

HEAD OF "P" BRANCH *cal*

A.F.O. 5124/44 ✓

RESTRICTED

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Cancelled
see AFO 131/40

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ADMIRALTY FLEET ORDER

RE-ALLOCATION OF MANPOWER—SUMMARY OF GOVERNMENT PLAN

ADMIRALTY, S.W.1,
21st September, 1944.

The following Order having been approved by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty is hereby promulgated for information and guidance and necessary action.

By Command of Their Lordships,

J. V. Markham

To all Commanders-in-Chief, Flag Officers, Senior Naval Officers, Captains and Commanding Officers of H.M. Ships, Vessels and C.O. Craft (see A.F.O. 3758/44), Superintendents or Officers in Charge of H.M. Naval Establishments, and Admiralty Overseers concerned.

NOTE:—The scale of distribution is shown in the Admiralty Fleet Order Volume, 1941, Instructions, paragraph 10.

HEAD OF "P" BRANCH

H-PB

*5124.—Re-Allocation of Manpower—Summary of Government Plan

(C.W.51899/44.—21 Sep. 1944.)

See AFO 13/45
" 873/45
" 131/46
" 802/46
1187/46

The following is a reprint of the Admiralty message summarizing the Government's plan for the re-allocation of manpower during the interim period between the defeat of Germany and the defeat of Japan.

2. General demobilization either of the armed forces or of war industry cannot take place until the end of the war against the Axis Powers and their total defeat throughout the world. The war against the Axis Powers is one war, and there can be no break in the war effort after hostilities cease in Europe. There must be the maximum deployment of the forces needed to bring complete and final victory at the earliest possible moment.

3. It follows that in the interim period between the defeat of Germany and the defeat of Japan, the problem is not one of demobilization but of re-allocation of manpower between the forces and industry in order best to provide for the requirements of the changed situation.

4. An essential part of the plan is the continuation of compulsory recruitment for the forces to bring relief to those who have served for long periods and enable some of them to return to their homes. It is also necessary to retain control over industry and labour during the interim period, as there will be heavy demands for munitions of war and other essential production.

5. Until requirements for the continuation of the war against Japan and for the garrisoning of occupied countries are definitely known, it is impossible to determine what reductions can be made in the armed forces. It is clear, however, that the war against Japan is largely a fight for sea and air supremacy requiring the employment of considerable Naval and Air Forces before the greater part of the Army can be brought to grips with the enemy. On the other hand a large Army will be required for occupation duties in Europe. The commitments of the three Services must vary from time to time, and they will not, therefore, be able to release men at the same rate.

6. The Government consider that the fairest and most reasonable plan is to release individuals from the forces in an order of priority dependent on their age and on their length of war service. This procedure will be followed for the majority of releases who will be known as Class A. Some provision is also necessary to start the work of reconstruction and so a small number of individuals will be transferred to industry under a part of the plan known as Class B.

7. It must be clearly understood that no one will be released or transferred from the forces if his retention is necessary for the prosecution of the war. The Admiralty will, however, try to release men in their turn wherever they may be serving.

8. Those due for release or transfer from the forces may volunteer for a further period of service.

9. The arrangements for release apply to all War Only Officers and ratings, *i.e.*, to everyone in the Navy except permanent officers still on the active list, and except ratings whose continuous service or special service engagements have not yet expired.

10. To implement the plan all the War Only Officers and ratings will be classified in Age and Service Groups, using the formula that two months of war service is equivalent to one additional year of age. In general war service means time which counts for service pay. Thus a man 30 years old with four years' service will be in the same release group as a man 48 years old with one year's service. Men over 50, however, will be eligible for release as the earliest group, irrespective of their war service, and married women, irrespective of age and war service, will be eligible for release before unmarried women.

11. As soon as possible after the defeat of Germany a start will be made with Class A releases. It is anticipated there will be an interval in which those who are among the earlier releases and are serving abroad can, where practicable, be drafted home in time for release in their turn. Releases in Class A will not necessarily proceed at the same rate in the various branches of the Navy.

12. Transfers to industry under Class B will be small in comparison with releases in Class A and will not commence until a start has been made with Class A releases. Those transferred under Class B will be in occupational classes specified by the

Ministry of Labour and National Service, and the individuals will be taken in order from the Age and Service Groups next after those already released in Class A. The occupational classes will be mainly those required to supplement the labour force available for building houses.

13. In addition Class B will include a small proportion of specialists who will be applied for individually through Government Departments under the procedure which has operated during the war.

14. Those due for release in Class A may volunteer for further service until the end of hostilities, and, if accepted, will be given early release when general demobilization starts after the defeat of Japan. Those nominated for transfer to industry in Class B may, if they wish, wait their turn for release in Class A.

15. There will be a clearly marked difference in the treatment of those released in Class A in their turn and those transferred in Class B out of their turn:—

(a) Those released in Class A will be granted eight weeks' leave on full pay and allowances in addition to any foreign service leave due. They will be permitted to exercise their rights to reinstatement in their former civil employment. If they have no jobs they will be given assistance in finding them, and will not, during the period they are on leave, be regarded as subject to any powers of direction which are otherwise generally operative. They will only be recalled to the Service in extreme urgency.

(b) Those transferred in Class B will be granted three weeks' leave on full pay and allowances in addition to any foreign service leave due. They will be directed to their reconstruction employment and this will preserve their reinstatement rights. They will be liable for recall to the Service if they discontinue their reconstruction employment.

16. It is the Government's intention to introduce a scheme of War Gratuities by way of reward for service. Separate announcements will be made in due course, both about the amounts of these War Gratuities and the date on which they and the Post-War Credits which are accruing in respect of ratings' service from 1st January, 1942, will be made available through the Post Office Savings Bank.

17. All men released in Class A or B will be given civilian clothes provided they have served for at least six months. Civilian clothing will not be provided for women, but a cash grant and clothing coupons will be given instead.

18. Applications for compassionate release will be considered under the same conditions as are now in force.

19. Explanatory remarks:—

(a) The plan is subject to discussion in Parliament and the final version will be promulgated when known.

(b) While the principles are applicable to all three Services the rate of release in each Service will inevitably vary from time to time.

(c) A number of young men in industry whose call-up is now deferred will join the forces. This will speed up the releases in Class A.

(d) The plan is applicable to the W.R.N.S., with the one difference that married women have priority of release over unmarried women.

(e) After full consideration it has been decided that the governing factor should be release in order of age and service. No priority is given to the married man.

(f) The Admiralty will do all that they can to ensure that those serving abroad will be at no disadvantage.

(g) Separate announcements will be made about the Government's plans for educational and vocational training and other matters designed to help resettlement in civil life. These plans will be applicable to those released late as well as to those released early.

(h) It is emphasized that those who will be transferred to industry under Class B out of their turn will receive less in the way of benefits, and they will be subject to control as regards their employment. The sole object of this class is to start on essential reconstruction work such as housing, etc., so as to prepare the way for improved conditions of living and employment when general demobilization takes place after the defeat of Japan.

