

WHAT THE SOLDIER THINKS

A Monthly Digest of War Department Studies on the Attitudes of American Troops



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WAR DEPARTMENT,

WASHINGTON 25, D. C., 25 November 1944.

What the Soldier Thinks, Number 10, A Monthly Digest of War Department Studies on the Attitudes of American Troops, is published for the information and guidance of all concerned.

[A. G. 061.05 (3 Jan. 44).]

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MORALE PROBLEMS EMERGING WHERE WAR TENSIONS RELAX

Studies of the attitudes of soldiers in inactive commands give advance indications of post-armistice morale problems

"Because of the importance of the subject and experience in 1918, commanders of all echelons are cautioned that it is their responsibility to maintain high standards of discipline and morale following a cessation of hostilities."

This statement is an extract from "Readjustment Regulations RR 1-1," prepared by the War Department as a guide for that unknown day in the future when our German enemy will surrender. Although no one can safely predict when the European phase of the war will be brought to a close, the end may come suddenly...with little advance warning.

It would be well, therefore, to get a preview now of some of the morale trends to be set in motion by V-E Day (victory in Europe) by examining the attitudes of enlisted men far from home, in areas already by-passed by the war.

The central, all-pervading hope of these men, as might be expected, is to get home. Studies of all troops everywhere reveal the strength of this urge. But when the tension of obvious military necessity relaxes, when the restraints of a recognized job to be done are lessened, the desire to get home is unleashed in its full force.

In the interval before men can be returned to the U. S., an added weight of

responsibility will rest squarely on the unit leadership to keep up efficiency and morale. "The War Department will provide informational materials and aids to assist in these matters," states RR 1-1, which goes on to make clear, however, that... "These aids are secondary to the prime requirements of initiative and leadership."

This report on what soldiers are thinking deals with three types of morale problems which have increased in importance as continued Allied progress brings relative inactivity to former combat zones:

- I. Problems created or accentuated by men's lack of information.
- II. Problems of the relationship between officers and enlisted men.
- III. Problems in the constructive utilization of time.

Strictly speaking, none of these problems are new. In one form or another, they have existed in the training camps, in combat zones and in the supply lines. But studies of soldiers' attitudes show that these problem areas take on new dimensions when the urgency of military necessity relaxes.

I. PROBLEMS CREATED OR ACCENTUATED BY MEN'S LACK OF INFORMATION

Research shows that an important ingredient in morale is faith in mission--a sense of the importance of the task to which an outfit is assigned.

In one large command which has been by-passed by the changing direction of

the war, less than half of the enlisted men believe that what they are now doing is worthwhile. As the following chart shows, reaction to jobs is somewhat more favorable in two other inactive zones recently surveyed.

PROPORTION OF MEN WHO SAY THEIR PRESENT DUTIES ARE . . .

	Worthwhile	not Worthwhile	undecided
Area A	48%	28%	24%
Area B	61%	27%	12%
Area C	62%	21%	17%

The extent to which this problem will be magnified after V-E Day is suggested by a comparison of replies to two questions asked in August, 1944 at an overseas base which was diminishing in importance with the victory march in Europe.

PERCENTAGE WHO AGREED WITH THE STATEMENT

"THERE IS NOW no longer any need at this base for an outfit like mine"

40%

"WHEN GERMANY IS DEFEATED the men in my outfit ought to be sent back to the states."

81%

These figures indicate the need for re-orienting men on the place of their unit in the general military picture once the threat of the Nazi armies has been erased.

Studies have repeatedly shown that men whose officers take the time and care to explain the "reasons why" are much more likely to accept unpleasant situations and evince high morale. To cite an example: At one installation soldiers were asked about the extent

they are kept informed by their officers. Among those who said they were left "in the dark about too many things," *two and a half times as many felt that what they were doing was not worthwhile, as among soldiers who said they were "getting all we need to know."*

What information do the troops in non-combat theaters want from their commanding officers?

1. "Why does the Army still need men here?"

Army orientation is designed in part to help the men keep posted on the progress of the war. Materials used in this program are designed to be *localized* by the unit orientation officer -- tied closely to the problem of how the unit's task fits into the larger pattern. When this is done effectively the results are favorable.

"Some of the guys griped a lot," wrote one enlisted man on the margin of his questionnaire, "because we wanted to be doing something important to get the war over and get home. Then we got a new C. O. He talked to us about the war picture as a whole and showed how necessary our job was. Now we all know our job is important."

"How I wish," wrote another, "that our officers would acquaint the man who is doing the job with the importance or reason for it. This would greatly eliminate the griping that always comes from the man who fails to see the whys and wherefores of a job and a greater interest would be shown in the work to be done."

2. "Even if men are still needed here, does our outfit have to stay?"

Comments written by men all over the world show that they are reading in letters from home, or in home town papers, of friends who have returned home from overseas. "Why not us?"

In a far northern zone only *one-third* of the men think the rotation plan has worked out fairly in their area. Men in the Pacific think that men in the Mediterranean get the best break, and vice versa.

Rumors are rife and gross misunderstanding of the problem is evidenced by the failure of men to realize that ships which leave ports empty cannot necessarily take soldiers home because there is not enough shipping or reserve manpower for replacements.

What the men want is to "know the score". Example:

"For the last six months, I have heard a lot of different rumors about soldiers being sent back to the states after two years down here. I have talked with some of the men who work in headquarters of this post and other posts, and they all agree that there is some regulation concerning the matter. What I don't see is, why a soldier isn't told. It would build up the morale of a soldier 100% because he would have something to look forward to and not be misled by a lot of false rumors."

3. "If some men in my outfit can be sent

home why can't I go?"

"The chief influence which can be expected to have an undesirable effect on morale," say the Readjustment Regulations, "is that military necessity will dictate that certain types of personnel can be released while others cannot. An explanation will be made to all personnel at the earliest practicable date of the reasons which permit readjustment in the strength of the Army, together with the reasons for the particular methods to be employed in effecting it. All commanders will develop in their personnel a thorough understanding of the requirements imposed by the military situation."

The soundness of these predictions and recommendations is revealed by a study of men's comments on personnel selection in the rotation program. A few typical comments are as follows:

"SOUND-OFF SESSIONS"

A TWO-WAY CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION

A "gripe session" called "The Sound Off" is part of the mental reconditioning program conducted at AGF and ASF Redistribution Centers for soldiers returned from overseas. At these sessions any man can ask any question whether it concerns overseas problems, the home front, zone of interior or reassignment. The specially trained leaders of these groups know most of the answers, and know how to get the rest of them from higher headquarters.

An excerpt from Par. 16, ASF Circular 242 describes the mission of "The Sound Off" as part of the program "...which will answer specific questions in the mind of returnees; clarify misconceptions; make understandable and acceptable the less pleasant aspects of the situation in which the returnee finds himself; and finally give him a clear and personal basis for understanding the need for further personal participation in the war".

Both officers and men have been astonished at the way a simple fact or explanation can dispel doubts and puzzlement, which might have persisted for months. Gripes, once they are gotten off the chest, often cease to be a serious cause of mistrust or discontent.

Experience with "The Sound Off" program has shown that it has other values than as a source of information to the men and a device for getting their grievances off their chests. Information gained from this program is already being used to supplement other intelligence upon which action and policy changes are based; unhealthy rumors have been discovered and are now being scotched.

"Sound Off" sessions may be particularly useful in line outfits, since they can give leadership advance warning of frustrations that may lead to morale problems.

"In my company, men who have proven themselves to be good men and conscientious workers, were held here while others went home on rotation in their places. No one is indispensable, or cannot be replaced."

"Most of the men that have gone back are those that couldn't do a job or wouldn't do anything. Those the C.O. had trouble with. In order to get rid of them, he put them in groups going back to the states. Those who have done their work and stayed on the ball are here with no hope of going back in sight. That is definitely lowering the morale of the men and causing their work to become inefficient."

"Some men go home and they have only been

II. PROBLEMS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN

It is obvious that the first consideration in the success of any system of keeping the men informed is faith in the command. In the absence of such confidence, official explanations can backfire.

Research studies in regions of lessening importance in the war, merely emphasize what has been evident from other studies, namely, that the behavior more than the words of the officers -- especially of the junior officers who are closest to the men -- is a central factor in the morale of troops. Men willingly undergo great privations when they are convinced that their officers take a sincere interest in their welfare and have done all they can to mitigate these privations. Ordinarily men do not object to discipline. What they object to is unfairness and arbitrariness on the part of an officer -- especially an officer who is taking what they consider of undue advantage of his rank.

In the opinion of enlisted men, too many of the junior officers -- who are themselves relatively new to the Army and not imbued with the old Army tradition of leadership responsibility -- have little concern for the welfare of enlisted men. In one inactive overseas

here a few months, others just stay on and on. That is unfair."

War Department Readjustment Regulations recognize the importance not only of just policies but also of giving the troops the facts about these policies.

If previous studies are any criterion, V-E Day will bring in its wake many new gripes among enlisted men to rationalize their discontent with any delay in returning to the States. This tendency will flourish if an adequate information program is not used as a brake on rumors and misconceptions.

command, almost three out of five men said that few or none of their officers have their welfare at heart. In two other areas, the picture is somewhat better.

QUESTION: How many of your officers take a personal interest in their men?

Percent in:

	Few or None	About half	Most or all
Area A	47%	19%	34%
Area B	46%	16%	38%
Area C	58%	17%	25%

It is significant to note that the men who criticize their officers for lack of concern with enlisted men's problems are by no means always the same men who lack confidence in the officers' technical or military skill. Even in an area where 61% said few or none of their officers showed personal interest in the men, only a minority of this same group complained that none of their officers "knew his stuff."

(Excerpts from the official study manual for a recently instituted series of Army leadership conferences)

PERSONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN

"There is a strong tradition in American life against special privileges which are enjoyed simply because of position..."

"American soldiers expect a leader to demonstrate by his own conduct the standards they are required to adhere to. The hardships the soldier must endure, the leader must also endure..."

"Remember that the officer and his men must share and share alike. He must share their dangers, their hardships, and their living conditions..."

An officer preoccupied with his own comforts will never be a true leader of his men..."

"American soldiers expect a leader to regard them as men and not as inferior beings. Enlisted men feel their self-respect lowered when they are treated with contempt and condescension..."

"An officer must know and understand his men as well as his job. Many officers who are highly qualified technically are not conscious of the way some of their actions affect the morale of their command."

(from ASF MANUAL M 207)

Specific criticisms hinge on the enlisted man's concept of justice. In the matter of fairness of promotions, to take only one example, only 32 per cent and 27 per cent of the men in two non-critical areas respectively, said that upgrading of rank is based on merit rather than on favoritism. In another area, less than one man out of three said that promotions usually go to the most deserving.

DIFFERENTIAL OFFICER PRIVILEGES

But the most frequent complaint, from all overseas areas, has to do with officer privileges. It is illustrated by the accompanying chart of data from an inactive tropical area.

In all Army research surveys there is a page where enlisted men may write in comments on any subject they choose. Second only to comments about the desire to come home, criticisms of differential privileges of officers top the list in every current overseas study. In general, men do not object to the custom of granting prerogatives in line with extra responsibility, but their resentment is

aroused by what they consider excessive privilege or abuse of privilege sanctioned by tradition.

QUESTION: "Considering their responsibilities, how do you feel about the privileges and breaks that officers where you are stationed get?"

Officers get:	Percent saying...
Far too many...	41%
A few too many...	23%
About the right number...	33%
Too few	3%

Analysis of "write-ins" by enlisted men in inactive areas, in both the tropics and the far north, shows a clustering of comments about certain topics illustrated below with quotations:

a. TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

"I think officers are shown too much partiality. They are given transportation anywhere with their girl friends while we are not even given a pass truck. At times it is hardly possible to catch a bus back to the post. I say let them ride a bus."

"Can't someone stop the use of vehicles and enlisted men's time just for the officers' pleasures."

b. TIME SCHEDULE

"If we go to the NCO club, we have to be gone by 10:30. The officers' club is right by our barracks and you can hear the officers and nurses going strong yet at 11:30 and 12:00. I don't see that there should be that much difference between ranks in a free country."

"If an enlisted man is restricted from town after 5:30 p.m. (because of malaria control) I think officers should be too. A mosquito doesn't stop and look to see if he has bars on before he bites."

c. LEAVES

"The EM should be helped to a sure and exact answer to getting their furloughs after they have already been told they could go. The officers' seem to go through without trouble or hitches."

"My outfit is going on their third year of service overseas and haven't been allowed to give furloughs to the enlisted men yet. Most all of our officers have had furloughs since we left the states."

III. UTILIZATION OF TIME

Morale problems which develop among troops when an active theater reverts to non-combat status can further be minimized by constructive planning of time devoted to training and leisure activities.

DUTY TIME

The question of time utilization

d. FOOD AND LIVING CONDITIONS

"I don't see why the officers should have officers' clubs while soldiers have to live in tents."

"Why should an officer get fresh milk when an enlisted man doesn't?"

e. RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

"Many times after the motion picture has started rows of officers' seats are empty while EM are turned away at the door."

"One need but to observe. For instance, on Sunday morning the officers' sailing forth in military boats on fishing parties, with picnic baskets and civilian friends. Special Service has poles to lend but no boats for EM."

"The officers have two dances a week, can visit a girl any time, stay as late as they want to. Why can't we?"

(Note: Almost every man in this particular unit wrote in comments on this situation).

These quotations are representative of many which might be cited. It should be remembered, however, that there is a substantial minority of men, as shown by statistics quoted earlier, who are not critical of officers' differential privileges. Such men ordinarily are not moved to write free comments on this subject.

RR 1-1 emphasizes the new responsibilities of leadership in connection with these problems, which will be heightened as the sounds of war die away on various fronts.

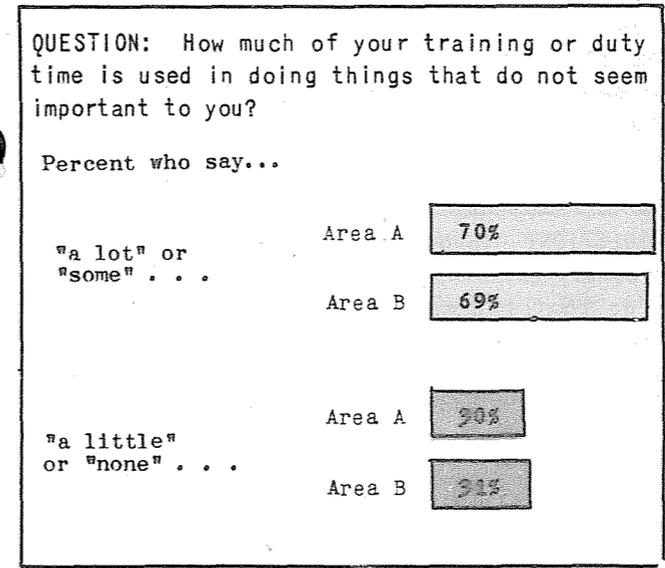
after V-E, Day, the Readjustment Regulations say, will be met by reducing hours spent on "purely military instruction" and substituting "a program of educational and recreational activities."

Carrying out this directive, therefore, becomes a question of establishing a proper balance between the military

and non-military phases of the soldier's day.

The new regulations will no doubt come as a boon to many men in overseas areas who feel that too much of their schedule is now occupied with unimportant duties which could be eliminated without harm to their military mission. Previous studies show that men do not object to hard work, but do resent tasks which in their opinion were merely dreamed up to fill in time.

In the two inactive areas mentioned above, more than two-thirds of the men think that "some" or "a lot of" their training time is spent on superfluous tasks.



How this factor of job importance influences job satisfaction is illustrated by a survey in one area which showed that three out of four men who regarded most of their duties as useful ranked themselves high on a general index of job satisfaction. Of those who did not consider most of their duties important, a majority ranked low by their own evaluation. The following comment is highly expressive of this kind of discontent:

"The men become disgusted because one day they dig a hole for somebody, then a few days

later they have to fill the hole up and dig it somewhere else. They are willing to work when they see the work is practical. When they have to do something that is not practical, they are hard to handle."

The importance of a combat unit's mission generally fades when the tide of battle ebbs away. The task of command, under RR1-1, is then to hold military duties to a necessary minimum, while making profitable use of remaining time through a program of education and recreation. The aim is to avoid resorting to GI "boon-doggling," "policing the area," ditch-digging and superfluous "improvements" for the sake of whiling away time.

The twenty-seven educational courses

ARMY EDUCATION AND RECREATION PROGRAM

a. At such time as the military situation and mission of any element in theaters permit, purely military instruction will be reduced to that necessary for the execution of the mission and the maintenance of military proficiency, orientation, discipline, and health. That part of the training day not required for these purposes will be devoted to a program of educational and recreational activities which will be conducted in a manner that will require the full effort of the personnel during the time allotted. When the commanding generals concerned determine that this program is to be applied, all personnel of the organization will be required to participate. However, each individual will be permitted to choose whether he will participate in the educational or recreational aspects. The purpose of the program is to assist in the maintenance of discipline and morale and be of maximum future benefit to military personnel.

b. The War Department will provide a wide choice of programs, together with a limited number of personnel qualified to assist in the initiation and supervision thereof. (RR1-1)

which are to be made available in non-combat areas will find an eager audience among enlisted men. In one rear area more than three fifths of the troops

surveyed say they would be "very much" or "pretty much" interested in studying such subjects.

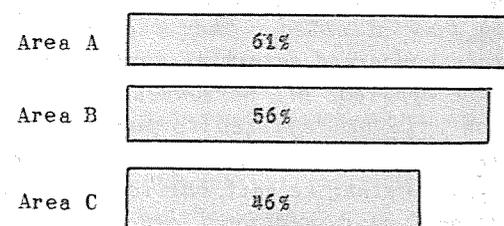
OFF-DUTY TIME

Research studies made in the past among various inactive areas show that enlisted men want (1) a just and liberal pass policy permitting them to leave the post and (2) adequate recreational facilities on the post.

In some isolated areas where a pass would be meaningless because there is literally no place to go, men feel that this situation should not be made an excuse for extending the work day. They still want a reasonable amount of leisure time. In such areas, of course, recreational aids assume an even greater importance in the eyes of enlisted men.

Only about half of the troops in three overseas zones think they are getting a fair share of free time.

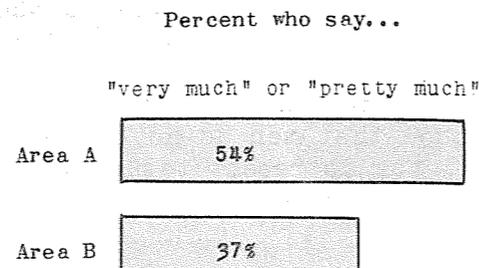
PERCENT OF MEN WHO SAY THEY ARE GIVEN A FAIR AMOUNT OF TIME OFF FROM WORK



In another theater surveyed, a substantial minority of men said they were not getting as many passes as they felt were coming to them.

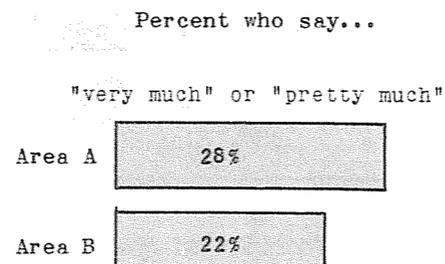
In recent surveys of two inactive theaters, only a little more than a half and a third of the men, respectively, say they are satisfied with the recreation program under way in their camps:

QUESTION: "Considering everything, do you feel that the Army has been doing all it could to provide entertainment, sports and recreation for the men here?"



The responsibility of command does not end with supplying adequate facilities for leisure time activity. The type of officer assigned to direct such activities in lower echelons, his qualifications and above all his interest in the program seem to have a vital bearing on its success or failure. In both the areas charted above, only a small proportion of the men feel that the officers on their own posts pay enough attention to their recreational needs.

QUESTION: In general, how interested would you say the officers on this post are in seeing that the men have good entertainment, sports and recreation?



Many suggestions for making off-duty time more attractive are found in free comments written on questionnaires. RRI-1 encourages individual initiative on the part of command "to cause the maximum of economy through improvisation." Ample evidence has been supplied by previous research to bolster the contention that enlisted men on the post, if offered the chance, will come forward with a host of worthwhile ideas in this connection.

BADGE OF THE INFANTRYMAN

"Expert" awards have helped to increase respect and preference of infantrymen for their own arm of service

Source: Studies of enlisted men in three infantry divisions training in U.S. camps.

The prestige of the infantryman has climbed to a marked degree in the course of recent months, with appreciation steadily growing for the role of the foot soldier of our Army's infantry.

One of the measures taken to boost respect for the Infantry among its own members has been the Expert Infantryman's Badge, established by W.D. Circular No. 269, 1943. Awarded to men who show prowess in the weapons and skills which are tools of the foot soldier's craft, this medal carries with it a \$5 increase in monthly pay.

The badge system has definitely exerted a favorable influence on attitudes of enlisted infantrymen, according to surveys of two divisions made before and after the practice of giving awards was adopted. For purposes of comparison, studies were also made over the same

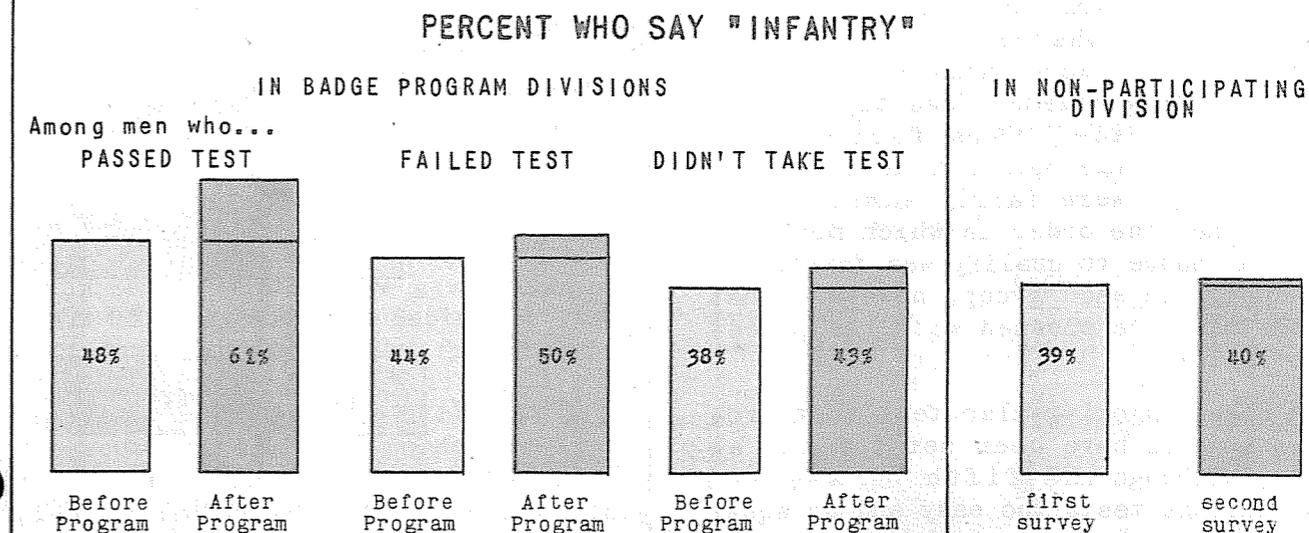
period in another division which had not yet conducted Expert Infantryman tests.

Among units which have entered this program, a wider regard for the Infantry was found after the award policy went into effect. The most pronounced improvement on this score is noted among men who actually qualified for the badge, 61% now saying that they think more highly of the Infantry than of any other arm of the service, as against 48% who formerly felt that way.

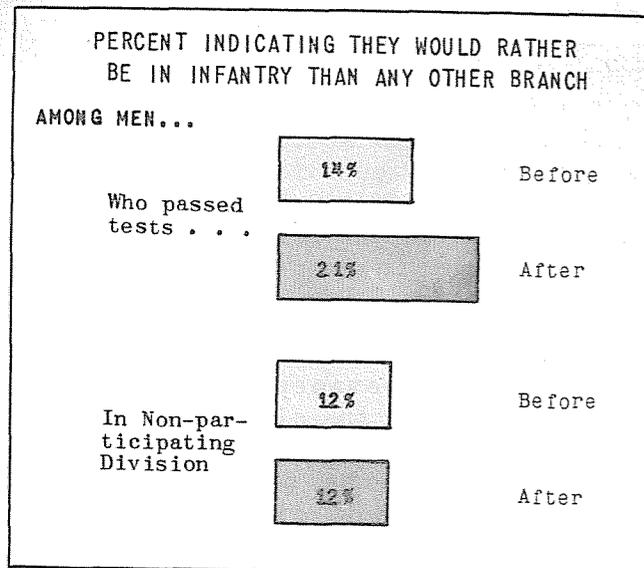
In contrast, almost no change at all was registered between the first and second surveys in the division which did not offer the badge. A breakdown of replies among men who passed, men who failed, and men who did not take the tests is presented in the chart below.

To have respect for a branch of service, however, is a far cry from actually liking to be in it. The Expert Badge does not soften the rugged life of the

QUESTION: Which branch of the army do you think most highly of?



infantryman. But as a mark of recognition for his proficiency, it has led to some increase in the number of men who say they would rather serve the "Queen of Battles" than anywhere else in the Army. Although slight, this rise becomes more significant in the light of figures which show that in the non-participating division, the percentage of men preferring the Infantry to all other forces remained completely static.



Enlisted personnel leave no doubt about the wisdom of the badge policy in general. "It's a good idea," say four out of every five men surveyed.

In this as in other questions, a more favorable reaction was encountered among men who passed the Expert tests than among those who were unsuccessful or who did not undergo them. Possibly a "sour grapes" prejudice, this factor also appeared to tinge opinions on whether or not the tests were fairly administered and whether the order in which men were given a chance to qualify was fairly determined. In each group, however, most of the men were pleased with the procedure followed.

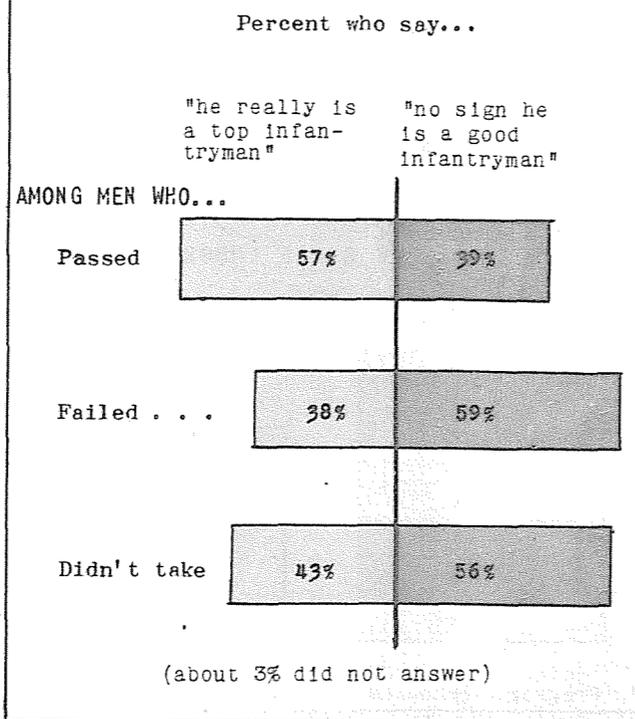
A clear majority also feel that proper standards have been set for the awards, although one-fifth of the men consider the tests too easy and an equal number think they are too hard.

The bulk of the men interviewed in this study feel that soldiers in other branches are not very much impressed by the Expert medal, a situation traceable to lack of knowledge among non-Infantry forces about the rigid requirements for this badge of skill.

Is the GI who sports an Expert Infantryman's Badge on his chest really a crack soldier? On this point, opinions of the men as a whole are about evenly divided. Among those who have won the award, it is accepted by three out of five as the sign of a top-notch infantryman, but only two out of five disqualified men agree with this judgment.

This information indicates that there is room for some "selling" by company officers on the meaning of the Expert award. Facts which may be emphasized are that the man who wears it can handle a rifle better, march faster, hurl a grenade straighter and is better equipped to kill the enemy and stay alive in combat than the average soldier.

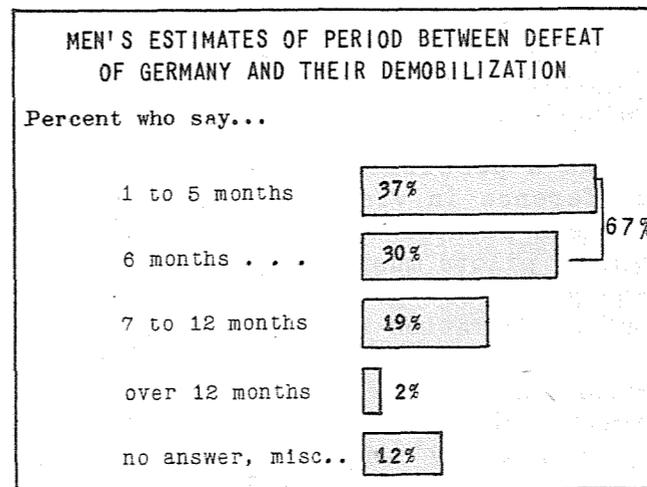
QUESTION: In your opinion, how good an infantryman is a man who can pass the Expert Infantryman tests?



WHEN DO MEN EXPECT TO BE DEMOBILIZED?

Veterans in a front-line area forecast probable duration of service

There seems to be a broad current of belief among American troops in Europe that they will be back in civilian life again six months after the collapse of Germany. For example, a survey made on September 6 reveals that this notion was held by two out of three enlisted men in an infantry battalion engaged in the hard fighting around the Gothic Line.



Apparently many of these soldiers figure that for them, the post-emergency service referred to in the phrase "duration and six months" will date from the end of European hostilities, rather than the end of the entire war. This possibility suggests itself because in estimating the probable span between defeat of Germany and their discharge from the Army, almost half the men whose guesses fell within the half-year range, specifically chose to say "six months."

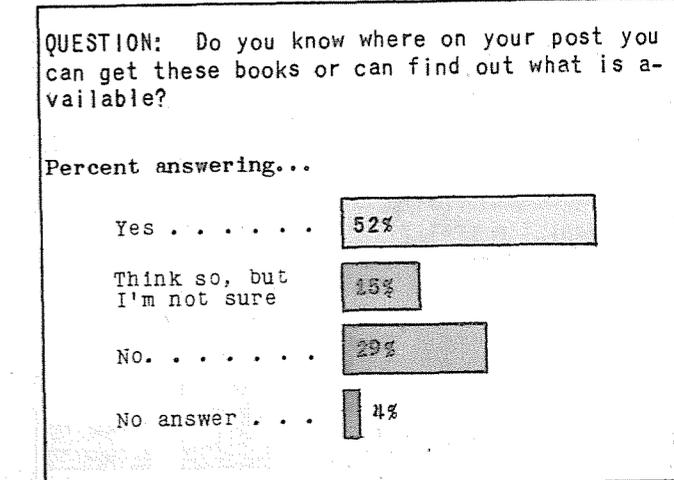
The majority of enlisted men surveyed also take for granted that the war against Japan will be wound up in short order, three men in five giving the Nips eight months from last September at the outside -- or six months from the time most of them think the Nazis will quit. If these predictions turn out to be over-optimistic, they foreshadow a morale problem which may grow in proportion to the time lag between victory over Germany and V-Day in the Pacific.

GI LITERATURE

When a soldier overseas has time on his hands, whether in garrison or near the front, he may often be found poring over the pages of a pocket-size book labeled "Armed Services Edition." Paper-bound reprints of best-selling titles, these little volumes are distributed free of charge in foreign theaters by the Special Services Division.

The extent to which they get around among troops may be judged by the fact that almost half the men questioned in one area report having read one or more books in the series. About 50% of these say they have read at least five titles.

A difficulty in the way of circulating Armed Services Editions is the problem of posting men on where they can be obtained. Only about half the men are definite about where these books are stocked in their camp.



FIGHTER AND BOMBER PILOTS—A COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES

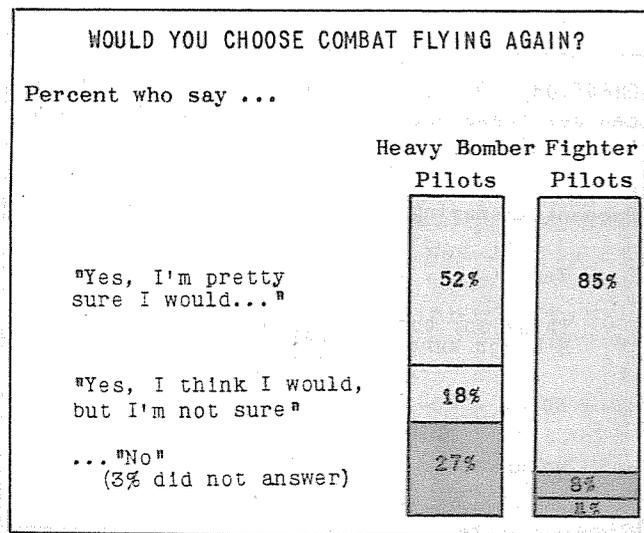
Wide variations in outlook are noted between these two groups of fliers

Source: Survey of pilots in fighter and heavy bombardment squadrons in an active theater.

In the air war over enemy skies, heavy flak...hostile interceptors...and the drain of combat take their toll in human spirit as well as in machines.

The men who fly our big Fortresses and Liberators have to cope with different conditions of battle than the pilots of speedy fighter craft. And they have a different outlook towards their jobs, measured by replies to questions in a recent survey.

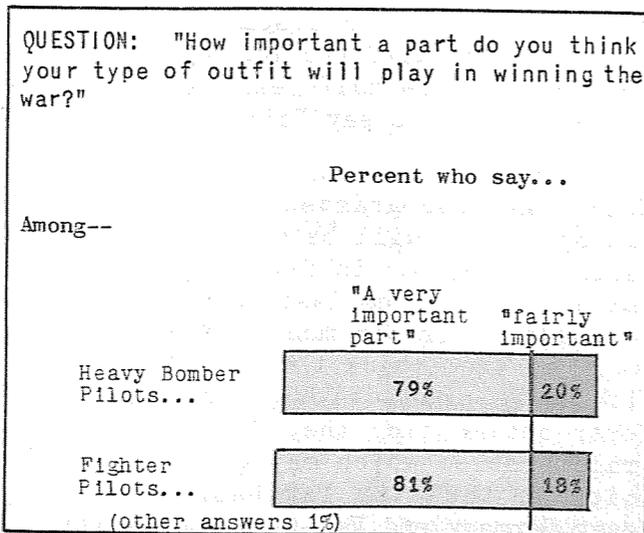
In weighing the results of this study, a factor to bear in mind is that it was made during one of the war's most grueling periods of aerial activity. An indication of the high level of morale among these men is that despite the severe strain under which they fought, seven out of ten heavy bomber pilots and almost all the fighter pilots thought they would sign up for combat flying again if they had it to do over. Fighter pilots, however, tend to be more certain of this choice than the men who fly the heavies:



A more striking contrast was brought out by a question on willingness to undertake another series of missions in the same theater after a furlough in the States. The percentage of heavy bomber pilots voicing a decided "No" against this idea is larger, by a ratio of more than 2½ to 1, than the proportion of fighter command men who express such reluctance.

As a possible explanation of this difference in viewpoint, an Air Force surgeon pointed to the fact that heavy bomber pilots must sit and take it from enemy pursuit planes without breaking out of formation to return fire -- just as on a bombing run they must hold an even course in the teeth of an anti-aircraft barrage. Emotional tension built up in this way cannot be relieved by the feeling of swift action and fighting back experienced by the man at a fighter's controls.

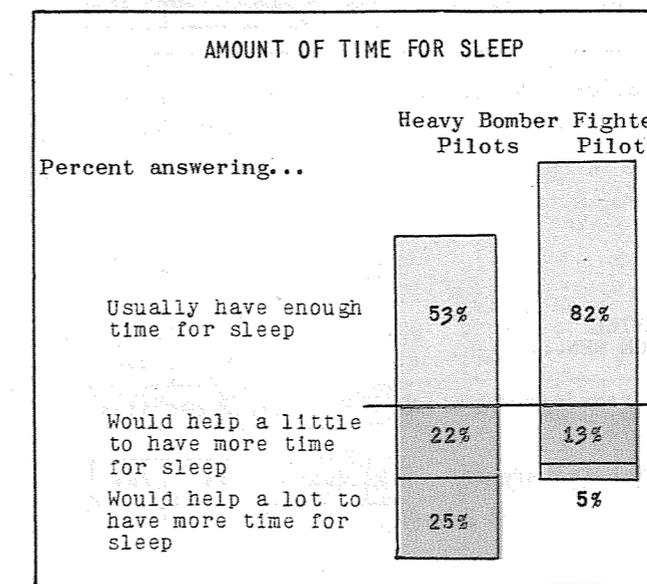
Both groups of airmen firmly believe in the vital role of their own type of outfit in winning the war, about four out of five in each class rating its part as "very important."



In comparing attitudes of pilots, the personality traits which influenced their classification into bomber and fighter types should probably be taken into account. It is also worth noting that men in the fighter squadrons are somewhat younger on the whole, 42% being 22 years old or less, while this age group comprises only 24% of pilots in heavy bomber wings.

Age	Heavy Bomber Pilots	Fighter Pilots
22 yrs. or less	24%	42%
23 to 25 yrs.	49%	45%
26 to 29 yrs.	27%	13%

The possibility that fatigue may have a bearing on the viewpoints disclosed in this study is indicated by the following chart, which shows that only about half the bomber men feel they are getting enough sleep, as against more than four-fifths of the fighter pilots.



This may also tie in with the fact that among pilots of fighter planes, 67% score their physical condition as "good" or "very good" while only 47% of the heavy bomber pilots express similar confidence.

HOW THEY RATE THEIR PHYSICAL CONDITION

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Heavy Bomber Pilots...	9%	38%	48%	5%
Fighter Pilots...	15%	52%	31%	2%

A source of discontent among men who pilot the heavies is the policy on leaves and passes in some organizations, most of them feeling that this situation calls for improvement. Closely related to dissatisfaction on this score is the complaint among more than half of the bomber pilots that for tactical or other reasons, no advance notice on leaves has been given, whereas practically none of their fighter colleagues report such a practice.

QUESTION: "Do you usually know ahead of time when you can count on having a leave or pass?"

Percent who answer...

	Heavy Bomber Pilots	Fighter Pilots
"Usually know a week or more beforehand"	10%	
"Usually given a few days notice"	20%	66%
"Usually find out about it just before a leave is granted"	32%	25%
Don't know, no answer	18%	7%

Most of the factors governing aerial combat in the theater surveyed are of course beyond the control of command. But the above data draws attention to policy on rest, physical conditioning and time off as a factor in the morale of men who are now doing a top fighting job.

HOW THE REASSIGNED MAN VIEWS HIS PRESENT ROLE

The level of morale among transferees is lower than among other men in the company

Source: Survey of a cross-section of enlisted men in Ground and Service Force units stationed in the U. S.

Enlisted men in substantial numbers are being transferred from one branch of service to another, on grounds of physical disability or shifting military requirements.

When a soldier sets his barracks bags down in his new Army home, he is faced with the problem of adjustment to new job, new officers, new relationships.

On several counts the morale of personnel re-assigned from another branch tends to rank lower than the morale of other men in the same outfit.

Two out of every five transferees studied, for example, say they have no pride in their present company, while this feeling is shared by only one out of four men who have been in the branch all along. On this question, generally accepted as a reliable barometer of esprit de corps, no marked differences were found between men who were switched into Ground Force and into Service Force units.

The difficulty of absorbing transferred personnel into the life of the company is illustrated by the number who feel they "don't belong" to their unit, are not an integral part of it -- about twice as many re-assigned men as old hands. Here again Ground Force and Service Force men express similar views.

Transferees are also more likely to doubt the value of their jobs, and to feel they could be doing more important work elsewhere in the Army

QUESTION: Do you feel proud of the company you are in now?

	Percent Answering...			
	No, not proud	Yes, fairly proud	Yes, very proud	Unclassified
SERVICE FORCE MEN...				
Transferred	41%	26%	22%	11%
Not transferred	23%	33%	31%	13%
GROUND FORCE MEN...				
Transferred	42%	26%	22%	10%
Not transferred	28%	30%	29%	13%

QUESTION: Do you feel you really belong in your company and are an important part of it?

	Percent Answering...			
	Not at all	Not very much	Fairly much	Very much so
SERVICE FORCE MEN...				
Transferred	27%	32%	23%	18%
Not transferred	13%	26%	36%	25%
GROUND FORCE MEN...				
Transferred	32%	31%	16%	21%
Not transferred	18%	24%	34%	24%

The task of company officers in helping the soldier adjust to his new place in the Army is easier if he has heard a straightforward explanation of why his transfer was effected. Where re-assignments have been dictated by military necessity, events on the battlefield may be cited as disclosing the need for more troops of one type, less of another, to round out our striking force.

Men who have been convinced of the logic behind their transfer are more likely to develop a spirit of pride in their outfit than men who were not told reasons for this step. As the accompanying charts show, however, a poor excuse, or one that men consider poor, is worse than no excuse at all.

Explaining the "score", first step in re-orienting a transferee, also helps to overcome the feeling of being an "outsider" and encourages the belief that he is an important cog in the company machine.

Fully half the men who said they were given good reasons for their re-assignment think their present jobs represent the most useful Army work they can do, whereas this attitude is found among only about one-fourth of other transferred men.

OPINIONS ON IMPORTANCE OF JOB

Percent who say.....

AMONG MEN WHO WERE...	hardly important at all	fairly important	as important as any other job I could do
	Transferred	22%	43%
Not Transferred	12%	40%	48%

RELATION BETWEEN REASONS FOR TRANSFER AND QUESTIONS ON PRIDE IN OUTFIT

Percent who say.....

AMONG TRANSFERRED MEN WHO...	Not proud	Fairly proud	Very proud	Unclassified
	Were not told reasons	46%	23%	20%
Think reasons "not good"	54%	28%	10%	8%
Think reasons "good"	33%	28%	28%	11%
AMONG MEN NOT TRANSFERRED	26%	31%	30%	13%

DO YOU FEEL YOU REALLY BELONG?

Percent who say.....

AMONG TRANSFERRED MEN WHO...	Not at all	Not very much	Fairly much	Very much
	Were not told reasons	32%	33%	20%
Think reasons "not good"	46%	33%	12%	9%
Think reasons "good"	17%	31%	25%	27%
AMONG MEN NOT TRANSFERRED	16%	24%	36%	24%

BREAKING A PROMISE

Many enlisted men with combat experience cite pledges which were not made good

Source: Survey of enlisted men who are veterans of battle in one overseas area.

"...they have broken a lot of promises they made and so I just don't give a dam."

"After being promised a little break and then get a dirty deal...how does anyone expect a man to stand up after that?...."

These comments by veterans of a combat outfit illustrate the danger of making a pledge to enlisted men, then letting them down by not "delivering."

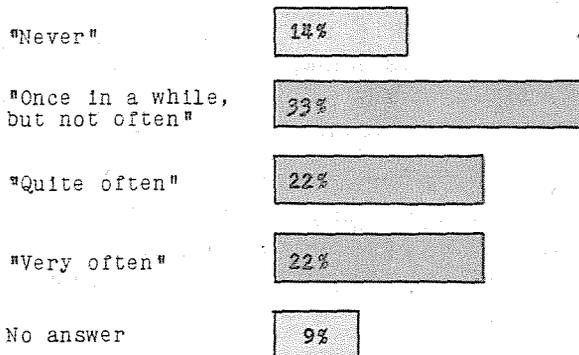
Whether it's a matter of extra spit and polish for inspection, or taking another hill in a bloody campaign, the promise of some reward can be a handy incentive in getting men to really "put out." But when the commitment is not carried out, evidence abounds that disillusionment among troops, breeding a cynical "I've-heard-that-before" attitude, may be a high price to pay. The GI has a long memory in matters of this kind, as shown by the feelings expressed in this survey.

Although this is generally recognized by commanders, more than three-quarters of the enlisted men studied say they have been led to expect things in the Army which never materialized.

Enlarging on this grievance; about 40% of the men questioned cite some specific example of broken faith. Of these gripes, more than half relate to promises about furloughs, passes or rotation. Here are some typical comments on these subjects in the men's own words:

QUESTION: From your experience in the Army, have you ever been promised things which you haven't received?

Percent who answer



"My outfit has been promised so many beautiful thoughts of going home and then disappointed. We were told that if we took a certain hill it was a one way ticket to (U. S.). 5 miles past the hill we were still pushing forward." (Cpl.)

"...the Government gives big hopes of me returning and then does nothing. All promises and no action." (Sgt.)

"...men are disgusted and fed up with false promises by their superiors that they would be rested." (S/Sgt.)

"We get promises of a rest after two campaigns and it turns out to be drill most of the time." (Pvt.)

Other unfulfilled pledges often brought up by enlisted men concern better food and living conditions, ratings, transfers and recreation. More than likely, some of these alleged promises have merely been read into officers' words by wishful-thinkers. Such misunderstanding can be averted by guarding against over-optimistic statements which may be construed as definite pledges.