

**SPECIAL GRAPHIC SUPPLEMENT**

**ON**

*Current and Post-War  
Problems*

**NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER**

**UNIVERSITY OF DENVER**

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# Why Public Opinion Surveys?

Free expression of public opinion has always been an essential part of the democratic way of life. But only within the last decade has the study of this great social and political force approached a scientific basis.

An accurate knowledge of public opinion is of interest to the general public and of definite importance to the nation's leaders. Such knowledge may be of even greater significance to teachers and students, both as a measure of past achievement and as a guide to future endeavors. For it is the schools of America which must provide in large part both the factual background and the practice in critical evaluation which are essential to the intelligent interpretation of material presented by the newspapers, the radio, and other disseminators of information.

One of the weaknesses of democracy as we know it was pointed out more than half a century ago by James Bryce in his **American Commonwealth**. He wrote: "The obvious weakness of government by opinion is the difficulty of ascertaining it. . . . The action of opinion is continuous, that of voting occasional, and, in the intervals between the elections of legislative bodies, changes may take place materially affecting the views of the voters."

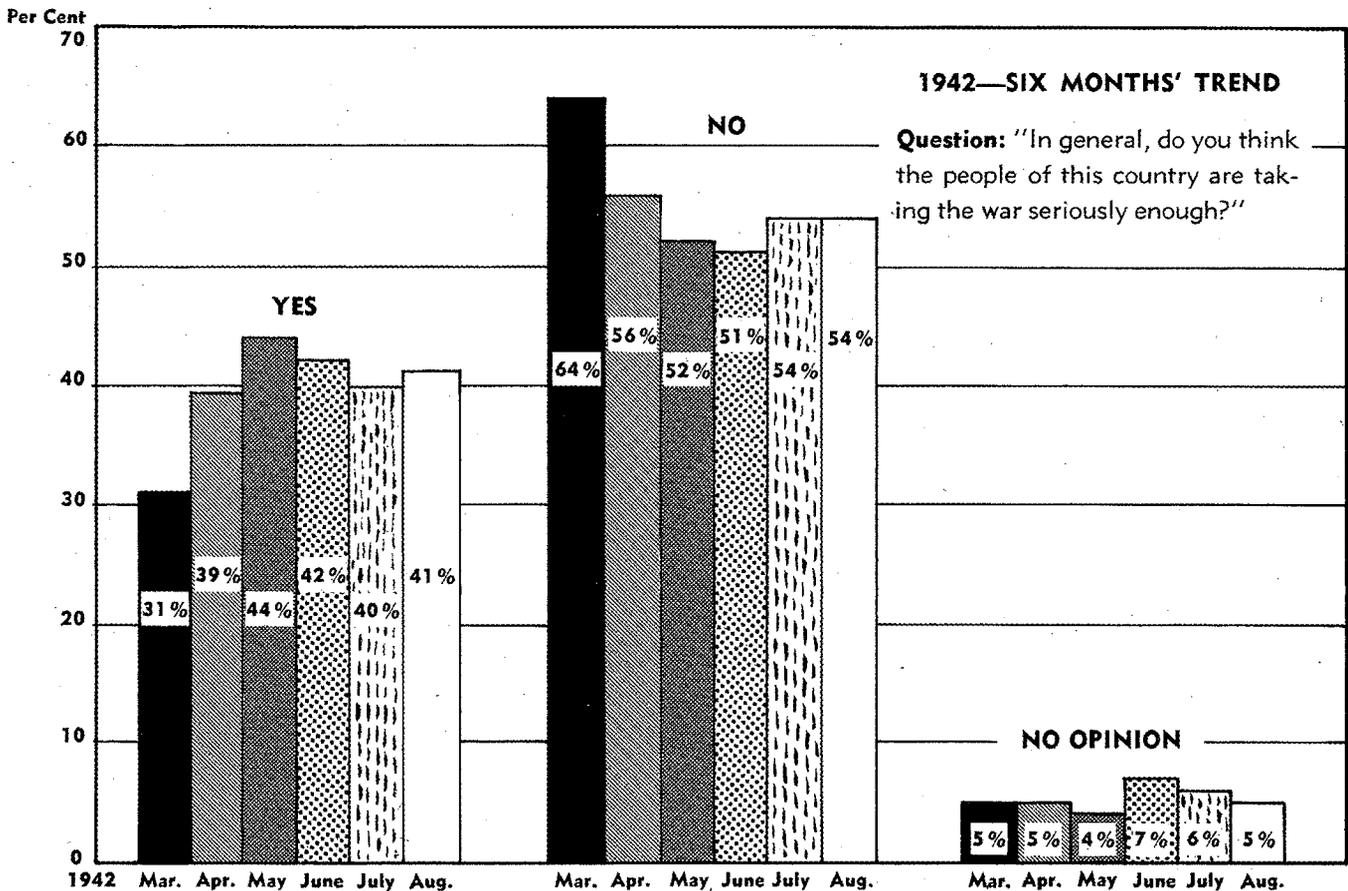
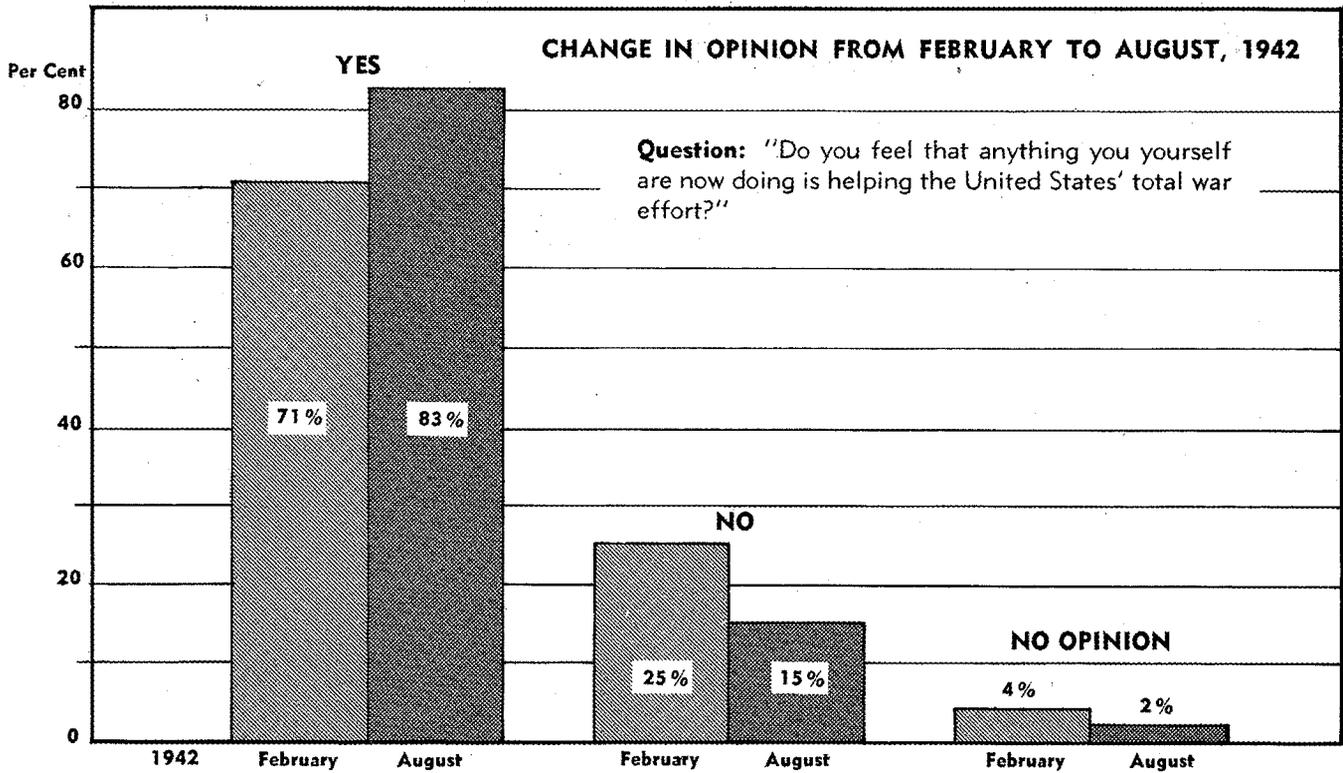
Today one of the chief drawbacks of our democratic

form of government is the difficulty of the people in making their views articulate. Some voters may feel that, once they have voted, they as individuals have little power or opportunity to influence the men elected to office. This situation may account for the widespread lack of interest toward political matters on the part of American citizens. Those who believe that the voice of the people should be heard between elections on questions of major policy, see in the science of opinion surveying a new and effective technique of democratic government.

The surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center during the past year have revealed interesting and highly significant trends of public opinion on a variety of pertinent problems. Several surveys have been devoted entirely to questions of national policy in the conduct of the present war and in the establishment of an enduring peace following the cessation of hostilities.

The present supplement is devoted to a graphic presentation of the responses to questions selected from the various surveys. This is a new departure in publication policy, and the Center is confident that this type of presentation will have particular appeal and usefulness for both teachers and students of America.

## CHARTS I AND II HOW ABOUT OUR WAR EFFORT?



# Opinions on Some Current War Problems

## How Do Americans Feel Toward the Peoples of Germany and Japan?

### How About the War Effort?

Charts I, II, III, and VI on these important questions are largely self-explanatory. The break-downs on Chart VI are especially interesting in the contrast

they show in American attitudes toward people of the two Axis nations—distinctly more hostile toward the Japanese than toward the Germans.

### How Long Will the War Last?

The question, "How much longer do you think the war will last? (Just your best guess)" has been a frequently used "lead-off" question in National Opinion Research Center surveys. Responses are recorded by intervals of a year, or less, so that on a given survey the Center can report the per cent of people who are of the opinion that the war will continue less than six months, from six months to a year, from one to two years, from two to three, from three to four, from four to five, or more than five years.

To make the graphs simple and clear-cut, all those who suggest the war will last **less than two years** are grouped together, as are all those of the opinion that it will last **two years or more**. Chart IV shows a comparison between those who think the war will last longer than two years and those who decline to make any guess as to the probable length of the war. At times of public optimism—when **fewer** people anticipate a longer war—the number who decline to guess **increases**.

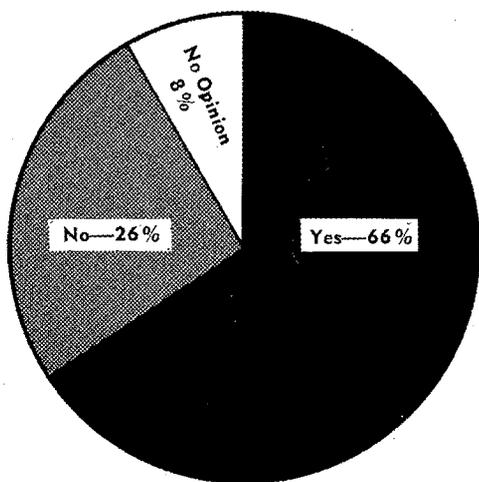
Chart V indicates the fluctuation of opinion as a reflection, in part, of news events. For the purpose of clear interpretation, the per cents used for this chart are based only on those expressing opinions; that is, it eliminates the "no opinion" group. Such a chart has two definite limitations. First, the surveys including this question are taken at irregular intervals, so that occasionally, as in April, an entire month elapses between surveys. In the second place, the news events are not, of course, complete. The selection of news highlights was an entirely arbitrary one, made by the Center's staff from the War Chronology of **Current Events** Magazine. Other phases of the news that may have had a profound influence on public opinion are difficult to date and chart exactly. Into this category fall such events as, for example, the passage and execution of new draft laws, the rate of war production, and submarine sinkings.

### CHART III

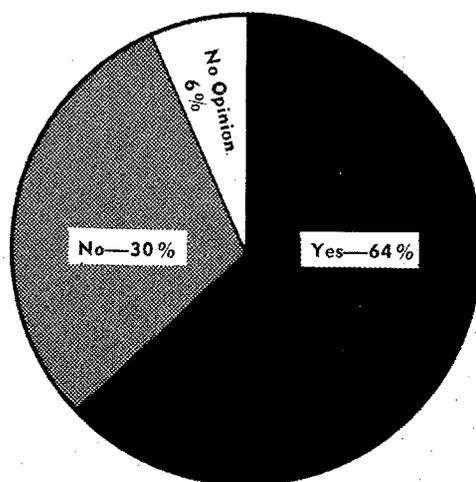
## Are Executives...Workers...Labor Leaders... Government Officials Doing All They Can to Help Win the War?

**Question:** "Do you feel that as a whole the **people in charge** of factories—the executives—are doing all they could do right now to help win the war?"

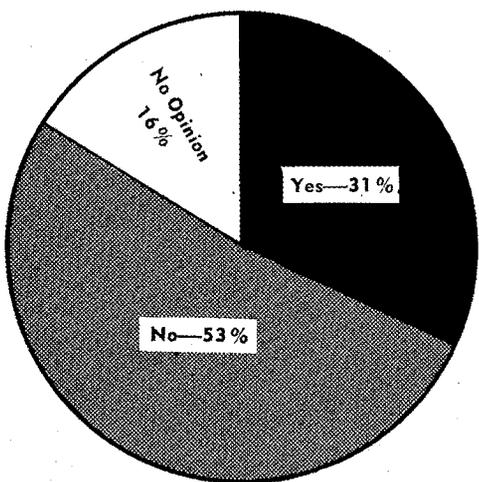
"How about the **workers** in the factories? . . . the **leaders of labor** unions? . . . the **government officials** in Washington?"



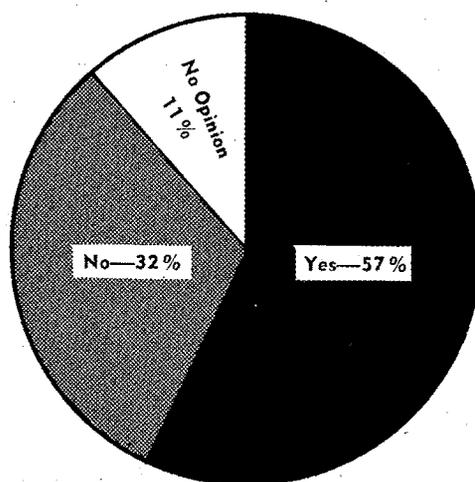
EXECUTIVES



WORKERS

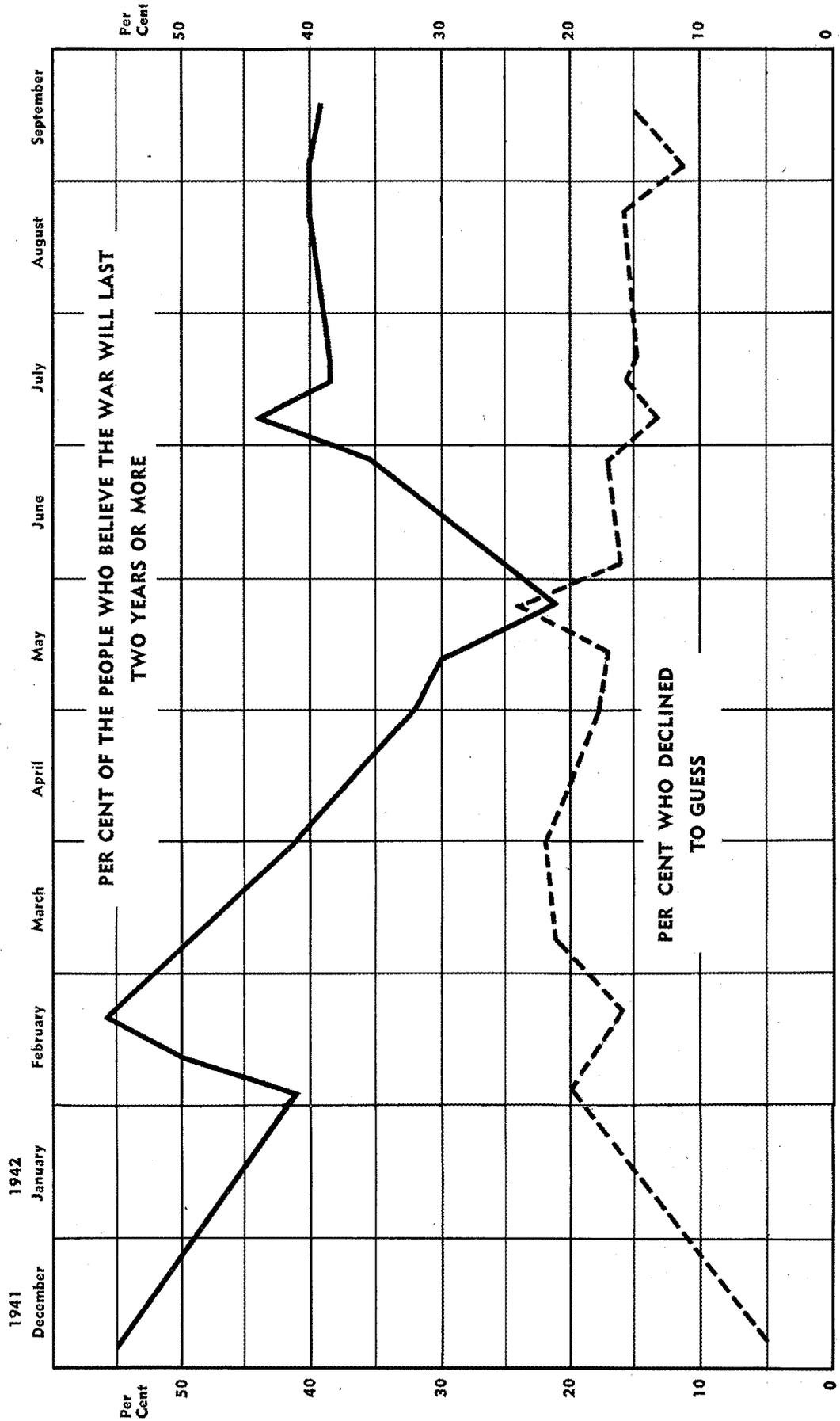


LABOR LEADERS



GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

# CHART IV How Long Will the War Last?



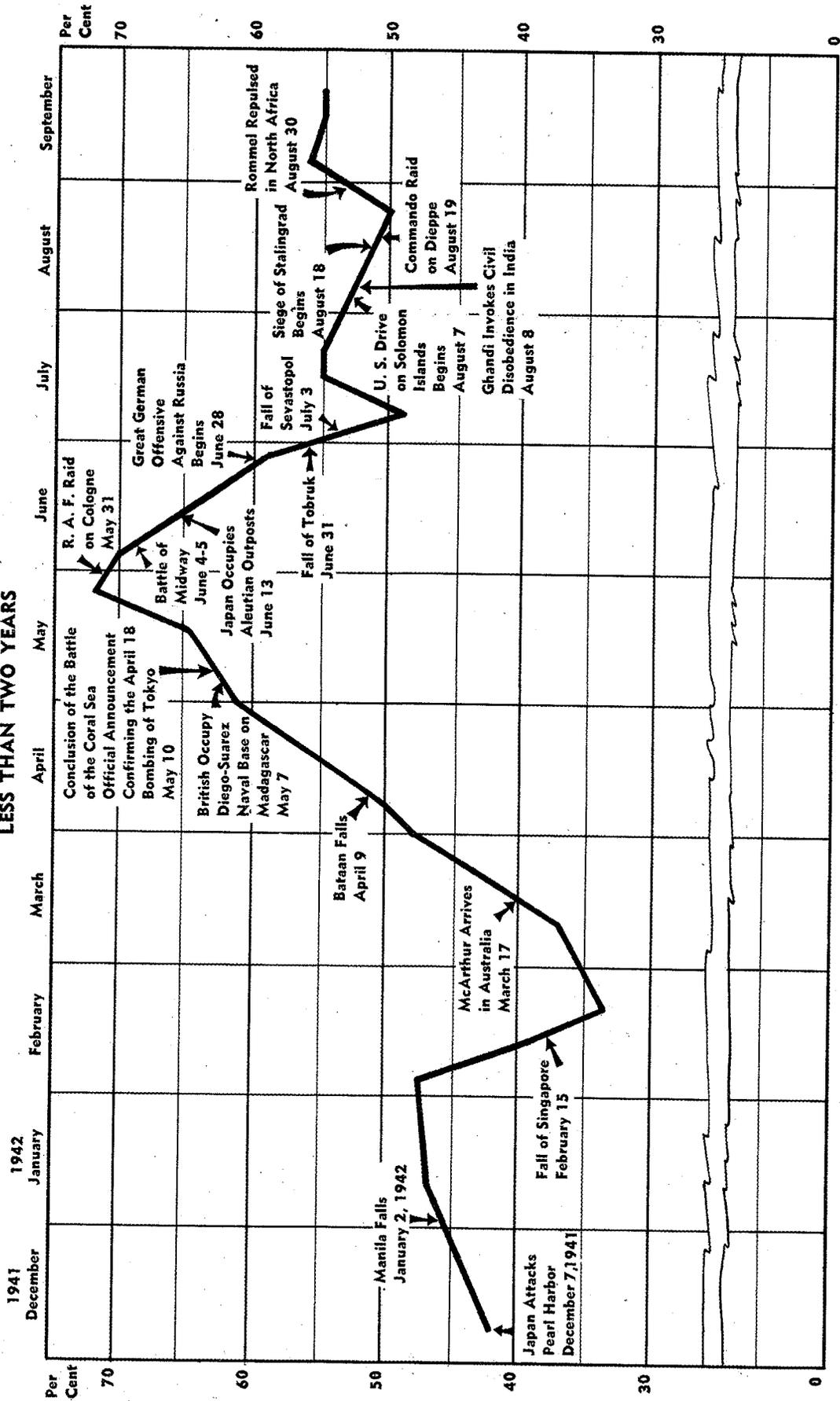
This chart is based on a series of surveys from December, 1941, through September, 1942.

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# CHART V

## How Long Will the War Last?

### PER CENT OF THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THE WAR WILL LAST LESS THAN TWO YEARS



Note: These percentages are based only on those expressing an opinion. Those who declined to guess have been excluded.

This chart is based on a series of surveys from December, 1941, through September, 1942.

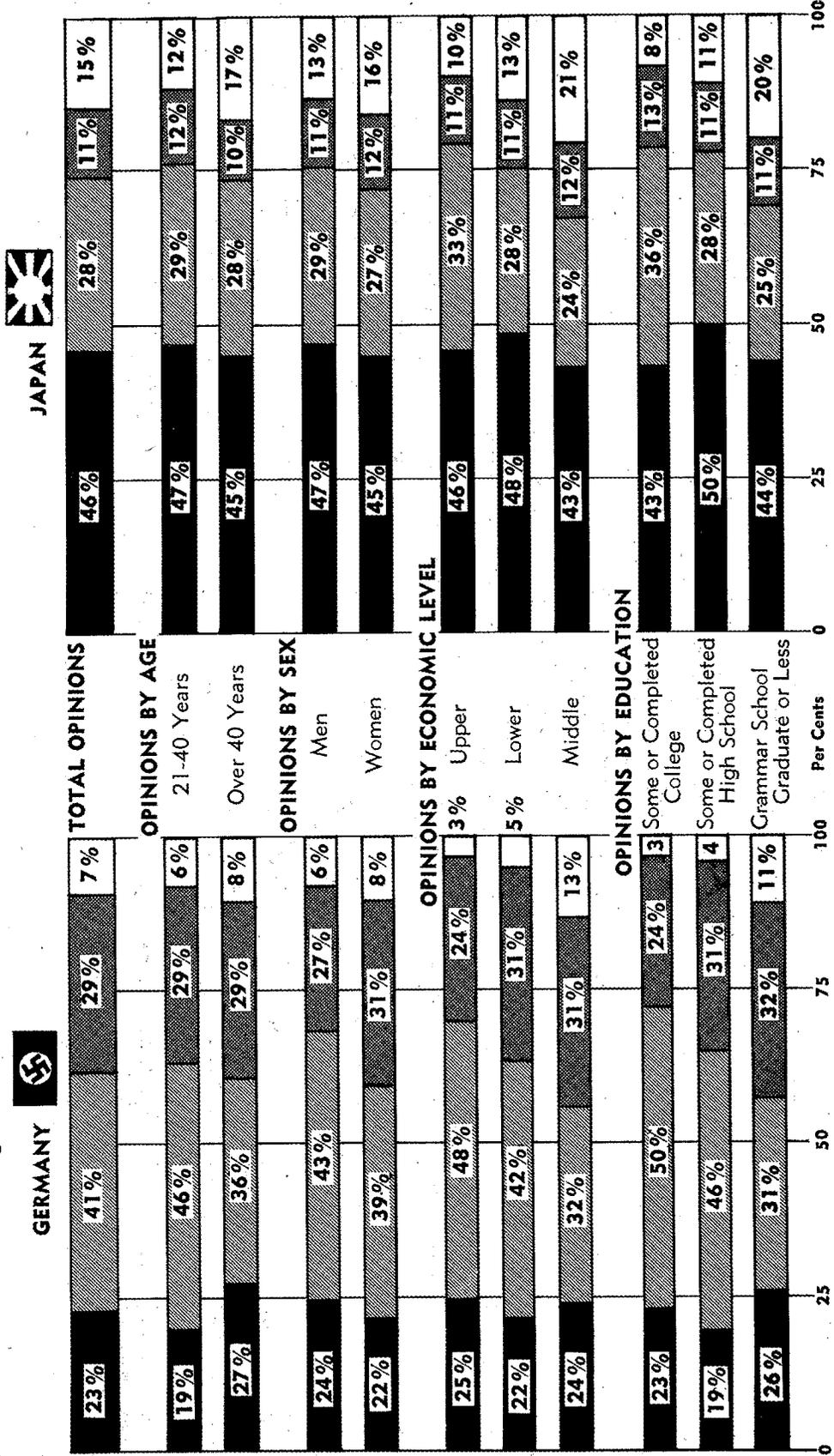
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# CHART VI

## HOW DO AMERICANS FEEL TOWARD THE PEOPLES OF GERMANY AND JAPAN? HOW ABOUT THE WAR EFFORT?

**QUESTION:** "Which of the following statements comes closest to describing how you feel, on the whole, about the people who live in Germany (Japan)?"

- (a) They will always want to go to war to make themselves as powerful as possible.
- (b) They may not like war, but they have shown that they are too easily led into war by powerful leaders.
- (c) They do not like war. If they could have the same chance as people in other countries, they would become good citizens of the world.



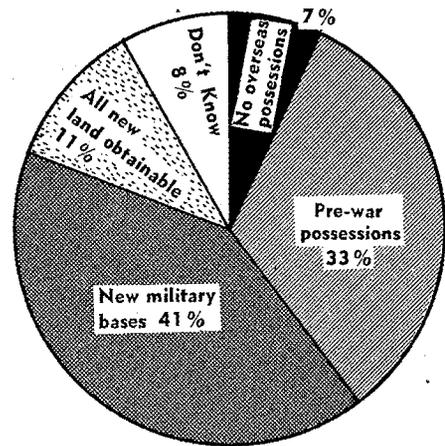
## CHARTS VII, VIII AND IX

# Public Opinion on Post-War Problems

### CHART VII

Which of these four statements comes closest to what you think the United States should do about new land and possessions in the world after the war?

- The United States should give up all the land outside of the U. S. difficult to defend.
- The United States should be satisfied with the amount of land in the world she had before she entered the war.
- The United States should try to get new military bases, but nothing else.
- The United States should try to get as much new land in the world as she can.



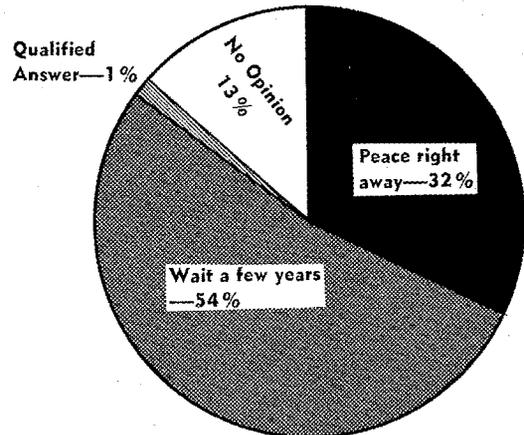
### CHART VIII

Some people say it will be a better peace if the Allies make the peace terms with Germany, Italy, and Japan as soon as possible after the fighting is over. Others say it will be a better peace if the Allies stay in Germany, Italy, and Japan for a few years, and then make the peace terms. Which side do you agree with?

The idea of waiting a number of years after hostilities cease before writing the peace treaties is being discussed in responsible quarters. If this issue becomes increasingly important, a trend of American opinion taken at periodic intervals should prove valuable.

Today a clear majority of the people approve a cooling-off period. The percentage of those who favor waiting amounts to 66% among people with some college education, and falls to 47% among those who are grammar school graduates or less.

The "qualified answers" to this question indicated, not a compromise opinion, but a desire to eliminate the defeated countries entirely, to destroy them rather than to make peace with them.

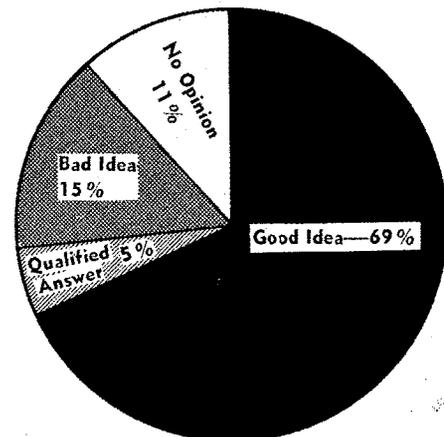


### CHART IX

After the war, if a union of nations that would try to solve world problems were formed, do you think it would be a good idea or a bad idea for the United States to join it?

Only 15% of the people out of every hundred are against the United States joining a union of nations at this time.

The two out of every hundred who qualified their answers said that it should depend upon such things as the leadership of such a union, on which nations are members, and upon the "workability" of the union. People under 40 years old and those on the higher economic and educational levels are more in favor of this idea than are older people and those with less money and fewer educational advantages.



## Opinion Concerning a Post-War Union

Because of the extraordinary weight American public opinion is likely to exercise on post-war affairs, the Center has already presented a series of trend questions to a national cross-section of adults. Two recent surveys have been largely devoted to opinion on post-war problems.\* As a rule all such questions were preceded by the phrase, "Supposing the Allies win the war . . ."

The question as to the desirability of a post-war world union first ascertained attitudes toward the United States' participation in such a union, then checked opinions among those favoring a union on the desirability of including leading Allied and Axis nations in the membership.

Chart X on the opposite page shows the responses to the survey reported in August—the opinion of the **total cross-section** on the question: "After the war, if a union of nations that would try to solve world problems were formed, do you think it would be a good idea or a bad idea for the United States to join it?" The second part of the question, also shown on the chart, samples opinion on membership among those responding favorably to the first part.

Chart XI on the following page is based on the break-downs to this question—the opinion of the various population **sub-groups** included in the fully-rounded cross-section. A comparison of Chart XI

with Chart XII will indicate why the bars in Chart XII are of varying lengths—because only those individuals who answered "Yes" or "Yes, but . . ." to the question of United States participation were asked the further questions regarding membership. In both charts, note particularly the differences of opinion among people of varied economic and educational backgrounds. Break-downs on the various Allied countries are not shown because there are only minor differences of opinion among the various population sub-groups.

In a survey reported last March, the Center asked: "If Germany, Italy, and Japan are defeated, do you think the United States should try to form some kind of a union of the Allied countries to help keep peace and order in the world?" At that time 85% of the cross-section answered, "Yes." The different wording of the two questions may easily account for the difference in the findings. The earlier question asked if the United States "should try to form some kind of a union," compared with "if a union . . . were formed." The earlier question suggested our leading, not merely joining such a union. Finally, "to help keep peace and order in the world" is capable of stimulating more thoughtful speculation than the wording of the question in the more recent survey.

\*See Reports No. 2 and 5.

# CHART X

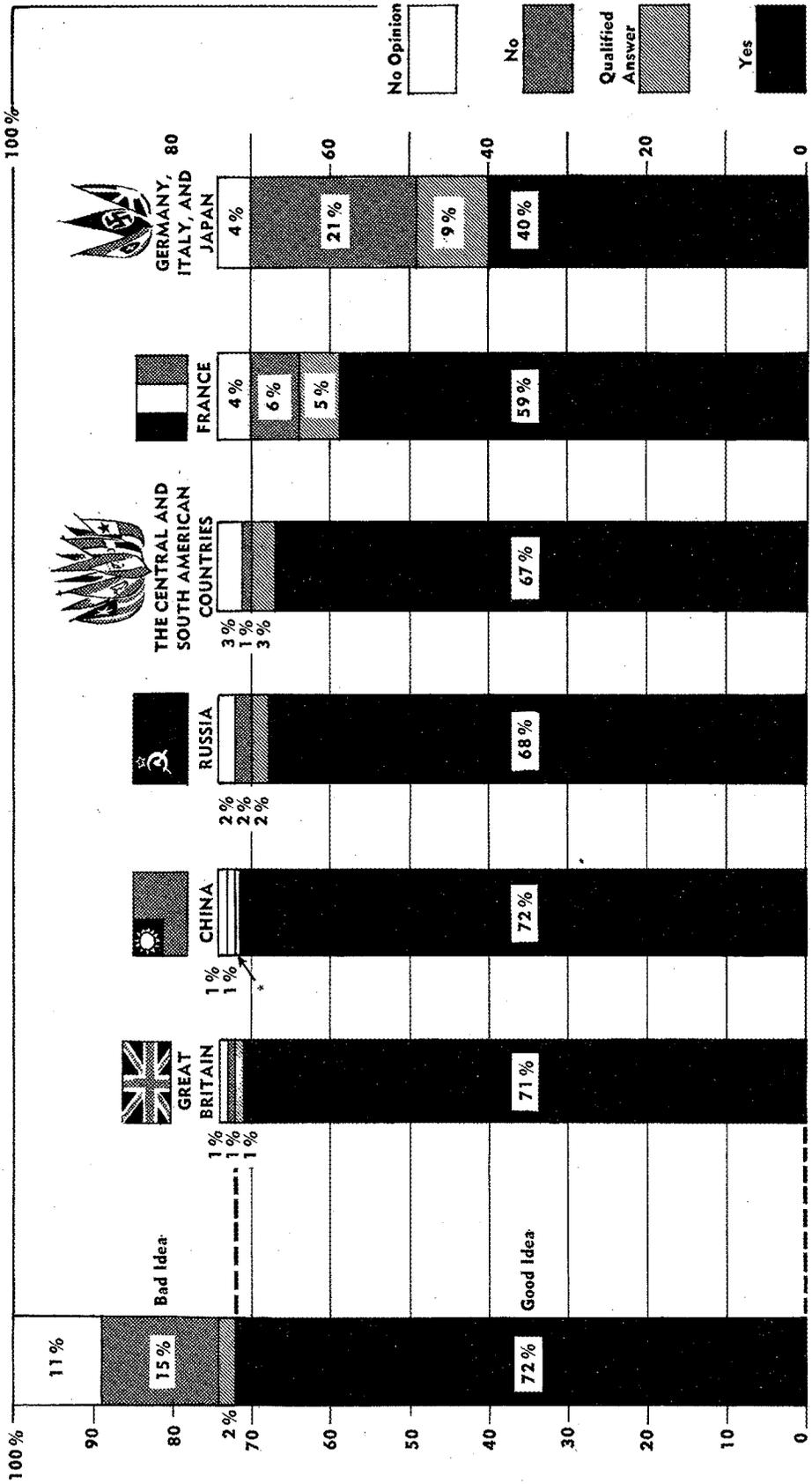
## WHAT ABOUT A POST-WAR WORLD UNION?

**Question:** "After the war, if a union of nations that would try to solve world problems were formed, do you think it would be a good idea or a bad idea for the United States to join it?"

The 72% answering "Good Idea" and the 2% who qualified their answers were then asked:

**"Do you think Great Britain should be in the union?"**

This question was repeated for China, Russia, the Central and South American Countries, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan. The three Axis powers were grouped as one in this survey, for a similar question in a previous survey indicated differences of opinion of less than 1%.



\* Less than 1%

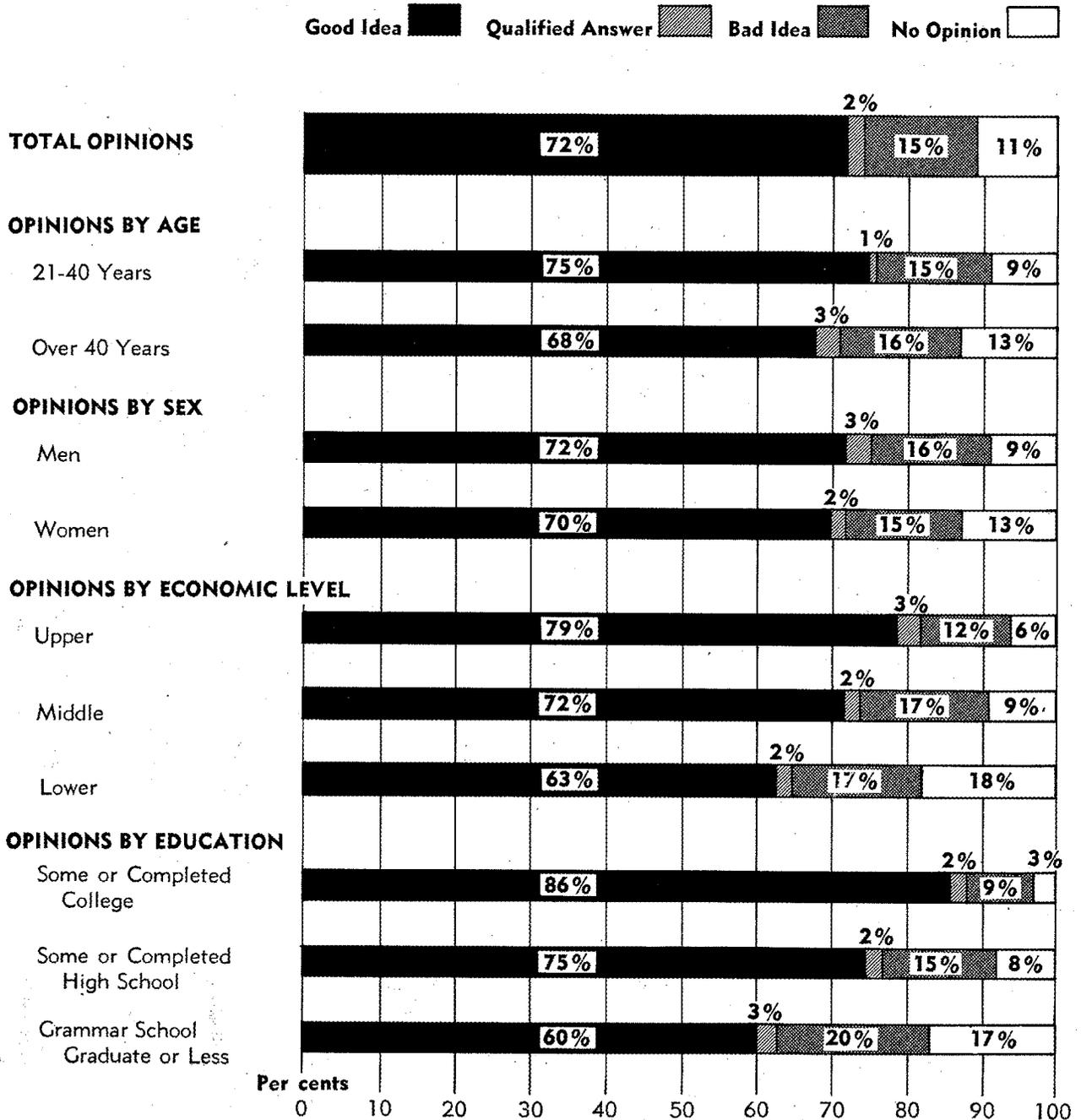
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July, 1942  
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**CHART XI**

**Should the United States Join a Post-War World Union?**

**QUESTION:** "After the war, if a union of nations that would try to solve world problems were formed, do you think it would be a good idea or a bad idea for the United States to join it?"



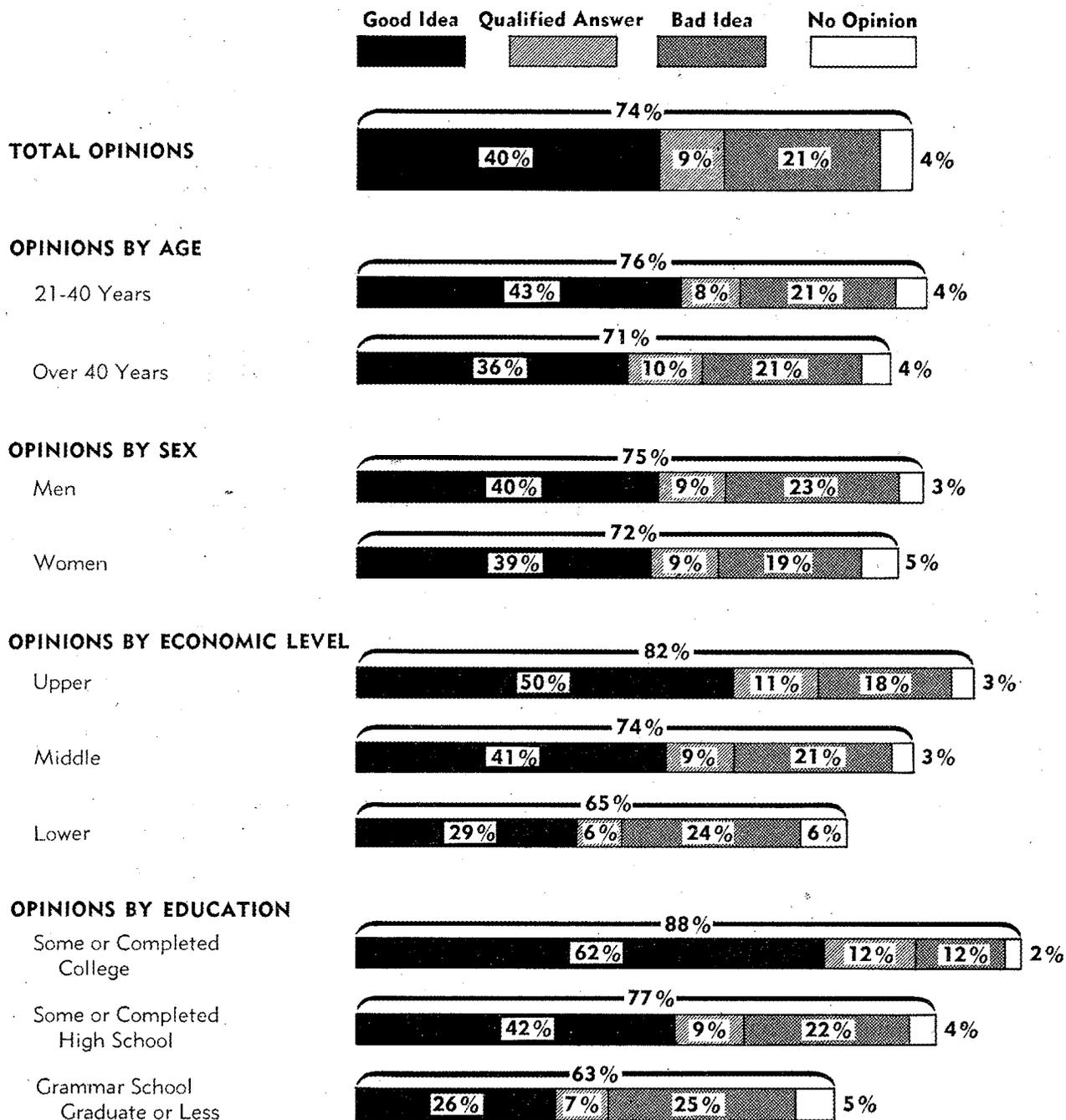
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## CHART XII

### SHOULD A POST-WAR UNION INCLUDE THE AXIS NATIONS?

Those in favor of the United States' membership in a post-war world union were asked their opinions regarding the other countries to be included.

**Question:** "Do you think Germany, Italy, and Japan should be in the union?"



## **PURPOSES OF THE NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER**

1. To establish the first non-profit, non-commercial organization to measure public opinion in the United States. Through a national staff of trained interviewers, representative cross-sections or samples of the entire population will be personally interviewed on questions of current importance.
2. To make available to legislators, government departments, academicians, and non-profit organizations a staff of experts in the science of public opinion measurement, and a highly trained nation-wide corps of interviewers.
3. To analyze and review the results of surveys made by other polling organizations.
4. To create at the University of Denver a research Center to discover, test and perfect new methods, techniques, and devices for ascertaining the status of public opinion.
5. To provide at the University of Denver a graduate department devoted to the study of the new science of public opinion measurement.

## **SPONSORS**

The National Opinion Research Center has been established by a grant from the (Marshall) Field Foundation, Inc., of New York City, in association with the University of Denver.

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# How Is a Public Opinion Survey Made?

When a survey is being made, printed questionnaires are distributed to the Center's personally-trained interviewers throughout the United States. Each interviewer is sent an assignment on the total number of interviews he is to secure, and their distribution by sex, age, economic level, etc. When the completed questionnaires are returned to the Center the answers are classified and coded for transfer to a punched card. A separate card is punched for each interview, with a punch for the answer to each question. The punched cards are then run through a special tabulating machine which can be set to count the punches, to separate the cards by punches, and

in other ways materially to assist the statisticians.

The final results—the responses to the various questions—are reported not only for the total cross-section interviewed, but also for various population sub-groups, such as men compared with women, those 21 to 40 years with those over 40, comparisons among people of various educational and economic backgrounds, farm and city dwellers, or residents of various sections of the country. The differences of opinion shown in these breakdowns may sometimes be of even greater significance than the opinions of the entire cross-section.

## Factual Information

**The Cross-Section**—The sample population upon which these studies are made is representative, within a small degree of error, of the national population over 21 years of age. That is, the sample used is based upon certain sociological characteristics of the adult population of the United States.

**Geographical Distribution**—Within each of the nine Census Divisions of the country interviews are properly apportioned among the adult population in the urban and rural areas of that division. For the urban population the interviews are apportioned to cities and towns in the correct size groups; while in the rural areas the interviews are properly apportioned among farmers and non-farmers.

**Sex**—The sample includes an equal number of men and women.

**Age**—Within each sex group half the interviews are obtained from persons between 21 and 40 years of age and half from persons over 40 years. The 1940 Census shows 48% between 21 and 40, and 52% over 40 years of age.

**Color**—Within each Census Division are obtained the number of colored respondents proportional to the colored population in that area. These interviews are properly apportioned among urban, rural-non-farm, and farm residents.

**Economic Status**—Within each sex group the interviews among the white population are assigned on the basis of four standard-of-living categories. The

colored people are not assigned on the basis of economic level since such a large proportion of them fall into the lowest income group. For purposes of tabulation the two upper groups are combined in this report and the colored are all included in the lowest economic group. Persons on relief are also included within the third group. The economic characteristics of persons in each one of these three groups can be defined roughly as follows:

**Upper** (25% of sample)—Those persons who have all the necessities of life and some of the luxuries characteristic to their community. Four per cent of the sample is made up of what is understood as the prosperous and wealthy group. The remaining 21% is made up of persons who can afford some luxuries, but must choose rather carefully between which ones to buy.

**Middle** (45% of the sample)—This group is called the great middle class in America. They have large enough incomes to maintain an adequate standard of living but can seldom afford luxuries.

**Lower** (30% of the sample)—This group includes both colored and white people from families on relief and also the lowest income non-relief families. These people have difficulty maintaining an adequate standard of living.

# PUBLICATIONS

The National Opinion Research Center, University of Denver, offers the following publications:

1. **Announcement of Purposes.** Brochure outlining the-why and wherefore of the Center, including distorted map (8x10½) showing the 48 states as they would appear if their area were proportional to their population over 21 years of age.
2. **National Survey, Report No. 1.** Opinions and attitudes of the American people towards the war in Europe—completed one week before Pearl Harbor, December, 1941. (24 pages.)
3. **National Survey, Report No. 2.** Opinions and attitudes of the American people towards important post-war problems, March, 1942. (32 pages.)
4. **Rocky Mountain Survey, Report No. 3.** Regional opinion towards post-war problems and attitudes towards foreign products of particular importance to the Mountain area, April, 1942. (24 pages with map.)
5. **Supplement to Report No. 3.** Regional opinion on Federal regulation of gas and electric companies, banks, labor unions, chain stores, and railroads. Also Federal versus State control of old age pensions, unemployment insurance, public schools, and water rights, May, 1942. (8 pages.)
6. **National Survey, Report No. 4.** Reporting opinion towards five ANTI-INFLATION MEASURES, June, 1942. (24 pages with map.)
7. **Supplement to Report No. 4.** Opinion towards Federal regulation after the war, of gas and electric companies, banks, labor unions, and railroads; and on Federal versus State control of old age pensions, unemployment insurance, and public schools, June, 1942. (8 pages.)
8. **National Survey, Report No. 5.** Attitudes towards certain POST-WAR PROBLEMS, August, 1942. (32 pages with map.)
9. **Special Graphic Supplement, Report No. 6,** on CURRENT AND POST-WAR PROBLEMS, October, 1941. (16 pages with 12 charts—8½ by 11 inches.)
10. **Distorted Maps.** (Size 8½ by 11 inches.)
  - A. Outline map of U. S. showing states as they would appear if area were proportional to number of persons 21 years of age and over.
  - B. Same as above based on total U. S. population, 1940 Census.
  - C. Same as above based on Popular Vote for President, 1940.

The large number of requests for these publications makes it necessary for the Center to cover part of the printing costs and postage by charging 10 cents for the Reports and Special Graphic Supplements, and 5 cents each for the regular Supplements and Distorted Maps.

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