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INTRODUCTION TO MANPOWER STUDIES

3 February 1947

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THE INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

Washington, D. C.

RESTRICTED

THE INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

PUBLICATION NUMBER L47-74

RESTRICTED

INTRODUCTION TO MANPOWER STUDIES

3 February 1947.

General McKinley, fellow officers, today we begin the study of Manpower in Economic Mobilization. My purpose this morning is to high-light briefly the salient features of the program which we have outlined for you in the pamphlet you have recently received. I want to touch very lightly on some of the manpower problems that arose in World War II and then go on to say a little about each one of your subcommittee problems.

I'm sure it has been apparent to you throughout the course to date that manpower cuts across the entire field of industrial mobilization. Especially in your study of production, you have time and again got into discussions of manpower. You already know that problems of production and problems of manpower are inseparable. From raw materials to the delivery of the end item, the production requirements determine the labor requirements--the number and skills of workers required. During the next five weeks, you are going to dig into some of those problems which perplexed you in your other studies but which you were unable to run down at the time.

As an example of the widespread failure to recognize the importance of manpower in war planning, I will quote a paragraph from the introduction to the Industrial Mobilization Plan of 1936, page 1X;

"There exists within its borders (the United States) in ample quantities the labor, power, facilities, and with certain important exceptions, all the raw material necessary in war. Particularly is this statement true as applied to the total strength in manpower. It is almost impossible to assume a situation where the population would be in danger of suffering actual hardships in war due to a lack of personnel to produce the necessities of life. In practice therefore it is customary to approach the mobilization problem from the standpoint of determining how many men are estimated to be necessary for the organization of military and naval units under a given situation rather than how many could safely be so organized."

Only as recently as last year was Manpower included in the studies of The Industrial College as one of the principal components of the curriculum.

But what appears to us now as a rather inexcusable failure, in all fairness, should be considered against the background of war experience up to that time. The Armistice of November 11, 1918 cut short our "all out" war effort before manpower shortages could emerge as a problem. It appeared then as it did in the early days of World War II that war production was a matter of materials,

facilities, and "know how." There was plenty of manpower for workers on the home front as well as the armed forces. No one in the military hierarchy envisaged an army of more than four million men. With our tremendous resources of population, we could just let things run along without any definite manpower plan. Although we gave "lip service" to an "all out" effort, we really didn't mean it. We thought we could win the war and still carry on business as usual at home. We would keep our family life intact except for those sons who were so unfortunate as to be drafted (or when they felt the hot breath of Selective Service on their necks, we allowed them to enlist in the Navy or the Army, or even go to college instead--and at Uncle Sam's expense). We allowed our physical standards for the services to be so high that one-third of our young men were turned away at the induction stations as unfit for service. We asked our women to don a uniform and take a safe comfortable office job but only a few responded. We wouldn't allow our Waves to be sent out of the country. Management was allowed a nice profit--how nice a profit some firms made, Congress says it intends to find out--and labor demanded and got high take-home pay. I say this to stress the fact that our effort, great as it was, nevertheless fell far short of total war and must be remembered in any planning for total war.

We soon found, as the war wore on, that it meant shortages and sacrifices on the home front as well as on the fighting front. Early in 1943 we began to encounter manpower difficulties. Someone had failed to reckon with battlefield casualties, industrial and dependency deferments, the hordes of physically unfit turned away at the induction stations. In early 1944 we had to resort to an extremely wasteful but necessary action--the breaking up of twenty-two combat divisions in order to furnish replacements for the invasion of Normandy.

Between 1940 and 1944 it was necessary to add 12 million workers to the labor force while at the same time the armed forces took another 11 million. There is the problem in a nutshell. Such an enormous expansion cannot be accomplished efficiently without carefully laid plans, and we didn't have these carefully laid plans.

In 1944 the balance between home front and fighting front requirements was badly upset. The supply of labor for increased production and new facilities dwindled from month to month. War production could not keep pace with requirements. The armed forces demands for manpower reached new heights. Army Service Forces report for that year stated: "Labor shortages were widely recognized as the principal bottleneck to be broken if war production goals were to be achieved." The manpower pool was running dry. The War Manpower Commission, Selective Service, the War Production Board, the armed forces, and other government agencies attempted to solve these labor shortage problems day by day as they arose, but their efforts were not well coordinated, and, in the absence of an over-all manpower plan, were generally ineffective.

The manpower situation became so critical on the West Coast that in September 1943 the Director of the Office of War Mobilization instituted ~~instituted~~ a program there which became known as the "West Coast Plan." This plan provided for the establishment of two special committees in each critical labor area on the West Coast. One committee, the Production Urgency Committee, consisted of representatives of all agencies that had an interest in war production in the area. On the basis of recommendations arrived at by the Production Urgency Committee, a second committee, the Manpower Priorities Committee, authorized employers to hire additional workers, maintain their present strength, or required them to reduce their working force (by not replacing separations). This plan worked out rather successfully and later was extended to other critical labor shortage areas. I merely want to mention this plan as being one of the measures adopted to remedy the situation. There were many others but I am leaving them up to you to study and analyze in your committee problems.

Student Problems

Now for a few words about each subcommittee problem. Subcommittee Number 37 will study the manpower resources of the nation and relate these resources to the business of waging total war. I want to stress the point that we want here not just a recapitulation of national statistics. Last year's committee on this subject did a pretty good job of that and their report is in the files of the College.

There are certain basic statistics that should be carried in mind, both as rudimentary and important as the alphabet. The manpower of the United States is drawn from a population base of 105-odd million people, 14 years of age and over. The actual working force out of that number represents a group of 55 to 65 million actual or potential workers, male and female, young and old. It is also well to bear in mind that the warring countries were able to increase their actual working force during the war by approximately 20 percent of peacetime strength. These are the figures for Great Britain and the United States. Another interesting bit of data: The population of the United States is increasing at the rate of about one million a year; Russia's rate is two million. Out of the flood of statistics you will see and handle in this field of study, these few data are the "a-b-c's" of knowledge. But a word of caution here--national statistics, however, are often misleading and sometimes conceal the real problems--the problems of the local areas.

Before a manpower plan can be geared to strategic and production plans, one must know the facts about our manpower pool, the make-up of the actual working force, the potential workers, the geographical distribution of skilled workers, etc. We should have somewhere recorded

the quantity and quality of skilled and unskilled workers, professional, scientific and technical personnel. How flexible is our labor supply? What are the trends at work in our population that will make us strong or weak in comparison with other powers in a future war? How well can our population withstand the ravages of an Atomic War? These questions are indicative of the problem before this committee.

Social and Economic Factors in Manpower Mobilization

Briefly stated Subcommittee No. 38 "Social and Economic Factors in Manpower Mobilization" has the problem of morale on the home front--the impact of war on the everyday life of men, women, and children at home. We are all familiar with the many complex social and economic problems that accompanied the war--the problems of the "boom" towns, "ghost" towns, communities adjoining training camps, and war production centers. War disrupted the normal pattern of everyday life for millions of people and brought with it problems of housing, transportation, health, long working hours, racial disturbances, night work, women workers, teen age youth, child care, et cetera. The workers attracted by high wages moved about the country seeking better and better war jobs. Cost of living and rationing had a direct bearing on the morale of the worker. Much of the turnover and absenteeism could be traced to this social and economic disturbance. How effective were the steps taken in World War II to remedy the situation? What planning should be done now to minimize the effects of such disruption in a future war?

The Military Economic Balance

As World War II wore on into 1943 the problem of maintaining a proper military-economic balance became more and more critical. In the early days of the war, the services had "carte blanche" to take what they needed without regard to civilian needs, but it became all too apparent in 1943 that there was a limit below which production of essential civilian goods would be insufficient to maintain the health and morale of the people on the home front. Unfortunately due to the absence of a plan, the problem was met on a day to day, item by item, basis. As WPB sought to cut production on a certain item that was believed unessential, the protests would often bring to light many wartime needs for that item. WPB would then modify or rescind its ruling. There was a need for a carefully thought out plan to maintain at all times the most efficient balance between the size and nature of the armed forces on one side of the scale and the home front requirements on the other. Electricians, doctors, mechanics, engineers, dentists, welders, scientists, all are needed both in the services and at home. In another war the requirements for civilian defense and the probable destruction of cities and factories at home will force even greater emphasis on this vital problem.

This study is an innovation in the Manpower curriculum. There are no textbooks or treatises on the subject. The material can only be found here and there in writings on other related subjects. Dr. Elliott in his lecture to the College in September on the subject of "Civilian Requirements" presented an excellent account of the problem and his efforts to meet it in World War II. We are fortunate in having Dr. Edward Fitzpatrick lecture on this subject on February 10th. Dr. Fitzpatrick will remain for the seminar in the afternoon and I'm sure you will find him most interesting and authoritative.

I don't know what answer the committee will find to this all pervading manpower problem. If you could sum up the entire field of manpower problems in one package, certainly this is it. There has been a great deal of loose talk about it; but, so far as I know, no one yet has offered any plan for keeping the scales in balance. We are challenging this committee to come up with something concrete; something which will at least be helpful as a starter for more detailed plans.

Utilization of Manpower

Subcommittee No. 40 "Utilization of Manpower" covers an extremely broad field, and we have accordingly assigned a large subcommittee to its study. We might very well have listed this as two separate and distinct subcommittee problems. The main subcommittee will be divided into two groups; one group to report on civilian utilization; the other, utilization by the armed forces.

How can we most effectively utilize our manpower pool in wartime industry? Early in the war we could "live off the fat." We had about nine million unemployed, and many women, negroes, older persons, and youths were able and willing to join the laboring force in war production. But later on as we used up this fat we had to devise some means to improve the productivity, individually and collectively, of our working force. New workers had to be trained. We instituted a nation-wide training program, in the state and local vocational schools, and even in basements and old abandoned buildings. All in all some 14 million persons were given training for war work. The recruiting and training of new workers was only the beginning of the utilization program. Problems of hours of work, shift arrangements, fatigue, transportation and housing, reduced the efficiency of the workers.

The War Manpower Commission was established in April 1942 to mobilize and provide for the effective utilization of manpower. It established three operating divisions, one for the recruitment and placement of workers, one for training, and another for utilization. The Bureau of Utilization sought to improve the efficiency of workers

and plant techniques. Other agencies, including the War Production Board and the armed forces took an active part in trying to improve plant techniques and workers efficiency. The study of utilization will also include an analysis of the results attained in the deferment of key personnel in industry. There never was a clear definition of just what constituted a "key" person. Your study will also include the problems of the eight or nine million workers in agriculture and the three million odd in Federal civil service. The committee should devote some time in its studies to an analysis of the effectiveness of the U. S. Employment Service, the agency charged with operating manpower controls in the local areas.

Utilization by the Armed Forces

The committee studying "Utilization by the Armed Forces" should find the investigation of the policies and practices of our services a very stimulating task. Most surely there were many errors made here both in procurement and utilization. The rivalry between the Army and Navy and between the branches and services produced many examples of inefficient manpower utilization. Did the services set their physical standards too high? Could not these standards have been more elastic to allow limited service personnel to handle jobs of a sedentary nature--even as far down the line as the infantry division and regiment?

This is an entirely new field of study at the College and it is hoped that the committee will produce a report that will provide a basis for further investigation of the matter. Here also is an opportunity for a report which will be helpful to the personnel planning agencies of the armed forces.

Selective Service

The subcommittee charged with the study of "Selective Service" will find a great wealth of written material on the subject, in addition to having the national headquarters still functioning right here in Washington. Unquestionably the system was very effective in selecting men for the armed forces, but there was nevertheless much room for improvement. It is hoped that the committee will ferret out these deficiencies and arrive at constructive criticisms. Dr. Fitzpatrick has had long experience in both wars in this field. During World War II he was a special advisor to General Hershey and helped unravel many snarls in the operation of the system. As for General Hershey, many of us in the Manpower Committee last year after hearing General Hershey's lecture on Selective Service considered him to be one of the most interesting speakers of the entire course. We are fortunate to have General Hershey again on February 6.

Collective Bargaining and Government Policy

In "Collective Bargaining and Government Policy" we have that currently provocative subject "Industrial Relations." The daily papers and radio are full of it. Many of you doubtlessly have already formed opinions on labor-management issues. We urge the members of this subcommittee to enter this study with open minded impartiality. Develop both sides of the issue thoroughly, before deciding on conclusions and recommendations, and bear in mind always that the armed forces desire above all a solution that will result in a friendly cooperative labor-management team working together in peace and war toward a common goal.

Manpower Controls in a Future Emergency

I stated that Subcommittee No. 40 "Utilization of Manpower in Wartime Industry" will analyze the operation of manpower controls in World War II. Our last subcommittee No. 43 "Manpower Controls in a Future Emergency" will of necessity also have to consider these past controls in determining what is needed in the future. This last committee will have to work pretty closely with all of the other committees because the problem covers the entire manpower field.

In World War II we were permitted to muddle along in a voluntary system enforced sometimes by the threat of indirect penalties. We had time on our side then. As Dr. Elliott told us last September:

"Britain was holding North Africa, the Mediterranean had not been closed, and there were a number of other factors of a favorable character assisted by that Providence which heretofore had been so consistent in protecting drunken men, fools, and the United States. My only proposal in this is, we ought not to press Providence too far. We will not have several slow stages in our preparation to go into the next war."

This committee should also seek out and analyze such manpower plans as now exist or are being formulated. This certainly should be a stimulating experience. Are these plans adequate to meet the needs of the strategic plans? Are the manpower plans closely geared to the strategic and production plans? Who if anyone is planning for the proper military-economic balance? What provisions are being made to establish a manpower planning group whose mission is, to formulate and keep current manpower plans for war mobilization? This analysis of the manpower plans of the services will have to be coordinated with the other subcommittee studying utilization by armed forces.

A great deal of testimony on the "pros" and "cons" of National Service will be found in the "Hearings Before the Senate Military Affairs Committee" of early 1943 and 1944. Will we have time to debate these "pros" and "cons" after the next war begins? Is it enough to say we won World War II without it therefore we don't need it for the next war? Should we dismiss it by saying "it cannot be administered"? Should we not have a plan ready to rush through Congress upon a declaration of war? Should not the public and Congress be the protagonists of the bill? What should be the chief provisions of such a National Service Law?

I will not go into any explanation of the lecture and seminar program except to say that we have endeavored to obtain the best experts available. You will find the reading assignments and list of experts with each committee problem. We hope you will take full advantage of the list of local "experts" in informal discussions of your problems. They have all been contacted and are willing to assist you. The committee and subcommittee chairmen should coordinate these contacts and conferences so as to prevent needless duplication. You will find the last two weeks have much open time for making these contacts and working on your reports.

The manpower divisions of the Instruction Department and the Research Department have been working together on this entire program as a team. During the next five weeks of your manpower studies, please consider the research staff and the instruction division as one group. For each subcommittee there is a faculty consultant who will devote his full time to assisting the members of the committee.

(10 Feb. '47-350)E