Measuring National Morale

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cured in exchange for fifty destroyers and if these bases had been immediately fortified for the protection of the country. Perhaps it would also have been better if he had demanded the bases in the Marshall Islands which were later turned over to Japan and which have now been used to attack us. Renunciation of selfish, imperialistic aims involving the conquest and subjugation of alien people is not necessarily irreconcilable with a desire to secure definite advantages for one's country.

Fourth, they must not promise the impossible. Otherwise postwar disillusionment will be accentuated.

Fifth, war aims must undermine enemy morale.

Sixth, war aims must bind the allies together.

Some of these aims are hard to reconcile. Merely to enumerate them indicates the difficult problem which an administration faces —the problem of setting forth war aims which will at the same time stiffen popular morale for the war period and provide a sound and workable program for a difficult and very different post war period.

If the government is to maintain a high morale, there is no better injunction than to quote the words of President Lincoln in appointing General Hooker to the command of the Army of the Potomac, "God forward and give us victories." But the people must stand firm while victory is being prepared. That must involve a program of useful work for everyone. Only as everyone is personally a participant in useful work that contributes to victory will everyone also feel the buoyant enthusiasm and confidence that is the essence of sound morale.

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MEASURING NATIONAL MORALE

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Morale has come to be a factor of prime importance in organization for a total war. Time was when the civilian population remained an inactive mass in war time, since professional soldiers alone conducted the fighting. Now the entire civilian population is harnessed to the war effort. The fighting forces are selected from the population by conscription, industrial workers are assigned to definite tasks in the production of military equipment and supplies, volunteers—women as well as men—are recruited for a variety of civilian defense services, prices and wages are subject to government regulation, savings of surplus income are channelized into the purchase of war bonds, and income taxes reach down to the lower levels of earning. But all this regimentation of individual behavior is accompanied in a democracy with the necessity of keeping a highly literate people informed about the goals of the war effort and the current events that mark off steps toward achieving the goals.

MORALE is defined as the degree to which the individual feels competent to cope with the future and achieve his desired goals.[1] Feeling about one's capacity to achieve desired goals at some future time, is usually expressed in opinions exchanged in conversation and in discussion. National morale is then expressed in the opinions that people state consistently, that is, those opinions they voice and then reiterate without much variation, about the means they favor to attain the goals they desire. When their behavior in voting, in contributing money to support, and in personal sacrifice to attain the end, is also consistent with their opinions, we conclude that we are seeing evidence of good morale. Thus a complete measure of national morale would require both a measure of public opinion and a measure of public behavior.

Although several psychometric scales have been developed to measure morale, none of them has been tried out upon a representative sample of the population of the United States. Consequently, no scientific statements can be made about national morale. All that can be stated are certain qualified inferences about morale from the Gallup Polls and certain very limited conclusions about small groups of people who responded to the scaled tests of morale. Even less is known about the consistency of behavior with these expressed opinions, and no systematic procedure like the Gallup Poll has been devised to measure national behavior. In spite of these limitations in our knowledge everyone talks about morale as if it were an easily observable phenomenon and I have been asked to prepare this paper on measuring national morale.

Since the measurement of national morale would require testing a representative sample of the population of the United States on one or more of the recently constructed scales designed to measure national morale, and as I have just indicated, we have as yet no such data, I shall confine my treatment of this subject first, to some of the more technical problems of measuring morale, and second, a consideration of some observations on factors relevant to national morale, and finally on examination of the Gallup Polls of public opinion.

John Harding published "A Scale for Measuring Civilian Morale" in 1941.[2] Inasmuch as his definition is definitely related to some points that we shall presently consider, his definition may be quoted in full. "Given a certain task to be accomplished by a group, *morale* pertains to all factors in the individual's life that bring about a hopeful and energetic participation on his part so that his efforts enhance the effectiveness of the group in accomplishing the task in hand." With this statement as a start, he then constructed a questionnaire of 48 items which was administered to 311 Harvard juniors. Intercorrelations among the items revealed several empirical clusters. The questionnaire was then revised and enlarged to 59

[1] Rundquist, E. A., & Sletto, R. R., *Personality in the Depression*, 1936.
[2] *The Journal of Psychology*, 1941, 12:101–110.

items and administered to two criterion groups selected to represent high and low morale respectively. The high morale group consisted of 44 distinguished social scientists and men in public life, each of whom was devoting a considerable part of his time to the furtherance of national morale. The low morale group consisted of 14 subjects from a settlement house group, described as "surly" or "having a grudge against the world," and 32 additional men approached while loafing during working hours on the Boston Common.

The final form of the morale scale consisted of 20 items chosen by the two procedures just described. Eight items seemed to form a cluster expressing an attitude of confidence. Five items formed a cluster around an attitude of tolerance. Four items referred to an attitude of realism as opposed to wishful thinking; and three items expressed an attitude of assertive idealism in international affairs. Each of the questions was scored on a five-point scale so that the possible range was from 20 to 100 points.

The lower morale group exhibited great heterogeneity of attitudes but the high morale group was by no means an optimistic group.

The second morale scale recently published is that of Delbert C. Miller, the "Washington State Survey of Opinions" a scale to measure national morale.[3] The author began his study with five hypotheses to supply a theory of national morale which could be tested. These hypotheses are: (1) belief in the superiority of the social structure of the in-group; (2) degree and manner by which personal goals are identified with national goals; (3) judgments of the competence of national leadership; (4) belief that resources are available to hurl back any threats to the in-group; and (5) confidence in the permanence of national goals. To test these hypotheses, 48 opinion statements were prepared with a five point scale. A preliminary test was made on 200 undergraduates in freshman, sophomore, junior and senior classes in proportions representative of the student body at Washington State College. Item analysis was then made against the total score as a criterion and a scale of 18 significant items obtained. By this method of analysis it was found that the most significant of the five hypotheses were in order (2), (1), and (5). The other two hypotheses were also related to the criterion, but not as significantly.

What are the conclusions that can be made from this brief description of the Harding and the Miller scales? I think that the first conclusion is that the Harding scale shows a definite relationship between participation, action, and the expenditure of effort, on the one hand, and attitudes of confidence, tolerance, realism and idealism (all components of morale) on the other hand. These results

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[3] "The Measurement of National Morale", American Sociological Review, 6: 4: 487–498, August, 1941.

thus seem to confirm the validity of the original definition of morale as formulated by Rundquist and Sletto in 1936. From the Miller scale one may conclude that national morale consists first in the degree and manner by which personal goals are identified with national goals, second, in the belief in the superiority of the social structure of the in-group, and third, in confidence in the permanence of national goals. The net conclusion is that morale goes along with belief in national goals and is strengthened by active participation in efforts to achieve these goals. These conclusions are not measures of national morale, but rather a clarification of the fundamental factors in morale.

Let us now examine some aspects of the present American scene which are related to morale. The public is confused about the validity of its goals when its leaders do not keep it informed. As a people we are unused to censorship and resent any restrictions on freedom of discussion. The claims and counter-claims of blocs and special interest groups tend to becloud the real issues of making prompt decisions upon the best means to win the war. When farmers, organized labor and businessmen all stand out to maintain prices and wages, the special pleadings they voice, tend to obscure the national goal. We are also unfamiliar with the horrors of secret police, atrocities and cruelty to conquered civilian peoples. Consequently, we can not bring ourselves to a realization that these things exist in the same world with the four freedoms we prize so highly. The essential decency of American attitudes makes us skeptical of the reality of these horrors. Furthermore, these stark and grim realities have occurred against a background of debunking of the national heroes of American history. Our frame of reference has been warped by the tendency of certain intellectuals to deprecate the simpler virtues of past leaders and to subject them to ridicule because they failed in all respects to live up to a wholly unrealistic perfectionism of character.

War censorship in a context of propaganda means that the usual safeguards of counter-propaganda are removed by centralization of news at the source so that government propaganda is more strictly channelized than occurs in a peaceful democratic society. Consequently morale may suffer from uncertainty as to the real facts of any particular case. While at the moment there seems little evidence to support the belief that freedom of the press will be unduly restricted, it is well to ask the question, how can we protect ourselves from the more insidious forms of propaganda? While no fool-proof rules can be formulated, there are in general three questions that can be asked about a statement. If the answers are No! then there is a strong probability that the statement contains undesirable propaganda. Does the statement present all sides of the issue? Note that we do not ask whether both sides are presented, because to ask the question that way presupposes that there are only two sides,

probably a good side and a bad side. In our complex world there are usually several alternatives. Is the reader free to draw his own inference from the evidence, or is the statement so worded as to force a particular conclusion? Is there freedom of inquiry into the sources of the evidence upon which the statement rests? Strains upon institutional structure due to the alienation of popular support will be diminished and confidence restored in some measure by using these correctives to propaganda.

In our democratic social order we value our four freedoms very highly. Freedom of assemblage, freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of religious worship, may experience some restriction in war time when national survival is at stake. This is necessary and will be accepted. Judging from the experience of Great Britain, where the strain on social institutions has been much more severe than anything yet experienced in America, it seems certain that we can maintain our essential freedoms even in organization for total war. But, one asks, are there not specific safeguards that can be taken to protect freedom of assemblage and freedom of speech, safeguards consistent with tighter controls and yet permitting the needed expression of minority views? Years ago Edward A. Ross, in his *Social Psychology*, 1908, enumerated certain principles of prophylaxis against mob mind. More recently Everett Dean Martin in his *Behavior of Crowds*, 1920, sketched out some of the mechanisms operating when an audience becomes a crowd and verges upon the psychology of the mob. These analyses are familiar to all social psychologists and are excellent general accounts. What we have needed is a practical guide. This we now have in a publication of the Council for Democracy, 11 West 42nd St., New York City, printed in 1941, of a list of nine points that may be regarded as practical safeguards which maintain freedom of speech in war time and also may prevent mob psychology from developing. First, select a meeting place larger than the expected audience. Second, microphones must be used. Third, provide adequate lighting of the hall. Forth, have a low platform, with a table and chairs. Fifth, parliamentary law must be observed and no mass chants allowed. Sixth, permit no uniforms or insignia or banners on the part of civilians. Seventh, provide friendly police. Eighth, bond those responsible for the meeting. And ninth, make similar provisions for overflow audiences, protest groups or other minorities.

Civilian morale is a function of the degree to which the people are free to participate in the support of the national effort. When a community finds opportunity to channelize its efforts toward the achievement of winning the war there is a lift in morale. This has been true in Minneapolis. The emergency organization of the community of the City of Minneapolis to meet the shock of war needs began a year ago when members of the Board of Directors of the Council of Social Agencies began to consider seriously the effect of

numerous war relief fund campaigns upon the ability of the community to support its regular civic agencies.[4] There were community conflicts inherent in the situation when financial support to voluntary war relief drives jeopardized the financial support of the regular agencies of welfare. Unless resolved by careful community planning, these uncoordinated activities would waste funds and confuse the issues. Furthermore, the development of a competitive spirit in an area where cooperation was greatly needed would initiate independently organized activities and channelize energies into interests with narrow outlook and purpose. Eventually we would find ourselves in a situation that would entail unplanned consequences of independently planned social actions.[5]

The first step was to organize a War Chest which would provide a common single fund raising campaign for all the war relief agencies but with continued support also to the regular social work agencies. Since the Community fund raises $1,300,000 annually for the support of 54 social agencies of the city, and through its Council of Social Agencies, provides the coordinated planning for over 50 additional private and public agencies with other means of support, the problem was a major issue however considered. By the late summer of 1941 this War Chest organization was completely outlined, although it was January 1942 before it began to function. The danger of competition between volunteer war fund financing and money raising for ordinary civilian welfare agencies was, however, only one point of potential conflict. There were three other threats to coordinated community planning in the interest of reducing institutional strains and in working for institutional adjustments. One of these was the war-time prerogatives of the American Red Cross as a semi-official agency of government, another was the movement to organize Civilian Defense Councils, and a third was the pressure of eager citizens and women's organizations to play their part in defense. One by one these potential threats to community organization were met and solved.

The Minneapolis Civilian Defense Council was established by City Ordinance in February 1942, and divisions on utilities, civil protection, military services, industrial resources, labor, health, welfare and community services, were created. Now it happened that the Minneapolis Council of Social Agencies already operated its technical planning functions through a Central Planning and Research Committee, which is subdivided into areas of health, group work and recreation, and case work and relief. This central planning and research unit was immediately integrated as a technical service unit with the corresponding divisions of the Civilian De-

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[4] An excellent account of the same matrix of factors in 1917–1918, is described in Anderson and Ryan's monograph, "War Came to the Iowa Community", Iowa Agri. Experiment Station, Bulletin p. 36, January, 1942.

[5] See my analysis of unplanned consequences of independently planned social actions in "Social Theory and Social Action", *Amer. Soc. Rev.* Vol. 1, No. 1, Feb., 1926, p. 11.

fense Council. The method used was to name the vice-chairman of the group work and recreation unit of the Central Planning Committee the chairman of the corresponding section of the CDC; to name the vice-chairman of the health unit of the central planning Committee, the chairman of the corresponding health section of the CDC; and to name the vice-chairman of the welfare unit of the Central Planning Committee, the chairman of the corresponding section of the CDC. The technical secretaries of these subdivisions of the Central Planning Committee served also as the technical secretaries of corresponding sections of the CDC. Many conferences were of course necessary to affect this coordination of effort, but the point is that the arrangements were worked out in this manner and consequently no serious problems have arisen. Having solved this problem created by the threat of overlapping jurisdictions between the CDC and the Central Council of Social Agencies, there remained the problem of articulating these combined organizations with the American Red Cross. This problem also was worked out so that no friction or duplication of function resulted. In this case the arrangement was to make the Disaster Relief Committee of the American Red Cross one and the same in authority, organization and personnel with the Evacuation and Relief Unit of the Civilian Defense Corps. Since the Civilian Defense Corps was organized as the "combat division" of the CDC to function in times of public emergency such as air-raids, munition plant explosions, large fires, floods or other major disasters, the lines of authority were easily set to run up through the fire department, to the police department and to the military unit.[6] Finally, what should be done about the hundreds of civic clubs and women's organizations equally eager to aid in organized defense work? Here again the principle of central coordination under the CDC was worked out. A special activities section of the CDC was set up to include recreation, consumers interests, women's activities, welfare and health, each coordinated by interlocking personnel and stipulated lines of authority with the other divisions of the CDC and with the Civilian Defense Corps.

The leaders of this vast effort at community planning and coordination are convinced that civilian morale may be maintained and built up to support the total war effort by giving people an opportunity to do their share in a common organized effort. The objectives are definite, the procedures of action in time of emergency are worked out in systematic detail, and everyone who participates has a definite task to perform in the effort to attain this objective. Considering the number of munition plants in Minneapolis, its strategic importance in the great flour industry, and its hinterland which contains the chief source of iron ore, a public emergency is not so remote a contingency as it might seem on first thought. A plan of action ready to follow sustains morale.

[6] A special issue of *Minnesota Municipalities,* on civilian defense, March, 1942, supplies a detailed outline of the legal foundations.

Morale has been defined [7] as the degree to which an individual feels competent to cope with the future and to achieve his desired goals. In the present situation we have as the first common goal, superordinate to all previous individual goals, to win the war. In primitive societies the actions of individuals flow readily over from stimulus to responding behavior. Thus the stimulus of attack, arousing bodily preparation in muscular tension, deepened respiration, increased heart rate, and the pouring into the blood stream of adrenalin from the glands and of sugar from the liver, is followed by fighting behavior, or flight and hiding as the case may be. In the present situation, however, such forceful stimuli as atrocity stories, cruelty to civilian refugees, or fear of inflation, are complex experiences which usually occur in combination. Our original nature responds to these by the usual bodily preparation to fight or flee and we experience an increased heart rate, deepened respiration, muscular tension, and an increase in adrenalin and blood sugar. But what type of individual responding behavior can lead to victory or security? We can not as isolated individuals do anything quick and satisfying about atrocities, the torture of civilians, or menacing inflation. Any simple and satisfactory response is frustrated. The only possible successful response is an institutional response. That is to say we can win the war, protect helpless and enslaved peoples, check inflation, only by discharging our energies over a slow-moving network of institutional patterns. MacArthur was ordered to leave the Philippines on February 22nd, but it was not until March 17, 1942, that the news of the MacArthur's arrival in Australia was announced, twenty-three days later! Censorship was necessary to keep secret from the Japanese the very idea that the commander of an invested army could be removed, and then military preparations had to be made to continue the defense of Batan, as well as to work out the secret arrangements of flight and transportation. Meanwhile, people wondered and worried over what seemed to be a lost opportunity to place a great military commander in a larger field of service where he might turn the scales toward victory. In other words, the people felt frustrated and their morale suffered.

Now it is perhaps evident from this brief illustration following upon our description of the civilian defense organization in Minneapolis, that the orientation of community institutions toward defense may be accomplished by a well coordinated plan. This supplies the institutional machinery over which the aroused impulses of the people toward effective action may be usefully discharged, thereby giving each individual according to his capacities, an opportunity to contribute his personal effort to achieve the common-desired goal. This definite relationship to the pattern of collective effort gives him a feeling of competence to achieve his goal and dissolves any feeling of frustration. As a result civilian morale is stiffened. The moral about morale is, therefore, to do something.

[7] Rundquist, E. A., & Sletto, R. R., *Personality in the Depression*, 1936.

Evidence of the desires of civilians to participate in the defense effort has been continually expressed in the Gallup public opinion polls. On November 9, 1941, with only 9 per cent undecided, some 67 per cent favored the propositions that in time of war the government should have the right to tell factory owners and businessmen what products they can make and what prices they can charge. With 9 per cent undecided, 61 per cent favored regulation of farm production and farm prices. It seems particularly significant that unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled workers and white collar workers approved by 64 per cent (7 per cent undecided) economic controls over themselves, and 81 per cent of businessmen (4 per cent undecided) would accept government dictation over factory products and prices. By March 1942, 61 per cent favored total mobilization of all citizens and 7 per cent were undecided. A seventy-two per cent vote in August 1940 favoring a law to forbid strikes in war industries, changed to 86 per cent in favor of such regulation in March 1942, with only 5 per cent undecided.

Reliance upon the results of Gallup Polls as indicators of morale assumes first that inferences from these results may be justified on logical grounds, and second, that the responses to the polls are valid and reliable indicators of what public opinion really is. Taking first the question of logical inference, we may say that if expressed opinions are consistent with future action, that then the advanced expression of opinion may be taken as an indicator of probable future action. In the examples given, we do not yet have evidence of subsequent action, in terms of accepting economic controls over wages and prices, and conformity to regulations that control wages and prices, because the complete system of governmental control has not yet been worked out, legalized or put into effect. All that can be said on this point, therefore, is to cite evidence of earlier polls of public opinion that was followed by voting behavior consistent therewith. On the basis of the rather satisfactory vote predicting results of earlier Gallup Polls, we would seem to be justified in the expectation that the polls which show willingness to accept governmental regulations that contribute to winning the war, will be followed by conformity to these regulations when they are legalized and enforced. When large proportions of the public express an opinion favorable to proposed regulations that are considered essential to organization for a total war, we may infer that this indicates a conviction that they feel competent to cope with the future and to conform to rules that the government formulates as a means to achieve the goal of winning the war. Thus we conclude that the results of these polls are an indication of good civilian morale.

As to the second question about poll responses as valid and reliable indicators of what public opinion really is, the most objective test, is of course, that which finds subsequent behavior consistent with earlier expressions of opinion. In advance of that test all that can be said is to raise technical points about the selection of the ques-

tions, the manner in which they are worded, the adequacy of the sample interviewed, and the methods of inteviewing. Since Blankenship [8] has recently discussed the facts and principles of experimental tests of these questions, I shall merely cite in summary of this point that his conclusion from a survey of the critical literature substantiates the general validity and reliability of the Gallup Polls. This is not, however, to ignore the fact that these polls have certain limitations. The important thing to remember, it seems to me, is that no totalitarian state would dare to use this free poll method of sounding out public opinion. The fact that the present poll technique has certain imperfections and could be misused, is no more a condemnation of its careful use, than it would be to say that we shall destroy all automobiles because some careless persons use them recklessly and injure and kill innocent persons. Any complex invention, whether it be a mechanical invention like the automobile, or a social invention like the Gallup Poll, can be misused and can endanger ordinary living habits.

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DISCUSSION OF DR. CHAPIN'S PAPER

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As Doctor Chapin in his paper on the "Measurement of National Morale" has stated, "Morale has come to be a factor of prime importance in organization for a total war." This thought is constantly being brought before our attention in our daily papers, our fiction and our general discussions. In fact it has as a word been reiterated so often that people in all walks of life are beginning to be conscious of the vagueness of the word and are striving to find its true meaning.

In earlier wars as Doctor Chapin says, "The civilian population remained an inactive mass." Our concern about morale was then chiefly with the attitudes of the fighting forces. Now however, we must concern ourselves with the attitudes of the civilian forces because this present conflict has reached down into the daily lives of the mass of humanity and morale takes on a more individual aspect.

Morale must then be considered as an individual attitude and in this guise I believe that "morale is the faith which an individual possesses because of his dignity as a human being, that he has value and a definite place in the world." It then follows that if this is the morale of the individual, the morale of the mass or of groups might likewise be interpreted to be the faith inherent in human societies be they, folk tribes, city states, nations or world organizations. They must exist for a definite purpose and they must continue to exist if they are to attain this end. This human dignity which the individual and the mass possess is a gift of the all-powerful God, who watches

[8] Blankenship, A. B., "The Opinion Polls Again!" *Sociometry*, V, 1. February, 1942, 89–101; also Ross Stegner's rejoinder, pp. 102–103.