers' War Board Report was carrying paragraphs on the race issue almost every month, including this pointed reminder to the nations' writers:

. . . We cannot as writers, limit the blame for race hatred to enemy influences. It is not so simple. Race hatred is rooted in the native soil and the cheap labor supply of America. . . . Writers play a considerable part in furthering the "old stock" swindle in picking out only Anglo-Saxon names for their attractive characters and marrying them only in Protestant churches and giving them only inferiority-emphasizing relationships to menial Negroes, ignorant working class Catholics, shyster or comic Jews, slovenly if picturesque Mexicans, and so on.

In short, the time seems to have arrived for writers to stop shaking their heads about other people's race bigotry and examine their own very considerable contributions to it. . . .27

In its meeting of April 12, 1944, the board undertook one of its characteristic brainstorming sessions in regard to the racial problem. Crouse and Carmer suggested promotion of the Bill of Rights as a central theme for such a campaign.


27Writers' War Board Report, June 1, 1944.
while Alan Green proposed the promotion of a single individual as a "Messiah" to lead an onslaught against hate groups who profited from prejudice. Oscar Hammerstein and others objected, however, that these would be too long-range to do much good. The consensus of the group was that approaches through the regular WWB committees and contacts and an attempt to educate their own colleagues in the publishing and entertainment industry would prove more practical. Even this was thought of as "a broadly and systematically conceived plan to enlist as many as possible of the media of communication on the side of an American unity which will prevent the civil war now threatening this community."\footnote{Fadiman to John Tunis, June 22, 1944, Cont. 18, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, April 12, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.}

The Comics Committee was notably active in this field. Paul Gallico was the nominal chairman of this group, but he was often absent on writing assignments overseas; so the real direction in 1944 and early 1945 was given first by Clifton Fadiman and then by Jack Goodman. Among their projects that actually reached print was one that appeared in a leading publication of the Gaines Publishing Company, Comic Cavalcade,
Winter, 1944-45. It contained three sequences on the tolerance theme. In the first, the "Green Lantern" was assisted by black and white street corner Santa Clauses in conquering a villain. The latter had attacked Jews after using "100% Americanism" as a means of taking over women's committees bearing a strong resemblance to the wartime so-called "mothers' groups" regarded by the board as neo-Fascist. Next, "Philippines Are People" distinguished "good" orientals from "bad" Japs. Finally, "Hop Harrigan, America's Ace of the Airways" was involved in a sequence based on the pamphlet, They Got the Blame: The Story of Scapegoats in History.

Wonder Woman - Comic No. 13, Summer, 1945, contained a sequence on Negro heroine Sojourner Truth as one of the "Wonder Women of History."^29

In an effort to get comics' support for the board's programs, a meeting was held with representatives from comic book publishers in December, 1944. One of the strongest pleas made was to include racial tolerance assistance within the

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^29"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 7, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, February 23, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 18; File 1-79-6, Cont. 17, WWB Records; Copies of comic books containing the sequences referred to are contained in File 1-79-6.
regular comics' framework. The WWB suggested to the group that "while your readers cannot be expected to accept heroes or heroines belonging to minority groups, it is possible to give subsidiary characters Jewish names or depict them as Negroes, etc. Above all, along the line of racial hatred, stereotypes should be avoided. The Catholic should not be portrayed as superstitious, the Jew avaricious, humble, aggressive, or the Negro as a menial or comic."30

The Comics Committee also prepared a newspaper cartoon series attacking vicious rumors. Called "Don't Listen to Him," it was drawn by veteran artist Eric Godal. This series featured such figures as "The Destroyer," who "Eggs on his followers by blaming their trouble on innocent scapegoats, Negroes, Catholics, Jews, or foreign born--an old Hitler trick. His goal is riots and confusion--power for himself." Some 500 newspapers wrote to the WWB to obtain the free mats of this series.31

In an effort to get reading material that promoted racial harmony before the youth of the country, the board,

30"Digest of Comic Magazine Conference, December 5, 1944," Cont. 11, WWB Records.

31File 1-79-6, Cont. 17, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 18.
in October, 1944, formed the Juvenile Book Committee with Mrs. Rita Halle Kleeman as chairman. The committee chose a series of books using the criteria that the book have a forceful well-presented appeal for racial equality while having sufficient entertainment value to guarantee that a wide audience would read it. Selected books were promoted by radio reviews by Mrs. Kleeman as well as by mailings from the board itself. Efforts were made without avail to start a series of juvenile radio shows for a similar purpose.\(^{32}\)

The board extended its effort to promote useful books on the adult level as well. One of their first concerns was with a novel by Lillian Smith, *Strange Fruit*. This work, which dealt with the racial conflict in a small Southern town, a love story between a black and a white, culminating in a lynching, needed only a minimum of help. It enjoyed good reviews, widespread publicity, and an excellent sale. The board simply reviewed it favorably in its publications and made some personal contacts. However, on March 19, the work was banned from Boston bookstores due to some of the language used

\(^{32}\)Mrs. Kleeman to Mrs. Elliot Sanger, December 7, 1944, Cont. 18, WWB Records; File 1-79-7, Cont. 18, WWB Records.
in it. The board, on principle opposed to censorship, and feeling that the language might be used as an excuse to suppress a useful piece of work, immediately sent telegrams of protest to the bookstores, to officials concerned, and even to the sponsor of the Kate Smith Hour, when that singer criticized the book on the air. There was enough agitation stirred up from other sources, however, and the WWB soon dropped the matter.33

The board next turned its attention to Gwethalyn Graham's Earth and High Heaven. It dealt with a Jewish-Protestant marriage and directly raised the issue of anti-Semitism, thereby winning WWB commendation. No popular magazine treatment of this subject had yet appeared. The WWB undertook to urge Collier's magazine to accept it for publication and to insure a good reception for the story when it appeared. The effort worked. When Collier's agreed to publish

Earth and High Heaven, Stout, for the board, sent a statement to the magazine praising it for its "editorial forthrightness and simple honesty" in sanctioning such a theme.34

The board utilized its usual organs in the promotion. In addition, it was arranged for commentator Walter Winchell to compliment Collier's. Alan Green sent letters to a number of women commentators, as well as to many of the WWB's advisory council, asking for a plug for the book and commendation for the magazine. Mrs. Kleeman reviewed the book in her regular spot on the Radio Book Service of the National Council of Women.35

One other WWB book promotion on racial matters concerned a work written as a resource unit for high schools, Probing Our Prejudices, by Hortense Powdermaker. It was, in the words of its author, "an attempt to help high school students become aware of their prejudices, to understand the nature, origin and effect of prejudices, and to suggest

34Stout to Collier's, July 17, 1944, Cont. 18, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, August 2, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Graham, "Earth and High Heaven," Collier's, CXIV (August 26, September 2, 9, 16, 1944).

35"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, August 2, 1944," Cont., WWB Records; File 1-79-18A, Cont. 1, WWB Records.
activities which can help reduce them."^36 Carl Carmer wrote an editorial pointing out the book's value. It was commended in the WWB Monthly Report. The group was able to get it favorably reviewed in Scholastic Magazine, in Parents' Magazine, in School and Society, and on the "Thursday Club" radio program by Martha Deane, a women's commentator.\(^37\)

Naturally, the WWB did not always succeed, even in areas where it had well-established contacts. For example, much effort was expended in 1944 and early 1945 to get magazine articles published on race tolerance. Mailings were dispatched to authors, editors, and publishers with this plea. The grand net result was exactly one article, that by Mrs. Kleeman, in Redbook; and its only contribution to racial matters was that it included a picture which showed several whites and blacks working closely together.\(^38\) Furthermore, an attempt

\(^36\)Powdermaker, Probing Our Prejudices (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), viii.

\(^37\)"List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records; Writers' War Board Report, November 1, 1944; File 1-79-18B, Cont. 18, WWB Records; Agnes E. Benedict, Review of Probing Our Prejudices, by Hortense Powdermaker, Parents' Magazine, XX(April, 1945), 157-58; Review of Probing Our Prejudices, by Hortense Powdermaker, School and Society, LX (August, 5, 1944), 96.

\(^38\)Mrs. Kleeman, "Easier Housekeeping Ahead," Redbook (June 25, 1944); File 1-79-5, Cont. 17, WWB Records.
to interest the newspaper syndicates failed when the NEA syndicate turned down a piece by Hughes on Negro discrimination in job placement on the grounds that it would not be popular. The WWB considered but decided against protesting since the NEA was such a valuable outlet on other matters.39

The board members' fight against racial hatred was a private campaign, but they were able to take advantage of the Fifth War Loan Drive to get some government cooperation. The drive was to begin in June, 1944; among other things, the group was asked for "special angles" on bond sales for use on radio shows.40 They took advantage of this to suggest that July 4 be established as a general tolerance day. The "special angles" would tie up tolerance with bond sales. The board suggested this theme:

American boys abroad are living this American idea. They are all equal in the life they are living and the deaths they are facing. Bombs, torpedoes, and bullets are no respecter of race, creed, or color.

Here at home we too are asked to make an all out effort. The responsibility for buying bonds and the

39"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, August 16, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.

40Julian Street, Jr. to WWB, March 11, 1944, Cont. 44, WWB Records.
privilege of buying bonds rests with each American citizen equally.41

They went on to express ideas for implementing this on specific programs. For example, for the National Broadcasting Company show "Mystery Theater," the New York writers commented that "this show dramatizes current mystery novels. A novel which contained the race tolerance ideas could be suggested to them for performance the night of July 4."42

There is no clear record of how thoroughly these ideas were used. However, according to Julian Street, Jr., of the Treasury Department, several network shows did use the WWB approach on July 4, and one quoted their theme verbatim.43

On May 3, 1944, the WWB was visited by Malcolm Ross, chairman of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practices. He told the board that the committee had little real power in itself and depended for its usefulness upon complaints made to it or disputes in war industries referred to it by the President. He asked the help of the group both in publicizing the work of the FEPC and in gaining the

41 WWB to Street, June 6, 1944, Cont. 44, WWB Records.

42 Ibid.

43 Street, quoted in Mrs. Barach to WWB, October 25, 1944, Cont. 46, WWB Records.
cooperation of unions which tended to resent the advancement of Negro workers.\textsuperscript{44} The New York writers agreed to try to help out in these matters. About three months later, on receipt of an appeal from Mrs. Ida Fox of the National Council for a Permanent FEPC, it decided to expand its efforts to include helping to retain the FEPC.\textsuperscript{45}

In this effort the board primarily used its regular publications, with emphasis on the editorial service and "Brief Items for House Organs." For example, the editorial service in June contained "Him Today--Me Tomorrow," by Duffus, a plea against various types of discrimination. Subsequent editorials included "Fair Play on the Job" in September, "Fair Play Now" in October, both by Duffus, and "Making Democracy Permanent," by Dorothy Norman. A paragraph plugging the FEPC in the WWB Monthly Report was credited with having begun a campaign in Massachusetts on behalf of the committee. The New York group also cooperated in getting writers for appropriate scripts to be given over the public

\textsuperscript{44}"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 3, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.

\textsuperscript{45}"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, August 10, 1944," Cont. 48, WWB Records.
Later, as the fight in Congress over attempts to renew the FEPC waged hot, the WWB sent telegrams and letters wherever they thought the result might be fruitful. When a struggle developed in New York over the Ives-Quinn Bill, a measure to set up a state FEPC, the New York writers used what influence they could muster to encourage support for its passage. The fight both in Congress and the New York legislature was still continuing, and requests for assistance were still coming in when the WWB went out of existence early in 1946.

The board felt that radio, reaching as it did a mass audience, was an extremely important media in the fight for race tolerance. In some cases, including the "Unity at Home—Victory Abroad" broadcasts already mentioned, the New York group helped to furnish the material itself. Another such

46 "List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Mrs. Mary S. Hayes, November 23, 1944, Cont. 48, WWB Records; File 8-41, Cont. 48, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 18.

47 Margaret Leech to Julian S. Myrick, February 19, 1945, Mrs. Leech to Myrick, March 5, 1945, Cont. 20, WWB Records; Landry to Governor Thomas Dewey, February 27, 1945, Cont. 20, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to WWB, January 9, 1946, Cont. 48, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Mrs. Janet E. Neuman, February 20, 1946, Cont. 48, WWB Records; Kesselman, "Fair Employment Practices Movement in Perspective," 41-43.
example was the WWB assistance to the "New World A-Comin'" broadcasts for a New York radio station. Scripts dealing with race relations were furnished, including the powerful "There Are Things to be Done," by Mitchell Grayson, later sent out as a WWB war-script-of-the-month. It concerned everyday instances which showed ways in which fair treatment of the Negro could be furthered. The series was so effective that the sponsor, the YMCA, was placed on the "Negro Education Honor Roll for 1944," for presenting "the most forthright radio dramatization of Negro life and race relations on the air today."48

As a general rule, however, the WWB worked through more indirect means, preferring to influence or educate those who controlled the contents of the entertainment media. On May 31, 1944, Dan Golenpaul, producer of the radio show "Information Please," visited the board to discuss the problems and possibilities of introducing race tolerance material into the entertainment fabric of commercial radio shows. He

suggested that the dollars and cents angle might be success­fully exploited. If the radio writers and agencies could be convinced that they could attract and hold an audience interested in racial harmony, their assistance in the board's campaign would be more enthusiastic than if they were simply fulfilling a democratic obligation.49

The board thought this approach might be too commer­cial and felt it would have to be at least combined with an appeal to principle. However, this conference did spur them on to the organization of several meetings for radio writers. Eventually it was decided to include other types of writers as well. They believed that much of the problem was caused by the fact that many writers were just not aware of the existence of a dangerous situation.

The first meeting took place at the home of Fadiman in New York on June 15, 1944, where over twenty radio writers were gathered. Fadiman addressed the group and a discussion followed which was apparently rather frank, particularly over whether or not the direct approach to combating race hatreds

49"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 31, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.
was indicated. Some of those attending, including script writer Jerry McGill, argued for the direct approach: "We must expose our enemies, damn them and brand them. The Gerald Smiths, etc., change their lines from month to month. We must keep abreast of those changes and attack them all." Others at the meeting, however, argued strongly for the indirect approach which fitted in much more closely with the board's point of view.

At least one writer came away convinced. Goodman Ace, the author and star of the popular radio show, "Easy Aces," wrote Fadiman, "what I am trying to say is that last night I was awakened to the cause . . . and I am sure we can contribute something to the fight."

The next day after the gathering at Fadiman's house, a much larger, more formal meeting was held which some fifty-four radio writers, members of the Radio Guild, attended in addition to sixty-five free lance writers. Stout addressed


51 Ibid.

52 Ace to Fadiman, June 16, 1944, Cont. 17, WWB Records.
the group, urging particularly that they frequently use sequences in which the racial tolerance theme was secondary to entertainment, but definitely present, rather than to just occasionally give a blatant plug which would be immediately identified as obvious propaganda. A few days later Green made a similar request in a racial tolerance meeting with eighteen editors of juvenile books.  

The writers at each of these meetings had indicated an interest in some material which might be educational as well as useful in planning program themes. Accordingly, they were sent a series of special mailings that the board considered to be helpful for educational and propaganda purposes. One of these items was They Got the Blame: The Story of Scapegoats in History, by Kenneth M. Gould, an attempt to explain why the persecution of minority groups began and continued.  

53 "Minutes of the Meeting with Radio Writers, June 16, 1944," Cont. 15, WWB Records; Green to WWB, June 20, 1944, Cont. 15, WWB Records.  

theme was that Americans came from many different places and
countries but all were now one people. *Negroes and the War*,
another selection sent to as many writers as there were
copies available, was an OWI pamphlet that had met such op­
position in Congress that it had never been distributed; and
most copies had actually been destroyed. It showed both what
Negroes had contributed to the war and what they stood to
gain by an American victory. For programs aimed in whole or
in part at the South, there were reprints of Lillian Smith's
"There Are Things to be Done," in which the author, a native
Southerner, pleaded that the South break with race prejudice.
Other mailings included the *Races of Mankind* pamphlet, a
somewhat similar study, *Race? What Do Scientists Say?*, and
a series of commercial advertisements put out by the Institute
for American Democracy, a group organized to promote racial
tolerance.55

55Copies of *By Different Boats*, *Negroes and the War*,
and *Race? What Do Scientists Say?* are in File 1-79, Cont. 15,
WWB Records; Smith, "There Are Things to be Done," *The South
Today*, VI (Winter, 1942-43); Mrs. Barach to Mrs. Pat S.
Klopfer, April 15, 1944, Cont. 15, WWB Records; on the protest
in Congress to *Negroes and the War* see, for example, *New York
Times*, March 9, 1943, p. 18.
The mailings continued into September, 1944. In the fall the New York writers were concerned with assisting the Institute for American Democracy with its "Be American" radio campaign. They obtained the services of twenty writers, forty-five of whose ideas eventually made it on the air. These announcements opposing both religious and racial prejudice were offered free to every American commercial radio station.  

Putting into effect the WWB suggestions, though without any direct assistance, in December, 1944, the radio show "Mr. District Attorney" did a dramatic treatment of an outburst of racial antagonism in a school fostered by an advocate of "100 per cent Americanism." The show had ended with a plea to read Probing Our Prejudices. There was a somewhat hostile audience reaction. The board had to stimulate letters from writers and other individuals to counteract this reaction, in order to assure continued treatment of this theme.  

In the fall the WWB also sent out a memorandum to

56 File 1-79-23, Cont. 29, WWB Records.

57 Mrs. Barach to Mrs. Samuel Lewisohn, December 26, 1944, Cont. 25, WWB Records; File 1A-33, Cont. 25, WWB Records.
writers, editors and columnists, exposing to its satisfaction some "mothers' groups" such as the "Mothers of Sons Forum" and the "National Blue Star Mothers of America" as concealing isolationist, anti-Russian, anti-British, anti-Semitic, and, in general, pro-Fascist activities. The board also took offense and issued protests when a car card designed to be used on buses and trolleys was withdrawn in some cities because it included a Negro baby among a picture of four.58 Relatively minor assistance and cooperation in connection with the race question during this period was given to the National Urban League, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Bureau for Intercultural Education of New York, and the American Council on Race Relations of Chicago.59

In the fall of 1944, the Office of Communications Research at Columbia University made a survey of all phases of show business on behalf of the WWB. This included a thorough analysis of motion pictures, stage plays, radio programs, magazine articles, comic cartoons, newsreels, and advertising written throughout the last year. The purpose was to show

58 File 1-79-19, Cont. 18, WWB Records; File 1-79-24, Cont. 19, WWB Records.

that writers and editors in each of these areas fostered racial stereotypes, such as the "avaricious" Jew and the "lazy" Negro, which tended to support the ideas of popular prejudice. This survey, said to be "the most comprehensive . . . ever attempted," carried out the purpose fully.60

The question which the WWB and its Committee to Combat Race Hatred had to consider was how to best present this material to the most appropriate audience. The committee conceived the idea of putting on a one-night show. If top names in the fields of both literature and entertainment could be obtained to give the performance, an audience composed of the leading writers, editors, illustrators, artists and technicians of entertainment and communications media might be induced to come and be educated by the material on racial stereotypes and indoctrinated with the WWB's ideas on race tolerance. This idea flowered into the WWB production called "The Myth That Threatens America," and the concept worked almost to perfection. Green regarded it as one of the best demonstrations of the New York group's ability to marshal assistance from the

60 "Gear Show Biz vs. Race Bias," Variety, CLVII (January 10, 1945), 1, 18; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, December 27, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Landry to the author, September 28, 1970.
more talented people in all areas as well as one of the most lastingly useful things that they ever accomplished.\textsuperscript{61}

There was considerable disagreement between members of the WWB as to how the subject should be approached. The difference of opinion was between those who believed the show should be a serious exposition of the material and those who thought a light, entertaining atmosphere should be maintained as much as possible. From either approach it was hard to present the material dramatically to a very sophisticated audience. The result was something of a compromise between the two factions.\textsuperscript{62}

"The Myth That Threatens America" had its showing on the evening of January 12, 1945, at the Hotel Barbizon Plaza in New York City. Invited was an audience of almost 600 of the persons who were, in one way or another, responsible for the contents of motion pictures, magazines, books and other mass media. The response was somewhat greater than anticipated,

\textsuperscript{61}"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, December 27, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee to Combat Race Hatred, November 20, 1944," Cont. 19, WWB Records; interview with Green, August 8, 1968.

\textsuperscript{62}"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, December 27, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.
taxing the capacity of the room. John Mason Brown, dramatic critic, author, and war correspondent, was the master of ceremonies and the narrator for the show. After an opening address by Rex Stout, a carefully prepared "Education Please" quiz was given as a takeoff on the show that normally starred Fadiman. The panelists were a varied group: playwright Moss Hart, editor-author Carl Van Doren, publisher-columnist Bennett Cerf, and perhaps as a climax, strip-tease dancer Gypsy Rose Lee. A considerable portion of the survey, as well as basic educational materials, was delivered in this fashion. According to Variety, the show business trade paper, the panel delivered a "sock" performance.63

The meeting also included speeches by author John Roy Carlson, WWB member Christopher LaFarge, anthropologist Margaret Mead, who was at the time associate curator of the American Museum of Natural History, and Eric Johnston, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce. All, of course,

63"Diverse Intellectuals Use Showmanship to Break Down Racial Prejudice," Variety, CLVII (January 17, 1945), 2; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, December 27, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.
hit hard at the myth of racial difference. For a break, the audience heard Negro singer Benay Venuta sing "Free and Equal Blues." According to the reviewer, the evening "hit its peak" with the contribution of WWB member Hammerstein, the Broadway lyricist. For the occasion, he wrote new words to Jerome Kern's song, "Ol' Man River," calling it instead "Ol' Man Author." In this number a quartet composed of the best known stereotypes, an Irishman, a Jew, a Negro, and an Italian, pled their cause.64

"The Myth That Threatens America," was generally considered a success. The Variety reviewer complained only that the periodic levity of Brown, the master of ceremonies, was out of keeping with the serious nature of the material being presented. He summed up: "The application of showmanship in the all out effort to battle 'The Myth That Threatens America' was a wise one and the whole idea of directing it at a few hundred who have the power to mold public opinion ties in with the WWB program to mobilize its own."65 The Hammerstein song

64"Diverse Intellectuals Use Showmanship," 2; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, December 27, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.

65"Diverse Intellectuals Use Showmanship," 2.
was widely noted and reprinted. Indeed, the board made distribution of the song one of its later race tolerance projects. The board itself considered the results so good that several subsequent repetitions of the show were planned though none were ever carried to completion. Robert Landry, chairman of the WWB committee, later stated that "this may well have been our absolute high point of massed impact upon opinion makers."66

Late in March, 1945, the Committee to Combat Race Hatred was requested by the United States Department of Justice to assist in connection with "I am an American Day," an attempt to reduce prejudice against foreign-born citizens, to be held on May 20. Agreeing that the project was worthwhile the committee voted cooperation.67

The committee and the WWB provided customary support through the WWB's regular publications. Permission was obtained from actress Ingrid Bergman to use her name on a suitable statement from a recently naturalized citizen. This appeared in


67Mrs. Alberta Altman, Department of Justice, to WWB, March 30, 1945, Cont. 91, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee to Combat Race Hatred, April 2, 1945," Cont. 91, WWB Records.

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the April edition of "Brief Items for House Organs" and "Brief Items to Army Camps" under the title "Thank You Americans." The same article was later run in Photoplay magazine. The regular "Joe Palooka" cartoon in each of the "Brief Items" mailings had Joe emphasizing the "I am an American" theme. The WWB editorial mailing for May included a statement of support for "I am an American Day," by Mrs. Jean Poletti of the committee. Finally, the WWB Monthly Report for May contained a section praising the virtues of naturalized citizens under the title "How About an Oath for Old Citizens?"  

The Justice Department requested that suitable dramatic materials be furnished. The committee felt that time would not permit the writing of special scripts, but the WWB had already obtained and utilized as war-scripts-of-the-month two dramatic presentations dealing with this theme. These were "These are Americans," by Chet Huntley and Ernest Martin, a factual story of the contributions of Mexican-American citizens to the United States, and Gretta Baker's "Foreigners

Settled America," the story of two young people, one a first-generation American, the other of Mayflower descent, who learn that at one time or other all Americans could correctly be termed "foreigners." Accordingly, these were sent to the Justice Department, which arranged for them to be printed and distributed widely in time for presentation on May 20.69

In an associated project, the WWB obtained the services of actor Claude Rains as speaker for a large outdoor rally on "I am an American Day" held in Springfield, Massachusetts. Rains' speech, written for him by the board's Green, went over so well that the Springfield Mayor's Committee worked to have it entered in the Congressional Record. Finally, the WWB Radio Committee continued the "I am an American" campaign by attempting to insert the theme into radio spots for the Seventh War Loan Drive.70

Also in the spring of 1945, the Radio Committee recommenced its mailings to radio writers, expanding them not only

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to those who attended the meeting but to all those on the WWB mailing lists. The board expressed its opinion that "because race and religious hatred is a weapon of our fascist enemies, because they are using it systematically and skillfully, not only to disrupt us in war, but also to divide us in the coming peace, it is one of the most vital issues of our time." The WWB insisted that "now more than ever, writers have an obligation to employ their craft in the fight against bigotry and for our cherished American ideals. The board believes that radio writers without altering or impairing the honesty or entertainment value of their programs are in a unique position to do this." More mailings went out: the ABC's of Scapegoating was one such, a pamphlet discussing the techniques and dangers inherent in society's use of the scapegoat. The board also distributed a summary of the Columbia University survey findings, "How Writers Perpetuate Stereotypes." This

71 Form letter to radio writers, signed by Hobe Morrison, March 22, 1945, Cont. 22, WWB Records.

72 Ibid.

73 Harvard University Department of Psychology, ABC's of Scapegoating (Chicago: Central YMCA College, n. d.).
pamphlet was also publicized in the WWB Monthly Report, with the result that it was sent, on request, to hundreds of other writers.74

Throughout the rest of 1945, even as the WWB moved toward the conclusion of its work, it continued to emphasize racial tolerance. In fact, according to Stout, when the Writers' War Board was reorganized into the Writers' Board in the fall of 1945, its "main purpose was to combat 'the myth that the United States is and should remain a White Protestant Anglo-Saxon country.'"75 During this time its regular publications were the principal means utilized. Among the editorials for May of that year was Mrs. Poletti's "Blind Prejudice," a sharp attack on the stupidity of racial discrimination. As late as December, the last month in which editorials were published, this theme was continued. In November the editorial "We Discovered America" once again reminded the public of the United States' diversified racial and cultural heritage. December brought a final straightforward attack on prejudice with "Open Mouths, Closed Minds." A little

74"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 27, 1945," Cont. 19, WWB Records.

75Stout to the author, June 15, 1968.
magazine coverage was obtained, including an article on the need for tolerance in a veterans' magazine. 76

The war-script-of-the-month series also continued the racial tolerance theme up to the last. The February script was Ben Kagan's "Scapegoats in History," based on Gould's They Got the Blame. The March, 1945, script was "There Are Things to be Done," by Mitchell Grayson, a dramatized version of Lillian Smith's appeal to the South. These were followed in May by "Boy from Nebraska," by Millard Lampell, the story of the hostile reception given to a Japanese-American war hero due to the prejudice at home. In October, the Board sent out "Dr. Hopkins' Atomic Bomb," by Arnold Hartley, a documentary of the danger to democracy inherent in the prejudice in the American educational system against any minority group. Finally, to close the series in December, there was a last direct attack on racial hatred and the men and groups who profited from it. This was "Hate, Inc.," by Caye Christian. 77


Once begun, the WWB's effort against racial hatred probably was as extensive as possible, considering the number of other projects that were simultaneously underway. The board involved itself in projects that ranged from attacks on the most hard core anti-Negro bigotry to opposition to repeal of the Indian Organization Act. In the latter case, they feared this would tend to restore discrimination and injustice against the Indian.78

Indeed, sometimes the board seemed a bit too eager to find an issue to protest. For example, the WWB took offense at a Time article summarizing the results of a national opinion poll. They were disturbed by two sentences reading: "The U. S. citizen most likely to go to the polls next November 7 is an upper-income Northern male. He is college educated and over 40, Catholic or Jewish in religion."79 The WWB felt that Time was trying "to imply that the November elections can and will be carried by the Jewish and Catholic vote," apparently with connotations of intolerance.80 A WWB protest was duly

78"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 22, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.

79"Who Will Sit It Out," Time, XLIV (July 10, 1944), 23.

80"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, July 12, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records.
delivered, but the content of the article seemed to bear out Time's denial of anything more than straightforward reporting of a straightforward survey. 81

Unlike some of its other private projects, however, the board's efforts against racial hatred were basically non-controversial. The need for activities of this kind was unquestionable; and the board's actions were quite possibly useful, a minute part of a gigantic and long-lasting struggle.

81 See File 1-79-23, Cont. 18, WWB Records.
CHAPTER XII

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

As another of its main goals as a private agency, the WWB undertook to promote international cooperation. This campaign took two forms. First, during the war, the board sought to improve the relationships between the United States and her allies by praising those countries and their contributions to the war effort. Also, wherever possible, the group helped to disseminate favorable information about America in the allied nations. Second and simultaneously, the war board undertook to promote the idea of post-war world organization, so that international cooperation might continue and increase and prevent a third world war. The two approaches were conducted in such close coordination that they are practically inseparable for purposes of discussion.

To a degree greater than most of the WWB's other private campaigns, this one involved considerable cooperation with the government. Accordingly some activities which had as their ultimate goal the promotion of international cooperation are included in the chapter on the war board's work.
with government agencies, since they involved merely the fulfillment of official requests. This chapter and the one following are concerned with the projects largely conceived or carried out by the board independently of the government.

Originally, the board undertook the advancement of international cooperation primarily as a means of achieving a military victory in the war. However, most of the group were convinced from the beginning of the need for some kind of international government. Well before Pearl Harbor, for example, Stout was stating publicly that "the time may come—I hope it does, and the sooner the better—when nations will be willing to surrender enough of their sovereignty to permit the establishment of an effective world police." ¹

The first war board project which involved the theme of international cooperation was their assistance in the celebration of Flag Day, June 14, 1942, as United Nations Day. The flags of all the allied nations were to be honored. The Office of Civilian Defense and the Office of Facts and Figures were the government agencies primarily responsible for the

¹Stout, quoted in New York Times, April 25, 1941, p. 12.
occasion, and the materials the group obtained were distributed through these agencies. The principal WWB contributions were a script for radio broadcast by Erik Barnouw, circulated nationally to local radio stations, a script for an outdoor pageant by Maxwell Anderson, and a narrative by Otto Harbach for a stage presentation dealing with various war themes. The success of the board in arranging for top-flight material in this instance contributed substantially to its reputation among government officials for quality assistance.

In July the war board assisted in the promotion of *American Unity and Asia*, by Pearl Buck, then a WWB member. This was a collection of Miss Buck's speeches and articles dealing with the need of unity in America during wartime and with the problem of Asia. One of the main purposes of the book was to increase America's understanding of her Chinese ally. The board, working with and through the Council for Democracy, sent a copy of the book to every member of Congress.

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Some radio commentary was also arranged.\(^3\)

About the same time, the New York group began an effort to increase friendship and understanding with Russia. In July, 1942, a cable arrived at the WWB offices from Alexander Fadeev, Secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers, asking for all kinds of written material to be used in the Soviet Union to show what the United States was doing about the war. Fadeev proposed that the Soviet writers send similar material in exchange, thus increasing mutual understanding.

The WWB was delighted to have this opportunity, and Robert Landry and Jack Goodman immediately assembled an appropriate collection, including pamphlets, books, films, short stories, and poetry about the war, and even radio scripts, such as Benet's "They Burned the Books," and dispatched them to Russia. In return, the Union of Soviet Writers sent a series of cabled reports to the WWB containing atrocity stories, war literature, commentary on Soviet life

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\(^3\)Buck, American Unity and Asia (New York: John Day, 1942); "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, July 22, 1942," Cont. 1, WWB Records; Stout to Arthur J. Goldsmith, July 24, 1942, Cont. 50, WWB Records; File 1-44, Cont. 5, WWB Records.
in wartime, and the like. The board had it translated and got a considerable amount of it into print in the United States. A great deal more material was sent in both directions throughout 1942 and early 1943. The WWB, however, had continuing difficulty in arranging for translations and in obtaining anything of real interest to Americans. The Russian writing tended toward dry statistical reports. In June, 1943, when requests for more human interest material went unfulfilled, Stout found it necessary to inform the Soviet writers that the use of their work was insufficiently widespread to warrant the expense and trouble of further cables.4

In November, the WWB took up for the first time the question of international post-war organization. Stout said that he believed the group accepted the view "that its primary concern was no longer the military war, rather the problem of organizing the world for peace, and presenting the necessity of post-war participation in world affairs to

the American people." The board fully considered the question of how to persuade America and other countries to give up part of their sovereignty, in the face of objections from isolationist forces. Margaret Leech particularly urged the WWB to confine itself to readying America to take its own part in world affairs instead of giving gratuitous advice to other countries. The press of current events soon demonstrated that the board could not as thoroughly ignore the military war and concentrate on the problems of the peace as they intended, but the approach was maintained in the New York group's later campaigns. Also, the matter of post-war participation in world organization was thereafter never far from the thoughts of the board, and much of the thinking behind several of the later campaigns appears to date from the meeting.

In December, fearing that there was still a considerable amount of latent anti-British feeling that should be

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5 Stout to WWB, November 18, 1942, Cont. 22, WWB Records.

6 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, November 18, 1942," Cont. 22, WWB Records.
counteracted, the WWB began to directly promote good relations with Great Britain. Already in this connection, in September, the war board had felt it necessary to attack one of the leading American literary figures, Theodore Dreiser. Dreiser was quoted as saying, "I would rather see the Germans in England than those damned aristocratic, horse-riding snobs there now. The English have done nothing in this war thus far except borrow money, planes, and men from the United States. They stay at home and do nothing. They are lousy."

He also lashed out at Churchill personally. In a public comment on Dreiser's remarks, the WWB recounted British heroics in the war and denounced Dreiser:

Not being lawyers, we do not know whether Theodore Dreiser's utterance was treasonable in the legal sense, but certainly our enemies would pay him well for his disservice to our country's cause. We profoundly regret that an American writer of Mr. Dreiser's eminence should thus insult and offend our allies and commit so shameful an act of sabotage against our government and people.

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Dreiser was stung by the statement. In a letter to the WWB he claimed that what he had said was misrepresented. He charged the WWB with "servility to British Toryism" and said that they had "set themselves up as prosecutor, court, and jury and condemned me to the newspaper hell prepared for the anti-capitalistic class." The novelist demanded a public apology from the New York group. Dreiser's claim to misrepresentation by the press apparently had some validity. However, in the same letter to the WWB he said that the British Tories were "more responsible than anyone else" for bringing on the war, and he saw no difference between Churchill's colonial policy and Hitler's firing squads.

The board continued to think that his views were highly objectionable, and no apology or reply was forthcoming.

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10 Dreiser to WWB, October 31, 1942, Cont. 111, WWB Records; Dreiser to Norman Cowan, October 22, 1942, and Dreiser to George Barnard Shaw, October 10, 1942, Letters of Theodore Dreiser, III, 965-66, 968-72; H. Dreiser, My Life with Dreiser, 282-87; Elias, Dreiser, 278-79.

11 Pearl Buck, whose signature on the WWB statement had especially shocked Dreiser, did attempt to explain her stand to him. See correspondence in Cont. 11, WWB Records.
It was the kind of feeling that Dreiser had exhibited in extreme form that concerned the WWB. In December, therefore, the board formed the United Nations Committee, designed to improve the public image of each of the Allies of the United States. Britain received primary attention, first under the chairmanship of Paul Gallico, then of Jack Goodman. Several ideas for spectacular one-time events, such as an international broadcast of the meeting in North Africa between American General Eisenhower and British General Bernard Montgomery, were considered but rejected. Instead, the committee contacted writers and commentators suggesting that they compose material which would achieve the committee's purpose. Gallico wrote, "Stories slanting to develop a better understanding of the English both as human beings and as brave allies will be of inestimable value at this particular time." He also indicated that

... stories which will bring home to the civilian population the fact that at any moment the lives and safety of their sons may depend upon the friendship, the courage, and the intelligence of a soldier of the British Empire, or a Russian, or a Chinese, might bring these same civilians into a more cooperative mood.\(^{12}\)

\(^{12}\)Gallico to writers and commentators (form letter), January 1943, Cont. 74, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the United Nations Committee, December 1, 1942," Cont. 74, WWB Records.
Cooperation was achieved in some cases. For example, Gallico arranged with cartoonist Ham Fisher for the latter's comic strip figure "Joe Palooka" to be rescued by an Englishman from one of his periodic disastrous plights. Also, in order to offer suggestions for improvement, the board undertook a critique of British propaganda and information reaching the United States. The group listened to the American broadcasts of the British Broadcasting Company and read issues of the magazine Britain, published by the British Information Service. Suggestions were forwarded to the British agencies responsible. By March, 1943, however, the United Nations Committee felt that the need for combatting anti-British sentiment had diminished and thereafter confined its role to fulfilling specific requests.

In March, the WWB came out in support of the "Four Senators" resolution introduced in Congress by Senator Joseph


14 Stout to Miss Leech, December 14, 1942, Gallico to Stephen Fry, December 19, 1942, Cont. 77, WWB Records.

15 Martha McCleery to Win Nathanson, April 21, 1943, Cont. 74, WWB Records.
Ball (Republican-Minnesota). This resolution called for the immediate establishment of the United Nations organization, in order to deal with the problems of the peace to come as well as the fighting of the war. The WWB congratulated each of the four senators who had authored the bill and joined with a number of other organizations in a campaign to promote the resolution under the leadership of radio commentator George Fielding Eliot.16

Late in April the OWI requested the board's assistance in both the planning and preparation of material for the second celebration of Flag Day, June 14, as United Nations Day. The board produced a wide variety of verbiage. The newly organized Committee on Speeches and Speakers arranged for the composition of several speeches. Well-known radio writers Ruth Gordon and Theodore Ferro authored those designed for delivery over the radio; and WWB members Green, Fadiman, Stout, and Grafton wrote those for delivery in person. The American Legion Women's Auxiliary utilized the

Stout and Grafton speeches, once on a nationwide broadcast. WWB member Hammerstein lent his talents as a lyricist to the writing and staging of a pageant, "Hitler Had a Vision," produced in Washington before a distinguished audience.

WWB members Robert Colwell and Russel Crouse combined their talents for yet another stage dramatic presentation, "An American's Progress," which was given nationwide distribution. Green wrote a portion of the script for a special pageant at the Radio City Music Hall in New York City. Both the war-scripts-of-the-month for June were devoted to the subject of international organization. One was considered particularly successful, Howard Fast's "Tomorrow Will Be Ours."

This dramatized the possibility of the successful uniting of the nations of the world by analogy to the struggles for the evolution of the United States itself. The other script was "Reminder to the Free," by Michael Greenwood.17

In addition, Stout, Grafton, Caldwell, Landry, Ruth Jordan, and Elmer Rice prepared six special editorials, and the WWB sent them to 750 local newspapers. The success of this approach encouraged the board to start its regular editorial service. The OWI distributed some WWB-written pieces to several thousand house organs. Once again, the results were sufficiently impressive that the New York writers began regular service to house organs in July. The WWB's Assignments Committee obtained the services of twenty local writers with regular publication outlets to handle distribution of some United Nations material in their regions. The government considered the celebration a major success and was impressed by the "exceptionally effective" performance of the WWB.¹⁸

The WWB carried on a number of other activities associated with the concept of international cooperation during this period but that were not specifically connected with United Nations Flag Day. Several other speeches designed to show the people of the United States the necessity

for world union were added to the WWB catalog for continuous use. Most used were those by Christopher LaFarge and Mark Van Doren. The board furnished Carl Carmer and James Marshall to argue for world federation on a radio forum held on New York station WHN on the subject, "Should the United Nations Enter Into a Regional Federation or into World Federation?" Also, the board provided two speakers, Walter Duranty and Arthur Upham Pope, to support the affirmative in a discussion held on the subject, "Can America and Russia Work Together?" on a nationwide radio program, "American Forum of the Air," on August 10. When the "Brief Items for House Organs" series began in July, its first series contained an article by Stout emphasizing the need for the United Nations, "The Post-War World." Trying to remove an offense to one of the United Nations, the board attempted to generate pressure for the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The Monthly Report carried a paragraph advocating repeal; and the board persuaded one of the Saturday Evening Post writers, J. C. Furnas, to obtain the consent of his magazine to print an editorial on the subject.¹⁹

¹⁹File 22-9, Cont. 75, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to Theodore Granik, July 17, 1943, Mrs. Barach to WWB, August 10, 1943, Cont. 23, WWB Records; "Brief Items for House Organs," July, 1943, Cont. 6, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual
In April, after his well-publicized trip around the world, Wendell Willkie published *One World*. It was strong in its praise of Russia and China, particularly, and, of course, presented a very strong plea for world organization. The WWB undertook to help with promotion. Willkie was such a well-known figure that he needed little assistance in arranging interviews and obtaining comments on his book, but the board used all methods available to them to get favorable commentary. It also lent assistance in persuading the Council on Books in Wartime to adopt the volume as one of its "imperative" books, thereby assuring special recognition and promotion. WWB member Jack Goodman was at that time advertising manager for Simon and Schuster, the book's publishers, and most WWB assistance was channelled through him. The book was a major best seller.20

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Report, 19; Writers' War Board Report, July 15, 1943; "We Should End the Affront to China," *Saturday Evening Post*, CXXVI (October 23, 1943), 112; File 22-22, Cont. 76, WWB Records.

In cooperation with Willkie, the WWB prepared and sponsored a July 4 program over the CBS radio network entitled "The Declaration of Interdependence." Willkie gave the principal address. In consultation with Goodman, he agreed to drive home the points the board wanted emphasized: first, the peoples of the world must work together to win the war and the peace; second, the world had grown so small that what happened to one country affected the peoples of all countries. In his speech, Willkie expressed the firm conviction that the people of the United States would decide "by overwhelming majority" to make the choice of equality for everyone everywhere rather than to choose "narrow nationalism . . . which inevitably means the ultimate loss of our own liberty and the certainty of recurring wars;" or "international imperialism . . . which means the sacrifice of some other nation's liberty and the same certainty of war."\(^21\)

For the larger part of the program there was a drama written by Crouse and Landry, built around the idea of the

equivalency of the thirteen colonies uniting to form the United States with the nations of the world coming together to combine in the United Nations, and arguing that the conflicts among the nations were no greater than those among the colonies in 1776. Actor Frederic March was the narrator for the program.22

The New York group seriously considered the notion of trying to get Walter Lippmann to write the kind of study of Great Britain that they felt the United States should read. Recognizing that too much time would have to elapse before such a book could be published, they decided instead to promote The Making of Modern Britain by Allan Nevins and J. Bartlett Brebner, a soon to be published short book designed to give Americans a better insight into the British character. The board requested prominent persons, including Lippmann and Willkie, to say a good word for the book.23


At a meeting of the United Nations Committee, January 6, 1943, an OWI official, Herbert Agar, presented a proposal which ultimately permitted the WWB an opportunity to influence British opinion about America. As Agar put it, officials of both the British and American governments, especially the British ambassador to the United States, Lord Halifax, and the American ambassador to Britain, John G. Winant, had conceived the idea of a magazine published in Britain for the British, but which would be composed of articles written by Americans and which would have as its goal informing the British of American institutions and character. The British were willing to completely finance the venture, including the salaries of the London staff and payment to the contributing writers. The OWI did not have the contacts to deliver the necessary "name" writers, and it also felt that the venture should have no official connection with the U. S. government. The WWB, acting in its private capacity, was requested to serve as an editorial board, procuring all the material required for each issue. This proposed magazine was to be called Transatlantic.  

Winant particularly urged the New York group to undertake the task.25

After a period of negotiations, the WWB agreed to take on the job. The board was to be the sole source of material for the new magazine, though it agreed to try to carry out, insofar as possible, the suggestions of the London editors and the members of the OWI-Overseas office in London, primarily Agar. All material would be submitted to Ferdinand Kuhn, an OWI official in Washington, who would consult with the New York group in case there was any disagreement. The OWI would pay all expenses on the American side, such as office rent, cable fees, and the like. The WWB would donate its services in procuring material and editing. Margaret Leech was given the chairmanship of the WWB's Transatlantic Committee, and she was responsible for the operation throughout the rest of the war.26

25 Winant to Stout, January 7, 1943, Cont. 100, WWB Records.

In the first issue of Transatlantic, September, 1943, the London editor, Geoffrey Crowther, who had been the pre-war editor of the British publication The Economist, explained the purpose of the periodical:

The purpose is very serious and very ambitious. It is to assist the British and American peoples to "walk together in majesty and peace". The temple of peace will need many pillars and buttresses. But the keystone of the arch is British-American co-operation. It is intended to assist the British people month by month to get into focus this picture of America and the Americans.27

In the September issue and again in the November issue, the WWB and its role in the formulation of Transatlantic were explained to the British audience. Crowther made clear that while there was close collaboration between himself and the board on all points, the New York group was primarily responsible both for conceiving ideas for the periodical and in getting writers to carry them to fulfillment.28 The London editor could veto material sent by the board but in practice rarely did so. Also, the board


constantly consulted with the OWI, but that agency was usually content to agree to every WWB proposal. It seems fair, then, to consider Transatlantic another of the WWB publications, though on a somewhat more sophisticated level than any of the others.²⁹

In the magazine, there was no attempt at blatant propaganda, as was usually the case in the other WWB organs. Instead, most of the material was in the nature of general information or light amusement. Regular columns were published, such as "Washington Letter," by veteran journalist Roscoe Drummond, and "State of the States," by Carl Van Doren and others. Sample articles printed in the first four issues included "Thoughts Thought as Goebbels Burbles," by Ogden Nash; "Public Opinion Polls," by Frederick L. Allen; "Big Newspapers," by Henry Pringle; "Writing of the American Constitution," by Allan Nevins; "The Intermountain West," by Bernard DeVoto; "Texas," by J. Frank Dobie; "American Folklore," by Carl Carmer; "The New York Theatre," by Howard Lindsay; and "The American Goes to the Game," by Paul Gallico,

²⁹See files in Conts. 100 and 128, WWB Records.

The magazine was well received by the British press. Due to wartime restrictions on the paper supply, circulation was limited to 50,000 copies. All of these were distributed in Britain, and each issue sold out completely. Despite the outward signs of success, the board remained unsure that Transatlantic had all the influence that they desired. There was no thought of halting publication, however; and the New York writers assisted the magazine until the end of 1945.31

In 1943 and through the first half of 1944, the major effort of the WWB in the fight for a world organization of nations was its promotion of a document called the

30Transatlantic, I (September, October, November, December, 1943).

31WWB, Second Annual Report, 22-23; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Transatlantic Committee, May 23, 1944," Cont. 100, WWB Records; Green to Mrs. Ralph Pulitzer (Margaret Leech), April 20, 1944, Cont. 100, WWB Records; WWB, Third Annual Report, 26; Times of London, September 6, 1943, p. 6.
"Pledge for Peace." This pledge was originally written in 1942, after the board had first considered the question of international peacetime cooperation. Fadiman apparently wrote the original version, but the document was so thoroughly discussed, revised, and rewritten before it appeared that what Carl Carmer still believes was an "admirably worded resolution" was actually the product of collective authorship. The intent of the board was "to state in the smallest possible compass the irreducible minimum requirements for a serious effort to organize the world for peace."32

Beginning about May 1, the WWB discussed the pledge in its own meetings and with about 150 other writers, including members of the advisory council. After about six weeks of consultation the board unanimously passed the pledge and agreed to move forward with its promotion. There was none of the controversy such as was involved in the New York group's statement on the German question. The discussion merely concerned matters of semantics and most often whether

32Stout to R. Rothschild, June 25, 1943, Cont. 82, WWB Records; Carmer to the author, March 25, 1969; interview with Green, August 8, 1968.
the pledge should be short and general or more lengthy and specific. The only serious question as to whether the pledge should be issued at all was the fear of some, primarily Fadiman, that "the more widely this pledge is publicized the more open the board will be to attacks from the right, based on the fact that we are engaged in propaganda." 33

As adopted, The WWB Pledge for Peace read as follows:

Mindful that I am a citizen of a great country created 160 years ago by the union of thirteen divided and quarrelling colonies; and convinced that the world of today holds as much wisdom as did that of the Founding Fathers, I declare myself for these propositions:

One, that to save myself, my children, and my fellow-beings from inevitable destruction in future world wars, a world organization shall be formed;

Two, that this world organization shall in the beginning consist of the United Nations and such neutral countries as may be admitted by them;

Three, that the Axis powers, their allies and their sympathizers, shall have the status of territories on probation until the world organization shall admit them to membership;

Four, that no member nation may at any time or for any reason, secede from the world organization;

33 Fadiman to Stout, August 24, 1943, Stout to Rothschild, June 25, 1943, Stout to Booth Tarkington, June 15, 1943, Cont. 82, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 16, 1943," Cont. 82, WWB Records.
Five, that each member nation of the world organization shall give up forever the sovereign right to commit acts of war against other nations;
Six, that the authority of the world organization shall be made effective and irresistible by the establishment of an international police force;
Seven, that a primary goal of the world organization shall be the gradual abolition of economic and political imperialism throughout the world; and
Eight, that it shall be the first duty of the world organization not merely to destroy the military power of the Germans and Japanese, but to formulate and carry into execution whatever measures may be deemed necessary to prevent them from preparing for a Third World War of conquest.
Solemnly aware that the acceptance of these propositions involves the creation in myself of a loyalty to the human race along with, but not conflicting with, my loyalty to my own country, I do hereby set my hand, and pledge the allegiance of my heart.\(^{34}\)

To handle the promotion of the pledge, the WWB employed the same technique as in the Lidice campaign, the organization of a "front" committee. Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts was persuaded to accept the position as honorary chairman. Carmer, of the war board, became the active chairman of the Pledge for Peace Committee. Vice-chairmen were historian Douglas Southall Freeman and William A. Neilson, an authority on English literature and retired president of Smith College. The secretary was writer Margaret Culkin Banning. Much of the actual work involved was carried out by

\(^{34}\text{WWB, Second Annual Report, 18.}\)
the executive director, Ruth Hays Friend, a volunteer for the WWB who worked diligently with the group throughout its existence. The committee itself was composed of fifty-six prominent individuals, primarily writers.\(^{35}\)

The pledge was given its official debut on November 11, 1943, Armistice Day. A reception was held at the Hotel Willard in Washington for representatives of the press and other interested citizens. Justice Roberts delivered the principal address. Carmer spoke more briefly and Fadiman read the pledge to the assembled group. The intent of the campaign was to get citizens throughout the nation to

send the signed document to their representatives or senators. The war board was prepared to send any quantity of copies of the pledge wherever they might be used.  

The board's own publications simultaneously began the campaign for the pledge. The editorials sent out in October heralded the pledge as a "Prescription for Peace." The November follow-up editorial was "A Four-Square Peace," which called on the Soviet Union, Great Britain, China, and the United States to use their power for world organization. In January, the WWB editorial, written by Stout, "The Bugaboo of Sovereignty," was an attempt to anticipate possible objections to their plan. The November and December issues of the Monthly Report carried paragraphs on the pledge, asking writers to agitate for it on a local level. The "Brief Items for House Organs," issued November 22, 1943, contained a version of the pledge written in simplified language, with illustrative examples, presumably so that it could be comprehended by the average working man.  

36 New York Times, November 12, 1943, p. 22; Writers' War Board Report, December 1, 1943.  

37 "List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records; Writers' War Board Report, November 1, 1943, and December 1, 1943; "Brief Items for House Organs," November, 1943, Cont. 34, WWB Records.
The Pledge for Peace Committee also made many efforts to publicize its document through other media of communication. The pledge was published in a wide variety of magazines, including *Parents' Magazine*, *Mechanix Illustrated*, *True Confessions*, the *Women's League Outlook*, and the *Veterans of Foreign Wars Bulletin*. The WWB sponsored a Pledge for Peace broadcast on a nationwide network on June 30, 1944, featuring an address by Justice Roberts before the United Nations Council of Philadelphia. On May 30, Fadiman appeared on the Imogene Wolcott radio show; on June 13, Carmer was on the Adelaide Hawley show; and on June 30, Fadiman broadcast over the Mary Margaret McBride program. In each of these the lady hostess for the show signed the pledge on the air. According to the board's tabulations, the Mary Margaret McBride show appearance alone brought in requests for over 10,000 copies of the pledge.38

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A large number of local organizations around the country responded to the board's appeal. Various farm, church, civic, business, and labor groups made use of the document. Many local groups organized to support post-war world organization not only discussed and signed the pledge but also circulated it on their own. The pledge was preached from pulpits, discussed in college classrooms, posted on bulletin boards in factories, and distributed by a traveling library in Iowa. The WWB was continually impressed with the wide range of activities of groups concerned with the pledge, both in nature and geographical location.39

There was one instance where the pledge received undesirable publicity. The Philadelphia Record, in a major editorial, strongly attacked the pledge. It claimed that the WWB's document "holds that Americans should give up forever their independence by renouncing two rights which determine national independence (a) the right to withdraw from any world organization; (b) the right to make war

against anyone." The editorial pointed out that if Americans "tried to fight in defense of their rights the other nations would be bound to jump on them and fight them. . . . America thus would no longer be a nation once its government signed that pledge."41

The WWB was more stung by the final comment in the editorial than anything else:

The committee not only threatens to undermine all the progress we have made toward world collaboration but sizes up as exactly the kind of organization which Col. Robert McCormick [of the isolationist Chicago Tribune] visioned in his dreams.

Here is what the isolationists have longed for: a committee of earnest well-meaning people with a big figure at the front to whose extreme proposals they can point as typical of what world collaboration means.42

David Stern, the publisher of the Record who had inspired the attack, flew to New York at the board's invitation to discuss his comments with Stout, Fadiman, and Mrs. Friend. After the conference, the WWB dismissed his objections

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40Philadelphia Record, May 22, 1944, p. 10.
41Ibid.
42Ibid.
as a simple unwillingness to abrogate United States sovereignty, covered over with a framework of rationalizations. No change in their approach was ever considered.\textsuperscript{43} The campaign was considered sufficiently successful that in the August Monthly Report the New York group was able to claim that "strong support for the Pledge for Peace is sweeping from coast to coast."\textsuperscript{44}

Numerous other smaller tasks were undertaken in the fall of 1943 for the purpose of encouraging international cooperation. The New York group arranged for Herbert Zim to do an article to their taste on "The Price of Freedom" for the Book of Knowledge Annual, 1943. The board obtained writers for a series of pamphlets for the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs on South and Central American countries prepared for distribution to schools, clubs, and other groups in the hope of stimulating hemispheric understanding and unity. Other pamphlets written under WWB auspices included one for the United Nations Information Office on the governments in exile, and "Your Congress Can Win the

\textsuperscript{43}"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 24, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.

\textsuperscript{44}Writers' War Board Report, August 1, 1944.
Next War Now," for distribution by the Non-Partisan Council to Win the Peace. For the anniversary radio show of Freedom House, the war board obtained the script "Untitled" by Norman Corwin, produced earlier on radio, a moving account of the way a young soldier killed in action had lived, and the things for which he died, most notably the chance for permanent peace. It was added to the WWB script catalog for widespread distribution.45

The New York writers lent their assistance in many writing chores for other agencies trying to help out the allies of the United States. Work was done for the United China Relief Fund, Greek War Relief, Yugoslavian War Relief, and Russian War Relief. Speeches, material for radio delivery, and articles were furnished. For example, for Greek War Relief the WWB placed a piece in This Week in the fall of 1943 dealing with conditions in Greece. For Russian War Relief, the war board handled such items as rewriting for

45 Zim to Fadiman, October 8, 1943, Cont. 43, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual Report, 18-19; File 5-143, Cont. 43, WWB Records; "WWB Script Catalog, November, 1945," Cont. 21, WWB Records; Corwin, Untitled and Other Radio Dramas (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1947), 45-76.
publicity purposes a cabled letter from a Russian boy to America. This was done by Robert Ordrey. It also persuaded Booth Tarkington to write a letter to a Russian boy published in the September issue of *Boy's Life*. For the National War Fund, another relief agency, the WWB produced slogans, radio speeches, inspirational magazine pieces, speakers, and scripts. For example, the board obtained an original script by radio writer Forest Barnes, which was used on the National War Fund's nationwide broadcast on November 6, 1943, as part of its campaign for funds. All of this material was obtained without charge to the recipient agencies.46

In the summer of 1943, as a part of its campaign to promote international cooperation from every angle, the board asked its Comics Committee to consider what might be done in their area. Meetings were held with representatives of the comic book publishers, and as a result two new comics sequences were conceived. Beginning in September, 1943, and continuing in subsequent issues, Street and Smith publishers

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46 WWB, Second Annual Report, 17-18; Files 21-4 and 21-4A, Cont. 13, WWB Records; Files 21-7, 21-13, and 21-19, Cont. 74, WWB Records.
introduced the "Four Musketeers" into its regular "Air Aces" comic book. Each of the four musketeers was from one of the four major allied nations and, in the comic book, while vulnerable apart, were unbeatable together. Fawcett Magazines introduced in 1944 the figure of "Radar, the International Policeman" in two of its magazines to promote post-war international cooperation. The sequences were continued monthly or quarterly. 47

In the fall of 1943, the WWB was requested to assist in the utilization of the intermission time on the Metropolitan Opera radio broadcasts over the Blue Network. These were used by the Metropolitan Opera Guild for patriotic, inspirational, programs called Opera Victory Rallies, which ran in series each Saturday from December to April. The 1943-44 series theme was "The Road to Lasting Peace." Of twenty-four broadcasts in this series the board handled eight. When the WWB was responsible it carefully supervised the preparation of the speech, lending writing assistance

47 "Comics Committee Progress Report," May 15, 1944, Cont. 11, WWB Records; samples of the comic books referred to may be found in File 1-52, Cont. 11, WWB Records.
where required, making sure that the subject would be well presented and that the entire address would be in accord with the group's general outlook. As they put it to one speaker later in the series:

Neither we nor the Metropolitan Opera Guild are laying down any vigorous "line" but we are assuming that all our speakers take for granted certain simple presuppositions: (a) The United States has definitely rejected isolationism or semi-isolation as a national policy, (b) International cooperation is possible and necessary: peace is a process not a condition. It must be continually fought for.48

Among the speakers arranged for by the board was Willkie, who, on January 8, urged the American people to bring pressure to bear for closer international cooperation. Concerning the Moscow, Cairo, and Teheran conferences, he said:

We have reason to believe we have established effective military coordination and cooperation of the four great allies. But we also have reason to believe that we have not as yet produced sufficient political and economic and moral understandings. The force of the people's opinion was responsible for the very fact that the conferences took place and for such progress as has been made thus far. The people

48 Fadiman to Elmer Davis, December 13, 1944, Cont. 23, WWB Records; WWB, Second Annual Report, 19; "Guest Speakers on Opera Victory Rallies, Season, 1943-44," Cont. 23, WWB Records.
must now assert their opinion clearly to bring about those political understandings which alone can make real the great principles for which we fight.49

Vice-president Henry Wallace, speaking on April 1, 1944, asserted that the American people "want a peace which means the destruction of the ideas and systems which created dictatorship and . . . are overwhelmingly for a peace which can be enforced under international law which has definite authority behind it."50 The board believed that this series reached a particularly thoughtful and presumably influential audience.51 Ever increasing efforts were necessary because the need for international cooperation, they felt, increased rather than decreased as the end of the war came into view.52


51"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, May 3, 1944," Cont. 1, WWB Records. Other speakers who appeared under WWB auspices and topics were: Elmer Davis, who delivered the keynote speech on "The Road to Lasting Peace," on November 27, 1943; Jan Masaryk, Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs, "The Aggressor Nations," on December 5; Archibald MacLeish, December 25; Senator Harley M. Kilgore, "Human Rights and Lasting Peace," on February 5, 1944; Stout, "Sovereign Rights and Lasting Peace," on February 19; and Dr. Thomas Parran, Surgeon-Geneaal of the U. S. Public Health Service, "Health and Lasting Peace," on April 29. "Guest Speakers on Opera Victory Rallies, Season 1943-44," Cont. 23, WWB Records. The full text of all speeches arranged for by the board may be found in Cont. 23, WWB Records. The speeches were also usually printed, in whole or in part, the next day in the New York Times.
CHAPTER XIII

POST-WAR RELIEF, UNITY, AND ORGANIZATION

Beginning early in 1944, the WWB became concerned with another aspect of the problem of international post-war cooperation. This involved the very basic and immediate need to feed and clothe the peoples of Europe as they became liberated from the Germans. This task was officially in the hands of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). In its efforts the board was attempting to help this agency directly or indirectly.

The WWB was introduced to the problem through Food for Freedom, Inc. This was a Washington-based non-profit organization, which believed that food properly used could shorten the war and lay foundations for peace. To accomplish this, they gave complete support to UNRRA. Food for Freedom hoped to educate Americans to the necessity of feeding Europe for years after the war even at the sacrifice of their own personal comfort. As preparation, they sought to stimulate food production and encourage conservation.
techniques to build up stockpiles.\(^1\)

On May 19, the Executive Director of Food for Freedom, Harold Weston, visited the offices of the New York group to ask for help to his organizations. The WWB was interested, when it heard of the visit, and Weston met with the entire group on June 14. He pointed out that the United States had not adopted any policy officially on the feeding of liberated countries. He reported that UNRRA had been the subject of some unjust accusations. Its public relations program was inadequate, and the public did not understand the importance of its role. He was particularly anxious that the board publicize the fact that there were many destitute, starving people overseas and that stockpiling for the end of the war must begin immediately even if it meant tighter rationing.\(^2\)

In response to this plea, the board tentatively established a Food and Relief Committee with Henry Pringle


\(^2\)Mrs. Barach to WWB, May 20, 1944, Cont. 80, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 14, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records; Woodbridge, *UNRRA*, I, 281-89, and passim.

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as chairman, in Washington, and Alan Green as acting chairman, in New York. On July 24, Green, Fadiman, and Selma Hirsch, of the OWI liaison office, called on New York Governor Herbert Lehman, the Director General of UNRRA, to see what cooperation might be achieved. The WWB members informed Lehman of the board's desire to propagandize for UNRRA. Lehman was gracious but not enthusiastic. He apparently doubted that the New York group could offer any effective assistance. He did agree that UNRRA would welcome any publicity to prepare the American people for the continuation of food rationing, to sell them on the need for clothing rationing, and, in general, to acquaint them with UNRRA and its purposes. 3

Despite this relatively discouraging response, the WWB decided at its meeting on July 26 to move ahead on what Green at the time called "as difficult a propaganda problem as it has ever seen." 4 The problem, as the WWB saw it, was that the "American people are in no sense aware that the

3 Fadiman and Green to WWB, July 25, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records; Woodbridge, UNRRA, I, 148-49, 236-37.

4 Green to Luise Sillcox, July 29, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records.
stability of Europe and consequently the future peace of the world depends mostly upon the success of the Relief and Rehabilitation Program. To make them aware of this is not enough, but they must also be prepared to accept continued rationing and imposed sacrifices for a considerable time after the end of hostilities." The board agreed to gather information on the problem for a few weeks and then do whatever they could. The need was so strong, they felt, that even without an official invitation to propagandize UNRRA, they would take on the job as a private campaign.6

As an initial step, on August 31, the Food and Relief Committee held a "Food Dinner" in Washington. Among the guests were Lee Marshall, the Director of Food Distribution of the War Food Administration, and Gen. E. G. Gregory, Quarter-master General of the Army, as well as representatives of all agencies involved in the food situation. At the meeting, Food and Relief Committee chairman Pringle tried to make clear the need for feeding post-war Europe and for preparing the American public to continue rationing.

5Ibid.
6Ibid.
Through Pringle, the board also contacted Chester Bowles, head of the Office of Price Administration, to protest the easing of rationing in the face of European shortages and the lack of stockpiles in this country. Bowles replied that he personally agreed with their point of view and urged the WWB to proceed with its campaign. He noted, however, that ultimate authority in this area lay with the War Food Administration and suggested that pressure might be more profitably applied there.\(^7\)

The board soon encountered difficulties. Its approach to the problem had to be extremely general due to the unsettled status of UNRRA; in particular it had to avoid the issue of just how the feeding of Europe was to be accomplished. Furthermore, the New York group was confronted by a number of newspaper and magazine stories which publicized apparently ample stockpiles of food in this country and even stressed the notion of excess surpluses. The writers were not convinced but agreed that such accounts

\(^7\)"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, September 6, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, September 20, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
cast doubts on the credibility of their campaign.8

The board continued the campaign in its own publications. A good example of their line of presentation may be found in the Monthly Report:

American writers have helped manfully to convince the public that the shooting war isn't over. American writers must dig in and do a similar job on the incontrovertible fact that the eating war is even further from a conclusion. There is no relief in sight for any of the food shortages which have faced us in the last couple of years and which still face us. There is every reason to believe that these shortages will—and must—continue for a good long while. In the first place, the American soldier is going to continue to be the world's best-fed fighter. In the second place, every mile that those soldiers slog forward liberates more people, and those people must be fed. Must be fed because it's simple humanity to feed them. Must be fed because it's good, selfish common sense to feed them: for if they starve there will be chaos wherever we liberate populations, and while there is chaos anywhere in the world there can be no hope of lasting peace. Wherever and whenever you can, pound home the idea that a meatless dinner or a butterless piece of toast are weapons and that relaxation of rationing before the war is ended and the relief job completed will be a defeat inflicted by too many soft civilians and too-greedy food industrialists.9

8"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, September 6, 1944," and "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, September 20, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records; Green to Rita Weiman, September 12, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records.

9Writers' War Board Report, January 1, 1945.
A similar message had been delivered in the December editorial, "Food for Friends," by Green and Margaret Widdemar. Other pieces were placed in "Brief Items for House Organs."¹⁰

In addition, the Food and Relief Committee undertook some private contacts to persuade influential food distributors to help explain the food problem to the public. They were able to get an authoritative article on the long-term aspects of feeding Europe and the necessity of achieving and maintaining food production. This was written for the board by Canadian diplomat Lester B. Pearson, then chairman of the United Nations Interim Committee on Food and Agriculture, the supplies committee for UNRRA. It appeared in a collection of information about the food and relief problem in liberated countries sent out by the New York group in a special mailing to newspaper columnists and radio commentators. The board also arranged a press conference in Washington for officials of Food for Freedom and the relief agencies for some countries. By its standards, the board's

¹⁰"List of WWB Editorials," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
campaign was not large; but Weston was convinced that it played a significant role in persuading the War Food Administration to institute stricter rationing procedures.\textsuperscript{11}

The New York writers had the opportunity to do an encore on this particular campaign about a year after the original effort. In late 1945, the group, by then called simply the Writers' Board, received a request from the Emergency Non-partisan Committee for Relief to Liberated areas for an emergency campaign to try to save the UNRRA relief appropriations bill. It was in danger because of the possibility of imminent Congressional adjournment and because of some Congressional criticism of the manner in which UNRRA funds had been spent. Failure to pass the bill immediately would break the UNRRA supply chain. The board hastily prepared an editorial which it sent out in a special mailing December 12 to 1300 newspapers. Entitled "The Conscience for Christmas," it doubted that the U. S. Senate would have a Merry Christmas if they knew that their hurry to get home would condemn thousands of people to starvation:

\textsuperscript{11}WWB, Third Annual Report, 26; Woodbridge, UNRRA, I, 69; "Mike Steps Up," Time, XLIV (December 25, 1944), 18; Weston to Green, January 20, 1945, Cont. 88, WWB Records; File 24-31, Cont. 88, WWB Records.
"Unless the UNRRA appropriation of $150 million is appropriated before Congress recesses, Senators will have killed men, women, and children as surely as if they had snatched the food with their own hands from the plates of the destitute."\textsuperscript{12}

Appropriate material was sent to ten radio commentators. The board also conceived what was described as a "newspaper stunt." It obtained pledges from a large number of writers and members of the professions to fast on Christmas Day if Congress did not approve the necessary funds before the Christmas recess. Press releases were prepared for Sunday, December 23, and full publicity was about to begin when word came that the Senate would take the necessary action. The campaign was accordingly cancelled.\textsuperscript{13}

The WWB gave assistance in publicity to another somewhat similar project, the United National Clothing


Collection. The purpose of the agency was to collect still usable clothes and send them to war-torn Europe. In January, 1945, this agency requested the board's help. The New York group arranged for about thirty "big-name" writers to make statements in support of the clothing collection. These statements were to be used for publication in whatever way was available and for radio appeals. The WWB was able to deliver statements from such people as actors Humphrey Bogart and Frederic March, columnist Elsa Maxwell, dramatist Clifford Odets, and writers Cornelia Otis Skinner, Jan Struthers, Booth Tarkington, Sinclair Lewis, and Fannie Hurst, as well as from several of its own members. Most of these statements were published in some way.14

The WWB gave additional assistance to the clothing collection by preparing editorials and cartoons for use in the publicity drive. One of these editorials, "Their Sunday Best," was sent out by the board itself in April, 1945. In

14Lawrence Beller, Publicity Director of the United National Clothing Collection, to WWB, January 26, 1945, Cont. 82, WWB Records; "Winter's Coming: United National Clothing Collection," New Yorker, XXI (July 7, 1945), 15-16; File 24A-2, Cont. 82, WWB Records. For examples of publication of the statements described, see Lewis, "Suggestion: United Clothing Collection," Rotarian, LXVI (April, 1945), 18, and Miss Hurst, "Life-Saving Roundup," Independent Woman, XXVI (April, 1945), 107, 109.
the same month, the entire "Cartoonists' Bulletin" was devoted to this cause, and the Monthly Report gave the drive a plug. Later, in November, the board wrote an editorial for the follow-up clothing campaign, the Victory Clothing Drive.¹⁵

Transatlantic continued to publish throughout 1944 and 1945 with its entire limit of copies selling out each month. The quality of the articles that the board delivered for it was sufficiently high that several were reprinted in British and American digest magazines, including This Month and Reader's Digest. The board also furnished a number of the Transatlantic pieces to the Union of Soviet Writers for informational use in Russia.¹⁶ A representative selection of the kind of articles published in later issues of Transatlantic includes quite varied subjects: "The Intelligent Britisher's Guild to Baseball," by Paul Gallico; "Labor:  


¹⁶WWB, Third Annual Report, 26-27; see, for example of reprint, Stuart Chase, "What the TVA Means," Reader's Digest, XLV (October, 1944), 37-40.
British and American," by John Chamberlain; "Paul Bunyan," by Christopher LaFarge; "Bradley: A Freehand Sketch," by Quentin Reynolds; "What Has Happened to the Gangster?" by Stanley Walker; "The Deep South," by Hamilton Basso; and "State of the States," by James Thurber. All these were original articles, written exclusively for the WWB and Transatlantic.

Transatlantic was deemed such a success in Britain that publication continued even after the official subsidy was dropped. The board's official connection with the publication ceased as of the December, 1945, issue; but the magazine continued for several years thereafter.17

The WWB also took over complete responsibility for planning the speeches and arranging for speakers on the second season of the Metropolitan Opera Victory Rallies. These were on the general topic, "The Fight for Lasting Peace," again broadcast over the nationwide Blue Network. For the beginning keynote speech on the general topic, the board utilized Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress and

17Transatlantic, Nos. 5-28 (1944-1945); WWB, Third Annual Report, 26-27.
State Department official. Characteristic of the kind of material delivered throughout the series was the second address, by John W. Davis, former Democratic candidate for the presidency. Davis said that the United States

should undertake to make available to the security council on its call and, in accordance with the special agreement or agreements concluded among themselves, armed forces, facilities and assistance necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security.

It is cheap insurance if it will work. It can never work unless America joins in the effort. Can we make an agreement to contribute so many airplanes, so many ships, so many guns and men when the council calls for them? To my mind, the answer to both these questions is "Yes."  

The New York writers undertook an assortment of other projects in pursuit of their goal of post-war international

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unity than on any other subject. Titles included "Can We Trust Our Allies at the Peace Table?" "We Must Plan," "Peace Is a Result, Not an Accident," "We're Smart Enough to Win a Peace," "Let's Do It Better This Time," and over a dozen more. These were circulated with increasing frequency as the end of the war approached.¹⁹

The Monthly Report constantly stressed post-war unity throughout 1944 and 1945. Two "Brief Items" articles, "The Price of Freedom," by Frederic March, and "United We Stand," by news commentator H. V. Kaltenborn, were designed to explain in simple language to the average war worker and soldier the necessity of the United Nations.²⁰

１⁹ File 1-36, Cont. 128, WWB Records.

especially promoted two books on post-war organization. The first, Kenneth W. Colegrove's *The American Senate and World Peace*, was an argument that the requirement for a two-thirds majority of the Senate to approve treaties was outdated and undemocratic and that it endangered the chances for world organization and world peace unless it was removed or bypassed. The second, *The Time for Decision*, by Sumner Welles, included a historical account of the result of America's attempt to withdraw from world affairs after World War I, a discussion of the problems surrounding any peace settlement after World II, and, finally, a comprehensive plan for world organization emphasizing the role of the United States.

In the late summer and early fall of 1944, the WWB suggested and arranged for the production of a car-card headed, "Must They Die in World War III?" which was distributed by Americans United for World Organization. The poster showed three white babies, a Negro baby, and an oriental baby, with the sub-heading, "Yes: Unless you work now for a lasting

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peace after victory." It was placed throughout most of New York's system of public transportation. The subway was the lone exception, and the board brought pressure on the individual responsible for the refusal, John H. Delaney, Chairman of the Board of Transportation. They called the attention of radio commentator Walter Winchell to the situation and sent letters of protest to the New York Times. The car-card was never permitted on New York subways, but the attention attracted to it by the controversy resulted in its display in a number of other cities, including San Francisco, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Portland, Oregon. Some further protests were made against it in these cities. The board was never sure whether the opposition stemmed from race prejudice, as mentioned elsewhere, or from dislike of world organization. Since the purpose of the poster was promotion of world organization, they were inclined to believe that aspect was of greatest importance and increased their efforts to counteract suspected isolationist opposition.23

23WWB, Third Annual Report, 22-23; "Car Card News Release," September 11, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records; Stout to Delaney, September 14, 1944, Cont. 87, WWB Records; File 24-12, Cont. 82, WWB Records; New York Times, September 12, 1944, p. 20.
In the belief that American hostility to the Soviet Union was one of the greatest dangers to Allied unity during the war and particularly to the chances of post-war organization, the board periodically mailed out pro-Russian material throughout the last two years of the war. As early as March, 1943, the WWB sent out as a war-script-of-the-month, "My Brother Lives in Stalingrad" by Sandra Michael, a story of the wartime sufferings of the Russian people. In January, 1944, the "Brief Items for House Organs" service carried an article, "Why We Must Get Along with Russia," signed by the former ambassador to Russia, Joseph Davies. Valiant deeds of Russian soldiers were chronicled for American audiences in the July, 1944, war-script-of-the-month, "Concerning the Red Army," by Norman Rosten.24

In the fall of 1944, the WWB was particularly disturbed by the findings of public opinion polls that most Americans still primarily identified Russia with Communism, which they disliked, that only about ten percent of Americans

were at all well-informed about Russia, and that about one-third of the population thoroughly distrusted the Soviets. The group considered this matter of sufficient importance that late in 1944 the Russian Committee was established under the chairmanship of Jack Goodman. One editorial, Green's "Bad News for Mars," emphasizing American-Russian cooperation, appeared early in April, 1945. The committee readied its special pro-Russian effort for the end of the war in Europe. Material was prepared for each of the WWB outlets. Green wrote one appropriate speech, "Not Just Allies--Friends," and William Nelson another, "Why the U.S. and Russia Must Be Friends." The war-script-of-the-month was "Death and Dr. Burdenko," a highly favorable picture of the development of Soviet Russia from the czarist days to World War II, told through the person of a skillful surgeon from the peasant class.

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The committee arranged for the promotion of the book, *These Are the Russians*, by Richard Lauterbach, a *Life* magazine correspondent. Lauterbach wrote, for the committee, a memorandum which was distributed to commentators, columnists, and selected writers. Entitled "Russians Are People--And a Lot Like Us," it tried to stimulate a feeling of kinship by Americans toward their Russian counterparts. It claimed that Russians were like Americans in their fondness for gadgets and speed, for sports, for jokes and laughter, for material progress of all kinds. Lauterbach said that "there has been a real rebirth of religious feeling in Russia. . . . The desire for peace is firm and deep too."27 Included in this recitation of Russia's virtues was gratitude---"every Russian I met was fully aware how much American help meant to their nation when things were black in 1941-42."28 The memorandum finished with a statement that expressed the basic message of the WWB's pro-Russian campaign: "Americans and Russians have cooperated well in fighting a war against

27Lauterbach, "Russians Are People--And a Lot Like Us," Cont. 76, WWB Records.

28Ibid.
Fascism and oppression: there is no reason why they can't remain good friends and fight together for peace and plenty."29

One of the hostile comments made against the Soviets referred to their failure to enter the war against Japan or to permit United States' forces to use their territory in Siberia. The WWB endeavored to defend Russia in an editorial circulated in June, "Russia in the Pacific." Correspondent Robert Bellaire, who wrote the editorial, argued that Russia could not possibly have entered the war herself. As for American use of Russian territory,

The fact that our use of Russian bases against Japan would have inevitably opened a new fighting front hundreds of miles in length, far from Allied sources of supply and conveniently near to Japan's is the best argument in favor of Russia's past policy. . . . By waging merely a war of nerves against Japan, Russia has accomplished for the Allies all that could have been accomplished under the circumstances. By never making it clear whether she intended to move against Japan before Germany's defeat, Russia forced Japan to concentrate millions of her best troops along the Siberian frontier where they were unable to interfere with our 6000 mile march across the Pacific.30

29 Ibid.

30 Bellaire, "Russia in the Pacific," Cont. 58, WWB Records.
Other material distributed by the WWB at this time followed one of these two approaches, popularizing the Russian people or defending Russian war policy. One interesting project which would have done both was a WWB-sponsored tour of the U. S. by ten Russian war heroes. The trip was cancelled at the last moment by the Soviet government.31

From the fall of 1944 onward, the war board's effort to promote post-war organization was largely concerned with the conferences devoted to planning international organization and the proposals which emanated from them. The group was convinced that public opinion was favorable if only it could be awakened and informed of the plans under consideration and the necessary action.32

31 File 22A-4, Cont. 76, WWB Records.

32 The WWB's assumptions appear to have been correct. The poll conducted by the National Opinion Research Center showed that in February, 1944, 71% of Americans thought that it would be a good idea to join a union of nations, with 13% opposing. After the Dumbarton Oaks proposals appeared, in September, 1944, giving the general idea specific form, 64% still favored joining, 26% were opposed. Field and Van Patten, "If the American People Make the Peace," 501-503.
Beginning on August 21, delegates from the United States, Britain, and Russia opened a conference at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington to formulate plans for a permanent world peace structure. During the next six weeks, they agreed on the general outlines of what became the United Nations. There was considerable dispute over some issues, especially the extent of veto power that each of the great powers should possess, but during and immediately after the conference the general attitude of political leaders and commentators was optimistic. These men believed that a large step forward toward total agreement and harmony had been achieved.\(^{33}\)

During late summer, the war board had largely permitted the Pledge for Peace campaign to coast along on its own momentum. But, once the Dumbarton Oaks proposals became public, the group immediately gave them their full attention and tried to decide whether to support them as they stood or to demand amendments providing a stronger world organization more in keeping with the WWB's own ideas.

\(^{33}\text{Feis, Churchill--Roosevelt--Stalin, 427-37; "Agreements on Security League Points Way to Better Peace," Newsweek, XXIV (October 9, 1944), 40-41.}\)
Originally, in late September, 1944, the board decided to go all out for the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. The group circulated a memorandum to its own members, its Advisory Council, and the Pledge for Peace signers pointing out that "the world [Security] Council will consist of eleven members, four of them delegates from the four major powers. . . . The above mentioned decisions can be made only with the concurrence of all four delegates of the major powers and two of the remaining delegates. . . . Thus no such decisions can be made and no pressures, sanctions, or force applied without the approval of the U. S. delegates."34 At this time the WWB believed that the main danger was that the U. S. Senate might refuse to agree to any proposal that did not give the American Congress a veto power over participation in Council activities. So the memorandum concluded, "The Pledge for Peace which you signed states that the authority of the world organization shall be made effective and irresistible. Certainly it will be neither, instead it will

34 WWB form letter on Dumbarton Oaks proposals, September 27, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records; Mrs. Barach to WWB, September 27, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records.
be futile and impotent, if its decisions will be subject to ratification by the legislatures of member nations."\textsuperscript{35}

Second thoughts, however, soon began to trouble the New York writers. At the October 11 meeting, Green, Stout, LaFarge, and Fadiman reported that their study of the results of Dumbarton Oaks had revealed dangerous loopholes and omissions which largely cancelled out its good points. The board still was unwilling to object in any way to the agreement but decided to undertake an even more careful examination.\textsuperscript{36} Letters began to arrive in response to the board's memorandum, many critical of the WWB's attitude. Lewis Munford, for example, accused the board of the "flabby tactics" of accepting battle on the enemy's own grounds:

You single out the weakest provision of the Dumbarton Oaks project, that which would ruin the effectiveness of any organization for peace because it would make possible for a single one of the four powers to block action when it pleases. . . . Instead of working to correct this defect you are actually putting it forward as one of the talking points for the Dumbarton Oaks arrangement on the

\textsuperscript{35} WWB form letter on Dumbarton Oaks proposals, September 27, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records.

\textsuperscript{36} "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, October 11, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
very ground that would make it attractive to every American isolationist, namely that we could at any time escape responsibility and wreck with a single vote any contemplated international action.37

The opinion of the WWB began to swing against Dumbarton Oaks. Stout's reply said, "I have been wrestling with my soul and now agree completely with you. If we settle for Dumbarton Oaks as it now stands we will be participating in another swindle."38

At the meeting on October 18, the board received requests from the OWI and from the Association of United Nations Councils for help in preparing a brief and readable summary of the proposals. A long debate ensued among those present. Some argued that nothing could be written about Dumbarton Oaks without saying there was nothing to the proposals at all. Others replied that criticism of the proposals put the board "in the position of playing Senator Lodge."39

37Mumford to Stout, October 16, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records.

38Stout to Mumford, October 19, 1944, Cont. 88, WWB Records.

39"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, October 18, 1944," Cont. 4, WWB Records.
The eventual decision was to label Dumbarton Oaks, "a start in the right direction but note that much remained to be done. The board accordingly arranged for three pieces of material. One, called "Questions and Answers about Dumbarton Oaks," by Stout, was a simplistic, generalized, but vaguely favorable expression of the results of the conference. For example, in answer to the question, "Is this sure to prevent wars?" Stout wrote, "Not necessarily. But if we really mean it when we say we want no more wars, here is our chance to make a real start on a set-up that will get us what we want if we work at it." This was widely distributed.

The second article was "A Primer for Dumbarton Oaks," also by Stout, an even more simplified version of the questions and answers. It was dispatched to several organizations planning for the peace, for their use in promoting Dumbarton Oaks. The "Primer" was published in the WWB's own "Brief

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40 Stout, "Questions and Answers about Dumbarton Oaks, Cont. 88, WWB Records.
Items for House Organs" and "Brief Items for Army Camps," and OWI was permitted to use the primer for its purposes. The "Primer" was also published in the Junior League Magazine in the December, 1944, issue. 41

The third document prepared regarding Dumbarton Oaks was somewhat stronger. This was a comparison of the proposals with the terms of the Pledge for Peace, called "A Test for Dumbarton Oaks," designed to show the weak points of the proposals. It indicated that the Dumbarton Oaks results were unclear on the treatment of the enemy nations and their admission to membership in the organization. The pledge's provision that no secession would be permitted from the world organization was directly contradicted. The "Test" demonstrated that under Dumbarton Oaks the authority of the world organization would be neither effective nor irresistible, as called for in the pledge. Whether some of the other provisions of the pledge had been realized, such as

renunciation of the right to make war and the abolition of economic and political imperialism, was as yet undetermined. The "Test for Dumbarton Oaks" was printed in the board's Third Annual Report. It also appeared in leaflet forms distributed to all members of Congress, almost 200 army orientation officers, the Monthly Report mailing list, 350 editors of periodicals, 182 cooperating peace organizations, assorted other groups, including religious and agricultural societies, libraries, and Pledge for Peace associations, and anyone who wrote in requesting a copy.

The board received a number of replies to the "Test." The majority were favorable. Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas wrote the WWB: "I am certain that by presenting these discussions to the people of the country you are doing a very fine work. It certainly is necessary to enlighten and inform our people on our foreign relations." There was also hostile commentary accusing the board of stifling any


43 Report on 'Test for Dumbarton Oaks', February 20, 1945, Cont. 82, WWB Records.

44 Fulbright to WWB, February 21, 1945, Cont. 82, WWB Records.
chance for world organization by demands for instant perfection.45

The board utilized still other methods of publicity. Stout restated his "Primer for Dumbarton Oaks" in editorial form, and it was sent out in December, 1944. The "Cartoonists' Bulletin" for December, 1944, posed the presentation of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals as a project to the nation's cartoonists. The Committee on Speeches and Speakers arranged for the appearance and the writing of the speech of Florence March, wife of Frederic March, at a rally at Carnegie Hall in New York on April 25, 1945. The WWB's Jack Goodman and Robert Cenedella of Decca Records prepared recordings explaining Dumbarton Oaks for radio. Radio writers Nick Carter and Martin Stearns wrote a series of radio dramatizations for the OWI. Innumerable smaller jobs in this connection were done for various organizations.46

A contact with Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., strongly encouraged the WWB to push for a more powerful world organization then had thus far been set forth. In

45See, for example, M. Black to Douglas Southall Freeman, February 13, 1945, Cont. 82, WWB Records.

December, at the instance of the board, war correspondent Edgar Ansel Mowrer asked the secretary, "How can we Americans who support the Dumbarton Oaks proposals best aid you who have to negotiate them? By accepting the proposals as written and urging approval on them as they stand, or by criticizing them as insufficient and insisting that you obtain something better?" Stettinius replied, "Needle us like Hell. Ask for the maximum. We shall do much better at the coming conference if we are backed by an American public that is yelling for the strongest, most perfect organization conceivable. Then if we only get 80% of what you are asking for it will still be a victory for us all." This quote was circulated to the WWB Advisory Council, the Pledge for Peace Committee, and certain cooperating groups. A WWB attempt to get a similar strong statement for publication was unsuccessful.

Despite this encouragement and the deep conviction that what they fought for was right on principle, by March,

47 Mowrer to Stettinius, December 18, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records.

48 Stettinius to Mowrer, December 21, 1944, Cont. 82, WWB Records.

1945, doubts about the wisdom of their course were once again creeping in on the war board. At the meeting on March 7, 1945, reversing his previous position, Alan Green argued strongly for supporting Dumbarton Oaks without qualifications on the grounds of political expediency. He believed that if the proposals were defeated, for whatever reason, it would mean the end of any chance of international union in the foreseeable future. He noted that isolationists had been delighted with the "Test for Dumbarton Oaks" since it, in effect, proposed amendments of the agreement which could delay and perhaps defeat its passage. After discussion, the WWB acknowledged the validity of this point of view and agreed to give whole-hearted support to the proposals.50

The next meeting, on March 14, was attended by MacLeish, the Assistant Secretary of State, and Adlai Stevenson, his special assistant. These two men had been given the task of educating the public about the activities of the State Department, whose formality and secrecy had not

50 Green to WWB, March 7, 1945, Cont. 88, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 7, 1945," Cont. 88, WWB Records.
resulted in the best of public relations. More specifically, they were to stimulate knowledgeable popular support of the proposed United Nations on the eve of the upcoming international conference at San Francisco, where the United Nations was to be formally established. MacLeish and Stevenson requested the board's cooperation in their endeavor. Noting that emotionally the U. S. was ready as never before to plan for world security, MacLeish argued that "now is the psychological moment to fortify this emotional conviction with an intellectual understanding of the problems involved and the practical possibilities for achieving the desired goals. . . ." 

The WWB again broached to MacLeish and Stevenson the question of whether to urge acceptance of Dumbarton Oaks as agreed upon or to fight for something stronger. Both men commented that while the State Department was officially


52 "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 14, 1945," Cont. 88, WWB Records.

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committed to Dumbarton Oaks, they saw no objection to making it clear that there were problems with the proposals and that they were not the final statement. Calling on the writers to go after what they believed in, Stevenson noted that "public opinion is often ahead of official action; such thinking often results in advancing the center." The board agreed as a private organization to give all possible help to the State Department effort. They also agreed among themselves to once again reassert a relatively strong stand for a more powerful world organization.

At the March 7 meeting a decision had been made to launch a rush campaign in regard to the results of another international conference. In the summer of 1944, delegates of more than forty nations had met at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. This conference had agreed on the establishment of an International Monetary Fund and an International Bank to prevent a recurrence of the international economic warfare of the 1930's and to assist in the financing of reconstruction

53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
after World War II. There was some opposition in the U. S. to these agreements both on economic and isolationistic grounds.\textsuperscript{55}

The WWB was almost totally uninterested in the details of the conference. As Green told the board, however, the Bretton Woods agreements were scheduled to be voted on in Congress before the San Francisco Conference met. If the United States had demonstrated its willingness to participate in any type of international security agreement, the chances for a successful outcome of the San Francisco Conference would be enhanced. If the agreements failed, the San Francisco Conference might dissolve, in the feeling that the work was futile. The WWB agreed, and quickly compiled a list of ideas for promoting Bretton Woods. It was decided that no attempt would be made to persuade the public of the excellence of the treaties themselves. The board felt that the agreements were too technical to explain in a short campaign, and economics was a field in which they were admittedly ignorant.

\textsuperscript{55}Carlyle Morgan, \textit{Bretton Woods: Clues to a Monetary Mystery} (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1945), passim; Blum, \textit{From the Morgenthau Diaries}, III, 257-78, 427-34, passim.
Instead, the agreed upon theme was to sell Bretton Woods as a token or symbol of America's willingness to take part in a world organization.\(^{56}\)

Working at the remarkable speed of which it was sometimes capable, within three days the board had written the "Clarion Call," composed by Green but somewhat revised by Samuel Grafton. This document was mailed to the Advisory Council, the Pledge for Peace Committee, and a large number of newspaper columnists and radio commentators. It well illustrates the line taken by the New York group in this campaign. It opened with the claim that "the fate of national security—the possibility of any international security organization coming into being in our lifetime—may be decided within the next few days."\(^{57}\) The belief that the agreements were complex matters of economics, remote from the matter of international organization was dangerous, the group argued:

\(^{56}\)Green to WWB, March 7, 1945, Cont. 88, WWB Records; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, March 7, 1945, Cont. 88, WWB Records.

\(^{57}\)"Clarion Call," Cont. 88, WWB Records.
The essential fact about Bretton Woods has nothing to do with economics. Its most essential fact is that the San Francisco Conference will meet only a few weeks after the American Congress accepts—or rejects—Bretton Woods.

If the San Francisco Congress convenes in the knowledge that our Congress has rejected Bretton Woods . . . then there is little use in reaching any international agreement with American delegates because of the non-ratification of our Congress.58

Claiming that the Bretton Woods agreements were worked out by experts and that their opponents were trying to amend them to death, the board concluded, "If you believe in the cause of a world organization, be it Dumbarton Oaks or some other variety, use all your influence to urge the passage of Bretton Woods without change."59

After a special dinner meeting on March 19 between several WWB members and a number of other individuals who could help with the promotion, the campaign was launched publicly. There was a flurry of attention in the New York press. Grafton, in his column in the New York Post, said that the Bretton Woods agreements were simply a matter of stabilizing the currency and should be quickly accepted.

58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
The New York Herald-Tribune, drawing on both the "Clarion Call" and the Grafton column editorial, gave them some rather critical publicity, complaining that the simplification of the matter was, in fact, a distortion. For the radio the board made special contacts which resulted in favorable mention of the Bretton Woods agreements by radio commentators and correspondents Walter Winchell, Cecil Brown, J. W. Vandercook, and WWB member William Shirer. The board arranged for interviews on the women's shows of Mary Margaret McBride and Marian Young. A recording was made by Orson Welles who used material prepared by Decca Records executive Cenedella and the board's Goodman. Stout appeared as a guest on the nationwide "Report to the Nation" on March 25. Finally, the board assisted in a program on Bretton Woods broadcast on April 30 by the Mutual Network. It had been conceived and written by the WWB's west coast counterpart, the Hollywood Writers' Mobilization.


LaFarge and Green hastily wrote an appropriate speech, "Road to Peace--Under Construction." It was sent out to numerous groups for their use and put in kits with the "Clarion Call" and assorted background information to be sent to anyone who inquired. Using the speech, WWB member Jean Ellis Poletti spoke at a Brooklyn rally. Florence March used another speech for several rallies. A mailing of a brief summary of the war board's view of the symbolic importance of Bretton Woods, "Recipe for World War III," went to over 1300 presumably influential figures, usually signers of the Pledge for Peace. They were asked to send letters or telegrams to Congressmen. The "Road to Peace--Under Construction" theme and material were used for a paragraph in the Monthly Report and, under the signature of Dean Acheson, in the "Brief Items" series. There were a number of other smaller appeals and contacts. The entire campaign, a typical WWB performance, took place within six weeks of its original conception. The war board then learned that the Bretton Woods agreements would not actually come up for a final vote until after San Francisco. Satisfied that they had done what they could, they turned their
attention to the upcoming conference.62

The San Francisco Conference began on April 25, 1945, and ended with the signing of the United Nations Charter on June 26. The Dumbarton Oaks proposals were not significantly modified, and thus the world organization established was no stronger than that originally proposed. The great-power veto was maintained, and there was no question that each nation had maintained its full sovereign power.63

For the board, there was never any doubt as to support of the result. Its campaign for the San Francisco Conference got underway in late April. On April 27, in cooperation with the American Association for the United Nations, the WWB arranged for the presentation over the Mutual Broadcasting Company network of a radio drama by Norman Rosten, "They Shall Be Heard," a poetic plea for a strong union of nations. In the sense that it was a generalized


call for world unification, it was also a part of the New York group's Dumbarton Oaks and Bretton Woods campaigns. Nonetheless, it was primarily designed to set the stage for San Francisco. The board also arranged for another production of the drama over WNYC in New York in May, and then sent it out as the June war-script-of-the-month. 64

In May, the WWB checked with the secretary of the Senate, Leslie Biffle, asking him, in confidence, for the names of senators likely to talk and vote against the San Francisco Charter. The New York writers and associated peace organizations intended to concentrate propaganda on and inspire public meetings in states that were considered doubtful. Apparently Biffle performed this service. 65

The Monthly Report sounded the keynote of the campaign. In May, in a paragraph entitled "Keep Special Issues Away from San Francisco," the board asked for an atmosphere in which the conference would be allowed a chance to succeed. The group pointed out that at the conference the delegates were


65 Stout to Biffle, May 24, 1945, Biffle to Stout, May 28, 1945, Cont. 100, WWB Records.
... tackling history's greatest problem. This problem is to maintain peace in the world. It must, of necessity, restrict itself to a very general and overall plan. . . . They will be assembled to draft a document for world peace which will be flexible enough to admit all ways in which international, national, group or racial tensions may be eased. They cannot begin to consider, in this particular conference, each and every problem. Give them a chance.66

In June, with the conference apparently going well, the Monthly Report was preparing for the struggle in the Senate, offering to all who might be interested a kit of materials suitable for the production of speeches, outlines of letters to newspapers and senators, plans for work through community groups, and the like. In July, with the conference favorably concluded, the board told its writers "It's Up to You from Here on In," indicating that the delegates had done their work and that the task of first getting Senate approval of the United Nations Charter and then strengthening that document was now up to American public opinion. This last message was not a really strong statement because the board

66Writers' War Board Report, May 1, 1945.
believed by this time that the charter would pass by a large margin.67

The other WWB publications followed suit. An editorial, "San Francisco Conference," was dispatched in May, informing the public of what might be expected to take place there and warning them not to anticipate the solution of all world problems. A June editorial, "The Course of True Love," was intended to calm any fears that seemingly minor disagreements at the conference might lead to a failure to create a world organization or might cause such major rifts between the great powers as to render it ineffective. "Brief Items for Army Camps" ran a feature, "Let's Buy It," over the signature of Florence Eldridge (Mrs. Frederic March). The "Cartoonists' Bulletin" for July was completely devoted to suggestions for the treatment of the San Francisco Conference.68

67Writers' War Board Report, June 1, 1945, and July 1, 1945; "Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, June 27, 1945," Cont. 52, WWB Records.

The WWB dispatched hundreds of the kits mentioned in the Monthly Report to individuals and organizations. Each kit contained five speeches of varying lengths, some intended for educated audiences, others for less sophisticated listeners. These were, "Why We Need the San Francisco Charter," by Norman Cousins and Frank Gervasi; "Take Your Place at the Peace Table," by Edward L. Bernays; "Our Chances of Avoiding World War III," by Robert Landry; "Comparison with the History of the U. S. Constitution," by Florence March and Nina Bourne; and "Why the U. S. and Russia Must Be Friends," by William Nelson. The State Department text and chart of the United Nations Charter and a State Department publication "Toward the Peace," a collection of associated texts and documents, were included. To explain the charter itself the WWB added a summary of the document prepared by Stout and a series of questions and answers pertaining to it prepared by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. Finally there was an article by Stout, "The United Smiths," that tried to explain the purpose of all world organizations in simple, persuasive, optimistic language:
A lot of people are starting out on . . . the mission of world peace . . . saying . . . "There always have been wars and so there always will be." . . . But the fact is that the lesson of history . . . tells us exactly the opposite. The outstanding political fact from the beginning of human history up to now has been the broadening of the area within which bloodshed is not permitted.

In cave-man days, the minute Junior got big enough to go after Dad with a club he did so, and Dad was a goner (unless, as often happened, he had got the idea first). But one day some male parent conceived the notion that it might be better for all if, instead of letting nature run its course (father and son have always killed each other so they always will), he and Junior should talk it over and arrange for the United Smiths.

That idea has been spreading ever since. . . . [History's] lesson leads to the inevitable conclusion that since the area within which organized bloodshed is not permitted has continued to expand throughout recorded history, there is every reason to suppose it will continue to expand until it covers the globe.\(^\text{69}\)

The New York group also held a special meeting on June 11. There, it persuaded about thirty prominent individuals, such as Saturday Review editor Norman Cousins and Freedom House official William Agar, to make themselves available to speak to meetings during the period that the Charter was under discussion as well as to use their own radio, newspaper, and

\(^{69}\)Stout, "The United Smiths," Cont. 88, WWB Records.
other publication outlets for favorable publicity. Those members of the WWB itself who were effective public speakers also assisted in this enterprise. At least several dozen rallies, usually sponsored by peace groups, such as Americans United, were addressed by WWB furnished speakers. 70

On the radio, in addition to the Rosten script, the war board arranged for several items. Through the WWB's Jean Poletti, the Hummert Radio Agency, which produced numerous daytime soap-opera type serials, agreed to send out regular non-partisan appeals to all Americans to express their views on the United Nations Charter. The WWB arranged for a weekly series of radio scripts on the charter to be written by Ned Calmer and distributed to local stations by the American Association for United Nations. Spot announcements were written by the WWB and recorded for radio use by Americans United. Radio show hostess Mary Margaret McBride was persuaded to conduct a weekly interview on the charter with WWB-supplied guests such as Robert Sherwood, Carl Van Doren, and Pearl Buck. Numerous radio commentators were pressured to give the charter prominent and favorable

By July, with the passage of the charter apparently assured and the WWB contemplating closing its offices, the San Francisco campaign was closed down, except for fulfillment of commitments already made. Once reorganized as the Writers' Board, the group gave periodic attention to the United Nations but withheld any major activity, waiting to see how that organization would work out in practice. By early 1945, it was clear that the U. N. was far too weak for the group's taste.

The board was already actually in the process of dissolution. Most of its publications had ceased. An indication of the strength of the feeling of the group's members, however, may be ascertained from the fact that they mounted a campaign to obtain signers for a petition to President Harry S. Truman asking that the U. N. be established as a real world government. The petition noted that there was no defense against the atomic bomb and felt that humanity might be wiped out without immediate preventative steps.

\[71\text{Ibid.}\]
Their proposed world government would be a drastic change. It would have jurisdiction directly over the individual with a world executive, legislature, and judiciary in addition to an adequate military force. The group believed that such a major change was justified by the desperate world situation. 72

The Writers' Board dissolved with little further action in this regard. The individuals who made up the group, however, continued to feel deeply the need for a strong world organization. In July, 1949, the Writers' Board for World Government was formed. It had no official connection with the WWB, but many of its members were the same: Stout, Fadiman, Green, Hammerstein, Crouse, LaFarge, and Leech, as well as any number of other writers who had worked closely with the earlier group, such as Cousins, Mark Van Doren, Henry S. Canby, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, and Robert Sherwood. The Writers' Board for World Government, to a degree, carried on the WWB's work in the area of world federation into the

1950's and 1960's.\textsuperscript{73}

Since the strength of the actual United Nations organization fell considerably short of what they had proposed, the board members were not surprised at its essential ineffectiveness. They continued to think that, given a real opportunity, world federation provided a hope for world peace.

\textsuperscript{73}Interview with Stout, August 14, 1970; Stout to the author, June 15, 1968; New York Times, July 4, 1949, p. 2; interview with Green, August 8, 1968; Carmer to the author, March 25, 1969.
CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

No study which is confined to a reasonable length can possibly indicate the full extent of the Writers' War Board activities. Despite the detail which appears in the foregoing chapters, much of the New York group's work remains unmentioned. Whole categories of work have been omitted, for example, the board's assistance to private humanitarian organizations such as the Red Cross. Many of the board's publicity methods have been entirely overlooked, such as their successful campaign to have war pages inserted in many books published during the war, giving the authors' views on some war issue, or their insertion of propaganda into the programs of New York theater-goers. In many other areas the attempt has only been to illustrate the nature of the group's work with little attention to its full scope.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the American writers guided by the Writers' War Board carried on a very considerable amount of activity in support of the war effort.
The precise significance of the board and its work, however, is much more difficult to ascertain.

As mentioned in the introduction, the WWB is not without some precedent in American history. Some clues to its place in a history of wartime propaganda may be gained from a brief comparison with other agencies whose activities to some extent paralleled those of the WWB. These included two government agencies, the Committee on Public Information (CPI) during World War I, and the Office of War Information (OWI) during World War II. They also include the interventionist groups that existed in the period after the Second World War had begun in Europe but before Pearl Harbor.

The war board never turned out propaganda in such quantities as did government agencies, and most of its operation lay within the boundaries of the United States, while the government agencies made a large proportion of their effort abroad. Nevertheless, the official groups were quite close to the WWB in purpose. The CPI, headed by George Creel, was America's first full-time propaganda agency. Creel employed all the techniques available in his day. The Committee's News Division poured out a stream of stories on the war, filling, Creel estimated, more than 20,000 newspaper...
columns per week, and even published the first official daily newspaper in the history of the United States government. The Committee constantly used advertising space, both paid for and donated, for its purposes. Inspirational cartoons and pictures were supplied for newspapers, store displays, and posters. No radio broadcasting system was available, but Creel organized the next best thing, a nationwide group of "four-minute men" who delivered CPI-supplied speeches on topics that the government wished emphasized. The CPI heavily utilized motion pictures. The Committee's materials went directly into the schools, women's clubs, and labor organizations.¹

The CPI had in mind the achievement of a number of goals. They sought to cooperate with other government agencies and the armed services in carrying out a variety of campaigns. They helped the Treasury to sell war bonds, the War Food Administration to gain adherence to "meatless" days, the armed forces to recruit manpower. They also sought to mobilize hatred for the German enemy and to establish the need for world organization. Creel himself claimed that "our effort was educational

¹Mock and Larson, Words That Won the War, passim.
and informative throughout, for we had such confidence in our case as to feel that no other argument was needed than the simple straightforward presentation of facts."^2

It may well be, as the principal historians of the Creel Committee have said, that the CPI's function was "to codify and standardize ideas already widely current, and to bring the powerful force of the emotions behind them."^3

There is little doubt that the CPI was effective in bringing about a greater unity of opinion in America. However, Creel's methods were rather primitive. As a later expert put it, "much of his organization's output was in fact heavy-handed and lacking in credibility."^4

In the late 1920's and 1930's, disillusionment with America's role in World War I was widespread. Historians informed Americans that they had been tricked by foreign propaganda into entering the war.^5 In this atmosphere the Creel

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^2Creel, How We Advertised America (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1920), 47.

^3Mock and Larson, Words That Won the War, 10.


Committee was subjected to a somewhat hostile scrutiny. It was accused of using misinformation and distortion in order to sway the American public to the desired manner of thinking. Among the results of this situation was that the difficulties in carrying out a propaganda campaign were increased. Some of the more obvious techniques became less effective because propaganda, by its very nature, should not be easily identifiable by its target as such. In addition to this, in the 1930's the emphasis laid on propaganda by the rising Fascist regimes caused America to be suspicious of a government propaganda organization.

When the American government entered World War II, therefore, it proceeded somewhat cautiously into the sphere of propaganda. The function of censorship that the CPI had undertaken was entirely detached from the OWI and placed in a separate Office of Censorship. Indeed, Elmer Davis, as OWI head, spent much of his time struggling against censorship. With the example of the Creel Committee before it, the OWI always sought to confine itself to cold sober facts, and its publicity campaigns leaned more often in the direction of information than toward out-and-out persuasion. The OWI was strongly enjoined not to meddle in controversial issues and,
at least on the home front, largely seems to have observed that prohibition.  

This circumstance left a convenient opening for such an organization as the Writers' War Board. In the first place, the board, as has been demonstrated, was in an excellent position to plant subtle propaganda on radio programs, in magazines and books, in local newspapers, and in other communications media. It had the expert knowledge and contacts to make the proper arrangements. It had such creative talent that its propaganda would be convincing and so intermingled with entertaining material as to make it palatable. As a private organization, its material did not have the overtones of a "propaganda ministry."

Furthermore, the WWB could engage in controversial polemics without involving the government's own reputation for objectivity. Two of the war board's campaigns as a private organization — its demonstration of the malign nature of the German enemy, and its promotion of a world organization — which

6 Mackay, "The Domestic Operation of the Office of War Information," passim. See also, for example, the testimony of Elmer Davis before a Congressional committee on the OWI's involvement with the Bretton Woods and Dunbarton Oaks Conferences, United States House of Representatives, Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on the National War Agencies Appropriations Bill for 1946, 79 Cong., 1 Sess., 1945, 1123-24.
the OWI did not touch on the home front, are strikingly similar to goals of the Creel Committee. Like the CPI, the board could make unabashed appeals to emotion, while the OWI had to at least cloak any such attempt in a guise of strictly factual information. As Robert Landry later put it, "I think we broke through a lot of taboos, did many things the government wanted done and could not itself do. . . . The government was slow; we were fast. They were timid; we were bold. They used official gobblygook; we had some wit. World War II was strangely unemotional and needed a WWB to stir things up." 7 To some degree, then, the WWB fulfilled some of the functions that the CPI had performed in World War I. It was probably no coincidence that George Creel himself was on the WWB's Advisory Council and did considerable writing for the war board.

As a private organization, the board's most immediate predecessors were the committees formed to encourage American intervention in World War II, the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, and the Fight for Freedom Committee. There are some close similarities between these groups, particularly the latter, and the WWB both in matters of policy and

7 Landry to the author, September 28, 1970.
technique. The Fight for Freedom, for example, followed a policy of cooperating closely with the Roosevelt administration even while urging steps more advanced than the president felt able to take. This was precisely the tactic used by the WWB in most of their private crusades: a hard peace with Germany, an international organization, and racial tolerance. Both groups sought to sway public opinion away from isolationist sympathies. They used many of the same techniques to achieve this goal: collections of statements or signatures from prominent people; letter-writing campaigns; the use of a speakers' bureau, the nationwide furnishing of ready-to-print newspaper features, inspirational pieces, editorials, and cartoons; the promotion of books and articles deemed helpful to the cause; and the preparation of a great variety of printed matter ranging from the most blatant propaganda to the most subtle use of "pure" entertainment. In matters of policy, a tendency to give full attention to Germany while almost omitting consideration of Japan and an emphasis on the need for racial tolerance were characteristic of both groups. Since several of the WWB members were formerly associated with one

8See, for Fight for Freedom, Chadwin, Hawks of World War II, 171-254.
or another of the interventionist groups, such resemblances might be expected.

For the WWB's position as a volunteer group of writers assisting an official propaganda organization while simultaneously engaging in private campaigns, there is no precise precedent in American history. There is, however, at least one previous group with which some interesting parallels can be drawn. The National Board for Historical Service (NBHS) was a group organized by historians to assist the CPI in their fields of expertise. It was a volunteer group, but one so closely allied with official policy that the author of the principal study of these historians could describe them in language equally applicable to the WWB as "an unofficial arm of the government." Like the WWB, they wrote propaganda materials for the government, particularly pamphlets. They attempted to get material into the popular magazines and newspapers of the day. They furnished the government with expert editorial service. Like the WWB, they helped to contact and organize for the war effort members of their own profession

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9Orr, "Historians at War," 64.
around the country and periodically supplied them with written materials to guide them in their war effort.\textsuperscript{10}

The comparison cannot be pushed too far, of course. The NBHS did not turn out propaganda in nearly the quantities of the WWB. Much of its output was aimed at a limited audience, the readers of scholarly journals and magazines. It failed completely to get its material into popular newspapers and magazines. Its primary successes were in the field of education, an area into which the WWB rarely ventured. It had little of the WWB's vast variety of talents, techniques, and goals. Ironically, a historian, Harold Wolff, with the example of the NBHS in mind, once proposed to the WWB that a similar committee be organized to assist the New York writers. His proposal was rejected on the grounds that they had little concern with history in their work and that if something needed a stamp of historical accuracy, this could be easily obtained from a well-known member of the profession such as Allan Nevins.\textsuperscript{11} As the historian of the NBHS states, the importance of that group lies in its relationship to the development of

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., passim.

\textsuperscript{11}Harold A. Wolff to WWB, October 6, 1942, Mrs. Barach to Henry Pringle, February 27, 1943, Cont. 13, WWB Records.
the historical profession more than in its contributions to the war effort or the history of war propaganda. Nevertheless, the general idea behind both groups and their peculiar relationship to the government are somewhat similar.

During the course of its existence, the WWB was the recipient of every kind of charge, from being Communist-oriented to utilizing Fascist techniques. Most of these attacks have only the documented validity that usually is attached to casual vilification. A few of the more thoughtful charges merit some examination, however. Most easily disposed of is the image that some writers, including John Steinbeck, apparently had of the WWB as an organization that worked secretly, seeking to dictate what writers should write and to insert subtle and insidious propaganda in America's reading material. The WWB's refusal to permit general circulation of its minutes through government circles also caused some officials to wonder if it was a secret society.13


As for the "secrecy" of the board's own existence, the charge is unfounded. On the contrary, the WWB made every effort to publicize its existence and functions among all those whose services it might utilize or who in turn might utilize its services. It recounted its activities in three annual reports to the writers of the country. If somewhat self-laudatory, these reports made quite clear what the WWB was doing and showed that it had no authority over anyone. These reports were summarized in the New York Times, Variety, and Publishers' Weekly. In addition, periodic statements on the group's various projects were issued to the news media. All inquirers were told fully and frankly what the board was doing.

Obviously, the board did not specifically label as "propaganda" much of the material which it obtained for publication. Indeed, outside the WWB's own publications, whose source was clearly identified, the WWB's name only rarely appeared in connection with its materials. Except for a few isolated instances, such as when the board was trying to stimulate letters as part of a campaign, this was not due to the WWB's own design. The New York group gladly received name credit whenever it felt that it had played a creative role in
writing the material and the author or publisher was willing to mention it. Its "secrecy" seems to have been genuine self-effacement. In many cases a demand for name-credit would have hindered the chances for publication or broadcast and reduced the number of people willing to work for the group. Getting the publicity or the information across was the important thing.

At one time, when the board was considering a radio show which would discuss its own activities and serve as a sort of broadcast equivalent of the Monthly Report, there was actually some question about the danger of exposing the group's "propaganda mechanism," but this was not considered a serious obstacle. As for the difficulty with the minutes, the WWB simply did not wish everyone in the OWI offices to be intimately familiar with their private campaigns which were discussed at the same meeting with the government-connected activities. A full accounting of all campaigns, as well as full and complete minutes, were routinely sent to the upper echelon of OWI officials. On several occasions the WWB protested against such secrecy as did surround the government's propaganda efforts during the war, though with little apparent effect.14

14See, for example, Stout to Elmer Davis, October 7, 1942, Cont. 111, WWB Records; and File 1A-10, Cont. 21, WWB Records.
Another accusation periodically made against the WWB was that it did not confine its efforts to non-controversial war activities but intervened instead in partisan politics on the side of the Roosevelt administration and the Democrats.15 This charge was not without some foundation. On most issues, the board openly stood on the side considered "liberal." Most of its "villains" were Republicans, such as Senator Robert A. Taft and Congressman Hamilton Fish. The board was so strongly opposed to Herbert Hoover that it refused to ghost-write an article for him, even at the direct request of the government.16

For the most part, the actions of the WWB seem to have been free of political motive. The board itself contained members of both parties. Much of the work with the Roosevelt administration was simply a part of the win-the-war effort. Where WWB members did undertake partisan activities, as when Rex Stout and Margaret Leech assisted the Roosevelt presidential campaign in 1944, they carefully disassociated

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15See, for example, Joe B. McMillan to WWB, June 3, 1944, Cont. 18, WWB Records.

16"Minutes of the Meeting of the WWB, July 21, 1943," Cont. 1, WWB Records.
themselves from the group. The WWB itself never agreed to help anyone in the field of politics, and any political effects of their work must be considered indirect and incidental.

Another and more complex question about the board involves its relationship with the government. The group was sometimes criticized for masquerading as a government agency, since its publications did not specifically designate it as a private organization. Writer John Patric, for example, claimed that the board misled authors into believing that its requests were official assignments, and said "is not my point the . . . worse [that] the Writers' War Board is not actually a government agency, but a quasi-government owned agency, and in a manner which leaves writers unable to decide which is which?"¹⁷ As has been noted, some persons friendly to the New York writers worried that the board might fall too closely under the government's control.

The answer to any such question lies in the rather ambiguous nature of the WWB's relationship to the government.

¹⁷Patric, to Congressman Fred Bradley, January 17, 1945, Cont. 127, WWB Records.
While the board usually made clear that it was a private agency without any government authority, it also ordinarily stated or implied the closeness of its ties with the government wherever it believed this would be helpful. This practice was not deceptive; instead it reflected the intimate working relationship with the OWI which actually existed. Furthermore, the WWB always refused to engage in any attack on or obstruction of the government. Stout, for example, made it an absolute policy that the president could not be criticized in any way. On the other hand, as illustrated by the board's private campaigns, the group was often willing to take stands in advance of the official policy in hopes of influencing government decisions yet to be made. If the disagreement was absolute, then the New York group simply did not participate in any government activities related to the disagreement. Serious disputes between the WWB and the government, however, were virtually non-existent. This lack of confrontations meant that the relationship was never really clarified. As WWB member Robert J. Landry put it, "We were on the same general wave length." 


None of the WWB's activities brought more criticism than its stand on the German question. Besides the attacks from outside, differences of opinion between board members were so strong that they were hard put to retain a united front. The advocacy of hatred for Germany during the war and the conviction that to be a German was to be aggressive, arrogant, and intrinsically evil appears in striking contrast to most of the other positions taken by the board. Though they denied it, the group's hard-liners, Stout, Fadiman, Gallico, and Green, held what seemed to be a racist theory in regard to Germans. Their historical documentation of the German "will-to-aggression" is reminiscent of the type of historical "evidence" once used to demonstrate the inferiority of the Negro race.

Their position is particularly incongruous when it is contrasted with the board's liberal, far-seeing, and often effective campaign for racial equality. Fighting racism at home while all but condoning it in regard to Germany is an inconsistency difficult to explain. Certainly the passions of war go far to explain much of the board's anti-German belligerence. Stout, in explaining the group's attitude, remarked that they looked upon the war as "a moral crusade" and
believed that almost everyone shared their feeling that "there was something intolerably evil loose in the world." The charge of cynical and insincere manipulation of public opinion by the WWB cannot be supported in this or any other instance.

Their anti-German feelings did not die when the fighting ceased. Commenting after the war on an anti-German story based on an idea that came up in a WWB meeting, Gallico wrote: "I do not know when I have had so much fun writing a story as I did turning out this one, which was prepared when the war was still going full blast and while it was still permitted to hate fascists, the Nazi, German, Jap, and Argentine brands, without being stigmatized as a 'liberal' in pregnant quotes." In contrast there stands the board's pioneering effort in racial tolerance. The group recognized the urgency of the problem well before the government or general public did and it attempted corrective action. In the area of international cooperation, once again, it can be argued that the group saw

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20 Interview with Stout, August 14, 1970.

21 Gallico, Confessions of a Story Writer, 343. The above statements are also partially based on the interviews with Stout, August 14, 1970, and Green, August 8, 1968.
the urgency and depth of the problem at a time when the government and public opinion were concerned only with the immediate situation. Whether or not the world federation which the group advocated was a feasible solution is, of course, a matter of controversy. The board members themselves would argue that their proposal has never been given a trial.

Ultimately, any judgment on any organization should be made in terms of its objectives. The WWB's goals were lofty indeed: the winning of the war and the winning of the peace. That, presumably, represents the duty of any citizen when his country is at war. To evaluate how well these goals were achieved and how much the group's efforts had to do with the result is obviously impossible when one cannot even accurately estimate the amount of reaction produced by any single piece of the board's propaganda. Most of the war board members were convinced that they had made a real contribution to the war effort. As to the winning of the peace, the general attitude is best summed up by the bitter words of Paul Gallico, written in 1946: "Any line about the kind of world we hoped to make out of this war has a hollow ring today. I guess at the time I wrote [1944] . . . I was actually naive enough to believe that this time it would be different."^22

^22Gallico, Confessions of a Story Writer, 345.
In the end, the simplest, most direct assessment of the place of the Writers' War Board in history was made by its chairman, Rex Stout, speaking long after the group ceased to exist. He said that the WWB "was the best instance in a violent conflict of the organized use of writing abilities to help the fight." At least in regard to American history, the statement seems to be accurate.

23Interview with Stout, August 14, 1970.
NOTE ON SOURCES

For an organization that produced so much published material, there is remarkably little available in print about the work of the Writers' War Board. Most of the material on which this dissertation is based is located in the 143 boxes in the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress which contain the records of the WWB.

The WWB records themselves are neither catalogued, indexed, nor, in many cases, logically arranged. The boxes simply contain the working files of the organization; and although the arrangement is roughly topical, no study of any aspect of the board can be considered complete until the entire collection has been examined. Among the most valuable items in the collections are the minutes of the meetings of the war board. These are full and complete accounts of each weekly meeting. Unfortunately, except for the year 1944, the board made no effort to obtain a complete file of the minutes, and thus no record remains of many of the board's discussions.

Other important sets of items contained in the records are the WWB's own publications. Virtually complete sets of
the war-scripts-of-the-month, the board's editorials for newspapers, and war talks are available. Some issues of the "Brief Items for House Organs," "Brief Items to Army Camps," and "Bulletin for Cartoonists" are missing, but the collection is still extensive. In addition the files contain a great many other speeches, scripts, and special articles that the board wrote or stimulated.

The files, of course, contain the massive correspondence of the WWB. This includes thousands of letters sent to or received from cooperating writers, extensive reports and memoranda exchanged with various agencies of the government, and the often revealing correspondence which passed between members of the board themselves and their staff.

Finally, the WWB's papers contain the working progress reports, case books, and memoranda by which the organization kept abreast of its campaigns. These are often sketchy, usually incomplete, and occasionally inaccurate. Accordingly, they must be used with extreme care. But they serve as the best source for the group's activities in any particular publicity effort. Often, without these reports, it would be most difficult to determine whether the WWB's ideas ever reached the stage of practical reality.
The board made public its activities in a series of Writers' War Board Reports. These were little more than propaganda sheets, but several libraries maintained files of these. A complete file is available in the New York Public Library. More comprehensive and more useful are the three annual reports issued for 1942, 1943, and 1944, which summarized the group's activities for the nation's writers. The annual reports are accurate but sometimes imply that the war board was more active than was actually the case.

In an effort to supplement the group's written records, I attempted to contact every living WWB member, as well as several other individuals who had worked closely with the board. Most responded to some degree. Rex Stout and Alan Green were of particular assistance, both in letters and in personal interviews. Correspondence with Mrs. Frederica Barach, Robert J. Landry, and Carl Carmer was especially helpful.

Except for a few articles and newspaper stories dealing directly with the WWB activities, most of the contemporary published material that I utilized in this dissertation is propaganda that emanated from the New York group. This material is useless except when used in coordination
with the WWB's records, because usually no other evidence exists to suggest its connection with the group. No internal characteristics exist which identify WWB work. I made no attempt in this study to do more than give typical examples of the group's propaganda. No published material classified as a secondary source in the bibliography contains any but the most casual mention of the group. Accordingly, all such material was used strictly for the purposes of historical background.
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II. SECONDARY SOURCES

**Articles**


Books


Unpublished Material


APPENDIX I

WRITERS' WAR BOARD

MEMBERSHIP

Rex Stout (Chairman)

Franklin P. Adams
Robert Bellaire***
George Britt*
Sidney Buchman*
Pearl S. Buck
Henry Fisk Carlton*
Carl Carmer
Robert T. Colwell
Russel Crouse
Elmer Davis*
Samuel Eubanks*
Clifton Fadiman
Paul Gallico
Jack Goodman
Samuel Grafton
Alan Green
Oscar Hammerstein II
Rita Halle Kleeman
Christopher LaFarge
Robert J. Landry
Margaret Leeche
John P. Marquand
Hobe Morrison**
Henry Pringle***
Jean Ellis Poletti**
Katharine Seymour
William Shirer
Luise Sillcox

*Served only in 1942.
**Joined WWB in 1944.
***Joined WWB in 1945.
APPENDIX II

WRITERS' WAR BOARD ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEMBERSHIP

Louis Adamic
Franklin P. Adams*
Frederick Lewis Allen
Faith Baldwin
Margaret Culkin Banning
Stephen Vincent Benét
William Rose Benét
Roark Bradford
Louis Brumfield
Van Wyck Brooks
Katharine Brush
Sidney Buchman*
Pearl S. Buck*
Henry Seidel Canby
Carl Carmer*
Mary Ellen Chase
Marc Connelly
Norman Corwin
George Creel
Bernard DeVoto
Walter D. Edmonds
Edna Ferber
Dorothy Canfield Fisher
Corey Ford
Rose Franklin
Paul Gallico*
Lewis Gannett
John Gunther
Langston Hughes

*Also served on the Writers' War Board
Fannie Hurst
Marquis James
Owen Johnson
MacKinlay Kantor
George S. Kaufman
John Kieran
Manuel Komroff
Joseph Wood Krutch
Howard Lindsay
Edna St. Vincent Millay
Edward R. Murrow
Robert Nathan
Allan Nevins
Clifford Odets
Eugene O'Neill
Donald Culross Peattie
William Lyon Phelps
Fletcher Pratt
Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings
Quentin Reynolds
Elmer Rice
Mary Roberts Rinehart
Kenneth Roberts
Frank Sullivan
Dorothy Thompson
Sophie Kerr Underwood
Carl Van Doren
Mark Van Doren
Hendrik Willem Van Loon
Walter White
William L. White
Margaret Widdemer
Thornton Wilder
APPENDIX III*

THE POSITION OF THE WRITERS' WAR BOARD
ON THE GERMAN PROBLEM

The Writers' War Board believes that Germany must eventually be brought into a co-operative family of civilized nations. Until she has proved her right to that position she must be rigidly controlled and the peace terms must be uncompromisingly enforced no matter how severe they may be. At any cost we must prevent another war of aggression.

THE RECORD

Nazism is the current manifestation of the German Will-to-Aggression.

The German Will-to-Aggression has expressed itself practically in a series of aggressive wars. Naming only those within the last century, there were the Danish War of 1864, the Austrian War of 1866, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, the First World War of 1914, and the Second World War of 1939.

The German Will-to-Aggression has expressed itself ideologically in a series of closely related movements and systems of thought. These movements and systems of thought have at various times been designated as "Prussianism," "Junkerism," "Nordicism," "Militarism," "Kaiserism," "Pan-Germanism," and the theory of Master-Race Germans predestined to dominate the world. They culminate today in that German version of Fascism known as Nazism.

In a letter of July 10, 1944 to this Board an eminent American historian (Professor Edward Mead Earle of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton University) has defined these manifestations more simply. He calls them "a total

*From WWB, Third Annual Report, 32-36.
inability of the German people to understand and respect the rights and interests of others." These "others" now, as at other times in German history, have included individuals and minority groups within her own borders as well as nations beyond them.

It is true that social and political intolerance have been found to some extent in other countries, including our own. We submit, however, that in no other great world power except Germany (and Japan) has it become the long-term official policy of the country, supported by a controlling number of its citizens.

The argument that the Nazi leaders led a deluded German people into war is completely unacceptable. The German people, as a political unit -- and we cannot treat them as anything else in making war on them or in making peace with them -- cannot be absolved from war guilt. They have accepted, some actively, some passively, the German Will-to-Aggression as a political philosophy and as a cultural standard for many years.

It has been said that the German people did not want this war. Even if this were true it would prove nothing. Hitler himself did not want war provided he could get what he wanted without war. The crime of Germans was in wanting and insisting on taking things that cannot be had without war.

Seventy million Germans did not want to fight Russia, but they followed their leaders -- long before Hitler -- in coveting the Ukraine and directing their foreign policy toward its acquisition. That meant war.

HOW BIG IS THE INNOCENT MINORITY?

Some Germans have not approved the German Will-to-Aggression and do not now. We hope the day will come when they will be numerous enough to control the policies of their nation. Meanwhile, it is with the Germany of today that we have to deal. If our sympathy for an innocent minority should prevent us from dealing effectively with the guilty majority -- the political unit which is Germany now -- we are convinced that another world war must result.
No one knows how large this innocent minority is or how influential it may be after the War. We know only that resistance to the present form of the German Will-to-Aggression known as Nazism found no effective or militant expression.

We ask that Germans everywhere, including refugees in this country, be judged by their willingness to recognize the German Will-to-Aggression and to support whatever severity may be necessary to discourage it. If they do not do this but, instead, are more interested in advocating a strong post-war Germany through the imposition of a "soft" peace; if they desire modification of our official Unconditional Surrender policy; if they are more interested in creating a strong German state than in creating a strong democratic Europe; then, we believe they are no less our enemies than are the Nazis.

Mere lip service to the democratic ideal is not sufficient. The German people, whether in exile or in their own country, must prove their renunciation of the German Will-to-Aggression. The proof of this renunciation will be found in the form and personnel of the government chosen by the citizens of Germany, the educational system they introduce, their dealings with other nations, and their treatment of minority groups within their own borders. Germany must be on probation until the evidence of this change of heart is convincing.

THE GERMAN EXPERTS

Scores of German political exiles now in this country are attempting, both as individuals and in organized groups, to advise Americans on the German problem.

Some of the more articulate of these exiles are eloquent apologists for Germany. Their attempt to take advantage of the American love of justice and fair play jeopardizes the lasting peace which should come from complete victory of the United Nations.

These Germans say: The German problem can be solved only by the Germans themselves.
They say: Any severity in peace terms would result in humiliating a proud people and producing a bitter and ineradicable resentment.

They say: The Versailles Treaty was the determining factor in the rise of the Nazis to power.

They say: Germany is the economic leader of Europe; European economy depends on Germany; hence we must cater to Germany's economic needs. (Those who advance this argument rarely or never recognize that our first duty is not to rehabilitate the aggressor but the victims of the aggressor.)

These statements we believe to be dangerous pro-German propaganda. We urge all Americans to be on their guard against such propaganda, however persuasively presented, whether by individuals or by organizations, whatever their sponsorship.

In the 1920's many intelligent Americans and Englishmen were deceived into believing that there were in Germany citizens who, like themselves, had a determining voice in the affairs of their nation. This mistake was a costly one which must not be repeated.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

The details of the treatment of Germany, after its unconditional surrender, will be arranged by the military and political leaders of many nations, and will be determined by the situation as it then exists. But all of us can and should have a voice in the basic principles. We believe the most important of these principles to be:

1. In our attitude toward Germany and the post-war world we should be guided not by sentiment ("After all, there must be lots of decent Germans"), not by assumption ("This time they've learned their lesson") but by bitter experience gained in two wars, the first of which we lost politically through our failure to recognize the German Will-to-Aggression, just as we will always lose our wars with Germany until we arrive at full recognition of this truth.
2. The severity of our treatment of Germany should be no greater and no less than is necessary to convince the Germans that the Master-Race theory will not work and that German Will-to-Aggression leads inevitably to disaster. This principle applies to all such matters as control of German production, restoration of German sovereignty, and the length and character of military occupation of Germany.

3. The burden of proof of good intentions must be upon Germany. After the last war we trusted the founders of the Weimar Republic. Yet they betrayed the cause of world peace by turning over to the German High Command the responsibility for maintenance of internal law and order as well as the further responsibility for demobilization of the defeated armies. This action by the founders of the Weimar Republic, which kept the control of German militarism in Junker hands, took place on November 10, 1918, the day before the Armistice. Not long after this deal was made, the Allied leaders learned of it and accepted it. Thus they demonstrated their inability to appreciate the true nature of the German Will-to-Aggression. We cannot afford to repeat that error.

4. In the alleviation of suffering the victims of German aggression have a claim on us prior to that of the aggressors.

5. To those Germans who have proved themselves completely free of the Will-to-Aggression, every encouragement should be given to obtain, and maintain, control and leadership of the German Government.

The Writers' War Board has on occasion been accused of advocating such absurd measures as sterilization and extermination in dealing with the German problem. These charges are either dishonest or irresponsible, or both. Our attitude could not be more clearly expressed than in the concluding words of an editorial which appeared on May 10, 1944 in the New York Herald-Tribune.
"The one test for any measure should be whether or not it contributes to lasting peace. A weak leniency will not do so; neither will a blind severity. Since the real problem is that of altering a militarized politico-social structure and outlook on life, thorough-going measures will be needed, but they must be constructively directed. Partition is not excluded, occupation may well be prolonged. But the one final solution for the German problem will be to establish a just and workable international political and economic structure, and then maintain firm control over the Germans until such a time as they have themselves developed the attitudes and institutions which will enable them to become useful partners in that structure."

Finally, we desire only a realization by the American public of this truth: That our enemies are not the Nazis alone but all Germans who accept or support, actively or passively, openly or with camouflage, any of the various forms in which the German Will-to-Aggression seeks political expression. Once the American people recognize this fact, we believe they will support a policy that can prevent a third German world war.
R. Thomas Howell was born on January 20, 1944, in Houston, Texas. In May, 1961, he graduated from Pineville High School, Pineville, Louisiana. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Louisiana College in 1964. He immediately began his graduate studies at Louisiana State University, receiving a Master of Arts degree in 1966. He is presently employed as assistant professor of history at Louisiana College and is a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in January, 1971.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: R. Thomas Howell

Major Field: History

Title of Thesis: The Writers' War Board: Writers and World War II

Approved:

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Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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Date of Examination:

December 5, 1970