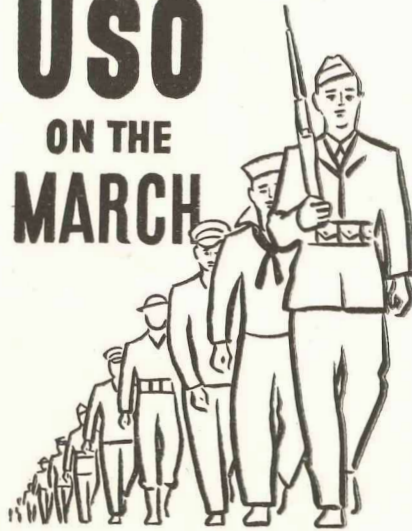


*United service organizations for national  
defense.*

PAMPHLET OFFICE

# USO ON THE MARCH



**ANNUAL REPORT BY HARPER SIBLEY, PRESIDENT,  
UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE, INC.**

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## A Report on U.S.O.

AT this first annual meeting of the United Service Organizations for National Defense, Inc., it is appropriate that I present a report of progress. *E. G. (Harper) Libby, Pres.*

The U.S.O. was organized, as you all know, to offer personal services of a spiritual, social and recreational character to the great group of young men enrolling in the United States Army and Navy, and to the large numbers of young men and young women leaving their homes to work in the new war industrial plants. These services were to be rendered through the united and cooperative action of six national welfare agencies, representing Catholic, Jew and Protestant.

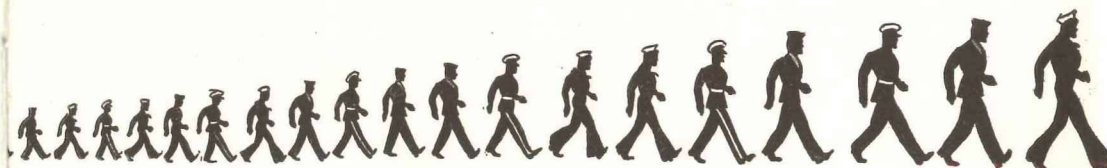
The U.S.O. is a great venture of faith in a field of unlimited personal service. Its success is essential to prove to America and to the world that free men of many backgrounds can work together voluntarily and effectively in a common program of helpfulness to the individual and in so doing can perform a vital function in the vast national emergency effort.

At this annual meeting I know that you rejoice as I do that the faith and patience of the leaders of our six national agencies who conceived and who organized this United Service Organizations has been justified.

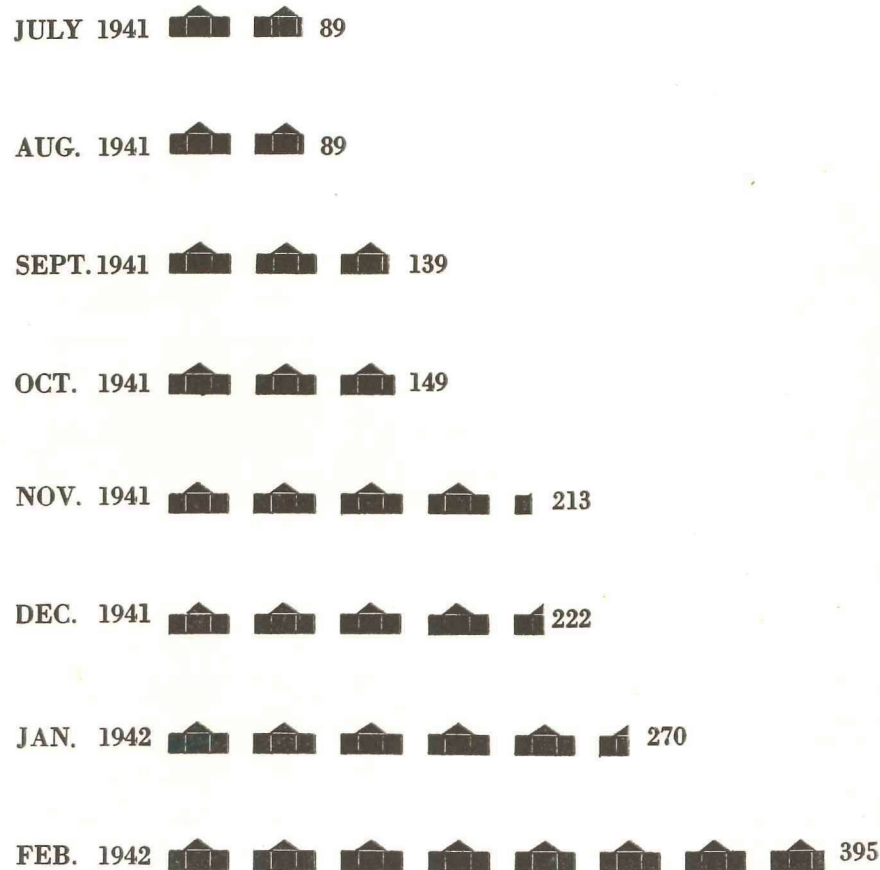


"personal services to the men"

The development of the program of Service Clubs is moving forward rapidly. That is important. But the great accomplishment has been the unfailing cooperation, the sympathetic understanding, the ever growing readiness to subordinate personal opinion or established tradition on the part of the leaders of each of the six national agencies. There were some who doubted the sincerity and the determined will to cooperation. There may have been some who hoped that the U.S.O. would fail.



# "USO IS OPERATING 395 CLUBS"



U.S.O. Clubhouses are located near most Army Camps and Naval Posts. Most of the early figures given here are for clubhouses which were rented by U.S.O. pending the

erection of 219 government buildings. The later figures include many of these new structures, which are being placed in service as completed.

The results confound such doubts and such hopes, and will continue to do so.

Last April at the great organization meeting in Washington the officers of the U.S.O. outlined to a representative group of outstanding citizens and leaders from all across America the program for the development of Service Clubs and units to be placed as needed in more than three hundred separate communities. At the same time the United States government promised legislation to be introduced into Congress to pay for the construction of approximately 200 new buildings to be leased to the U.S.O.

The program caught fire. Leaders went home from Washington ready and eager to carry their personal share of this great undertaking.

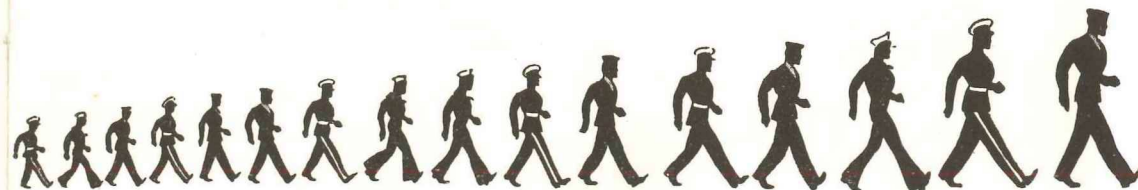
The campaign for \$10,765,000 was announced and accepted by the campaign committees. Following the creative and vigorous leadership at U.S.O. headquarters the campaign was an unqualified success.

The goal was over-subscribed, the U.S.O. was endorsed, and the program of service became possible.

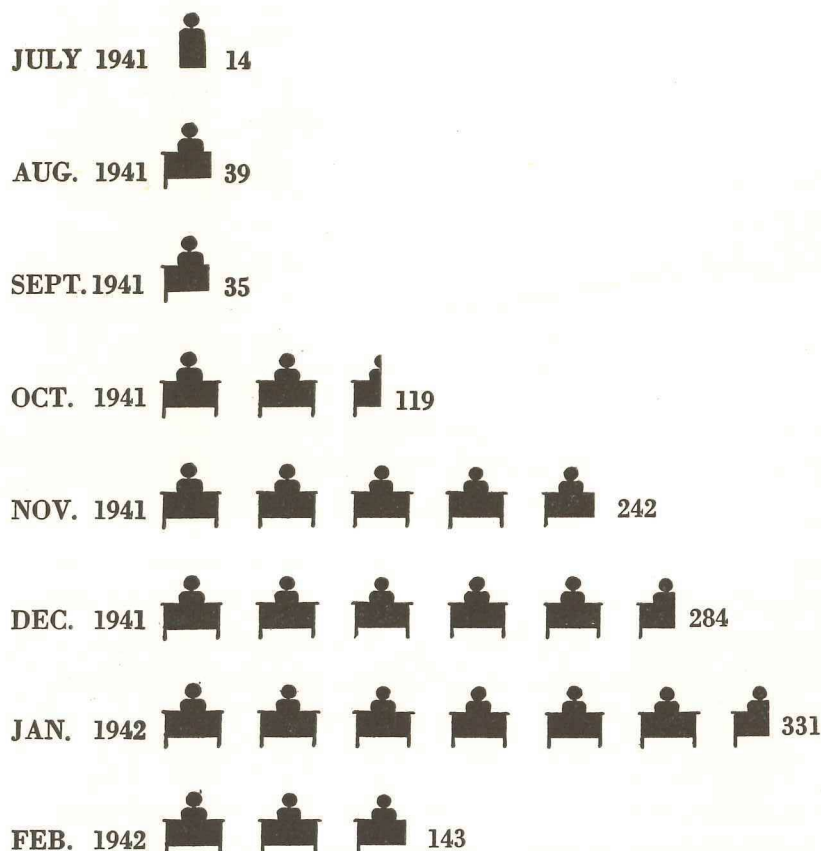
While there was great delay in the actual construction of buildings I can at least say that through the invaluable assistance of the Quartermaster's Department of the United States Army these 200 buildings are practically all completed and the furnishings and equipment, also provided largely by Congressional appropriation, are being rapidly installed.

An agreement has been signed between the United States Government, through the Federal Security Administration, and the United Service Organizations whereby these new buildings are leased to the U.S.O. for the duration of the emergency.

Your officers and representatives have been busy attending the dedicatory exercises of scores of these fine structures, together with high officials of the Federal, State and Municipal governments, and



# "143 SMALLER UNITS"



A "unit" is a place of U.S.O. operation where a large clubhouse is not necessary or available. Many are railway station lounges and offices of U.S.O. workers for

service men. The decrease shown in February indicates operations being transferred into the new club buildings and the resultant elimination of some "units."

great groups of important and interested local citizens in every part of the United States.

Approximately one hundred of these new buildings are now being operated by the U.S.O. through its delegated agencies, and the balance will all be opened for operation in the near future.

Early in the Summer, however, two things became very clear, — first, that the new buildings would not be finished and ready for occupancy for many months to come, and second, that even two hundred new buildings would not begin to provide the space needed for the ever enlarging program to be demanded of the U.S.O.



The Board of Directors of the United Service Organizations, therefore, authorized the rental of necessary club rooms and offices across the country to meet an immediate need for service to soldiers and sailors already thronging the towns and villages around the great troop concentration centres, and the young men and women away from home in the overburdened defense areas.

Today, the U.S.O. through the trained staff and direction of its six affiliated agencies and its own headquarters force is operating 395 clubs and 143 small units in 246 communities in 44 states and 15 overseas bases.

In these service operations the U.S.O. and its affiliated organizations have a staff of 967 trained men and women in the field, not including those in our Overseas Service.

This is already a powerful and effective force in the development of the U.S.O. program of service promised last April in Washington. But it is only the advance guard. As the national emergency grows vastly greater since the declaration of War, so new and enlarged field of service demands ever more from the United Service Organizations.



# "967 TRAINED WORKERS"

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U.S.O. personnel in the field is one of the best trained group of men and women ever assigned this type of work. Most are college graduates and all have much experi-

ence in leading recreation groups. Their positions are as club directors, program directors and regional directors. Many are in U.S.O. Overseas Service.

Already six new fields of opportunity for meeting the needs of our soldiers and sailors have opened up which were not anticipated or mentioned in all of the discussions at the meetings in Washington last April. It is, indeed, fortunate that the people of America responded to the appeal of the U.S.O. last June so whole-heartedly and so generously that the goal was substantially over-subscribed.

Because of this generous over-subscription, the Directors of the U.S.O. have been able to move vigorously and where necessary, immediately in these six new fields of service.

Let me make a brief statement concerning each of these six new fields of U.S.O. activity.

## (1) Maneuvers

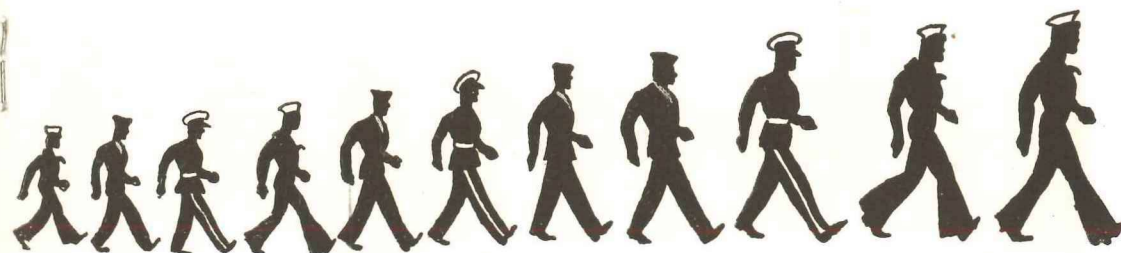
During the past summer the United States Army held prolonged military maneuvers in various parts of the nation. Very large numbers of soldiers were concentrated in the chosen areas, with the result that hundreds of communities were faced with throngs of men in uniform during periods of leave. Upon request from officials of



"... 24 regular road shows ..."

the War Department and the Federal Security Administration the U.S.O. immediately sent teams of trained workers into these maneuver areas to render service to the Army but even more to the many towns and villages in helping these communities organize their resources to provide hospitality to the men in uniform.

I have received many letters from commanding officers, from morale and special services officers and from the communities themselves expressing sincere appreciation for and approval of these U.S.O. services.



## (2) Entertainment-in-the-Camps

At the urgent request of officials of the Department of War and of the Navy, the directors of the U.S.O. authorized the incorporation of an affiliated agency to be known as U.S.O. Camp Shows, Inc. to organize, and to provide professional entertainment for our men in uniform. A large budget totalling approximately ten per cent of the U.S.O. resources was set aside by U.S.O. for this entertainment program.

Besides some 24 regular road shows now touring the military camps, naval stations, and bases, large numbers of concert performers and moving picture and radio stars have volunteered through Camp Shows for free performances all across the country.

## (3) Troops-in-Transit-on-Leave

Large numbers of soldiers and sailors have been traveling across the country on trains, in busses and in trucks and are to be found in the stations and transfer points. Early in the summer, U.S.O. clubs were opened for these troops in transit in many railway and bus stations, where friendly hospitality was offered these travelers. These services were so greatly appreciated, and these station clubs were so successful that the Board of Directors has now called on



"... millions of books needed ..."

all U.S.O. local councils, with special help from the representatives of the National Travelers Aid Association to organize such Troops-in-Transit Clubs in every community where the need exists.

## (4) Victory Book Campaign

A very much larger per cent of the young men in our armed forces today is made up of graduates of high schools and colleges than ever before. From all the camps and U.S.O. clubs came a demand for books. Joining with the American Library Asso-

ciation and the American Red Cross the U.S.O. has been helping to organize and to underwrite a campaign to collect many millions of books from the American people to be supplied to our soldiers and sailors. The headquarters of the Victory Book Campaign is in the U.S.O. headquarters office.

## (5) Mobile Service for Troops Detached for Guard Duty



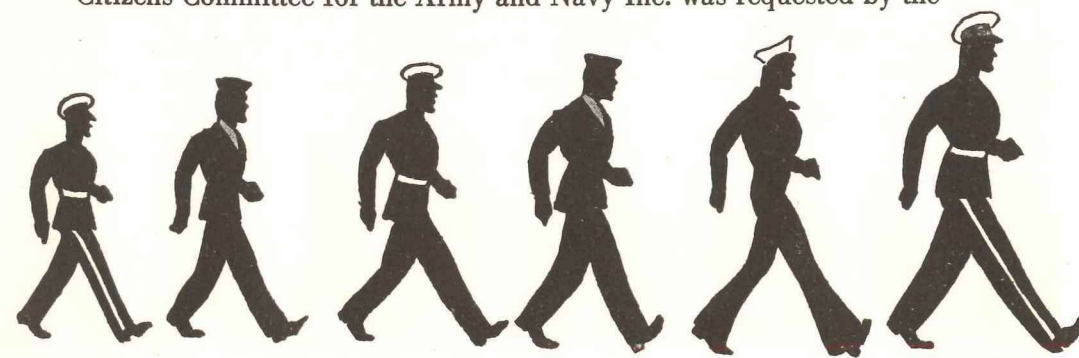
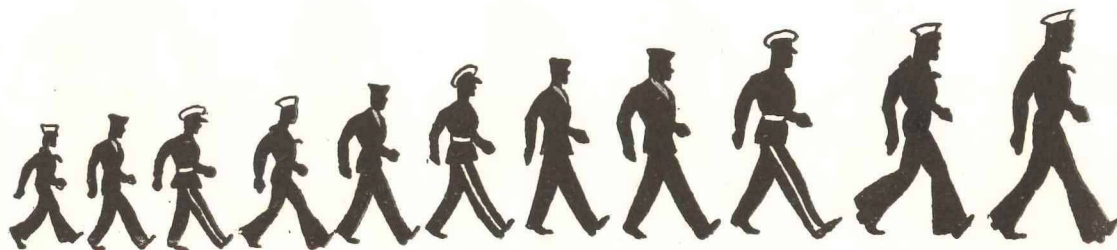
"... special mobile clubs ..."

With the outbreak of war on December 7th, large number of troops were detached from the concentration training centers and placed in small units on guard duty. Clearly, these troops could no longer avail themselves of the regular services and clubs provided by the U.S.O. Very shortly requests began to come from officers of the Army requesting special services for these troops.

As the U.S.O. is eager to respond to all proper requests for its services a Special Mobile Division was established at U.S.O. headquarters by the Board of Directors, and the necessary budget allowances established. Today, under the direction of the regional offices of our U.S.O. Field Service Department a special group of trained U.S.O. workers utilizing specially equipped trucks is assigned to this mobile field service.

(6) Department to provide equipment, furnishings and special services at the request of Camp Commanders, Chaplains, recreational officers, etc.

In the first instance a special national committee known as the Citizens Committee for the Army and Navy Inc. was requested by the



War Department and the Navy to supply equipment, furnishings and special services to the camps at the request of the camp commanders, etc. In a few areas the branches of this Citizens Committee for the Army and Navy, Inc. have been active and efficient. In many others, however, this committee was unable to function effectively, so that eventually recognition of the Citizens Committee for the Army and

Navy, Inc. was withdrawn nationally by the Secretaries of War and Navy.



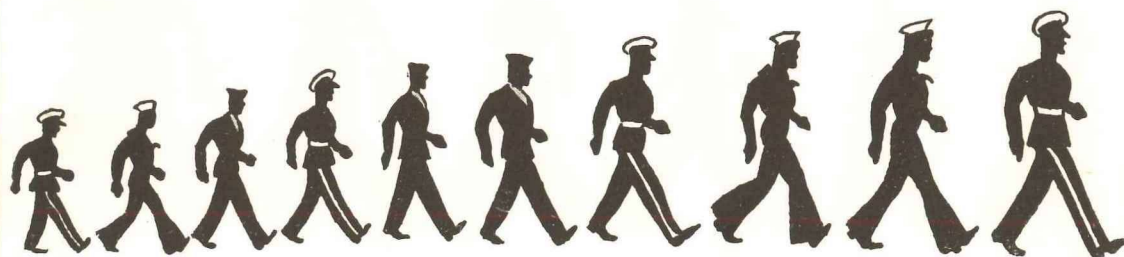
"... service for men in transit ..."

As the need persists, however, and the U.S.O. has committees in thousands of communities all across the United States the Board of Directors with permission of the Army is stimulating its U.S.O. Councils and U.S.O. Citizens Committees to study this special field of service to the armed forces, to cooperate with any branches of the Citizens Committee for the Army and Navy, where such Committees are effective, and to accept responsibility themselves for responding to requests from commanding officers, chaplains, recreational officers, etc., when the Citizens Committee of the Army and Navy is not functioning.

The U.S.O. regional offices are being strengthened to assist in handling such requests and such services on an area basis wherever this seems desirable.

Important as these new opportunities for service to our fighting units and to those enrolled behind the lines have proved to be, nevertheless the greatest task before us still is the successful operation of our U.S.O. Clubs and services in the communities surrounding the far-flung areas of concentration.

This past week we have received a new and long list of additional projects to be financed through another congressional appropriation.



Furthermore, at this moment our U.S.O. Field Department Staff is preparing, with the help of the regional supervisors of the six agencies, our own list of recommendations for new buildings and additional wings and rentals which we believe are necessary to meet the needs of the men in our rapidly growing army and navy, and of the workers in the vast plants projected in new and often remote areas to manufacture munitions of war.

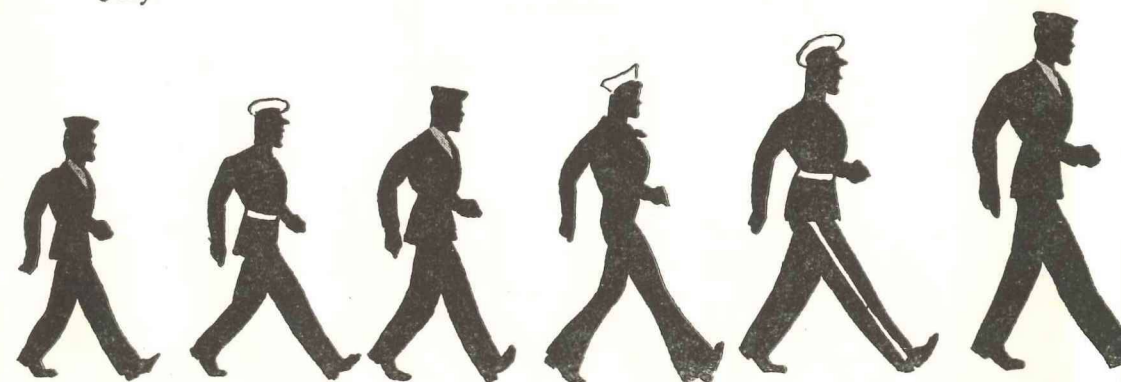
Because of the growing diversity of the U.S.O. program, it early became apparent that the staff at U.S.O. headquarters had to be expanded beyond the original conception to provide coordinated leadership for the activities of our six operating agencies; to guide essential research into problems of program and management; to represent the U.S.O. in negotiations with the Army, the Navy, governmental agencies, and municipal authorities; to bring leadership into the study and determination by the Board of Directors itself of National policies and relationships; and, not least of all, to plan far in advance for the annual national fund-raising campaign.

The U.S.O. in its New York and regional offices has now enrolled on its staff approximately forty full time men and women executives, not including the seasonal campaign department. Of this forty a substantial number, happily, are volunteers donating their entire services to the U.S.O. program.



"... clubs in 44 states ..."

It is interesting to observe that of this group only six were connected with the U.S.O. when I joined the staff in the middle of last July.

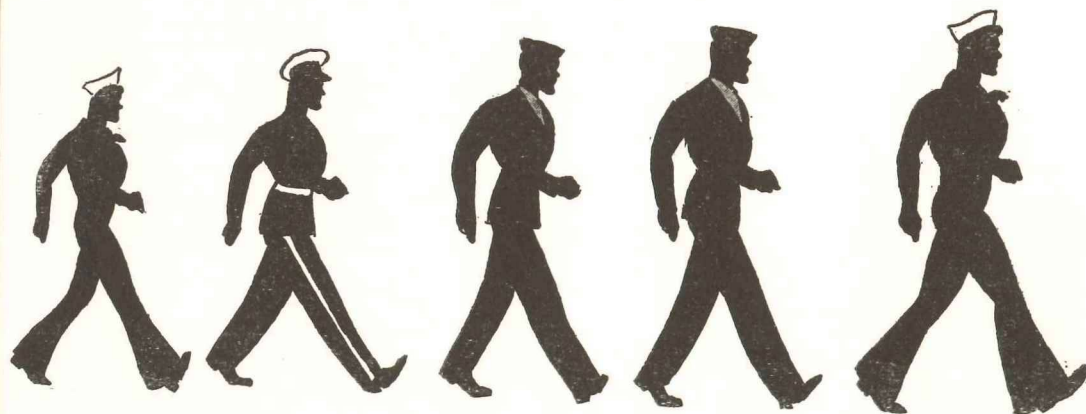


As the operations expand into the unknown future, still other and perhaps wiser leaders will be found to direct the essential U.S.O. programs of cooperative service. But a more devoted, eager, and loyal group than your present staff will not be brought together, nor one more determined to fulfill the splendid conception of a United Service Organizations.

*Harper Sibley*

*President*

New York  
February 3, 1942



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