

### III. Background Information

The manufacture and distribution of clothing is a major American industry, employing millions of workers and requiring large amounts of raw materials for the making of garments. Clothing, like food, is indisputably essential to the health and welfare of every person on the home front.

But our fighting men need clothing, too. When a man joins the Army he must be supplied with a uniform, overcoat, shirts, underwear, socks, raincoat, shoes, hats, blankets, and many other articles—all new. Within the space of a year his clothing requirements may be 3 to 10 times greater than those of his fellow Americans at home. All this equipment, plus maintenance, consumes—among other commodities—about 50 pounds of wool and 175 pounds of cotton goods per soldier every year.

Supplying such vast amounts of "fighting" clothing for a force measured in millions of men is one of the war's bigger tasks. It is magnified even more by the fact that the home front also has a constant need for new articles of clothing. The production of textile fibers, the weaving of cloth, the manufacture of garments—these have, in the past few years, surpassed all previous records.

These facts indicate the extent of military needs of textile goods:

The Army orders 11,000 different articles made of cotton—these include not only such obvious items as underclothing, towels, and surgical gauze—but camouflage and insect netting, tarpaulins, field hammocks, tropical

and arctic shoes, sealing tape, bagging, and fabric foundations for rubber boats and laminated plastics.

Cotton and rayon are both extensively used for tire cords and parachute lines. In the case of rayon, viscose—because of its high tenacity properties—is in the greatest demand for military articles.

During his first year in the Army, a soldier needs approximately 75 pounds of wool, vastly more than he ever consumed as a civilian. In 1942, more wool was used for *military purposes alone* than the entire country had ever consumed in a single year. Uniforms and blankets are the two major military needs for wool.

With higher incomes and sharply reduced supplies of consumer goods, civilians are spending more and more for clothes and other textile products—not because they actually need them but because these are among the few things stores still have in comparative abundance.

The clothing industry and the many fields that provide it with raw materials are today working at top speed to fill all war orders. Anything the home front can do to hold down its demands for new garments is therefore helpful. We have no materials, manpower, or facilities to expend on new styles and wide varieties of wearing apparel. Never has there been such a need for the civilian to keep the clothing he already has in good shape, to get from it as much wear as possible, to mend and patch and put old garments back into use.

### IV. Conserving Clothing

The general rules recommended by experts to prolong the life of clothing include:

1. Brush and hang up garments each time after they have been worn.
2. Inspect them regularly for tears, holes, rips, and worn spots so that prompt repairs can be made.
3. Protect clothes by the use of garment bags and careful storage when not in use.
4. Launder with mild soaps and a minimum of rubbing.

5. Remove spots as soon as they are discovered.

#### Copy Themes

1. Conserve clothes and all textile products to help speed victory.
  - A. Buy only what you need.
    - (1) See if you have something already that will do the job.
    - (2) Devise ways of using the same item for more than one purpose.

- (3) Make selections so that a minimum will serve the greatest use.
  - (4) Buy all-season articles.
- B. Take care of what you have.
- (1) Launder, press, mend, and brush.
  - (2) Use cleaning fluids and polishes when necessary.
  - (3) Store articles carefully. Use hangers and mothproof preparations.
  - (4) Obtain specific information *before* damage has been done—not afterward.
- C. Re-make and re-style.
- (1) Make over mother's discarded dresses and father's discarded suits for the children.
  - (2) Re-style your own clothes for your own use.
  - (3) Make over discarded dressy clothes for general wear.
  - (4) Make over discarded dresses for re-use.
  - (5) Make over discarded slip covers for smaller pieces of furniture.
  - (6) Make over discarded table cloths into doilies.
2. We have enough essential civilian textile goods to go around, without rationing, as long as we:
    - A. Buy only what we really need.
      - (a) Others may need the goods more than we.
      - (b) It saves manpower, material and transportation needed to produce and transport the goods.
    - B. Take care of the textile products we have.
      - (a) It takes manpower, material and transportation to replace them.
      - (b) It isn't easy to replace them now with as good material.
      - (c) This war won't be won by being wasteful.
    - C. Remake and restyle.
      - (a) It makes old clothes more attractive.
      - (b) It saves money.
      - (c) It helps reduce the wartime strain on manpower, material and transportation needed if you buy new goods instead.

## CONSERVE AND SALVAGE ESSENTIAL MATERIALS

Our whole schedule of war production—an undertaking unmatched in history—depends upon raw materials. Without them in sufficient quantities, any mathematical prediction of the planes, tanks, guns, ships we can build is only the dream our enemy once bragged it would be.

America's biggest single source of raw materials is found in the scrap heaps, the attics, the cellars, the forgotten corners where people pile up the things they no longer need. Precious raw materials vanish daily into the trash barrels and refuse dumps of the Nation. Regularly they go down the drains in millions of kitchen sinks. This is a brand of waste we can ill afford at a time when our war industries are perpetually hungry for raw materials.

They must have—to name only the most important—more scrap iron, tin, and other metals; more waste fats and oils, more paper products. They need these things to supplement the insufficient supplies of new raw materials that are the backbone of our war production. They

need them for re-use and mingling with the limited stockpiles that, by themselves, cannot keep pace with the full requirements of war industry.

Careful, conscientious salvage and re-use of critical commodities is one of the ways the enemy has kept his own war machine rolling. Our immediate demands, as arsenal of the United Nations, have grown so great that we now can only hope to fill them by collecting once-neglected waste materials from every home and farm, from every commercial enterprise and industry in the country. It is part of our total mobilization for total war.

Salvage is often the only means by which supplies of certain critically needed materials can be maintained at levels high enough to keep pace with the demands of war production. Salvage has in many cases meant the difference between enough and too little—the margin for victory.