

OFFICE PLANNING FOR VETERAN REEMPLOYMENT.

- 1) Current office management problems.
- 2) The returning Veteran.
- 3) Planning for reconnection.

OFFICE MANAGEMENT SERIES NUMBER 104

OFFICE PLANNING FOR VETERAN REEMPLOYMENT

Current Office Management Problems

The Returning Veteran

Planning for Reconversion



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CURRENT OFFICE MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

By HENRY E. NILES
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and
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Office Management Division

THIS conference has been planned to meet the desires of AMA members as expressed in the answers to a questionnaire sent out this summer, and as interpreted by the planning group which met in August.

Replies this year provide an interesting comparison to the answers given in 1943. Then, as now, they indicate the twofold character of the office manager's job—dealing with things and dealing with people. In many ways the problems of dealing with people are so important that some of the material given in this conference might have been included in the Personnel Conference, and much of what was given there is of interest to the office manager.

This year, the subject in which the largest number of persons expressed interest was *the returning veteran*. Then come *measurement of office work, job analysis and classification, and job evaluation*. If these last two had been combined into one heading, as I think would have been desirable, they might well have led the list. Last year *office compensation problems and job evaluation* were the two leading topics. It is clear that they still hold a major place in the interest of office managers. I personally believe that this is because of the importance of proper compensation as a means of building up an effective working force with high morale, and because of the desirability of using proper job evaluation methods in order to operate effectively under government regulations.

Microfilming, which was not on the list last year, tied for fifth place with *keeping employees informed*. Possibly this sudden increase in interest is due to the rapidly growing volume of old records and the difficulty of securing

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Becoming increasingly interested in problems of personnel and management,

Mr. Niles worked for ten years as a consultant in partnership with Mrs. Niles. The Niles are joint authors of the book, *The Office Supervisor—His Relations to Persons and to Work*. For many years they have been advocates of the unit or parallel plan of office organization, which is designed to introduce into large companies some of the simplicity and directness common in the operation of small organizations.

Mr. Niles rejoined The Baltimore Life Insurance Company in 1940 as an executive, and later became vice president and a member of the executive committee of the board of directors.

adequate filing equipment. It would appear that the office manager, who is the consumer of microfilming, had rather suddenly become aware of its possible importance to him. It is a subject in which consultants and planning people have been interested for some time.

Selection and training of supervisors and unionization of office workers both have higher places on the list than they had last year. The first of these is of importance to practically every office manager, and much progress has been made in the field during the war years. The second subject may or may not interest you, but don't be too complacent in thinking that unionization will not occur in your office. Often it comes as a complete surprise to those in charge of the office, so I recommend to you the session on this subject.*

During the course of the next two days you will hear discussion of a number of specific problems along the lines in which you have indicated your interests. I should like to take a few minutes now to outline what I feel are major problems which will confront all office managers.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FORCES IMPORTANT

It seems probable that before our next Office Management Conference we shall have won victory in Europe, and possibly shall have won our struggle in the Pacific. Victory in Europe is expected to bring many new problems to those who are carrying on our domestic economy. I do not believe that the course of the next five or ten years will be influenced primarily by the decisions of a few key men. I think that it will be determined by the combined resultant of the decisions of many, many persons, and I believe that your decisions will be important in determining the psychological and social forces which will enable us to reach the non-partisan goal of full employment, or which will cause us to fall short of it.

The war brought pressures which have given us full employment. We have proved that we have the resources, the labor, the production capacity, the knowledge, and the will to turn out a quantity of goods and services unparalleled in our history. Shall we have the will and the unity to organize for full employment and for abundance after the war? Have we lost the pioneering daring and imagination which have made America great?

I am convinced that psychological and social forces, rather than technical considerations, will determine whether or not we maintain full employment in private industry after the war. If business should fail to prevent mass unemployment, government will prevent it—or try to. I believe that most of us would prefer to have business rather than government as the major force directing our economy.

Of course, there are many factors which are discouraging in the postwar outlook. I am not urging a Pollyanna attitude. We must be realistic, and intelligent, and willing to deal with facts. But suppose that after the fall of France the British had been "realistic" and admitted that they were beaten, or that after Pearl Harbor we in the United States had said that having lost so much of our fleet, we had better make peace. It was the refusal of the British and our refusal to see ourselves as beaten which have led now to a point where we are nearing victory. In both there was aroused the determination to carry on toward a goal which admittedly might not be attainable, but which justified

* See *Office Management Series No. 105.*

every sacrifice in the hope of attaining it. The goal of a continuance of our economic machine at a high level with full employment seems to me to be one for which all must be willing to work during the coming months. We must be intelligent and realistic and ready to deal with facts, but we must also do this with a vision, a daring, and a determination comparable to that which we have been using the past years. We, who have done the impossible in war production, should be the last people on earth to despair of winning the peace.

IDEALS OF TRUE DEMOCRACY

Most of us in this country have been little touched personally by the war in comparison with the average person in Europe or in Asia. We should regard the coming years as an opportunity for working out more fully at home the ideals of the true democracy for which our men have been fighting abroad. These ideals seem to me to include the more equal place which women have gained in business and in the industrial world, and the greater recognition of the Negroes, although much still must be done before, in the eyes of other nations, this country becomes one without a caste system based upon color. Much also needs to be done to make us a true political democracy. Too often we are content with criticizing the Congress when we should be using the means at our disposal to get to Congress those whom we want to represent us—and this begins with action at the primaries rather than when we are faced with the choice between two candidates, neither of whom is acceptable to us.

PREPARE FOR QUICK SHIFTS

There seem to be excellent reasons for predicting either expansion, or contraction, or both, after the war. I shall not try any economic prophecy, but I believe that the office manager must be prepared mentally to make swift adjustments to changing conditions, whether they turn out to be inflationary or deflationary. If the wage level is moved either upward or downward, the change should be related, insofar as possible, to the productivity of the workers. This means greater use of job evaluation, of measured performance, of efficiency ratings.

It seems certain that many companies will have to change the work which they are doing as war contracts are canceled. This will mean changes of work in the office, not only changes in what must be done but also changes in the volume of work—which in some companies will be greater, in others much less. I feel that it is of utmost importance that the morale aspects be considered, particularly when there are readjustments downward in the size of the working force. Such readjustments, I think, should first take into consideration the economic aspects of the situation. If costs can be reduced by reducing staffs, cuts should be made, since our chances of really achieving plenty are based upon high production per man-hour and low unit costs. Then, if the reduction is economically sound, it should be carried out with emphasis on the second major factor—adequate planning. And the planning should be based upon a careful study of probable trends and of present and past performance, and upon the many recognized techniques of good office management. However, even with a well-planned cut, it is essential to con-

sider the third factor—personnel. Otherwise we may not only fail to achieve the expected economies, but find that the reduction has contributed to the social and psychological factors leading toward depression.

Carrying out a necessary reduction with obvious fairness and frankly telling those who are not discharged of the company's probable plans and of their probable retention, will make for greater confidence than allowing fear and uncertainty to dominate the group. If it is felt that a decline in the work of the company is about to occur, and if there are not very careful measures of the efficiency of the different individuals, slowdowns are likely to occur, since those on the job will stretch out the work in their desire to protect their own positions.

BE FRANK WITH EMPLOYEES

If the reduction is to be temporary, persons selected for layoff will probably not be the same ones you would release if it were to be permanent. If it does appear to be permanent, I suggest that you let it be known that such is the case. You will probably lose a number of your ambitious workers in consequence, but I think you may be glad of it if you stop to think that keeping too high a proportion of ambitious persons on relatively low-grade work is almost certain to lead to trouble. Ambition and ability can be used to promote an organization; but if capable, ambitious workers do not have a chance to use their abilities constructively, they are likely to use them destructively.

If the reduction is likely to be temporary, and if the clerks concerned are frankly told why it is not expected to be permanent, they are likely to accept lower positions without loss of morale, but with a determination to work in such a manner as to be chosen for the higher openings when the company again expands. It is not so much what is done in the expansion or contraction as it is the way in which it is done which will determine the long-range success or failure of the move and its effect upon our national psychological and social reactions.

Taking advantage of natural turnover, aiding in the placement of workers in other companies, giving adequate advance notice of dismissal or layoff, selecting those to be dismissed by fair methods, are all ways of easing the shock of a necessary retrenchment.

Each of us can help by his personal attitude to create the background which will tend towards full employment. First of all, we can ask ourselves whether we really fear high productivity per worker. Of course we want high productivity in our own offices, but in striving for it, are we striving for something which is socially undesirable? If so, what long term hope can we have? If, however, we see high productivity as a necessary basis for abundance, if we believe that we can have full employment, with high productivity per man-hour, high wages, abolition of waste and of restrictive practices of management and labor, and lower prices, we have a goal toward which we can work in our own companies and generally.

IMPORTANCE OF SUPERVISION

I wish that it were possible to get those on the first level of supervision to see clearly how their actions and attitudes affect the clerks under them.

They, or their immediate superiors, represent the management to the clerks. If they are informed of company plans and policies and trained in supervision, it is likely that they can do a great deal to help the company maintain the maximum of confidence in itself and in the future. If they are uninformed and fearful, they can do great harm.

There are two trends in office management upon which I would like to comment in closing. First, there is the greater use of simpler systems of methods improvement, particularly that of applying the ideas of those actually on the job. Second, there is the advance in training techniques and the growing importance of visual aids, charts, etc., in training.

In conclusion, I want to throw out a suggestion which was made to me by a person familiar with insurance offices in Hartford. The personnel departments or the office managers should try, he suggested, to see that one or two of the older and stabler clerks in each department are made aware of the normal problems of readjustment to civilian life, of the usual fears, doubts, ambitions, and reactions of the veteran, so that they may give him informal assistance in fitting in. It would be important not to over-organize such a thing, but imagine how effective it would be to have the informal leader of the department prepared, in even half the cases, to say the right things, at the right time, to aid in readjustment.

THE RETURNING VETERAN

By MAJOR BENJAMIN M. GOLDER
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SELECTIVE Service provisions concerning reemployment are not mysterious. They do need some explanation, but that explanation is founded on common sense rather than on technical determinations. You can get better answers by using the American system of fair play and square dealing than you can by looking for technical constructions, or for hidden meanings in the law, which, as a matter of fact, do not exist.

Just remember that the Selective Service Act was born in the summer of 1940. It is terrifically hot in Washington in the summer, in any event, and it was particularly hot that August from the political viewpoint, and from the viewpoint of the pressures that were being exerted upon the members of Congress, to say nothing of the atmospheric pressure. On one side of 14th and

K, or 14th and G, you would find a big sign put up by the America Firsters, and on the other side the internationalists. On every corner, so to speak, every shade of every creed of political thought was represented.

We were not entirely prepared at that time, a good many people thought, to turn our backs upon one of our principal boasts concerning the American system of life and government: the fact that we had no compulsory military training. It was not an easy thing for Congress suddenly to turn to a new page in our history and say, "From henceforth we shall have compulsory military training." But our minds were made up for us by other nations, and events throughout the world finally made it necessary for Congress to be realistic and decide that, living in a world in which wars appeared on the regular schedule of things, we had better be prepared for war if and when it came.

BACKGROUND OF THE ACT

As the debate on compulsory military training waxed hot, a good many members of the House and the Senate who had served in the armed forces during the last war remembered that when they left the ships at the Battery and marched up and down the streets of New York in the parades, everybody cheered. They also remembered that it was not very long before they were walking up and down the streets of the cities and towns of this country—and no one cheered, for then they were looking for work. Everyone forgot that they had been in the Army. Everyone had his own problems. So the veterans became pretty much embittered—we all remember with regret the marches on Washington. With these things in mind, the members of the House and the Senate decided that the time had passed when men sent into battle should later be compelled to stand on corners selling apples.

Then there was another influence at work. We had been through a depression of several years' duration, and men were saying, "It took me five years to get a job and get off relief. Now I've got a job, I'm being put in the Army. And when I come back, there won't be any job left for me."

These facts generated the reemployment provisions of the Selective Service Act. Men who had been through one demobilization period and men who were facing another decided that "there was no time like the present," 1940, to prepare for the end of the war, if and when war should come. Congress decided that as it prepared the machinery to take men from the economic life of our country and put them into the armed forces, it would also make ready the machinery by means of which they would be taken from the armed forces and reintegrated into the economic and industrial life of the country. In that way the provision known as Section 8 of the Selective Service Act was born.

If the law requires some explanation, it certainly requires no apology. Its

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objective is fair and just: The people who drew up its provisions meant to avoid the injustices which followed World War I. It is a little disappointing to veterans, in that it does not do everything they had hoped it would; and it is a little frightening to industry sometimes, perhaps because industry does not altogether understand it. But if industry thinks it is a "big stick," industry is in error. It is not, and it is not intended to be, a "big stick."

PROVISIONS OF THE ACT

What does the Act do? It provides that any person who left a permanent position—and I emphasize the word "permanent"—to enter upon active military or naval service shall, upon honorable discharge, be reinstated in that position, or one of equal seniority, status and pay—provided application for reinstatement is made within 40 days after such discharge, provided he is qualified to perform the duties of the position, and provided also that the circumstances of the employer have not changed to such an extent that it would be unreasonable or impossible for him to grant reinstatement.

Unfortunately, however, there seems to be an impression that the Selective Service System is interested only in veterans who have a legal right to reinstatement under Section 8 of the Act. Those who have a legal right to reinstatement, those who meet these five criteria, constitute only about 20 to 25 per cent of the veterans who will return. And the Selective Service System is just as much interested in the employment welfare of the other 75 per cent.

INDUSTRY DOING ITS PART

We are interested, first, because we have a legal responsibility to assist 100 per cent of the veterans to get their old jobs back, as guaranteed under the law, or to find new ones. We do not consider the legal responsibility imposed upon business by the law any greater than the moral responsibility to the returning veterans, and I am pleased to report that industry itself has considered the moral obligation more binding than the legal in many cases. We have no difficulty with industry. Industry has not looked at the letter of the law but at its spirit. Industry has gone far beyond the legal obligation and has made every attempt to find employment for the men who lack a legal claim to reinstatement.

Then, too, there seems to be an impression that there is a conflict between organized labor and our concept of the law. Misunderstanding may exist, but there is no need for it. We recognize that organized labor has a real place in the body politic and the economic system of this country. We do not look for any trouble, and we will not have any. Everybody must and will pitch in and do a job for the veteran. The law is in no wise anti-labor; it is pro-veteran. I think, in fact, that the entire country is pro-veteran.

WHAT IS A PERMANENT POSITION?

Now what industry wants to know is exactly how the criteria are to be interpreted, what is meant by a "permanent position." I can only say that there is no mathematical formula for determining when a job is "permanent"; the facts in each individual case must be considered. It is just as difficult to

give a definition of a "permanent position" as it would be for an insurance man to define a "permanent injury," and an infinite number of cases hinging on permanent injury have gone to the courts.

Generally speaking, a man who without any question had a permanent job is entitled to that job against all comers. Where there were successive holders of the same position, the general rule might be that the No. 1 man is entitled to it if he has an honorable discharge, applies within 40 days after his release from the service, and is competent to do the work. If a substitute has been employed, that substitute must leave. In the absence of special circumstances, then, the substitute, or the No. 2 man is considered a temporary employee. If No. 2 has left and been succeeded by No. 3 and No. 4, the first man is still entitled to reinstatement under the law.

Here we appeal to business and industry to continue the policy already adopted, to reinstate Nos. 2, 3, and 4, if it is at all possible. We are just as much interested in Nos. 2, 3, and 4, as we are in No. 1. They get just as hungry; their needs may be just as great, and their families, too, must be fed. We ask you to continue to discharge the moral obligation to them.

Take another case: Suppose four men are all permanent employees of one employer. No. 1 is a Class A-1 man, while the others are respectively Class A-2, Class A-3, and Class A-4. When No. 1 left, No. 2 was upgraded to his position; No. 3 was promoted to No. 2's position, and No. 4 to No. 3's. When they come back they are all entitled to permanent jobs, because the mere fact that a man has been upgraded to higher position does not mean that he has waived his right to the position he left. If this were the case, men would be reluctant to be upgraded, and their reluctance would interfere with good business administration.

HONORABLE DISCHARGE

Then there is a question concerning "honorable discharge." Here the form makes no difference. An honorable discharge may be an outright discharge, or the letter which officers of the Navy, the Coast Guard, and the Marine Corps receive when they are separated from the service; or it may be merely a certificate issued by the War Department indicating satisfactory completion of service. If the man or woman is separated from the armed forces with some evidence of discharge, either with honor or under honorable conditions, he or she comes under the provision of the law.

THE 40-DAY PERIOD

Other questions have arisen about the 40-day period in which the veteran must apply for his job. This period starts at the time he is separated from active military service.

It is unfortunate that in 1940, when the Act was drawn, Congress could not project itself far enough into the future to know that 40 days would be entirely inadequate. If, as the Act contemplated, only one year's military training had been involved, the time would have been sufficient; but in view of the changed conditions—the fact that men are now returning from all theaters of the war, with malaria, with amputations, with sicknesses and diseases and all types of physical and mental maladjustments—it must be apparent to everyone that many simply cannot adjust themselves within 40 days.

Unfortunately, as the law now stands, those who don't apply during that period are barred, so far as the letter of the law is concerned.

Here again, however, I am glad to say, American ingenuity has found another way of "skinning the cat." What industry has done—and has done in good faith—is, in effect, to amend the Act of Congress. Where a man is unable to come back to work within 40 days but is at least able to make an appearance and ask for his job, industry has put him on the payroll, and then given him a furlough without pay until he is well enough to work. That is something American business is doing in good faith—and in doing so, it is doing a good job.

Nevertheless, in order to meet existing conditions, Selective Service has taken the extra precaution of asking that the law be amended, and the 40-day period extended to 90 days.*

QUALIFIED TO DO THE JOB

Now as to the provision that the man must be qualified to do the job: You know that the need for enlarged facilities and increased production has forced a good many changes in methods in the last few years. Machines have been changed, and tools have been changed; and many men coming back, although they may be expert mechanics—perhaps the best in their field—may find that they are not quite up to the improvements which have been made.

When a case which involved this point arose recently in New Jersey, the Circuit Court of Appeals said: "The law must be construed liberally so that the men who have gone into the service shall not be unduly prejudiced by that service." In other words, you have got to make allowances, to help them, when they come back. This country never intended that a man who entered the military service should be the victim of unfair competition. If the man who has taken his place has slightly more skill or is better adapted to the new methods of production, the veteran should not, for that reason, be deprived of his job. That, said the Circuit Court of Appeals, was not the intent of America, and with that I am sure you all agree.

As the law now stands, then, it means that if the veteran has become slightly "rusty" or isn't quite up to his job, it is up to industry to construe the provisions liberally and help him find his proper place, even though it may sometimes be more expensive and inconvenient to do so. And I am glad to say that the court decision was not given in the way of an admonition to industry, that the courts were merely expressing the view that American business men have actually put into practice.

APPLIES TO MEN AND WOMEN ALIKE

The law applies to men and women alike. It applies to all who enter military service, whether by enlistment, by induction, by reason of having been members of the U. S. Reserve Forces, or by reason of having entered the armed services by commission, or in any other way. As long as a man or woman entered upon active military service after May 1, 1940, or was a member of the Reserve called into active service prior to or after August 27, 1940, that person is entitled to benefit by the provisions of the law.

* This bill was signed by President Roosevelt on December 8.

WHEN REINSTATEMENT IS UNREASONABLE

Another provision states that no employer is required to reinstate a veteran if his circumstances have so changed as to make reinstatement unreasonable or impossible. This does not mean that industry may retain a substitute where it would be cheaper to do so. It does not even mean that the employer who has found a more competent worker is under no obligation to reinstate the veteran. If the veteran is able to do the job, he must be reinstated, even though the substitute may be more satisfactory from a business and financial viewpoint.

But Congress did not intend business to be run on an unbusinesslike basis. Suppose the four men I mentioned earlier had been employed by a manufacturer, and at the time they went into service there was a demand for that manufacturer's product, so great a demand that he could employ all four. But when they return, demand is smaller, and instead of needing four men to man the machines, the employer needs only two. Under those circumstances, the first two men who return should be reinstated and, having been reinstated, they cannot be discharged for one year without "cause."

Now what happens when No. 3 and No. 4 come back? If there is no work for them, they are just "out of luck," for the employer is not required to create useless jobs. But we hope they are not "out of luck" so far as the desire of the employer to find work for them is concerned.

NEED INDUSTRY'S AID

Finally, please bear this in mind: We who work in Washington under General Hershey recognize that we can prepare the blueprints, and the theories, but that won't create jobs. Jobs for veterans are created by business. We can criticize, and we can suggest; but American business makes the jobs. And when you make those jobs we ask you to consider the fact that the veterans are really entitled to them. This country has taken men and sent them out to all corners of the world. We have kept them away from the influence of their families and friends. We have set them back in their education; we have set them back in their industrial training. We have set them back financially. And we have put them in situations where they have witnessed death and destruction. Upon their return they are entitled to real consideration.

I don't take the position that some writers take—that you must watch every returning veteran lest, all of a sudden he pull out a tomahawk and start screeching because he has turned into a neuropsychiatric. As a matter of fact, the overwhelming majority of men and women returning from military service are better physically, mentally, intellectually, and morally than they were. Military service in the American Army does good things for its men and women. So have no fear that the veterans are coming back with any idea but to be patriotic Americans, and to see their country continue the American way of life.

Remember that in a horse race, they take the best horse and handicap him by putting the heaviest weight on him. Similarly, the men who have been here all the time must bear the most weight, so that the soldiers may be given a "break." I think that is only fair. I don't think it is asking too

much for those whom we have sent overseas, or who went voluntarily, and who by their sacrifices made it possible for American business men to continue in business.

When the veterans come back, then, we expect you to do two things—things which you are already doing and which we hope you will continue to do. One is to be mindful of the law which you, through your representatives in Congress, have passed, and give the men the jobs to which they are entitled under that law. The other is to go out of your way if you have to, and find a job for the man who may not be entitled to one under the law, but is certainly entitled to one by virtue of his military service.

I should like to add also that every State Director of Selective Service has set up a division for handling these problems, and that every State Director wants your help—and offers his. There are about 75,000 volunteers in Selective Service, leading men and women in the community, who have been serving on local boards for four years. These people are fair and honest, and are ready to assist you. If you have a problem concerning a veteran, take it up with the local board or the reemployment committeeman at the local board, and it will be taken up with the state director if necessary. I am sure business will find the Selective Service System fair in every case.

* * * * *

Question: Does the law cover members of the Merchant Marine?

Major Golder: The Selective Service Act does not, but there is a special law, known as Public Law 87 of 78th Congress, which gives to members of the Merchant Marine who have completed a continuous term of service in accordance with regulations issued by the Administrator of the War Shipping Administration, the same reemployment rights that the Selective Service Law gives the veterans.

Question: Can a reinstated veteran be dismissed before the year is out to make a place for a veteran of longer military service?

Major Golder: No. When a veteran is reinstated, he automatically becomes entitled to employment for one year. The return of another veteran is not considered cause for discharge. But I repeat that it is our hope that American business will employ the second man also.

Question: What legal responsibility does the employer have to the permanent employee who is separated from service because he is over 38 years of age, when that employee takes a job in essential industry before returning to his old company?

Major Golder: Unfortunately, whether the man is over 38 or under 38, he loses his right to reemployment if he remains with the other company for more than 40 days. The man over 38 is not put out of the Army; he is separated only when he himself makes application, and no matter how commendable his motive may have been he is "just out of luck" so far as his old job is concerned if he does not return to it within 40 days.

Question: If an employer hires a veteran who is not a former employee may he discharge him within the year without cause?

Major Golder: Yes; legally he may, for the legal obligation applies only to former employees, and you need have no fear about employing veterans who do not come under the provisions of the Act. We hope, however, that veterans will never be discharged without cause.

Question: What is a blue discharge?

Major Golder: The discharge on blue paper is issued by the War Department to men who have not satisfactorily completed the term of service, and those who hold it have no reemployment rights under the law. It is not a dishonorable discharge; neither is it a discharge under honorable conditions.

Question: What can we say to the veteran who is dishonorably discharged?

Major Golder: You can say that, under the law, you have no legal obligation to employ him; that the benefits of the law are conferred only upon those who complete their term of military service honorably. Please do not infer, however, that we do not want you to reemploy such men; if you want to give them jobs, you are, of course, at liberty to do so.

Question: Is the responsibility to the man employed one month before induction the same as that to the man employed six months or a year?

Major Golder: The criterion is not whether the man was employed for a day, a year, or five years. The question is whether he was a "permanent" employee. There again you have to examine all the circumstances. In some cases agreements between employer and employee provide that a man employed for less than a certain length of time is considered a temporary employee, and in that instance, the length of service would have a bearing.

That problem, of course, presents itself most acutely in industries such as shipbuilding and aircraft, where there are perhaps 20 times as many people employed currently as there were in 1940, and thousands of men have gone into military service. Naturally a company which in normal times has jobs for only 1,000 people is under no obligation to employ 20,000 or 30,000.

Question: Will there be a government board of arbitration set up to settle disputes arising out of seniority?

Major Golder: The law does not provide for arbitration, and so far we have had no occasion for it. Disputes which arise are often the result of honest misunderstanding and can be ironed out when the employer, the employee, and organized labor, if it is concerned in the case, sit down at a table together. We hope that record will be continued.

Question: The returning veteran was not a union member, but the present holder of the job is. Have unions been willing to have such veterans put on the payroll but given leave of absence because they are not yet ready to resume work?

Major Golder: I cannot answer that categorically. In some cases, unions have gone just as far as industry, and have said that the veteran is entitled to a place in the picture. Other organizations have said no, and have argued that organized labor has struggled to achieve its position, is now a real force, and a good force, in American industry, and must abide by its rules. I am confi-

dent, however, that when this question is presented to the American people they will be entirely fair about it, and that when the returning veteran comes along, you will take care of him.

Question: What about returning veterans Nos. 3 and 4? How should industry handle their case?

Major Golder: If there are no jobs available, I hope the matter will be handled more intelligently than it was back in 1919. While there is no obligation on the part of the individual employer to reemploy a man for whom he has no job, there is an obligation on the part of American industry as a whole to so conduct its work that there will be jobs for everybody after the war. You will have no interference from the Selective Service System on this point; on the contrary, you will have all the help that we can possibly give you.

Question: If "B" is not definitely advised that he is a temporary replacement for "A" who has gone into service, what is the employer's legal responsibility when both "A" and "B" return and request reinstatement?

Major Golder: "A" had a permanent position, and anybody hired from outside to take his place was merely a "seat-warmer" for him. So "A" has the legal right to the job, and "B" is not a permanent employee.

However, you may have a situation like this: "A" is a highly trained technician. When he leaves, "B" comes along, with the same qualifications, but hesitates to take the job because he knows "A" has the prior claim to it. At that point the employer may say, "I recognize that this is the case, but I want you to work for me, and I will give you a permanent job." Then "B" has a legal right to reinstatement, and if both "A" and "B" come back, the employer must reinstate "A" in the job, and find a similar one for "B". In the absence of such agreement or special circumstances, only "A" need be reinstated. But, as I said before, we hope that the employer will give both of them jobs even in the absence of legal obligations.

Question: Suppose the employer is engaged in essential work and refuses, with the concurrence of the U. S. Employment Service, to release key men for service in the forces. These men later resign their jobs, and, after 60 days, enter the Army. Are they entitled to reinstatement?

Major Golder: When a country enters a war, people seem to have an urge to get into the actual fighting. You can tell them that their work in industry is important; but when you see the other fellows marching off and get enmeshed in a wave of enthusiasm and patriotism, it is pretty hard to hold back. You find yourself following the flag.

So, if they can't get away any other way, they resign, wait 60 days if they have to, or go to a local board and say, "I don't want to be in a deferred classification." Those men, if they left the position motivated by desire to enter the armed forces, are entitled to reinstatement, because Congress has said that the man who gave up his position to enter the forces is entitled to his job upon satisfactory completion of service.

Question: Suppose the veteran's substitute has received an increase. Is the veteran entitled to the new rate of pay?

Major Golder: Congress intended that the veteran should have the

increment attached to the job. If the higher position has evolved from the position that the veteran left and the veteran is qualified to fill it, the position, and the increase, belong to him.

To illustrate that point: Suppose a group of men, all electricians, enter the service at a time when electricians are getting \$1.20 an hour, but when they return, all electricians are getting \$1.50. The job and the rate of pay are inseparable, and they return to a rate of \$1.50. By the same token, if the rate has been reduced, they may receive lower pay.

On the other hand, suppose there were a rate range, \$200 to \$400 a month, and people were paid according to individual ability. In that case, it makes no difference whether the substitute was receiving more or less, the veteran goes back at his own individual rate. Again, if the job has been upgraded to the point where the veteran is unable to fill it, the employer need not hire him for it. But he must be given a job equivalent, in seniority, status, and pay, to his old job.

Question: Reverting to the case of the two veterans, one of whom was a substitute for the other: Can the second man be considered a temporary employee only if the employer informed him at the time of hiring that he was replacing a serviceman?

Major Golder: No; there is no regulation to that effect, but the point is one of the special circumstances to be taken into consideration. In the case of an ordinary business, say, a transit company, a man who is given a job—as a conductor, for example—normally considers it permanent. On the other hand, in a shipbuilding company which has expanded tenfold, it would be more reasonable to consider a job temporary.

Question: Is there any way in which the discharge of key men could be expedited?

Major Golder: The War Department will entertain applications for discharge from active military service, and its decision is made on the facts of the individual case.

Question: Suppose a company has more people in active service than it will employ after the war? Must all non-veterans go?

Major Golder: Theoretically, yes; but in actual practice that is not likely to happen. First, only the men qualified to fill positions are entitled to reinstatement; and the law of averages shows that only about 25 per cent of those coming back will want the jobs. Unless the company is almost entirely liquidated, that situation is not likely to arise.

However, the law provides that if a veteran meets the criteria I have mentioned, he has an absolute right to reinstatement, and Selective Service does not intend telling the employer what to do with those who are replaced. He may find other work for them, or, if good business judgment so dictates, he may let them go.

Question: May the veteran sell his right to a job?

Major Golder: No; it is entirely a personal right.

Question: To what extent may an interviewer question a veteran about the reason for his discharge? May he ask about health factors?

Major Golder: You may ask him anything you want, and he may refuse to answer if he chooses. You have no right, however, to refuse him reinstatement because he does not answer the question, although you can find out for yourself—in the ordinary common-sense way, whether or not he is qualified, physically and mentally, for the job.

Question: Reams have been written about the veteran's rights. Does the Army plan a program which will advise him of his civilian obligations?

Major Golder: Before the men are separated from the service, they are told very definitely what their rights are and how to secure those rights. As to their obligations—well, I don't know about that. When a man is being released after two to four years of discipline, I confess we don't make any effort to tell him what he should do. We say, "Now you go out and get it, and this is what you can get."

MANAGEMENT PLANNING FOR VETERANS AND PRESENT PERSONNEL

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WE ARE concerned in this report with the rather specific question of how to plan for V-E and V-J Day, and beyond, in terms of readjustments of personnel in an office. In thinking through this problem we must remember that it is but one phase of the broader goal on which we set our sights.

We are aiming at a postwar employment figure of 56,000,000 to 58,000,000 people, in contrast to a level of about 46,000,000 in 1940—the last peacetime year. This goal requires an annual output of goods and services of about \$135,000,000,000 (plus \$10,000,000,000 for munitions), in contrast to \$98,000,000,000 (plus \$2,000,000,000 for munitions) in 1940.

These figures are important to us for two reasons: First, they suggest that all planning which we do should be so geared as to contribute to the achievement of this goal; and, second, the extent to which we do approximate these income and employment levels will determine in considerable measure the number of headaches we shall have in the postwar period. If there are plenty of jobs, there will be less contention over the available ones.

These are, of course, long-range goals. In the meantime, we are faced with the immediate circumstance of providing employment for 100,000 or so men and women being discharged from the armed forces monthly, and we hope soon to see 250,000 or 300,000 returning monthly. This will follow V-E day and will be accompanied, we are told, by a considerable reduction in war orders—a change which will presumably be coupled with an open “go ahead” on certain kinds of civilian production.

Over-all, it is anticipated that 18,000,000 to 20,000,000 people will face employment readjustment after the war. These include about 9,000,000 from the armed forces, 1,500,000 from war agencies, and 8,000,000 from war industries. The readjustment will not, of course, occur all at once, and a substantial majority of the folks involved will have no reemployment rights such as those outlined by the Selective Service Act. Even among veterans there will be many who cannot be reemployed, since they had no previous jobs.¹ Of those who did have jobs before entering service it is estimated that up to about 70 per cent may return to their old jobs. (The present level is close to 25 per cent.) Of the *total* number of veterans it has been estimated that

2,200,000	will seek education
2,050,000	will become self-employed
1,200,000	will have assured jobs
200,000	will go back to family enterprises
<hr/>	
5,650,000	total who will not be thrown on labor market

Each of us wants, in the meantime, not only to contribute to the ultimate goals of a full economy but so to plan for the immediate task as to be as just and fair as possible and keep to a minimum the potential sources of conflict.

BASIC PROCEDURES

Selective Service has outlined the provisions of the Selective Service Act and the current interpretations of that Act. I should like to come back to this matter, but first I shall outline some of the specific procedures which have been developed by various organizations to implement the reemployment of veterans. It is assumed, by the way, that as a preliminary step, someone in the organization will be assigned the responsibility for being fully informed about the provisions and interpretations of the Selective Service Act, and I assume further that the organization has, or is establishing, appropriate records to show which employees left for service with the armed forces. Such records are basic.

The specific sequence of steps in planning must, of course, vary from one organization to another. A procedure which is appropriate for a retail establishment of 1,000 employees would be ill-suited for use in an office of 50.

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and utilization procedures for personnel at all levels. He has made an intensive study of factors involved in the reemployment of returning veterans and has written and spoken extensively on the subject.

¹ A representative of Selective Service reported in a talk that only 20 to 25 per cent of veterans have jobs to which to return. (New York, October, 1944.)

WHO SHALL BE REINSTATED?

The actual planning should include at least two and perhaps three or four steps which are preliminary to the final return of veterans. The first of these is the determination of the kinds of war service for which reemployment rights will be granted. Some organizations hold to the letter of the law and grant reemployment rights only to members of the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard—with their auxiliaries (Wac, Waves, Spars, and Women Marines), in addition to members of the Merchant Marine. (The fact has apparently not been fully publicized to date that members of the Merchant Marine are granted the same seniority rights as other veterans by Public Law 87, 78th Congress.)

Other organizations include additional groups. A recent survey by the Michigan Civil Service Commission showed that a number of companies and agencies provided reemployment rights not only to men and women who entered the various branches of the Army, the Navy, and the Merchant Marine, but also included those who entered war service with the American Red Cross and the armed forces of Allied countries—such as the RCAF. These are not uncommon provisions, and are based not upon any legal requirement, but rather on the conviction that a moral obligation exists toward such employees.

This decision on eligibility will probably be coupled with other policy provisions relating to principles in placement, benefit plans and employee services, vacation allowances, training programs, rehabilitation services, and handling of special cases. Some of these points are discussed below.

SURVEYING JOBS

Simultaneously, many companies have taken the second step in planning—a survey of the jobs which are expected to be open in specific periods after the war. Such an estimate can be made for several logical periods which might, for example, include: (1) the period from V-E to V-J Day; (2) V-J Day to six months thereafter; and (3) the six months' period to one year from then. Such an analysis will reveal the extent to which present employees will have to be laid off if veterans return to their old jobs and will show what jobs, if any, formerly held by veterans will not exist after the war. In many cases it will show additional jobs for veterans who were not former employees. Such an estimate brings the thinking and planning in an organization out of the stratosphere of uncertainty and bewilderment down to a practical factual basis of operation.

INQUIRY TO VETERANS

Having thus determined who shall be eligible for reinstatement and the jobs which will be available, the third step is to determine, insofar as possible, which eligible employees now in the armed forces would like to plan on returning to their former place of employment. We have noted the proportion of veterans who are expected to apply for their old jobs. If jobs become less easy to get and as overtime premiums disappear, there is bound to be an increase in the tendency to get "a job" rather than to shop around for a better job or a higher-paying job.

To be sure, such a survey does not give completely reliable information. Some veterans will change their minds; some will obtain additional training or experience which qualifies them for other work; others will decide on further training under GI Bill; and a few will ignore the inquiry.

Some information, however, is better than none. If one inquires, therefore, as to whether the veteran plans to return to his former employment, and as to the kind of work for which he feels he is best qualified, the query will provide some revealing information. I think it unnecessary, and often even unwise, to ask in such a questionnaire about battle experiences, citations, and types of training. The basic information needed is obtained simply by asking what job or jobs the veteran thinks he is best qualified for. Any more detailed inquiry can await the actual return of the veteran.

PRESENT EMPLOYEES' PLANS

The fourth step in this kind of pre-planning is to determine the proportion of present employees who expect to keep on working after the war. Usually such an inquiry should be anonymous in order to make it reasonably accurate. It will show approximately how many of the employees will be among the estimated 10 per cent of present workers who plan to leave gainful employment after the war. This 10 per cent figure is heavily weighted with women employees; an estimated 30 per cent of the 19,000,000 working women are expected to leave the labor market.

I don't want to leave the question of such a survey without remarking that some organizations should not make one. The decision whether or not to make a survey, and if so what kind, will vary with previously developed personnel relations and the status of bargaining agents, to mention but two factors.

At this point, we have an over-all statement of eligibility and general policy and an over-view of postwar and employment needs; we know the potential rate of return of veterans to the office, and the kinds of work for which veterans feel themselves qualified.

These data give us some insight into the changes in present personnel which may be necessary when the veteran returns. If prewar employment levels have been maintained during the war and there is no plan to expand after the war, then some present employees will necessarily be displaced. If a staff has been depleted during the war or if there are plans to expand after the war there may be enough openings to accommodate both veterans and those of the present staff who want to keep on working. Those who will have to decrease present workforces have, of course, the most headaches in store for them.

The subsequent aspects of planning in each office will again vary with the local situation. It may or may not be necessary to upgrade, downgrade, layoff, dismiss, increase, or train personnel. In some cases, there may not be more than one or two veterans to welcome back—though such a circumstance will be rare indeed.

In view of the anticipated problems relating to reemployment, I should like to suggest a number of guides to follow as returning veterans are received.

THE VETERAN INTERVIEWER

In the first place, as I mentioned, someone in each organization should be

charged with responsibility for knowing the details of the Selective Service Act and its interpretations. As Selective Service has indicated, much of the Act will depend for interpretation on court rulings—at least until such time as we have further legislation or executive orders clarifying doubtful points. The purpose of knowing these details is, of course, to avoid errors in judgment regarding reemployment rather than to evade any moral or social or legal obligation.

This “veteran interviewer,” or whatever he is called, should be familiar also with the various types of discharge forms, since, as you know, there are some kinds of discharges which do not entitle a veteran to reinstatement. The importance of this was demonstrated recently by a veteran who presented a photostatic copy of his discharge paper. He explained that the Veterans Administration had retained the original. The photostatic copy showed a notation to the effect that the veteran had been discharged because of “nerves.” The interviewer was at once suspicious of the copy, the story, and of the notation. He noted at once that the form carried the number 56. This is the so-called “blue discharge” and does not entitle the holder to reemployment rights. In this case the veteran realized that he was not “putting one over,” and volunteered the true story of his unsavory history in the Army.

Veterans such as this one who are discharged for reasons which do not, under Selective Service regulations, entitle them to reemployment rights need not necessarily be barred from employment. Since they do not have reemployment rights, however, it seems fair to make it clear that they will be considered as new employees if they are hired.

Our “expert” on the Selective Service Act may also be the person who is charged with receiving the veteran upon his return. A veteran must be given more than a cursory “hello.” Some companies, such as International Harvester, have specifically provided that each veteran shall be personally welcomed by a member of supervision before any steps are taken to route him through the reemployment procedures.

THE PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

After the initial welcome the veteran should be placed in the hands of someone who is qualified, in the terms of the organization, to discuss with the veteran the question of placement. As part of this process the veteran should be given a physical examination identical with those normally given to job applicants, and the results of the examination should become part of the record used in interviewing. Selective Service has made it very clear that the armed forces do not intend to supply employees with the results of physical examinations, since the military physicals are so much more rigorous than the usual employment physical.

If, therefore, employment applicants are regularly examined, and if there are jobs in the business which involve different kinds of physical demands, it may be advantageous to list these physical and mental demands of each type of job and then have the examining physician code the status of each applicant in accordance with qualifications needed for the job. For example, applicants might be coded physically as:

1. Those qualified for any type of work

2. Those who are not suited for
 - a. Close work
 - b. Heavy work
 - c. Standing job
 - d. Noisy area, etc.

Similarly, each job description would show whether the job involved close work, standing, noise, etc. This procedure will help to improve placement and should be used in conjunction with other records, including previous work history, training and experience in the armed forces, and present interests. A veteran is entitled to his old job if he is still qualified and eligible. I doubt, however, the wisdom of encouraging a veteran or anyone else to take a job in which he has doubtful interest.

The interviewer will have to exercise good judgment in evaluating a veteran's present status (aptitudes, interests, health, experience) in determining placement. We can haul out the old chestnut at this point and say that each case is an individual problem and must be handled on its merits. This, of course, is true, but there are three aspects of such placement to which I should like to call special attention.

THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

First, how shall we treat the physically handicapped? Obviously, we are not going to manufacture a crutch and maintain that any handicapped person is "no longer qualified" for his old job. As a matter of fact, the physically handicapped may be the least of our troubles, since they will not only have the benefit of the best sort of vocational rehabilitation, but will also have counseling aimed toward their adjustment to the handicaps.

In an office situation a man may be seriously handicapped if he is unable to manipulate an office machine or other equipment, or he may be handicapped in the sense that he would present a shocking appearance to visitors or customers. In either case, the immediate emphasis should be on determining what kind of a job is suitable and available rather than on flatly refusing employment. An employer who is unmoved by a sense of social obligation to employees may well remember, nonetheless, that the calculated "sphere of influence" of each employee outside of working hours is at least four people. This can be multiplied into a considerable body of potential customers. This fact may well be kept in mind in all relationships with employees and applicants.

Employers must keep in mind that a handicap which bars a man from service in the armed forces is by no means an *a priori* disqualification for a civilian job. Far from it. In spite of all the joking done about Selective Service induction standards—"If he walks under his own power, he's in," or "If he's still breathing, he's in"—there is undoubtedly no more thoroughly "fit" group in the world. You have to be good to stay in. Considering these standards, it is apparent that a large proportion of discharges are perfectly well suited to civilian work.

THE EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED

This point is particularly pertinent in regard to the emotionally handicapped veterans. This is the second aspect of placement to which I made reference.

Most of us understand very little about psychological quirks, and it is entirely human to be wary of or to avoid those things we don't understand. When a worker fails to respond to a pat on the back and an encouraging word or when he rather abruptly "turns on" a fellow employee we decide he is mentally "off the beam," and we want to steer clear of him. We have heard that people like this are called psychoneurotics or psychotics and anyone suffering from a malady with so complex a name must be plain "nuts." So when we learned that a number of veterans were being discharged as psychoneurotics, we became alarmed. Now the Army is wary and no longer uses this fancy language for public consumption. The step is well taken, since a man who is discharged because of an emotional disturbance is unable satisfactorily to adjust to a special kind of environment. This is not evidence that he may not be quite adequately balanced in another situation, such as a civilian job. To be sure, we do see those with quirks—ranging all the way from mildly disturbed folks who feel uneasy and find it difficult to concentrate to those who begin to imagine that someone is "out to get them." There are those who disappear after working a few hours; the fellows who work well when they work, but are absent too much; the "returned heroes"; those who seem to lack energy and ambition; and those who develop impossible combinations of physical symptoms. I have seen no prediction that any large proportion of veterans will be substantially "unemployable" because of emotional difficulties. In fact, it is well to remember that the ranks of workers, supervisors, and executives are filled with excellent folks who are psychoneurotic in all degrees. (The less frequent psychotics are a different question.) It may be advantageous to get the help of an "expert" in the placement of the so-called psychoneurotics—the emotionally disturbed. In general, there are six guides to which psychiatrists subscribe. They suggest: (1) Don't hand lots of responsibility to the psychoneurotics—work it in gradually as they grow more used to civilian life and feel stronger; (2) If the man is sensitive to noise be careful not to employ him where he will be exposed to sudden or rattling noises; (3) Don't give him a job as night watchman—this gives too much time to brood; (4) Don't expect him to sit at a desk all day; (5) Give him work which involves a variety of activity and will keep him occupied, and (6) Avoid jobs which entail long dull periods of slack work punctuated by peaks of rush jobs.

NEW SKILLS

And now the third factor in placement. Quite a number of returning veterans have had experience and training in the armed forces which qualify them for much better jobs than the ones they left. Many will have newly acquired skills, increased maturity of judgment, and leadership experience. I am not referring only to the messenger boys who have become lieutenants and majors in the Air Force, but more especially to the men who have become

experts in jobs having civilian counterparts and those who have been quickly singled out as leaders. A good case in point is the vast organization which procures, transports, and distributes equipment of all kinds to the armed forces all over the world. The folks with experience in this branch of service will, in many cases, be far ahead of their civilian contemporaries in modern methods. It is to the best interests of an employer and his employee that these special skills be utilized. Information regarding such training and experience will be given on the veteran's separation form—the so-called Form 100—a copy of which is given to each veteran at the time of his discharge.²

I should like to point out in passing that the War Manpower Commission has developed two documents which are designed to be of assistance in the placement of veterans. These are *Special Aids for Placing Navy Personnel in Civilian Jobs* and *Special Aids for Placing Military Personnel in Civilian Jobs*. In commenting on these, C. L. Shartle, Chief, Division of Occupational Analysis and Manning Tables, War Manpower Commission, stated: "When a returning veteran applies for a job he should be questioned as to his military specialty. If you will then refer to the appropriate *Aid* you will find a brief description of his duties and responsibilities in his Army or Navy job, as well as a list of related civilian occupations. These two volumes of special aids also include physical activities and working conditions of each group of jobs listed."³

TRAINING AND FOLLOW-UP

We now have the veteran back, and on the basis of all available data about him we have found a suitable placement. Two things remain to be done: He should have the benefit of any appropriate training programs and he should be followed up.

In making reference to training programs, I am not speaking of complex programs of official "courses," such as might be provided by a large organization. Every organization should, however, provide supervisors with some training, if they need it, which will assist them in dealing effectively and consistently with veterans as well as with others. Returning veterans should also be "trained," in the sense of being brought up to date on the company in general and the office in particular. Obviously, what I have in mind is not necessarily involved or highly organized. In many situations it is enough to have someone bring the veteran up to date through an informal chat. There have been many changes in our methods of operation during the war, and an employee will not only function more effectively if he is up to date, but also will appreciate the information.

Other types of training, of course, would include training for a new or comparable job, training for upgrading, and opportunity to participate in educational programs offered by federal, state, and local educational agencies.

Finally, plans should be made for a friendly follow-up several times in the first month or two of work. The function and content of such a checkup are, I think, obvious. Among other things, it may reveal the desirability of recommending a job transfer—or at least a tryout on some other job. Many organizations provide that any veteran shall have the opportunity to try several jobs in an effort to find a suitable one.

² Copies of this form may be obtained by writing to the Adjutant General's Office, Washington, D. C.
³ THE CONFERENCE REPORTER, Industrial Relations Conference, AMA, October 5, 1944, p. 7.

The point is, perhaps, not so applicable to office situations, but in general, no transfer between jobs should be made without medical approval.

WHO SHALL BE LAID OFF?

We have now received, interviewed, placed, and followed up the veteran. In the meantime, something else has happened. The veteran has taken back his old job or has been placed on a new one. In this process another employee has been displaced by the veteran. Assuming that the displaced veteran's job has not been made available by a voluntary withdrawal, we are faced with two questions at once: First, which employee shall be displaced? Second, how shall he be handled?

The first question will be easily answered where the veteran's old job is clearly identifiable or if there is an agreement which specifies that layoffs shall be on the basis of seniority alone. In either case, the employee is earmarked by the records.

In other circumstances, it seems fairest to make the decision on the basis of such factors as skill, ability, experience, dependability, dependency, and, of course, length of service. A just policy demands that those best suited for the work be retained and that a war widow with three children to support not be displaced in favor of a single person, when other factors are substantially equal. Similarly, an employee of two months does not have the same status as one of two years. Thompson Products Company has announced that insofar as layoffs become necessary, it intends to lay off first the women whose husbands are working—regardless of seniority. Others have suggested that reemployment rights be extended to the wives or other dependents of employees who have lost their lives in combat. I cannot state a blanket rule for universal application, but perhaps these comments suggest some of the factors which may be considered in formulating plans.

THE DISPLACED WORKER

The handling of the person who is displaced by the veteran is our final concern. Such a person merits careful consideration. A friend of mine has suggested that some of the potential dissatisfaction and friction which will accompany these shifts in personnel may be modified and tempered considerably by preparing present employees for the return of veterans. Such a program might only call attention to the fact that veterans will be returning, the company attitude toward them, and its desire to treat all fairly. This proposal merits attention.

The displaced employees have presumably been good enough to stay on the payroll and have made some contribution to the organization. From a purely practical standpoint, it seems to me, there are at least five general guides at this point:

1. If the employee has been demonstrably inept, dismiss him (or her) with the admonition to seek more suitable work.
2. If the employee has been satisfactory:
 - 2.1 Place him in a comparable job if one is available.

2.2 Downgrade him to his old job if he was upgraded to fill a veteran's job. If downgrading to other than old jobs will be necessary, it will be helpful to have a system of job classifications or job-sequence charts. It is probably wise in the long run to avoid downgrading beyond a certain point; an employee who has the ability to handle a responsible job will not long be satisfied on a routine operation.

2.3 Train him for some other job, if possible.

2.4 As a last resort, lay off the employee with assurance of reinstatement if and when an appropriate job opens.

I think perhaps I have made this sound too easy. It is certain that I have referred rather glibly to the matter of seniority which will play so large a part in the reemployment process.

SENIORITY PROBLEMS

This brings us back to the problem of interpretation of the Selective Service Act. One of the disturbing questions right now relates to the problem of seniority. The Selective Service interpretation gives, in effect, super-seniority to veterans for one year. Some labor unions, of course, are urging that this whole matter be handled on a "straight seniority" basis. Since seniority is one of the few objective symbols of job security, many workers—including those who are now organized as well as those who are at present unorganized—may give more and more active support to that symbol. The extent to which this results in contention will depend in part on methods used in solving problems of reemployment. On the matter of seniority, employers are in the middle. We have directives from Selective Service on the one hand, and pressure from the unions on the other. Any delay or confusion or uncertainty will be at the cost of the employer. Obviously, we must follow the broader legal provisions, but we must expect this to result in some contention.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I have given a "once over lightly" to a number of aspects of this problem. There are others. Since the specific issues will vary so much from place to place, I will conclude with a few items which I have elected to dignify as "guiding principles." So much depends on good judgment. Such judgment should be guided by the following principles:

1. In all matters related to reemployment, maintain the spirit of the Selective Service Act.
2. Remember that, so far as Selective Service is concerned, the veteran gets the break in any doubtful situation. Remember, also, that Selective Service is operating under mandate of the Selective Service Act.
3. Place the veteran in the highest available job for which he is qualified—and do the same for a displaced civilian employee.
4. Don't assume that all veterans will be either crippled or psychoneurotic.

5. Avoid establishing a policy which sounds fetching and creates a splash of publicity, but which may backfire later (such as granting double-seniority to veterans).
6. Demonstrate to all that you are trying to do the right and just and fair thing throughout. We can't solve all the problems by legal regulations; we must act in terms of community opinion.
7. Remember that much of the Selective Service Act remains to be interpreted by the courts, and that not everyone is reconciled to the current interpretations as they relate to seniority.

I am not so optimistic as to believe that friction, dispute, and tension involving these situations can be entirely eliminated. It can be reduced and diluted by careful planning. Sound procedures must be worked out in advance for each situation. These must be properly implemented with accurate records and operating techniques.

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Question: Is it advisable to protect the veteran's job rights during a leave of absence for training in courses outside the company?

Dr. Drought: Let me answer that by telling you of a case in point. Our own reemployment of veterans policy makes the following provision: Assume a former employee returns within the prescribed time limit and is otherwise eligible for his job at RCA Victor. If he tells us that he would like to take advantage of training under the GI Bill, or some other training, and that training will fit him for some other job, or better fit him for his old job in the organization, we will give him a leave of absence for the necessary period of training, and will guarantee, insofar as we can, his reinstatement rights.

I say "insofar as we can," since events might make it impossible to reinstate anybody in his job when he is through with his training. Under normal circumstances, however, a man will be allowed to spend a year, or possibly even more than a year, in training, and when he comes back his reemployment rights will be the same as though he had returned to his job immediately after his discharge from the armed forces.

I want to emphasize, however, that that does not uniformly apply to all veterans. It applies to those veterans who take courses which are approved by the local plant to which the veteran applies for reinstatement.

Question: "A" was paid \$160 a month at the time of entering military service. "B" doing similar work is now receiving \$200 a month. At what rate should "A" be rehired?

Dr. Drought: "A" certainly should be rehired at the current rate, whatever it is. If the rate now and postwar is going to be \$200 a month, certainly you are not going to start the veteran in at \$160, just because that was what he was getting. You pay for the job.

Question: Would it be well to send a questionnaire to all veterans, asking their postwar job plans?

Dr. Drought: Yes, I think a number of organizations have found it helpful to do so, and you may get some revealing information therefrom.

Question: In later employment procedures, will it be considered ethical to examine discharge papers of new applicants?

Dr. Drought: It seems to me that it is entirely ethical to ask for discharge papers. Presumably, when you get a discharge other than an honorable one, you may want to inquire into the circumstances, to decide whether or not you are going to reemploy the person.

Question: The point has been frequently made that a large percentage of veterans will not want to return to their former jobs. Where will they go? Won't all concerns have so many of their own people returning that the market for veterans seeking other jobs will be very thin? Won't this mean that the majority of veterans will, through necessity, return to their former jobs?

Dr. Drought: I think, as indicated, that about 70 per cent will probably be going back to their old jobs. It is to be remembered, as Major Golder has pointed out, that only 20 to 25 per cent of veterans have a former job to go back to. This is a relatively small proportion of 9,000,000 men and women, and I think it should also be pointed out that there are many kinds of businesses, particularly the service businesses, which are grossly understaffed and have been grossly understaffed during the war. They are going to be crying for people, so that there will probably be quite a number of jobs to go to, at least for a while.

Question: What safeguards should be used in the displacement of Negroes?

Dr. Drought: I am not unmindful of the fact that the racial problem is probably going to rear its ugly head. Those of you who have been watching the news know that this has already occurred in various places. It seems to me that the only reasonable attitude to take in this situation is that you are treating people of other racial groups—let's not worry entirely about Negroes—just as you treat other people. You should consider their ability, skill, seniority, leadership, or whatever other criteria are used in displacing and reemploying people.

No doubt some of these people will be at a disadvantage, partly because they have not had educational opportunity. But, in any event, I doubt very much that any organization will simply adopt a blanket plan that all colored people are out, or all Chinese people are out, or all Philippine Islanders are out, or some other delineation of that sort.