

*Should We Return to*

# **RATIONING?**

*National Opinion on This and Other Aspects of the World Food Problem*



**NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER**

**UNIVERSITY OF DENVER**

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### Editorial Comment

How Is a Public Opinion Survey Made?

List of Publications

THIS REPORT IS BASED UPON THE FINDINGS OF LEADING PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING:

THE NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC OPINION (GALLUP POLL)

THE IOWA POLL (SPONSORED BY THE DES MOINES REGISTER AND TRIBUNE)

THE MINNESOTA POLL (SPONSORED BY THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR-JOURNAL AND TRIBUNE)

WALLACE-HOMESTEAD POLL (SPONSORED BY WALLACE'S FARMER AND IOWA HOMESTEAD, DES MOINES)

THE AMERICAN LEADERSHIP PANEL (RADNOR, PENNSYLVANIA)

## S U M M A R Y

At the end of a winter of widespread famine in Europe and Asia, at a time when starvation is an ugly, every day fact in many countries of the world, how do the people of the United States feel about assuming responsibility for helping to alleviate misery and want -- about sharing our supply of food with starving people abroad, friend and former foe alike?

In spite of confused thinking in some areas, in spite of voiced selfishness and bitterness, there can be no reasonable doubt that national opinion in this country, as evidenced in the findings of public opinion research is definitely ...

1. AWARE of the desperate need for food in starving nations overseas.
2. IN FAVOR of giving help in food and money to the starving.
3. IN FAVOR of a return to rationing if that step is necessary to provide food for Europe and Asia.

Here are the highlights of recent surveys touching upon various aspects of this vital problem:

- 70% of the public "would be willing to go back to food rationing in order to send food to people in other nations. (AIPO)
- 68% would be willing "to have meat and butter rationed again so that we could send more food to needy countries that fought on our side in the war." (NORC)
- 84% think we should either sell or give food to the German people. (NORC)
- 76% would either sell or give food to the Japanese. (NORC)
- 70% of the public think the government food conservation program is either about right or needs to go even further. (AIPO)
- 67% of American families (as of May 1, 1946) report cooperation in concrete food-saving measures. (AIPO)

-- Louise Merrick Van Patten  
Editor of Publications

Part I

R E T U R N T O R A T I O N I N G ?

Perhaps the most clear-cut index of public desire to help feed starving people in Europe and Asia is popular willingness to return to rationing. It is significant that every question asked by a polling organization -- whether in specific or general terms -- finds a majority of the people in the United States willing to return to rationing to help less fortunate people in other countries.

FOOD RATIONING IN GENERAL

Two American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Poll) surveys conducted in April and May '46 show a significant increase in the majority willing to go back to a food rationing program. The question was asked in rather general terms:

*"Would you be willing to go back to food rationing in order to send food to people in other nations?"*

	WILLING	NOT WILLING	UNDECIDED
APRIL '46	59%	36%	5%
MAY '46	70%	26%	4%

It is interesting that women -- the group most directly inconvenienced by rationing red tape -- consistently favor a return to rationing and other food conservation measures by higher percentages than do men. More Democrats than Republicans, too, say they would be willing to go back to food rationing.

In March '46, the Iowa and Minnesota Polls reported opinion on the following question:

*"Would you favor going back to GOVERNMENT FOOD RATIONING if we have trouble providing food for people in war-torn countries?"*

	YES	NO	UNDECIDED	
Iowa	64%	33%	3%	= 100%
Minnesota	62	33	5	

The "Yes" percentages include qualified answers amounting to 18 per cent in Iowa and 12 per cent in Minnesota. Most frequent qualification -- "If necessary." Others say: "If the right people would get it." "If only the very scarce items are rationed." "If we have enough for ourselves too." "If they are starving." "Everything except butter -- I don't think the other countries need it."

The American Leadership Panel, in a question asked by mail ballot in the fall of '45, found that even then strong majorities of its six panel groups were behind peacetime rationing "to help prevent famine abroad." Veteran and management leaders supported rationing by somewhat smaller majorities than did other groups. TALP asked:

*"Do you believe that the United States should try to help prevent famine abroad this winter?"*

(If "Yes") *"Would you support food rationing here to further this end?"*

	<u>HELP PREVENT FAMINE</u>		<u>SUPPORT RATIONING</u>	
	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
Negro leaders	100%		93%	7%
Labor	100		87	11
Agriculture	100		86	6
Press and radio	100		84	8
Veteran	96		71	8
Management	94		60	10

A somewhat greater uniformity of opinion was evidenced in April '46, when TALP asked the same six panels:

*"Would you be willing to go back to food rationing in order to send food to people in other nations?"*

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>	
Labor leaders	86%	11%	3%	= 100%
Agriculture	83	17	--	
Negro	80	20	--	
Veteran	78	20	2	
Press and radio	75	25	--	
Management	70	27	3	

Asked "Why?" those willing to return to rationing tend to explain their views either in strictly humanitarian terms or in the "somewhat more self-interested belief that a better fed Europe means a greater chance for peace, the spread of democracy, and the prevention of revolution."

Replies from leaders bring out many of the same points raised by the wider cross-section. For instance:

"We eat too much and waste more. I will eat less to live longer so that others may eat some to live today."

"Winning the war would be a hollow victory if thousands were left to die of starvation in its wake."

"Common decency and any normal feeling of sympathy towards one's fellow men should and must be sufficient grounds for giving aid to a famine ridden world."

"We cannot expect to have peace while people are hungry and dying from hunger."

"Starvation breeds revolution."

"Democracy and hungry people do not go together."

Unwillingness to return to rationing "does not always imply disinterest in Europe's food problems," according to TALP findings. Some leaders believe that it is too late for rationing; others that rationing is unnecessary.

The polls have also approached the question of sharing food without specifically mentioning rationing. A willingness to make concrete sacrifices was evidenced in replies to a Gallup question of June '45:

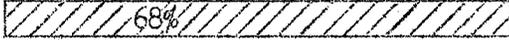
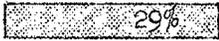
*"If necessary, would you and your family be willing to eat about one-fifth less than you are eating in order to send more food to Europe?"*

Willing 70%      Not willing 23%      Undecided 7%      = 100%

#### MEAT AND BUTTER

In March, 1946 NORC found majorities of every group studied -- adults in every walk of life, of every economic and educational background, in cities, in towns, and rural areas throughout the nation -- expressing a willingness to resume "red point" rationing to feed the hungry. The question specified former Allied countries as the recipients of the food sent:

*"Would you be willing to have meat and butter rationed again so that we could send more food to needy countries that fought on our side in the war, or would you rather not have such rationing?"*

Willing		68%
Not willing		29%
Undecided		3%

= 100%

Willing to return to meat and butter rationing are 74% of women and 61% of men, 72% of Democrats and 65% of Republicans.

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

Many of those replying to the NORC question add qualifying comments Willing such as: "... if necessary," "... if they can't get it any other way," "... if everyone gets an equal share," or "... if it's handled correctly, and needy people get it." A Blacksburg, Virginia, man says: "To a certain extent, but not so that they would rely on us instead of helping themselves."

Another group of comments seem made primarily in a spirit of generosity. For example:

"I've been there and those countries need it." (Contractor, World War II veteran, Pennsylvania)

"We don't want them to starve." (Housewife, Morristown, New Jersey)

"It would be a shame for us to have so much and for them to have none!" (Negro farmer, near Dublin, Georgia)

"We should help them out. They fought for us!" (Mother of serviceman, Van Buren, Arkansas)

Other comments reflect a still more generous attitude: "I wouldn't want to see anyone starve -- not even our enemies' children." "I'd even send food to the ones we fought."

A number of persons seem more concerned with shortages here than with hunger in Europe. The butter shortage in particular is the subject of comments. These are typical:

"I'd be willing to have rationing now so you could get something to eat." (Housewife, Newington, Connecticut)

"My people tell us they were better off with rationing than now without it." (World War II veteran, West Lawn, Pennsylvania)

"We got butter when it was rationed; now we don't get any." (Wife of mill worker, Reading, Pennsylvania)

"We're not getting any butter anyhow; probably we'd get more that way." (Cab driver, Toledo, Ohio)

"That way things could be evenly distributed to us as well as the people over there. We haven't seen butter for six months!" (Carpenter's wife, Escondido, California)

A housewife in Sinking Springs, Pennsylvania, among others, goes so far as to say: "The OPA should never have taken rationing off!" Typical of a number of comments from farmers is the sentiment from Georgia: "Suits me -- I get mine off the farm anyway!" A North Carolina nurse would favor a return to rationing for the benefit of our Allies because "It would help to bring more peace."

Not Willing A number of the minority "Not willing" to have meat and butter rationed again to make it possible to send more food abroad make comments suggesting that the need in Europe has been exaggerated:

"I can't feel it is necessary." (Farmer's wife, Virginia)

"Let those folks work like we have, and they wouldn't be needy." (Cotton farmer, Prattsville, Arkansas)

"I really don't think they need the meat and butter. Also I don't believe in rationing." (Rancher, near San Diego, California)

"I just came from over there. They got enough." (World War II veteran, Washington state)

Some believe that we have done enough already. A Virginia housewife, for instance, remarks: "We've given up enough for those countries already." A salesman's wife in Portland, Oregon, says: "We're doing enough for England now. We should help our veterans first."

Others express the view that the need in this country is too great to consider sending food overseas or make alternative suggestions. For example:

"It is time for us to eat a little, too." (Social worker, Tacoma, Washington)

"If there is any surplus, send it over, but I believe we should have what we need here. I can't get butter." (Retired railroad conductor, Pennsylvania)

"They could do it some other way." (Wife of factory worker, Toledo)

"Send the equipment over, and let them make their own food." (Garage owner, Glendale, California)

A banker's wife in Tulsa thinks: "If the right kind of appeal is put forth, the people will voluntarily ration themselves."

#### BREAD AND FLOUR?

To date, no nation-wide poll in the United States has reported results of any direct question on the rationing of bread or flour. In April, 1946, the Iowa Poll released the following question:

*"Would you favor a new program of government rationing of cereals, fats, and food oils if we have trouble providing these foods for starving people in war-torn countries?"*

	YES	YES, EXCEPT FOR BUTTER AND SUGAR	NO	UNDECIDED	
All those interviewed	57%	5%	34%	4%	= 100%
Women	61	5	29	5	
Men	53	5	38	4	

Several other poll questions indicate a willingness -- without mentioning rationing -- to curtail consumption of flour and to cooperate in other ways to save grain. In March '46, for example, a Gallup Poll question showed that 72 per cent of women, in comparison with 61 per cent of men, would be willing to use less meat and flour in order to send food across the Atlantic:

*"Would you eat less meat and use less flour in order to send more food to the people of Europe?"*

Willing 67%      Not willing 22%      Undecided 11% = 100%

Iowa Poll questions put to a state-wide cross-section in the spring of 1946 found large majorities of both men and women approving specific grain-saving regulations. The questions:

*"To save grain and food, brewers of beer will get 30 per cent less grain. Do you approve or disapprove?"*

	<u>APPROVE</u>	<u>DISAPPROVE</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>	
All those interviewed	88%	8%	4%	= 100%
Women	91	4	5	
Men	85	12	3	

*"Also to save grain and food, manufacturers of alcoholic drinks will get about 80 per cent less grain for this purpose. Do you approve or disapprove?"*

	<u>APPROVE</u>	<u>DISAPPROVE</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>	
All those interviewed	89%	8%	3%	= 100%
Women	92	4	4	
Men	87	11	2	

Only a minority of Iowans expected to react unfavorably to the new "dark" bread:

*"In getting more flour from wheat, flour will not be white but creamy. Do you suppose you will eat less bread because it is creamy instead of white?"*

Eat less 17%      No difference 79%      Undecided 4% = 100%

## WARTIME EXPRESSIONS OF OPINION

While the war was still in progress, a majority of the public in the United States said -- no matter how the question was worded -- that they would be willing to undergo, after the war, the inconvenience of rationing in order to help feed hungry people in other countries. Women consistently favored the idea by higher percentages than did men.

In December, 1943, the American Institute of Public Opinion asked a question regarding the continuance of rationing for "a year or two" after the war. The sacrifices involved in such a program are distinctly pointed out:

*"For a year or two after the war, should people in the United States continue to put up with shortages of butter, sugar, meat, and other rationed food products in order to give food to people who need it in Europe?"*

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>	
All those interviewed	71%	21%	8%	= 100%
Women	75	16	9	
Men	67	26	7	

The "Yes" answers were qualified by 4 per cent of the public as a whole, 4 per cent of the women, and 5 per cent of the men. Qualifications, according to Gallup were of two types -- "those willing to put up with shortages only for a period of less than one year, and those who felt that rationing should be continued to a limited degree only."

In the spring of 1945, before V-E Day, the AIPO repeated the same question and found that, to help feed needy Europeans, 65 per cent of the public would be willing to continue rationing for one year, and that 57 per cent would continue rationing for two years. Rationing for one year was acceptable to 69 per cent of women and 61 per cent of men; for two years to 60 per cent of women and 53 per cent of men.

A post V-E Day question, released in mid-June '45, mentioned no specific period of time during which rationing should be continued. Gallup asked:

*"Would you be willing to continue to put up with present shortages of butter, sugar, meat, and other rationed food products in order to give food to people who need it in Europe?"*

Willing 85%      Not willing 12%      Undecided 3%      = 100%

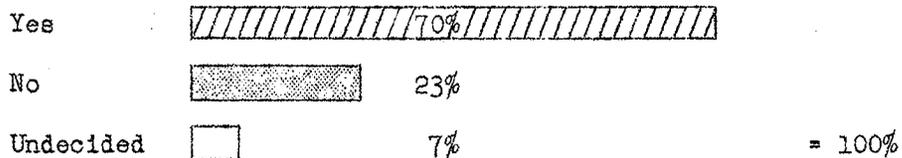
Part II

S H O U L D W E S H A R E ?

IS THERE A GENUINE NEED?

Opinion in the United States Opinion research findings indicate that many people in this country have been aware of the seriousness of the international food situation and have for some time past foreseen the present crisis. As long ago as June, 1945, the Gallup Poll reported:

"Do you think many people in Europe will starve this year unless we send them food?"



That leaders of important economic and special interest groups in this country are keenly aware of the reality of hunger abroad is suggested by the TAIIP question of November '45 already cited. In response to the question: "Do you believe the United States should try to help prevent famine abroad this winter?" "YES" answers were recorded as follows:

Agricultural leaders	100%	Negro leaders	100%
Labor	100	Press and radio	100
Management	94	Veterans	96

In April '46, a cross-section of Iowans interviewed by the Iowa Poll believed that starvation abroad constituted a long-term problem:

"How long do you think it will be necessary to send food to hungry people in other countries -- three months, six months, or longer?"

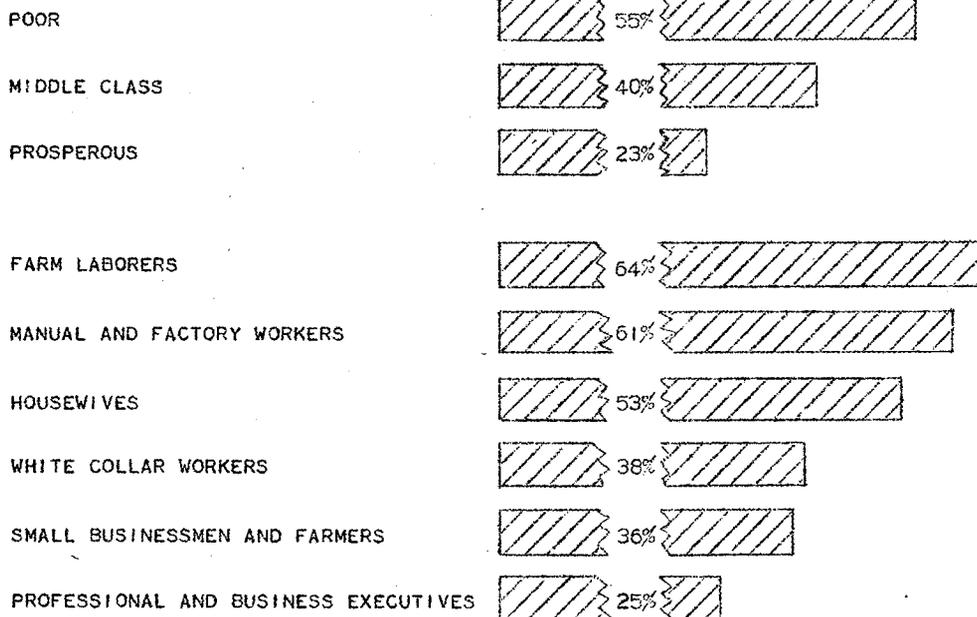
3 months	3%
6 months	29
Longer	57
Not necessary	4
Undecided	<u>7</u>
	100%

Some slight indication of the reality of the food shortage In Britain overseas is suggested by results of several questions asked by the British Institute of Public Opinion. By and large, Britain is probably better off than most other countries in Europe, yet:

"Do you feel that you are getting enough food to enable you to work efficiently?" (September '45)

No 50%      Yes 47%      Undecided 3%      = 100%

Varying widely from group to group is the percentage feeling that they are NOT GETTING ENOUGH FOOD TO WORK EFFICIENTLY:



Another post V-J Day question found all groups in Great Britain in substantial agreement with this consensus:

"On the whole, do you think that shortages are greater or less now than they were a year ago?" (October '45)

Greater 55%    The same 16%    Less 24%    Undecided 5%      = 100%

In November '42, it may be noted, opinion varied significantly from group to group on the following question:

*"If it would save shipping for the war effort, could you do with a smaller amount of food and still be able to work properly?"*

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>	
All those interviewed	45%	46%	9%	= 100%
Wealthy and prosperous	66	26	8	
Middle class	50	42	8	
Poor	42	49	9	
Transport, heavy industry, and factory workers	36	54	10	

In France In February '46, the French Institute of Public Opinion found food shortages the major problem for a majority of French families. The question:

*"What is the most important problem that you and your family have to face today?"*

Food supply	53%
Clothing	18
Money problems	16
Heating, fuel	9
Housing	4
Agricultural needs	2
Getting business going again	1
Other and undecided	<u>7</u>
	110%

Because some of those interviewed mentioned several problems, the percentages total to more than 100.

MOBILIZING CONSERVATION

Almost all the people in the United States have heard or read of the national food conservation program, and an increasing number say they are actually cooperating actively -- according to a series of surveys made in the spring of 1946 by the American Institute of Public Opinion:

- In Mid-March 92% of the public told Gallup interviewers that they had "heard or read about the plan to send food to other nations during the next four months."
- By May 1 96% said they were familiar with the program, and 72% had heard or read about President Truman's speech asking for cooperation to meet the food shortage abroad.

Asked, "Will you tell me what particular foods the government wants to save?" a majority of people correctly named wheat ... grain ... bread or fats and oils.

A third question in the Gallup series read:

*"Is your family doing anything now to save on these things?"*

	<u>YES, SAVING</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DON'T KNOW</u>	
March 20, 1946	56%	40%	4%	= 100%
April 3	53	42	5	
April 20	60	36	4	
May 1	67	28	5	

The May 1 Gallup survey shows a clear correlation between family income and participation in the food conservation program. Yet even among families in the lower income brackets, a majority are endeavoring to save food:

<u>WEEKLY FAMILY INCOME</u>	<u>Yes, Saving</u>
... less than \$30	61%
... between \$30 and \$60	68
... \$60 or over	72

Those who said their families are participating in the food saving program were asked to tell in what way. These are the replies in the order of frequency with which they were mentioned:

1. Cutting down on food, eating less; doing without things.
2. Making it a point to use left-overs at another meal.
3. Saving fats and drippings.
4. Eating more of foods not especially scarce.
5. Growing own vegetables.
6. Eating rye or whole wheat bread instead of white.

Another Gallup question, asked on the May 1 survey, showed that 70 per cent of the public think the government is either doing about right or should do more in the campaign to send food abroad. The question:

*"Do you think the government has gone too far or not far enough in taking steps to get food here to send abroad?"*

Too far	21%
About right	44
Not far enough	26
Undecided	9
	100%

It is interesting that Gallup finds almost half of those interviewed of the opinion that their health would be improved by a lighter diet:

*"Do you think your health would be better or worse if you ate less?"*

Better 44%      Same 25%      Worse 27%      Undecided 4%      = 100%

State-wide poli questions found substantial majorities in both Iowa and Minnesota backing the Truman program. Both polls asked:

*"February 7th, President Truman took action to provide more food for people facing starvation in other countries. In general, do you feel that President Truman did the right thing?"*

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>	
Iowa	82%	15%	3%	= 100%
Minnesota	80	13	7	

Part III

F O O D F O R A L L I E S A N D A X I S

An examination of opinion regarding certain specialized aspects of the food and relief problem reveals that:

1. A clear majority of all groups favor helping the people of the countries liberated from Axis occupation.
2. While many people have been unfamiliar with UNRRA and its operations, the better informed the individual, the more likely he is to favor United States financial contributions to the organization.
3. While only a minority would deny food entirely to the former Axis peoples, there is a strong feeling that food should be sold or exchanged rather than given free to the Germans and Japanese.

FOOD FOR THE LIBERATED COUNTRIES?

Majorities of all population groups studied favor helping liberated Europe to achieve "freedom from want," according to an NORC question asked in mid-October, 1945. Even among persons with a limited educational background, more than 3 out of 4 answer "Yes" to the following question:

*"Do you think the United States should continue to give relief to the people in European countries that were occupied by the enemy -- such as France and Greece?"*

	YES	NO	UNDECIDED	
All those interviewed	82%	14%	4%	= 100%
Attended college	90	8	2	
Attended high school	85	12	3	
Attended grade school	76	18	6	

In January '46, Wallaces' Farmer of Des Moines reported state farm opinion on the question:

*"Reports from Europe indicate that British people will get less to eat this winter than during war time, that Norway, Holland, Denmark, France, Belgium will get less to eat than under German occupation. It is proposed that Congress appropriate one billion dollars to send food to these countries, without cost to them, to prevent malnutrition and starvation until next harvest. Check the statement below that comes nearest to your opinion.*

*"Let's help them out. We'll have extra food and they are short on both food and cash." 22%*

*"We should ship more food abroad, but I think European governments should pay for at least half of it." 41*

*"I'm against it. We've done enough for Europe. If they want food now, let them buy it. No-hand-outs." 23*

Undecided 14

100%

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

Many of those interviewed by NORC make comments amplifying or qualifying their opinions regarding relief for the liberated countries of Europe, such as France and Greece. Among those in favor of helping these countries, perhaps the commonest reaction was that such help should be for a limited time only. A number suggest positively "... for a year," "... until the next harvest," or negatively "... not indefinitely," "... not forever." Many add to the time element the thought that help should be constructive, designed to put the liberated countries back on their feet and headed toward self-sufficiency. Here are some representative comments:

"We should help them for one year, until they can get their crops in -- after that, definitely NO!" (Librarian, New Orleans)

"Yes, but not indefinitely. Help them get on their feet. Be careful of the kind of help -- not pauperizing help, but help them to help themselves." (Minister's wife, Clarion, Iowa)

"Help them until they can get a little start, but I don't believe in carrying that load too long." (Farmer, near Broken Arrow, Oklahoma)

"The quicker we can get them on their feet, the quicker they'll be self-supporting and be able to trade with us." (Farmer, near Hanna City, Illinois)

"Help these countries until they can pick up their own load; help them especially to build up the children to gain a stronger generation to come." (Insurance man, Blacksburg, Virginia)

Some respondents suggest what may have seemed obvious to others -- that help should be given only if the need is genuine and acute ... or that relief be limited to non-luxury items, food, clothing and medical supplies. An occasional comment stresses the idea of repayment: "Send relief only if they will repay." "We should give them relief in the form of loans -- but not as a direct gift."

A number suggest that help should be given the liberated countries only if relief measures do not inconvenience people in this country: "Give them a certain amount. We shouldn't deny ourselves, though." "... but not to the extent of keeping American people short of goods to do it." "... if we can spare it without hurting our people." "Some relief, but not so much we will suffer here."

Others stress the idea that England and Russia should share the responsibility for relief. A railroad brakeman in Garrett, Indiana, says: "Yes --- if the other Allied powers help, too. It's their responsibility as much as ours." According to a Milwaukee laboratory technician, "If they're not able to help themselves, we should send food, but England and Russia should help, too." Still others make suggestions regarding the administration of relief, for example: "Let the United States, not the other countries, do the handling of relief and have charge of the distribution." "Everything should be handled by the military, not by relief organizations."

A number of those interviewed express the belief that there can be no choice about helping starving people. These reactions are typical:

"It's the only thing we can do -- otherwise they'll starve to death." (Apartment house superintendent, Brooklyn)

"I don't see how we are going to go on feeding and clothing the whole world, but I don't like to see people starve." (Mechanic's wife, Louisiana)

"I have a nephew serving in France who says that the children are suffering terribly. Why shouldn't we help?" (Railroad conductor, Indiana)

An occasional comment suggests the moral obligation which some feel is involved. Others emphasize still different aspects of the problem:

"The United States is the greatest country in the world. We're morally obligated to help." (Public utilities employee, Brooklyn)

"We have a very real responsibility, if we are true Christians at heart. We have so much we can give." (USO director, Washington, D. C.)

"We should help as long as we can. Hunger breeds trouble." (Cattle farmer, near Martha, West Virginia)

"If we don't help, there will be another war in 25 years." (Salesman, Queens, New York)

"The people of those countries couldn't help themselves and couldn't prevent the war's being forced on them." (Armature winder, Birmingham)

No Further Relief The minority opposed to sending further relief to the liberated countries includes a number of people who feel, as does a trained nurse in Montgomery, Alabama, that "those countries should be able to take care of their own by now." A Virginia dairy farmer is one of several to express this sentiment: "I think the United States has done enough already. It will take 200 years to get what we've spent paid off." Still another frequently mentioned argument is that Russia, Britain, and other nations should take a larger part in the relief work. A New Orleans shipyard worker, for example, says: "We shouldn't be suckers. We should give no more proportionately than Russia and Britain are giving."

The idea expressed most often, however, is the feeling that the need in the United States is greater than that abroad --- that food should go first to people in this country. Here are some of the comments on this point:

"Don't send food abroad until our own country is in good shape. Charity begins at home." (Shoe repairman, Chicago)

"Europe will get by. We should take care of our people right here at home." (Machinist's wife, Wichita)

"We don't feed all our hungry folks here." (Negro maid, Georgia)

"We've given so much that we don't have near what we need ourselves." (Retired farmer, Bixby, Oklahoma)

"It's too much of a burden on our people. We are getting tired of giving all the time." (Cateress, Pontiac, Michigan)

MONEY FOR UNRRA?

Need of more educational publicity for UNRRA (The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) was suggested by answers to another question asked by NORC in October '45.

Among persons with a college background who were acquainted with UNRRA, United States financial help to the organization was approved by a ratio of 9-to-1. Among the general public and those with no more than a high school education, the ratio of approval approximated 6-to-1.

NORC asked:

*"Have you heard or read anything about the activities of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration -- usually called UNRRA?"*

*(If "Yes") "UNRRA is now asking the United States and other countries to contribute more money, so it can meet the most serious needs for relief this winter. Would you approve or disapprove of the United States' making such a contribution, as its share in these relief activities?"*

	APPROVE	DISAPPROVE	HAVEN'T HEARD OR DON'T KNOW	
All those interviewed	34%	5%	61%	= 100%
Attended college	63	7	30	
Attended high school	35	6	59	
Eighth grade or less	19	3	78	

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

Naturally, obvious parallels exist between the ideas expressed regarding help to the liberated countries and regarding help to Approve UNRRA. People favor both or oppose both for much the same reasons, the comments show. The following three comments from those approving United States help to UNRRA, for example, echo similar comments from persons favoring continued help to the liberated countries:

"Give to UNRRA, but only to the extent that the bare essentials for people's immediate needs be made available." (Army officer, Montgomery, Alabama)

"Help if it is necessary -- so many starving Europeans really need help, but don't be gullible enough to give them everything they ask for." (Radio man, New Orleans)

"Help to a certain extent. We have a lot of relief right here. There are people in our own country that are in need, but we should help others, too." (Laboratory technician, Indiana)

Others reply "Approve," but express concern as to the money required: "We have to do it, but I'll bet our share'll be three-fourths of all of it. I don't know where all this money for this war and all this other is coming from." "... so long as the U.S. didn't have to pay out the major proportion. After all, we have suffered a financial set-back during the war, and we must get back on our financial feet." A Chicago insurance salesman thinks: "We should do our part, but couldn't we give them goods or materials instead of money -- get rid of things we have too much of here?"

A different viewpoint is presented by a Cleveland attorney: "The government should probably pay it all so that, through taxation, everyone shall have an equal share in this burden. If we can pay huge bills for war, we can certainly pay for peace!"

Still others qualify their approval somewhat with direct or implied criticisms of UNRRA administration:

"It's not handled properly. There are rumors that food is side-tracked and never gets there." (Credit man, Queens, New York)

"... but UNRRA should be reorganized." (Turnkey, county jail, New York)

"... but it should be well investigated." (Housewife, Cape Elizabeth, Maine)

"... if they clean the relief organizations up and the graft out of it." (Businessman, Goshen, Indiana)

"UNRRA has been abused and its material misused, but this has been corrected now." (Jeweler, Lorain, Ohio)

As regarding the more general issue of help for the liberated countries, a number of respondents emphasize their feeling that the United States should share with other countries the responsibility of financing UNRRA. A New York City physician, for instance, says: "If others ante-up we should help; otherwise not." A Patterson, New Jersey, Photographer puts it: "... but Allied nations should all contribute a proportionate amount." Another comment indicating lack of clear information of the actual UNRRA set-up comes from a New Orleans shipyard supervisor: "... only in proportion with Britain and Russia, only as a loan, and only on the insistence of our economists. If there is too much want in Europe, they may turn communistic -- but the more you give, the more people expect."

A substantial group of comments, however, indicate -- on humanitarian grounds -- clear-cut approval of United States support of UNRRA. These comments are representative:

"Give them double what they ask for!" (Salesman, Queens, New York)

"I approve heartily. These people are in dire circumstances through no fault of their own." (Radio announcer, Montgomery, Alabama)

"Innocent folks must not die of want. Their needs are great." (Civil service employee, Cleveland Heights, Ohio)

"We haven't suffered compared to people in other countries -- none of us are starving." (Health officer, Hackensack, New Jersey)

"Why help fight and then leave them to starve?" (Machine operator, Philadelphia)

Others interviewed see the relationship between economic security and peace as the most cogent reason for helping UNRRA help needy countries:

"The quicker relief is given and the people can begin to build back, the quicker a program of peace and prosperity for all can be worked out." (Business executive, Virginia)

"If you let the people starve, the war would be for nothing." (Machinist, Cleveland)

"We should help those in need so as to avoid another war. Otherwise Europe will become the seed-bed of another war because people are so miserable physically." (Housewife, Clarion, Iowa)

The minority who disapprove of United States support of UNRRA Disapprove again give much the same reasons as do those against help for the liberated countries in general. A number of the comments volunteered indicate ignorance of the fact that many other countries besides the United States are behind UNRRA -- financially and otherwise. Repeating familiar arguments are these respondents:

"We've already done enough. People will never stand on their own feet if you help them too much." (Welder, Lorain, Ohio).

"We don't have the money to do it. The big shots in Washington promise, but it's the little man who pays for it. Why not let those countries establish their own PWA or something similar?" (Druggist, Virginia)

"We're giving enough now. We shouldn't have to give any more. We have many unfortunates of our own." (Farmer, near Bixby, Oklahoma)

"We should take care of our own first. The Europeans asked for war, leave them suffer. Our soldiers are coming back and we'll have enough to take care of." (Florist, Chicago)

"Those foreigners are always after money from us." (Punch press operator, Detroit)

"UNRRA was drawn up by Russia and England for their own advantage. We get nothing in return." (Fire department lieutenant, Baltimore)

Others criticize sharply the administration of UNRRA. A Pontiac, Michigan, machinist, for example, answers: "Give food and supply, but no money. There's too much politics and graft." And a bus driver in Scranton, Pennsylvania, says: "No -- not when I read in this morning's paper that here we are sending food over and some of the UNRRA agents are selling it."

#### FOOD FOR GERMANY AND JAPAN?

Various question-wordings used by the several polls have shown clear majorities in favor of sending food to starving people abroad. Some questions mentioned liberated countries or our former allies specifically; others spoke of starving or needy people without more definite identification.

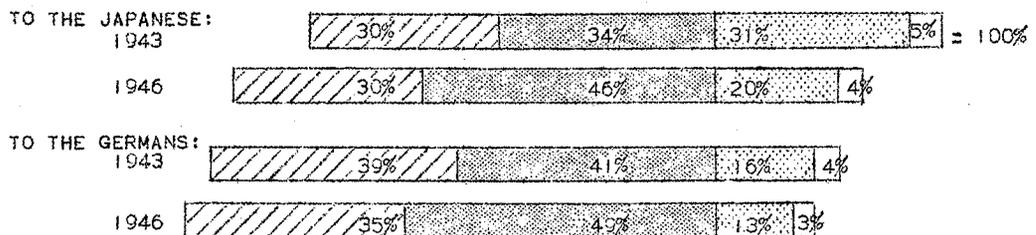
Even a question about sending food to the hungry in Germany and Japan finds only a minority who would withhold food from our former enemies.

In January '43, and again in March '46, NORC asked questions to ascertain public opinion on sending food to the Axis peoples. At the height of the conflict, public opinion was definitely divided on the question of whether -- after the war -- food should be given free, sold to, or withheld entirely from The Germans and Japanese.

Today the largest group in the population clearly favors sending food to both countries IN EXCHANGE FOR MONEY OR GOODS.

Americans look more leniently on the Germans than on the Japanese: more people would give or sell food to Germany and fewer would send none. Particularly noticeable is the decline in the percentage who would send no food at all to the Japanese. After V-J Day the wording of the question was changed slightly:

*"If the people in Germany (Japan) are starving right after the war (at the present time), do you think the United States should sell them only what food they can pay for, or send them food as a gift if they can't pay, or not send them any food at all?"*



On both surveys, persons in the more privileged educational, economic, and occupational groups reply "Give" oftener and "None" less often than do those less privileged.

In March, 1946, the Iowa and Minnesota Polls found the public somewhat divided on the basic issue of food priorities. Cross-sections in both states were asked:

*"In providing food for the hungry in other countries which do you think the United States should do: treat all starving people alike whether friends or enemies; or take care of our friends and allies first?"*

	IOWA	MINNESOTA
Friends and allies first	55%	49%
Treat all alike	42	48
Undecided	3	3
	100%	100%

#### IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Among those who would send food to the Axis peoples as a gift, a number Gift volunteer comments which explain their opinion on the issue as posed by NORC. "Send food whether they can pay for it or not," and "You can't let anybody starve," are common reactions. These comments are representative:

"We shouldn't let anyone go hungry." (Mechanic, Nashville, Tennessee)

"Give them whatever they need. I don't believe in making women and children suffer." (Housewife, Walton, Indiana)

"Christianity demands that we keep even our enemies from starving." (Postal clerk, Pennsylvania)

"The poor people aren't to blame -- they do what they're told." (Wife of railroad inspector, Lorain, Ohio)

"There would be a revolution if we didn't." (Laborer's wife, Chicago)

Sell Comments added to "Sell" answers in particular frequently mix pity with censure in a peculiar fashion. A Fredericksburg, Virginia, housewife, for instance, is one of several to remark: "It's not the Christian way but they treated our boys so terribly." Another sentiment frequently expressed is that of a retired school teacher in Manning, South Carolina: "I believe they should learn to help themselves; besides I don't believe the people are actually starving in either country." Others say:

"They stole from every other country -- why feed them free?" (Garage owner, Glendale, California)

"Feed them on a subsistence basis; make them pay no matter how long it takes." (Government information specialist, Mt. Rainier, Maryland)

"Both of these countries caused all the trouble we had, and you can't be too soft with them." (Carpenter, South Carolina)

"Let them pay so they will realize what it means to have war." (Wife of automobile salesman, Portland, Oregon)

"Sell -- if given a chance they can produce enough to pay for it." (Mortician, Chicago)

"Each country must have some things we can use or need -- raw materials, for example -- to give us in exchange for food." (Serviceman's wife, Reading, Pennsylvania)

"It's better for their morale to know they are paying or exchanging something of value for the food." (Automobile dealer, Pennsylvania)

None Some of the minority replying "None" indicate by their comments a strong feeling of bitterness against the Axis peoples. An Amherst, Ohio, truck driver, for example, adds: "They done us dirty -- why should we feed them?" And a farmer in the same neighborhood suggests: "Why build them up to fight us again?" A New Jersey businessman comments: "This may sound brutal, but they caused all this misery, now let them pay for it." Other sentiments are: "These countries have money salted away; they also have reserves of food stolen from other countries." "They were against us -- let them starve." "They cost us enough now -- they can root, hog, or die."

APR 9 - 1946

**There Must Be an Answer**

We were five months late in getting at the job of surveying the food needs of the world, Herbert Hoover tells us, and as yet there is no world-wide organization of food supplies to ward off unprecedented famine. The appalling consequence is that 170,000,000 people, from the English Channel to the Russian border, are critically short of food. "Never have there been so many hungry at one time in the history of the world," cries former Mayor La Guardia, new Director of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Drastic action must be taken at once, he says, to bring larger quantities of American wheat to starving peoples abroad.

What will that drastic action be? No effective program has been organized here, any more than on the world front. The thirty-nine steps advanced by the President's famine committee are proving utterly inadequate to meet the required 40 per cent consumers' saving of wheat, 20 per cent of fats. Last week we printed a letter from an obviously conscientious citizen asking: "Just what is the when, where and how of conserving food for the benefit of the starving?" The educational program, which alone could have made the voluntary program effective, is not yet organized to answer him.

American exports fell far short of the goal of 3,000,000 tons of wheat and flour in the first quarter of 1946. March shipments, which should have reflected voluntary savings, were well under 900,000, when 1,000,000 tons were the goal. Meanwhile, stocks on hand and en route to maintain a daily government ration of 1,000 to 1,250 calories will be exhausted in some European countries by the end of April, in most by the end of May. The minimum for health is 2,300 calories, Mr. Hoover says; the masses in the cities depend upon the government ration for life itself.

One still sees headlines here about Official Fears of Rationing. Yet a recent poll by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Denver shows 68 per cent of Americans interviewed willing "to have meat and butter rationed again" to send more food to former Allies. The results would hardly have been different had bread or flour been named. Seventy-four per cent of women, the group most inconvenienced by rationing, were in favor of rationing in this cause. Rationing may not be the answer—Mr. Hoover thinks that it is not. But the answer lies somewhere in a more concrete program painted by whatever strictures will be effective to get action from the confused butcher and baker, from the restaurant owner and the baffled housewife—and most of all from those who have wheat to sell. The general public, even without an educational program, grows daily more impatient with official fears, with official failure to organize a program drastic enough to do the job.

**Editorial Comment**

OAKLAND, CAL., POST ENQUIRER

APR 10 1946

**America Signifies  
Its Readiness to Be  
A Good Samaritan**

No matter how much the American citizen shouts about scarcities, he still seems to be a pretty good fellow at heart.

Witness a recent survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, of the University of Denver.

This survey reveals that 68 per cent of the people of the United States would be willing to have meat and butter rationed again so that we could send more food to needy countries that fought on our side in the war.

\* \* \*

One veteran added: "I've been there and they need it." And one kindly soul comments: "I wouldn't want to see anyone starve—not even our enemies' children. I'd even send food to the ones we fought."

Others see in rationing a way out of the present uneven distribution and would welcome rationing as "better for us as well as for Europe."

More than a third of the American people, according to the survey, believe that we should send food to Germany as a gift if she cannot pay. A small minority—13 per cent—think we should send no food to Germany under any conditions. The proportions are approximately the same in regard to Japan. About half the people think that we should sell or exchange food to relieve starvation in the Axis nations.

\* \* \*

All of which seems to indicate that Mr. Hoover was right when he stated that he thought the American people would be willing to help save the world from starvation and they didn't need the shackles of rationing to be Good Samaritans.

Our way of life isn't one to develop hate and breed war. By sharing a little of that which we can easily spare we may contribute in no small degree to the realization of a world peace that will endure.

APR 28 1946

## The Child at Your Back Door

If a hungry child came to your back door begging for a slice of bread, you'd not only give the bread, but you'd probably want to know why he had not been fed and what his parents or the authorities were doing about it.

Suppose that you went next door and discovered there was a hungry child in your neighbor's kitchen, too.

Suppose that overnight a hungry child appeared at the back door of every home in America.

What would you do about the child at your door?

You couldn't call the authorities and say, "Look here, there's a hungry child at my door. I have fed him, but where shall I send him? Surely there is some agency that can care for him."

Of course not. You'd take the child in, and so would millions of other Americans. We all would realize that some kind of unusual crisis was at hand. We would share our own meals with the child. If there happened to be a shortage of food, as there was during the war, we'd share our rations and eat less ourselves.

There IS a child or a mother or a father at our back door today.

Does it really matter that they are not at your back door in the flesh? There are 150,000,000 of them—more than there are people in this country—and they are at the back door of America.

There is also a world food shortage.

That means that in order for the people at the back door of America to be fed, we must eat less. It's as simple as the illustration of the child in your own kitchen.

We have used the term "back door" to bring the illustration closer to home, but the world's starving are not beggars. Compare them instead to neighbors whose home

### Women Favor Return to Rationing

has been burned to the ground and who are in an emergency.

There are encouraging signs that most Americans now realize the seriousness of the problem.

The Gallup poll shows that 59 per cent of us would be willing to return to food rationing, if necessary, to help feed the millions of hungry in Europe and Asia. The National Opinion Research Center at the University of Denver sets the figure at 68 per cent. Both surveys find women, who are most inconvenienced by rationing, are more in favor of rationing than men. Yet, the Washington Post, the other day, took a poll and found that only 17 per cent of the Capital's families were eating less bread and only about 10 per cent were saving fat. Are we doing any better in Chicago? The only reason our government does not re-inaugurate food rationing apparently lies in the fact that it would require four to six months to be put into effect.

The fact that we do not have rationing does not mean that we are not in a desperate period which should have rationing. It doesn't help the present situation but it should be remembered that a full year ago Judge Samuel I. Rosenman, in a comprehensive 236-page report to President Truman predicted that rationing would have to be continued here after the war if Europe was to be fed.

The past few months in which we have enjoyed unrationed meals cannot be recovered. The situation now is an emergency that can be met only by voluntary sacrifice.

The difficulty with "voluntary" or "self" rationing is apparent to all of us. Everyone is aware of the thoughtlessness, negligence and carelessness that afflict the average person when it comes to day-in-and-day-out self-denial.

## More Editorial Comment

NASHUA, N. H., TELEGRAPH

APR 9 - 1946

### FOOD PROGRAM

The generally cheerful acceptance of the program of food conservation in order that America might help feed the starving peoples of Europe and Asia indicates an awareness of the gravity of the situation which is borne out even more clearly in the results of poll conducted by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Denver.

According to a late survey by the Center, 68 per cent of the civilian adults of this nation would be willing "to have meat and butter rationed again so that we could send more food to needy countries that fought on our side in the war." Twenty-nine percent were against any return of rationing while three per cent were undecided.

An interesting side-light in the survey is that the highest per centage in favor of the proposal—74 per cent—came from women, the group most inconvenienced by rationing.

The results of this poll indicate clearly the healthy awakening of the American people to the fact that continued peace is dependent on security for the entire world and not for just a small segment. And "security" here means subsistence and not a life of luxury.

There can be no doubt that millions of people all over the world are on the verge of starvation. A dispatch from China yesterday, for instance, revealed that peasants in that war-shattered country are reduced to eating bark from trees and even clay in their desperate attempts to stay alive. A hint of the terrible-ness of the food shortage is found in the statement that even children are committing suicide rather than endure the agonies of slow starvation.

Impartial newsmen with no axe to gride are unanimous in saying that all Europe is in dire straits with thousands dying daily from lack of food.

These are exactly the conditions under which demagoguery can get in its most effective work. A hungry man is willing to listen to any wild-eyed fanatic or schemer who promises to give him food. If the program also calls for violence, that's all right, too.

Certainly, the plan of sending food abroad is going to entail sacrifices on our part. We may not be able to live as lavishly as we should like and in some cases the hardships are even going to seem relatively severe.

As bad as these privations, are and undoubtedly will be, however, they'll be a lot easier than would be the sacrifices entailed in trying to bring peace again to a world in which the flames of strife have been rekindled.

# How Is a Public Opinion Survey Made?

The subjects for the Center's surveys are determined in consultation with its Board of Trustees and other experts. Members of the Center's staff collaborate in drawing up a questionnaire. The individual questions are carefully "pre-tested," that is, tried out on various types of respondents in order to eliminate, insofar as possible, the chance of more than one interpretation and to produce wordings universally understandable and capable of measuring all shades of opinion relative to a specific attitudinal area. "Specifications," or sets of directions for interviewers, are also compiled to insure uniform interviewing procedure. Each member of the Center's personally-trained interviewing staff is sent a set of questionnaires and assigned a quota of interviews he is to secure, together with their distribution by sex, age, economic level, etc.

When the completed questionnaires are returned to the Center the answers are classified and given code numbers for transfer to a punched card. A separate card is punched for each questionnaire, 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 answers, to separate the cards into categories, and in other ways materially to assist the statisticians.

The final percentaged results—the responses to the various questions—are reported not only for the total cross-section interviewed, but also for comparisons between various population sub-groups, such as men and women, young people and older people, groups of people with varying educational and economic backgrounds, farm and

city dwellers, and residents of various sections of the country. The differences of opinion shown in these breakdowns are often of even greater significance than the opinions of the entire cross-section.

The results of the Center's surveys are published in news releases and reports which are utilized by educators, scientists, government officials, publishers and broadcasters, businessmen, and others especially interested in keeping up-to-date on public opinion trends.

Comparisons of NORC's results with those of other opinion-finding organizations are frequently published in **OPINION NEWS**—the Center's fortnightly digest of outstanding polls and surveys.

## Factual Information

**The Cross-Section** The population samples upon which NORC surveys are made are representative, within a small degree of error, of the national population 21 years of age and over. That is, the samples used are stratified according to 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 civilian population in the metropolitan districts, towns, and rural areas of that division. For the urban population the interviews are apportioned to metropolitan districts, and towns in various size groups, while in the rural areas the interviews are properly apportioned among farmers and non-farmers.

**Size of Cross-Section** As a result of statistical research, it is now known that a poll will not be accurate, no matter how large a sample is taken (short of a total census of the entire population), if the cross-section is not an **accurate miniature** of the whole population.

According to a statistical table copyrighted by the President and Fellows of Harvard College, the number of interviews in a national survey necessary to be within 3 per cent correct on questions that divide evenly is 2,500. This number is sufficient 997 times in 1,000. The Harvard table adds that HALF this sample, or 1,250 interviews, would be within 3 per cent correct 962 times in 1,000. NORC surveys used in this report are based on over 2,500 interviews.\*

**Age and Sex** Before the war, the adult population for the entire country could be said to be split approximately equally between persons 40 years of age and over and those between 21 and 39 years. Since Pearl Harbor the ever-growing military personnel have been instructed not to voice opinions, so they have been excluded from the

sample. This affects the age and sex distributions rather radically. After making adjustments for this factor, the resulting sex split is 46 per cent men and 54 per cent women. On the age distribution, 53 per cent are 40 and over, with the remainder between 21 and 39.

**Race** Within each Census Division are obtained a number of Negro respondents proportional to the Negro population in that area. These interviews are properly apportioned among the 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. For purposes of tabulation the two upper groups are combined in this report. The economic characteristics of persons in each one of these three groups can be defined roughly as follows:

**Upper** (16 per cent of the sample)—Those persons who have all the necessities of life and some of the luxuries characteristic to their community. Two per cent of the sample is made up of what is understood as the prosperous and wealthy group. The remaining 14 per cent is made up of persons who can afford some luxuries, but must choose rather carefully which ones to buy.

**Middle** (52 per cent of the sample)—This group is called the great middle class of America. They have incomes large enough to maintain an adequate standard of living but can seldom afford luxuries.

**Lower** (32 per cent of the sample)—This group has difficulty in maintaining an adequate standard of living. Included are the lowest income non-relief families and also those receiving government aid.

\* With the exception of a few questions based on half this number. It is understood that Gallup and Fortune surveys are based on cross-sections slightly larger than NORC's, while the Iowa Poll, the Minnesota Poll, and the Wallace's Farmer poll samples are somewhat smaller.

## PUBLICATIONS

Publications of the National Opinion Research Center include:

### REPORTS

- |     |   |                  |        |
|-----|---|------------------|--------|
| 9.  | <u>The Reconversion Period from War to Peace.</u>   | June, 1943       | \$ .15 |
| 22. | <u>Do Negroes Have Equal Economic Opportunities?</u>  | April, 1944*     | .10    |
| 23. | <u>Compulsory Military Training in Peacetime?</u>   | December, 1944*  | .15    |
| 24. | <u>Germany and the Post-War World.</u>  | January, 1945    | .50    |
| 25. | <u>Public Opinion on World Organization up to the San Francisco Conference.</u>                             | April, 1945*     | .25    |
| 26. | <u>Public Opinion on Control of Prices ... Wages ... Salaries ... during War and Reconversion.</u>          | June, 1945*      | .25    |
| 27. | <u>For the Record ... Public Opinion Misses on Russia but Scores on World Organization.</u>                 | September, 1945  | .10    |
| 28. | <u>What ... Where ... Why ... Do People Read?</u>   | January, 1946    | .50    |
| 29. | <u>Can the U.N.O. Prevent Wars?</u>   | February, 1946*  | .25    |
| 30. | <u>Should Price and Rent Control Be Continued?</u>  | April, 1946*     | .25    |
| 31. | <u>Should We Return to Rationing? National Opinion on This and Other Aspects of the World Food Problem.</u> | May, 1946*       | .25    |
| 32. | <u>Japan and the Post-War World.</u>  | (In preparation) | .50    |

\* MIMEOGRAPHED

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