

Fact Sheet No. 6  
For Insertion in the War Information Manual  
Section V - The Home Front

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION  
BUREAU OF MOTION PICTURES  
HOLLYWOOD OFFICE

NOTE: The following information is being sent to you as a supplement to the War Information Manual. Its purpose is to give further amplification to the Government's war program, and to provide material for short subjects and feature pictures. If more detailed information on the subject is desired, it will be furnished to you, on request, by the Office of War Information. Should you wish to use this material in your short subject or feature program, kindly communicate with this Office in order to avoid unnecessary duplication.

"V HOME"

THE PROBLEM: PUTTING EVERY AMERICAN HOME ON A WAR FOOTING

A nation-wide campaign has been launched by the Office of Civilian Defense to enlist every American home in the war effort. The dual purpose of the campaign, as stated by James M. Landis, Director of the OCD, is to make sure (1) "that all homes in strategic areas have made proper precautions for an air raid", and (2) "that American homes everywhere are fully and actively enrolled in constructive war work."

Local air raid wardens or block leaders have been authorized to inspect all homes (with the consent of the owner or occupant) to determine whether necessary air raid precautions have been made, and whether there is total participation in measures to strengthen the war offensive. These measures include conservation, salvage, refusal to spread rumors designed to divide the nation, and regular purchases of

War Savings Stamps and Bonds.

Every home meeting these standards will be awarded a "V Home" certificate, which is designed as a window sticker for display purposes. But the certificate will not be easily obtained. To qualify as to air raid precautions, a person must demonstrate that his home meets the local requirements as to blackout, safety room, and fire-fighting equipment. The other requirements will be satisfied only by the householder's signing a pledge that he is living up to them.

Homes which qualify for "V Home" certificates may rightfully take pride in the fact that they are integral fighting units on the home front, which, with the military front and the production front, constitute the lines upon which we shall defeat the enemy.

WHO IS THE ENEMY?

The enemy may be off our coast in a submarine. He may be in a long distance bomber with charts of our target areas. He may be a spy or a saboteur. But he is also in every town and every home in America, disguised as waste, inefficiency, disunity, insecurity, ill-health, plotting to weaken the home front and thereby to weaken the production front and the fighting front -- to decrease the total striking power of the nation.

This war, unlike any other war, is directed as much against civilians as against the armed forces. A home, like a battleship, must ready itself for action. Every person in the home must take his battle station. We must be ready for an attack at any time by the

armed enemy. We must also carry on an unrelenting offensive against the hidden enemies -- waste, inefficiency, disunity, insecurity, ill-health. The air raid warden is not a policeman, but a leader in the fight against unpreparedness.

WHAT IS A "V HOME"?

Sometime after September 1, the local air raid warden will appear at the home of Bill Smith to ask him five questions. If Bill Smith can honestly answer "yes" to all five questions, he and his family are entitled to the government award of a "V Home" certificate, indicating that their home is ready for war. But the chances are that Bill Smith will not be able to answer "yes" to all five questions. Not that he isn't patriotic, because he is. It is simply a matter of ignorance, of not being told his responsibility in helping to win the war.

Our job is to show Bill Smith and his family what needs to be done, to take some of the burden off the shoulders of the air raid warden. A graphic picturization of a "V Home" would furnish the Smiths with both the incentive and the information they need to put their home on a war footing. We can supply the answers, visually and dramatically, to these five questions that the air raid warden will ask:

Question One: Does your home follow the instructions of its air raid warden in order to protect life and property against attack by air?

To protect himself, his family and his community, Bill Smith must know the rules governing blackouts. He should know how to select a "safety room", that is, the room in his house with the least window

and door exposure and with the maximum structural resistance to blasts from bombs. He should know the easiest and most economical method of making his home light-proof. He should know what food and materials to have on hand in case of a prolonged air raid. His life may depend upon it.

It is unlikely that Bill Smith knows the latest instructions on how to fight fire bombs. How does he go about it? What tools and materials does he need? A demonstration on the screen of the proper technique will stick in his mind. He will be prepared to protect his home and his property.

Someone in Bill Smith's home should be encouraged to take First Aid instruction. At the very least, he must know what emergency articles to have on hand in his medicine chest. In case of a large-scale air raid, there will not be doctors or nurses enough to respond immediately to all calls.

Question Two: Does your home conserve food, clothing, transportation and health in order to hasten an unceasing flow of war materials to our men at the front?

There won't be much to go around in these war years. There won't be many replacements. Our soldiers will need many things worse than we do. In this new situation, Bill Smith must be made to realize that anything he doesn't need is a luxury.

He and his family must conserve on food by buying nourishing staples rather than expensive delicacies, and by discarding nothing edible.

He and his family must take good care of their clothing and household supplies. Clothing will be harder to get. Many household

articles will be irreplaceable. The Smith family must learn to repair instead of replace.

The transportation problem is the Smith problem. Tires must be conserved, the family car shared, as little traveling done as possible, vacations be spent at home.

The health of the Smith family is a national asset. Sickness increases the burden on doctors, nurses and hospitals, and subtracts from man-hours of production for war. Sensible diets, plenty of sleep, sound health habits - these are part of the Smith responsibility to the war effort.

Question Three: Does your home salvage essential materials in order that they may be converted to immediate war uses?

The attic, closets, basement, garage and back yard of the Smith home are sure to hold plenty of discarded articles. Useless to the family, this junk may be converted into bullets or gas masks or steel plate.

The Smith family must be told that Uncle Sam needs:

old rubber - to make new rubber for planes, tanks, battleships

scrap metal - to make the steel, aluminum, brass, copper, lead, tin parts of guns, planes, tanks, ships

old rags - to make wiping rags for war industries, and for construction work

kitchen fats and greases - to make explosives



The Smith salvage campaign should be conducted in an orderly fashion. There should be a convenient box in which to collect scrap materials, a handy container for kitchen fats and greases. Scrap materials should be turned over regularly to charitable agencies or sold to junk dealers. Kitchen fats and greases should be sold to the butcher.

Question Four: Does your home refuse to spread rumors designed to divide our nation?

Axis strategy reaches directly into the Smith home, is aimed at causing alarm and confusion to every single American. The enemy is trying to conquer us by dividing us - by making us suspicious of our allies and of each other. He makes capital of the fact that Americans are of different colors, different races, different religions. He seeks to undermine our faith in our armed forces and our government. His tactics are always the same -- the use of rumor, the whispering campaign, and lies that he hopes will be repeated as gospel by innocent but careless people.

Bill Smith and his family may in all innocence be playing the Axis game. They should be encouraged to ask two questions before passing on a piece of news or gossip. (1) Can it be proved? (2) Is it something the enemy might be glad to know?

If it's a rumor, they should bury it.

If it's a secret, they should keep it.

Question Five: Is your home buying war savings stamps and bonds regularly?

Perhaps Bill Smith has never asked himself how much he is willing to pay to be able to lead the kind of life he believes in. Or what it is worth to him to insure freedom and a decent chance for his children.

The answer is that it will cost whatever victory costs, for neither he nor anyone else can have freedom or opportunity without winning this war. Therefore, every stamp and every bond he buys is an investment in America's future. If the United Nations lost the war, his money will not buy back the freedom he will have lost. If we win the war, his money will come back to him as a nest-egg that will help build a house, buy a car, provide education for his children, or pay for travel - in a peaceful world. Meanwhile his War Savings Stamps and Bonds will help pay for the war and prevent inflation.

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These are the five questions the air raid warden will ask Bill Smith. The motion picture industry can help him answer "yes" to every question . . . can inspire him and every single American to make his home a "V HOME".