

N-13669

6 June 1946

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director, Command Class, C & GS Sch, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas

SUBJECT: General Staff Memorandum

In the general staff memorandum which follows it is assumed that the report would appropriately be prepared in headquarters, India-Burma Theater, and submitted to the Chief of Staff at that headquarters.

Francis Hill
FRANCIS HILL
Col., FA, 2d Comd Cl.

Headquarters
India-Burma Theater
APO 665 885
1200 hrs, 6 June 46

File No 162

SUBJECT: Control of Theater Newspaper "CBI Roundup".

1. PROBLEM.

To establish the degree of control to which the theater newspaper, "CBI Roundup", will be subjected.

2. DISCUSSION.

Recent receipt of War Department Circular No 10³, dated 6 April 46, enunciating principles and policies for Army newspapers (see Annex No. 1), necessitates review of theater policy for control of the "CBI Roundup".

No written theater policy currently exists. Presently approved practice is for the Roundup editor to clear, with the AC of S, G-3, prior to publication, all articles touching on theater policies and procedures. The Roundup editor believes that such practice should be discontinued, for the following reasons:

Circular No. 10³ now provides the Roundup editor with sufficient policy guidance, without further need for G-3 supervision.

The effect, meaning, and "punch" of a news story are altered when changed by personnel not familiar with newspaper procedures.

Deadlines for going to press are sometimes missed, due to the time consumed in obtaining concurrences on last-minute stories.

Now that the War Department has authorized ~~self-~~informed and temperate criticism, in Army newspapers, of the military establishment, this reason for general staff supervision is removed.

General staff supervision defeats the War Department desire for unbiased news coverage, since such supervisors are unconsciously biased by their desire to present a good picture, at all times, of the theater situation. Supervision also tends to offer opportunities for various staff officers to "ride their hobbies" in the newspaper, particularly the Chaplain, Surgeon, and Provost Marshal.

The newspaper loses prestige and reader-interest if not allowed to criticize theater situations known by large groups to need correction.

Opposing the Roundup editor's belief are several considerations favoring the continuation of a high degree of control. War Department Circular No. 10³ states that all commanders are responsible that Army newspapers within their jurisdiction give complete, accurate, and unbiased coverage; comply with Army Regulations; be properly staffed; represent no one group or individual; avoid inflammatory material not justified by the facts; and discuss improvement of the military establishment only where such discussion is temperate and well-informed. The Roundup staff lacks military and ~~international~~ ^{impartial} ~~back-~~ ^{independence} ground for compliance with the above, requiring supervision. In addition, the judgment of the Roundup staff can be, on occasion, questionable, as shown in detail in Annex 2. Had it not been supervised, the Roundup staff in the past would have: failed to cooperate with and needlessly and harmfully criticized our allies; attacked public figures in a biased manner; contracted with highly biased columnists; published incorrect interpretations of theater directives; and criticized theater authorities purely for the sake of news. The Roundup is an official organ of the theater in the eyes of the command, and must therefore be controlled and coordinated with other activities by the same procedures and channels as other theater services. Finally, supervision is necessitated by the ever-present tendency of current or future Roundup personnel, being professional newspapermen, to favor sensational news, and exploit the Roundup to increase their reputations as newspapermen.

5. ACTION RECOMMENDED.

Control of the "CBI Roundup" as provided for in Annex 3.

Francis Hill
FRANCIS HILL
Col., GSC
AC of S, G-3.

ANNEXES: No. 1, Circular No. 105, War Dept, dated 6 April 1946.
No. 2, Examples of need for supervision of Roundup.
No. 3, Proposed Memorandum to Editor of Roundup.
No. 4, Sample "CBI Roundup".

ANNEX NO. 1

to

Control of Theater Newspaper "CBI Roundup"

EXTRACT COPY OF CIRCULAR NO. 103, WAR DEPT, dated 6 April 1946

Cir 103

CIRCULAR)
No. 103)

Effective until 6 October 1947 unless sooner rescinded or superseded.

ARMY NEWSPAPERS. 1. The nature of the Army's mission places upon the War Department the responsibility of providing for the publication of newspapers to inform soldiers outside the reach of the American civilian press, as well as to meet the special need for publications devoted to soldier interests and desires. In this regard the War Department acts in a manner analogous to that of the publisher of any responsible newspaper in a democracy, subject to such special considerations, arising from the Army's position as a government agency, as are set forth below.

2. Mission. The objective of publishing Army newspapers is to provide as complete, accurate, and unbiased coverage of general and local news as facilities and equipment permit, together with features, illustrations and other material similar to those commonly found in the best American newspapers. This will help the American soldier to be the best informed in any Army. The Army newspaper should be a constructive force in the military establishment.

3. Scope. a. Army newspapers will base their complete and impartial news coverage on reports provided by commercial press associations, Army News Service, Camp Newspaper Service, or other responsible news-gathering agencies, including their own staffs of correspondence. Army newspapers are as much subject to the operation of Army Regulations as any individual or agency within the military structure. They must avoid publication of anything violating good taste or the laws against libel.

b. As in the case of any newspaper, the ~~value~~^{value} and effectiveness of an Army newspaper depend on the maturity, professional ~~experience~~^{experience}, good judgment, and capabilities of the editor and his staff. For this reason it is the responsibility of commanders to make certain that newspapers under their supervision are staffed with qualified personnel. On major papers these include competent editors, reporters, editorial and feature writers, artists, and production and circulation men.

c. Permitting the newspaper to become the mouthpiece of the Army, the theater, or other command, or of any individual or group should be avoided. The editor should, however, be free to print materials when available which explain the reasons for existing policies which affect the soldier. Well-informed and temperate expression of opinion about improvement of practices of the military establishment has a place in Army newspapers.

d. The newspaper should not become a vehicle for featuring in the guise of news inflammatory material not justified by the facts. The good judgment of the editor will be called upon to distinguish demonstrable fact from personal opinion. Editorial views based on incomplete evidence or personal prejudice may tend to instill false impressions. They may go so far as to break down trust and confidence in, and respect for, the dignity of fellow members of the military establishment, which are essential to the efficient management of the Army. In the formulation of editorial policy, the appropriate commander and the editor should guard against the damage that can result from captions or ill-informed criticism of U.S. Government policy, or of individuals in the Government or the military service.

4. Responsibility. All commanders are responsible for assuring that Army newspapers published within their jurisdiction conform to the principles and policies enunciated in this circular.

5. References. The references cited below contain directives and other material with which all personnel associated with the publication of Army newspapers will be thoroughly familiar.

a. WD Bulletins 5 and 18, 1944. Title V, Public Law 277-78th Congress, as revised by Public Law 418-78th Congress, concerning restrictions placed on dissemination of political argument or political propaganda of any kind designed or calculated to effect the results of Federal elections.

b. WD Circular 62, 1946, Release of Military Information, as amended by section IV WD Circular 92, 1946. The announcement of policies on the release of information contained in this circular are wholly applicable to the publications of military information in Army newspapers.

c. Section I, WD Circular 466, 1944. Publications, post, camp, station, and unit newspapers, as amended by section III, WD Circular 74, 1945.

d. Section V, WD, Circular 21, 1946. Paper purchasable through the quartermaster for publication of camp newspapers.

(AG 000.76 (28 Mar 46))

II. REPORT. -----

ANNEX No. 2

to

Control of Theater Newspaper "CBI Roundup"

EXAMPLES OF NEED FOR SUPERVISION OF "ROUNDUP"

1. Lack of Cooperation with Allies: Although Hq, SEAC, had requested that SEAC and IBT simultaneously publish news of the termination of the combined nature (British and US) of that headquarters, the Roundup tried to "scoop" the SEAC and local newspapers, but was prevented by IBT headquarters.

2. Criticism of Allies: Recently, Indian newspapers criticized the U.S. for failing to keep its promise to transport some 500 Indian students to the U.S. The Roundup desired to offer rebuttal, stating that Indian students have no business in U.S. ships as long as GI's remain to be returned to the U.S. The Roundup failed to consider that the promise to transport Indian students to the U.S. was a State Dept action, taken before the end of the war, and redeployment. The Roundup article, had it been published, would have contributed nothing, inferred Army criticism of the State Dept, and offended further India, where we have based troops for four years, and to whom we hope to sell considerable surplus property.

3. Biased Attack on Public Figure. When a portion of the U.S. press attacked Gen. Hurley at the time of his resignation as ambassador to China, the Roundup wished to join the attack by publishing a Drew Pearson allegation that Gen Hurley received a medal for courage in World War I after the shooting had stopped. The Roundup planned no other article on Gen. Hurley.

4. Contract with Biased Columnist: The Roundup obtained the free services of Representative Clare Luce as columnist, provided her articles were published as written by her, without change or omission. Clare Luce then embarked on a series of sharp criticisms of Congress, including such in her Roundup articles. Fortunately, Clare Luce soon became too busy for free columnist work, and begged out, saving the Roundup the embarrassment of informing her that her biased articles criticizing the government could no longer be used in an army newspaper.

5. Incorrect Interpretation of a Theater Directive: A Roundup article, reporting a theater directive on demobilization, so modified the wording and meaning that the article contained promises to the command that, even if intended, could not have been fulfilled. At the same time, personnel of the command would have considered such as an official theater commitment, since such they appeared in the official theater newspaper.

6. Preparation of Official Articles: Most Roundup-prepared official articles on theater policy have to be rewritten by the General Staff prior to publication, due to lack of background, and knowledge of military procedures and terms, on the part of the Roundup staff.

7. Handling of Critical "Letters to Editors": The policy of the Roundup to encourage the sending of critical letters to the editor brings in letters at times which should have been handled as requests for redress of grievances, under AW 121. Personnel apparently believe they have registered a complaint with theater headquarters when they write to the theater newspaper. Such letters have to be rerouted into proper channels. This situation results from lack of knowledge in the Roundup staff of how to invite informatory comment from readers while avoiding official complaints.

8. Criticism of Military Authority for News Value Only: A Roundup correspondent in the field found a soldier who required, had requested, but had not received a set of false teeth. The Roundup ran a series of articles on this subject, criticising the Theater Dental Surgeon, and making much of the case of the soldier who was tired of soup, and milk and crackers as a diet. The articles got the soldier his teeth, but the ~~same~~ ~~case~~ could have been accomplished by visiting the Dental Surgeon.

9. General Comment: The above is not intended to imply that the Roundup has not generally been efficient and of tremendous value to the theater. The above are merely examples of occasions when the judgment of the Roundup editor appears to have been fallacious. In general, the Roundup has been invaluable in disseminating news, publishing articles on theater policies and directives, and preparing personnel in advance for undesirable conditions which could not be avoided, such as train travel across India during redeployment to the U.S., and delays in departing for the U.S. due to lack of shipping.

ANNEX ³/₅₂₄

to

Control of Theater Newspaper "CBI Roundup".

PROPOSED MEMORANDUM TO EDITOR OF ROUNDUP

MEMORANDUM FOR: Editor, "CBI Roundup".

SUBJECT: Policy for Theater Newspaper "CBI Roundup".

1. General. Effective at once the Theater Newspaper "CBI Roundup" will be governed by the policies and principles enunciated in War Dept Circular No 103, dated 6 April 1946, and such interpretations thereof as shall be announced from time to time by this headquarters.

2. Theater Interpretations: The following theater interpretations of War Dept Circular 105, dated 6 April 1946, are announced for your guidance:

a. Sources of news, special articles from other news publications, and articles by columnists additional to those now in use by the "CBI Roundup" will be submitted to this headquarters for approval prior to use by the Roundup.

b. Replacements for the Roundup staff will be subject to the approval of the Chief of Staff, this headquarters, prior to acceptance. Where suitable replacements are not obtainable within the theater, application will be made to the zone of the interior. The Roundup editor will be responsible that needs for replacements are anticipated, in order to permit timely request on the ZI where such is necessary.

c. The editor of the Roundup is authorized to publish without approval of higher authority news articles from authorized sources whenever such articles are not obviously biased, incomplete, or inaccurate, except as set forth below.

d. News articles, from any source, which criticize the government, our allies, public figures, and military authority, or which contain inflammatory material, grounds for libel charges, classified material, interpretations of War Dept or theater directives, letters to the editor or other complaint letters, and answers thereto, or which constitute violation of Army regulations, or which contain material likely to be detrimental to morale, discipline, or proper functioning of the command, will be processed as follows prior to publication:

(1) Referred to interested staff sections for concurrence or non-concurrence.

(2) Then referred to AC of S, G-3, for approval.

(3) Then cleared with the C of S, when so directed by G-3, or when there is a vital disagreement between G-3 and the Roundup editor.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL WALTZ

John Smith
Brig Gen, GSC
Chief of Staff

ANNEX No. ³/₅₂₄