

HISTORY OF M.I. 7 (b) (MARCH, 1916 - DECEMBER, 1918).

INF 4/1B

© Crown Copyright 1920

Typeset by Lee Richards, London, 2001

[www.psywar.org](http://www.psywar.org)

Original document held by the Public Record Office, ref: INF 4/1B

HISTORY OF M.I. 7 (b) (MARCH, 1916 - DECEMBER, 1918).

CONTENTS

WORK OF M.I. 7 (b) (MARCH -DECEMBER, 1916).....	1
WORK OF M.I. 7 (b) (JANUARY, 1917 - DECEMBER, 1918). .....	3
1. <i>M.I. 7 (b.) (1)</i> . General Press Propaganda.....	4
2. <i>M.I. 7 (b) (2)</i> . Collection and preparation of technical information.....	6
3. <i>M.I. 7 (b) (3)</i> . Propaganda distribution in the Dominions and the East.....	7
4. <i>M.I. 7 (b) (4)</i> . - Propaganda Library and Aerial Propaganda over Enemy Lines – .....	8
5. <i>M.I. 7 (b) (5)</i> . - Summaries of Home Press. ....	11
6. <i>M.I. 7 (b) (6)</i> . Liaison with Press Representatives and arrangements for Official Press Lectures, &c., Cable and Wireless Propaganda.....	12



## HISTORY OF M.I. 7 (b) (MARCH, 1916 - DECEMBER, 1918).

### WORK OF M.I. 7 (b) (MARCH -DECEMBER, 1916).

The subsection M.I. 7 (b) was started in March, 1916, on the appointment of Lieut.-Colonel Warburton Davies to take charge of M.I. 7. It was organized by Major J. L. Fisher, who was appointed General Staff Officer, 3rd Grade, in April, 1916.

The duties of the sub-section were originally defined as:-

- (a.) Control of policy regarding Press propaganda;
- (b.) The study of the foreign Press, and compilation of the Daily Review of the Foreign Press;

but later in the year this latter duty was assigned to a new subsection, M.I. 7 (d), under Lieut.-Colonel Wake.

The work of M.I. 7 (b) as regards propaganda was at first confined to the preparation of military material for propaganda purposes, the main duties of distribution being undertaken by the News Department of the Foreign Office and afterwards by the Department of Information. A certain amount of distribution, however, has always been performed by Military Attaches, and by Press authorities at the various General Headquarters, both British and Allied.

The necessity early became apparent of maintaining correspondence with other Government Departments concerned with propaganda, such as the Foreign Office, Colonial Office, Board of Trade, Board of Education, War Trade Intelligence Department; &c., and with British and Allied General Headquarters abroad; and, also, of organizing an adequate service of propagandist writers.

In May, 1916, Captain Lord Onslow was attached to M.I. 7 (b) to carry out these duties. Correspondence was established with the other Government Departments concerned, and to assist in securing a service of writers Captain A. J. Dawson, as an experienced journalist, was attached to the subsection, and instructed to prepare a plan for obtaining continuous supplies of articles about the work of the Army, so far as possible without cost to the country. As a result a notice was issued from General Headquarters, Home Forces, in August, 1916, and posted in all officers messes, inviting officers of literary experience serving in Home Commands and on light duty to send in their names. To this invitation there was a large response. The officers were communicated with and asked to send in specimen articles on military matters, the better writers being encouraged to further efforts.

At the same time attention was given to pictorial propaganda. The services of various artists were at first lent to the subsection, but subsequently it was decided

that officers might be attached for artistic work in the same way as they were attached as writers.

While these developments of popular propaganda were proceeding, it was considered desirable that technical information should be collected from the various departments of the War Office, and by visits to commands and training centres, regarding the rapidly expanding British military effort. In May, 1916, Captain Basil Williams was attached to the subsection to collect and tabulate this information, and to embody it in articles and pamphlets for the use of writers and journalists.

Meanwhile, every effort was made to instruct and maintain the confidence of the Press. In May, 1916, arrangements were made for a confidential statement on military affairs to be prepared and issued, through the Press Bureau, to 40 selected editors of English newspapers; and in October the system of weekly interviews by the Director of Military Operations (described on page 12) was inaugurated for the benefit of selected American correspondents, who desire to be informed of the general course of events.

A weekly telegram was also produced, and circulated through the Foreign Office to foreign countries, giving the military news of the week, and before the end of the year a daily telegram was being despatched to Christiania and a similar bi-weekly telegram to Petrograd.

The distribution of the propaganda articles of the M.I. 7 (b) to the Press of the Dominions was next taken up (November, 1916). The news department being at that time a branch of the Foreign Office, could issue articles only to neutral and Allied countries; the Press Bureau issued only to British Press and the Colonial Office, when applied to, stated that it was unable to undertake the distribution. Eventually, it was arranged that the articles, should be sent from M.I. 7 (b) in the name of the Royal Colonial Institute. The distribution was accordingly begun in January, 1917.

The basis of all counter propaganda being the propaganda of the enemy, an early start had been made with the formation of a library of German propaganda literature in the subsection. War literature of enemy origin was collected by a branch of the Postal Censorship (M.I. 9) roughly classified and catalogued, and the first copy of each book or pamphlet sent to M.I. 7 (b). The examination and analysis of this literature was entrusted to Captain Chalmers Mitchell, F.R.S., who prepared an exhaustive memo on this question which was printed, for distribution.

An analysis of German wireless propaganda and Press telegrams was also undertaken in October, 1916, and soon developed into two daily circulated reports, one on German propaganda, the other on items of intelligence drawn from the German cables.

Another branch of the work of the subsection which soon became important was the preparation of propaganda pamphlets for aerial distribution, and the reproduction

of German captured letters. These were sent regularly to General Headquarters, France and Salonika, and widely used.

The regulation of facilities to foreigners and others desiring to visit places of interest was at first supervised by M.I. 7 (b). Subsequently the regulation of all visits, both in this country and abroad, was undertaken, and a special officer, Captain Foster, appointed to supervise it. Before the end of the year, however, this work was detached, and in June, 1917, was assigned to another subsection, M.I. 7 (c), which, up to that time, had existed as a Translation Bureau only.

It should be added that, in conjunction with M.I. 7 (c) (later with M.I. 3 (e)), arrangements were made for the translation of suitable articles into foreign languages for despatch to the foreign Press, and for distribution through representatives of the neutral Press in London, who were in the habit of calling weekly at the War Office. Sir Douglas Haig's despatch of 30th December, 1916 - to name one example - was thus translated into nine languages and distributed wherever these languages were current.

In December, 1916, Lieut.-Colonel Davies was transferred from the War Office to the 64th Division, and Major (now Lieut.-Colonel) Fisher was appointed General Staff Officer, 1st Grade, in his place. Lord Onslow succeeded Major Fisher as General Staff Officer, 2nd Grade, M.I. 7 (b).

The staff of M.I. 7 (b) had grown, with the increase of its duties, in 9 months from 1 officer to 24. It was housed, except for the War Office staff, in Adelphi Court, Strand, from August, 1916, to 4th October, 1917, when the whole subsection, still further enlarged, moved under Lord Onslow to improved accommodation in Adastral House, Victoria Embankment, where it remained until demobilized.

#### WORK OF M.I. 7 (B) (JANUARY, 1917 - DECEMBER, 1918).

The function of the sub-section was clearer, in December, 1916, than in March. Its function was to deal with the publication of military information in all its branches from a propaganda point of view; with all questions of policy that might arise in that connection, with the collection of military information suitable for publicity, the preparation of military material, and the distribution through the Press Bureau, the Department of Information and the National War Aims Committee; or in special cases through its own \* organization, of the finished article. To enable it to perform these duties it was found necessary also to follow closely the propaganda of the enemy as displayed in war literature, and in news telegrams circulated through the news agencies.

---

\* That is, Military Attaches, Press authorities at General Headquarters, both at home and abroad, a variety of representatives of public and semi-public bodies, and numerous private individuals going on missions, both neutral and Allied.

The work done in 1916 was, in the main, and of necessity, experimental. By the end of the year, however, most of the present subdivisions (known since, September, 1917, as M.I. 7 (b) (1), (2), &c.), had already defined themselves. Apart from policy, which is directed by the General Staff, the remaining history of M.I. 7 (b) is therefore best given as a history of the subdivisions.

The duties of the General Staff were these. At the head of the subsection was a General Staff Officer, Grade 2 (Major Lord Onslow, succeeded in April, 1918, by Major Lord Kerry). His duties included, besides a general supervision of the subsection, communication with other Departments; responsibility for the collection of information and supply of material to writers, and the execution of the policy in regard to publicity laid down by the Deputy Director of Military Intelligence, and communicated to him by the head of the section. He also acted as liaison officer between the War Office and the Ministry of Information,<sup>\*</sup> the National War Aims Committee,<sup>†</sup> and the British War Mission (Crewe House); and was in touch, by visits and otherwise, with the various British General Headquarters in the field. The subsection also kept in close touch throughout with the Admiralty and the Royal Air Force. By these means an attempt was made to secure unity of policy and action. The General Staff Officer, 3rd Grade, and by an attached officer responsible for preliminary censorship and distribution of articles.

The history of the subdivisions may now be given:-

1. M.I. 7 (b.) (1). *General Press Propaganda.*

This sub-division was started in June, 1916, to supply propaganda articles for the Press, and consisted at first of Captain A.J. Dawson, and one other officer. Before the end of October six other officers had been attached as writers, but the greater part of the early writing was done by outside contributors without payment. The notice referred to above, which was issued by General Headquarters, Home Forces, in August, 1916, and repeated in General Routine Orders 912 of 16th May, 1917, drew nearly 1,000 replies. Most of the outside officer contributors were only able to contribute for 2 or 3 months, but a few continued to send articles up to the end. Altogether the subdivision had 500 outside voluntary contributors.

By January, 1917, the staff of M.I. 7 (b) (1) had increased to 13 officers, which made it independent of outside contributions; and during its second year the staff averaged 20 officers, including such well-known writers as Lord Dunsany, A.A. Milne (Assistant Editor of *Punch*), Patrick McGill, &c.

The total number of articles produced by the staff and outside contributors from September, 1916, to November, 1918, was 7,500. From December, 1917, the average weekly output was between 60 and 70 articles.

---

<sup>\*</sup> In July, 1918, this duty was taken over by Lieut.-Colonel W.R. Greene, head of M.I. 7 (c).

<sup>†</sup> This Committee undertook distribution of articles to the Home Press.



The articles were distributed to newspapers all over the world, and the same article would sometime appear in Great Britain, the United States, in half-a-dozen neutral countries, and in 15 or 20 Dominion papers.

Besides miscellaneous articles, battle-stories, &c., one monthly, one daily, and eight weekly features were developed, including:-

(a.) A weekly and monthly summary of operations, for the use of the Ministry of Information; two weekly causeries on the war, one of which appeared in over 70 home papers; and a daily account of the offensives of 1918, which appeared in 40 or 50 home papers.

(b.) A "Weekly Letter to Soldiers," published for British troops abroad and at home; and a "Weekly Letter to the *Belgische Standaard*," the weekly of the Belgian Army.

(c.) *Le Courrier de l'Air*, a single sheet published weekly, giving the war news in French. 5,000 copies were distributed weekly over Belgium by aeroplane (see page 9). The first number appeared on 6th April, 1917. In January and February, 1918, it was suspended until the new system of balloon distribution was completed, and between February and August, 1918, was produced by M.I. 7 (b) (4), when M.I. 7 (b) (1) resumed production. Altogether 78 numbers were produced.

(d.) A daily telegram, started June, 1917, summarizing operations and replying to the German military critics. Out of this daily telegram developed the wireless branch of M.I. 7 (b).

Lastly, in conjunction with M.I. 7 (b) (2), and in collaboration with the Ministry of Reconstruction, a number of educational leaflets were prepared between July and November, 1918, for the Active Service Army Schools series.

It should be added that Captain Dawson left M.I. 7 (b) (1) on 21st April, 1918, to organize the Propaganda Department of the Royal Air Force. His place was taken by Major C.J.C. Street, who continued in charge until the subdivision was demobilized on 23rd November, 1918.

(NOTE - Pictorial Propaganda - The supervision of the Artists attached to M.I. 7 (b) was in October, 1917, entrusted to M.I. 7 (b) (1). These artists, who included Captain Bruce Bairnsfather and Lieutenant Frank Reynolds, R.I., were lent to the Ministry of Information when anything specific was required to be dealt with, were given every facility to visit the various fronts, and were employed also to illustrate propaganda articles and to prepare sketches for balloon propaganda.)

2. M.I. 7 (b) (2). *Collection and preparation of technical information.*

This subdivision was started on 8th May, 1916, and consisted at first of one officer, Captain Basil Williams. The staff was subsequently increased to five. The qualifications sought for were a combination of academic with some military experience, and two of the officers were Fellows of Oxford Colleges.

(a.) The main routine work of the subdivision has been the collection and arrangement of detailed material of an historical and technical nature illustrating the British military effort since the outbreak of war. Captain Williams was given special facilities for this work by a Minute, signed by the Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff, empowering him to obtain directly from all branches of the War Office such information and assistance as they could give him.

In addition to the material thus obtained from branches of the War Office and other Departments, visits were periodically made by Captain Williams and his officers to many of the most important military centres in this country and, latterly, in France, the interviews recorded and detailed information and statistics obtained regarding their work.

Collections were also made and fully cross-referenced of all Army Council Instructions and Army Orders issued since the beginning of the war. Official *communiqués* were kept, for all fronts, and a catalogued series of maps covering the whole of the various war zones. Illustrative material was also systematically drawn from Service magazines, newspapers and the literature of the war.

The whole of this material, which is very considerable and includes much confidential matter, has been exhaustively filed and indexed under 55 main subject headings and over 1,200 subheadings, making it easily accessible. The following selections from the subject headings indicates the scope of the collection: Recruiting; Raising and Training of Officers; Training of New Armies; Housing; Fortifications and Works; Movements of Troops; Equipment; Food, Forage and Supply; Cavalry, Artillery, Engineer and Infantry Training; Machine-Gun Corps; Tanks; Munitions; Remounts; Mechanical Transport; War Finance, Pay, &c.; National Service; Women's Work with the Army; Help to and from the Allies; Casualties and Pensions, &c.

(b.) From this material, besides occasional short articles, a series of pamphlets has been prepared dealing with most of the subjects named in these subject-headings. Some of the shorter articles and pamphlets have been sent to newspapers at home and in the Dominions, either directly or through the National War Aims Committee. Many of the pamphlets have been issued by the Press Bureau to the Press as a basis upon which newspaper writers could prepare articles. They have also been distributed to the Ministry of Information and to Military Attaches for dissemination in Allied and neutral countries, and some have been sent to foreign officers desirous of information on the British military system.

(c.) In addition to this series of pamphlets, the subdivision prepared from the original war diaries, a number of regimental war histories for publication in the respective counties. It also composed a series of pamphlets on the work of India and the Dominions in the war, and a comprehensive account, since printed, of the campaigns of 1917. It has prepared lectures, for use in training centres and depots, on such subjects as "The Origins of the War" and "German War Aims," and has written a number of leaflets for the active service Army schools series. The *Field Almanac* for 1918 was prepared in this subdivision. Two books have also been published: Captain Basil Williams' "Raising and Training of the New Armies" (Constable, 1918), and Captain G.S. Gordon's "Mons and the Retreat," issued both in America and England with a preface by Lord French.

(d.) The amount and accessibility of the information collected by the subdivision led to many special requests for details, statistics, &c., from its files, both by the Ministry of Information, and, more occasionally, by foreign correspondents, journalists, &c.

The value of the collection has been recognized by the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence, which has requested that it may be transferred to them for use in compiling the official history of the war. The request was granted and the files have been received for and transferred.

Captain Basil Williams was in charge of the subdivision from its inception to July, 1918, and Captain G.S. Gordon from that date until its demobilization on 23rd November, 1918.

### 3. M.I. 7 (b) (3). *Propaganda distribution in the Dominions and the East.*

This subdivision was started in January, 1917, under Lieut.-Colonel H.A. Pakenham, C.M.G., as a result of the negotiations described on page 2, for improving the service of propaganda articles to the overseas Colonies and the Dominions. On the transfer of Lieut.-Colonel Pakenham to M.I. 5 in March, 1917, the subdivision was taken over by Major B.R. Cooper. The staff has varied in strength. In October, 1917, it consisted of one distribution officer and two artists, and rose in the summer of 1918 to three officers for distribution and Oriental work and an average of three artists.

(a.) *Colonies and Dominions.* - A list of 200 newspapers was supplied by the Royal Colonial Institute in January, 1917; the papers were studied in the newsroom of the Institute, and distribution begun of matter thought suitable for each. By 1918 the number of newspapers on the distribution list had risen to 250.

As a rule it was found possible to use each article in eight or ten papers in different parts of the Dominions. Semi-official documents, such as summaries and despatches, were sent to all the papers on the list.

In December, 1917, the Empire Press Union suggested that those papers which had correspondents in London who were members of the Union should receive their articles through their correspondents instead of direct. The suggestion was adopted in January, 1918, and worked satisfactorily.

In May, 1918, at the request of the Air Ministry Propaganda Section, M.I. 7. (b) undertook the distribution of their articles as well as of its own. These articles were accordingly distributed, with the others, to the Dominion Press. Between May and August, 1918, a number of articles were also distributed on behalf of the Ministry of Information.

In July, 1918, on the formation of the American and Colonial Section of the Ministry of Information, it was decided that articles should no longer be sent out under the auspices of the Royal Colonial Institute, which is a private institution, but in the name of the Ministry of Information. The covering letter was altered accordingly, the method of distribution remaining unchanged.

The total number of copies of articles sent out between 1st January, 1917, and 23rd November, 1918, was 41,891, excluding summaries, despatches, pamphlets, &c., which were circulated broadcast.

One-third of the papers on the distribution list were not available for inspection, and returns were not available for most of the articles sent out in the last 4 months of 1918; but at least 8,000 insertions were observed in the Colonial Press.

Full advantage has been taken throughout of the services of the artists attached.

(b.) *Propaganda in the East.* - The distribution of propaganda in Egypt, Palestine and Mesopotamia was entrusted to M.I. 7 (b) (3) in March, 1918. In this respect the subdivision maintained liaison between General Headquarters, Cairo - which was the distribution agency for propaganda in the Near East - and the Foreign Office and Ministry of Information. Oriental publications were also received from Cairo, arrangements made for their publication, and summaries of their contents circulated to the different departments interested. Arrangements were also made for the translation of any articles that were of interest to M.I. 7 (b).

#### 4. M.I. 7 (b) (4). - *Propaganda Library and Aerial Propaganda over Enemy Lines* -

This subdivision was started with the appointment of Captain Chalmers Mitchell, F.R.S., in June, 1916, to examine, analyse, and report on the Propaganda Library of the subsection referred to on page 2.

(a.) *Propaganda Library.* - A catalogue of the library, which numbered some 2,000 to 3,000 books and pamphlets, and included practically all enemy war publications,

other than newspapers, to that date, was printed in 1917 from the MSS lists prepared by M.I. 9, and various supplements, were subsequently issued.

A comprehensive report was also prepared and printed, summarizing the contents of the library and indicating the general lines of enemy propaganda, including the use made of British authors. The report was widely distributed, copies being sent to the War Cabinet, the Admiralty, the Military Mission in France, the Department of Information, the British Museum, and public and University libraries in various parts of the country.

(b.) *Aerial Propaganda.* - The production of propaganda literature for distribution by aeroplane over the enemy lines was begun in M.I. 7 (b) before the end of 1916, and was continued with increasing volume and success throughout 1917.

For the production of this propaganda M.I. 7 (b) (4), under Captain Chalmers Mitchell, was made responsible; and, on the publication of the Propaganda Library Report mentioned above, it became the subdivision's main duty.

The propaganda literature produced was of the following kinds:-

- (1.) Reproductions of German prisoner of war letters and postcards, received either from General Headquarters, France, or through the Postal Censorship (M.I. 9), and selected by M.I. 7 (b) (4), as showing the good treatment of prisoners in England.
- (2.) Reproductions of photo postcards of prisoners of war, or groups taken in prisoner of war camps in England.
- (3.) Prisoner of war photo books, as arranged for by General Headquarters, France, and supplied by Wellington House.
- (4.) Leaflets of an "inflammatory" and socialistic nature, produced by M.I. 7(b) (4), urging German troops to surrender and stop the war. Later on, cartoons were designed to produce the same effect.
- (5.) Leaflets designed to give to the German troops information which had been withheld from them by their own authorities, e.g., the numbers of Americans landed in France, numbers of submarines sunk by British, &c.
- (6.) The weekly *Courrier de l'Air*, already referred to on page 5, designed to encourage the inhabitants in occupied territory.

The distributions for 1917 were as follows: 594,000 reproductions of 88 prisoner of war letters and 7 postcards; 90,000 reproductions of 17 photo postcards; 85,000 large edition, 25,000 miniature edition, and 20,000 photo sheets of prisoner of war photo

books; 888,200 leaflets and surrender notices; and 250,000 copies of 50 weekly numbers of *Le Courrier de l'Air*.

From the first these proceedings had an effect. Early in 1917 a *Note Verbale* was received from the German Government intimating that the dissemination of inflammatory literature by means of aeroplane would be dealt with as an offence against the laws of war, and in the following December two British airmen were court-martialled and sentenced to 10 years penal servitude. It was then decided to abandon the method of aeroplane distribution on the Western front.

Many other methods were suggested, and experimented with, such as kites, rockets, rifle grenades, and shells.

Experiments with balloons were also conducted, and in February, 1918, a satisfactory type of paper balloon was prepared capable of carrying 4 lb. of propaganda on a length of tinder fuze which released bundles of literature at intervals.

From that date increasing consignments of balloons and releases loaded with propaganda were sent, weekly by M.I. 7 (b) (4) to General Headquarters, France, and from there distributed to appointed despatching centres on the Army fronts.

Early in September, 1918, the British War Mission, Crewe House, to which Captain Chalmers Mitchell had already removed as liaison officer, took over from M.I. 7 (b) (4) the entire production of leaflets and cartoons. The subdivision under Captain Legh, with two other officers, was left to deal with all questions of manufacture of balloons and releases, the selection and reproduction of prisoner of war letters, the production (through M.I. 7 (b) (1)) of the *Courrier*, and the despatch of the printed propaganda and balloons to France.

Balloons and their equivalent propaganda loads were at this date being despatched to France at the rate of 2,000 a week.

The total number of leaflets, prisoner of war letters, cartoons, &c., handled by M.I. 7 (b) (4) from the start is 25,986,180.

The total number of balloons supplied by M.I. 7 (b) (4) is 32,694.

The effectiveness of the propaganda is notorious. Hindenburg's manifesto, reproduced in the British Press on 6th September, 1918, and numerous reports from repatriated inhabitants and captured Germans, testify to its enormous influence on the enemy. A German officer, in a private letter, said latterly that the 100,000 leaflets we showered down on his nation every day had done more than anything else to show the people where they stood, what they had to expect, and who was responsible for their ruin. It should be noted that up to the time of the publication of Hindenburg's manifesto the whole British propaganda material distributed

emanated from M.I. 7 (b). It was not till later, in September, 1918, that the pamphlets from Crewe House reached General Headquarters.

5. M.I. 7 (b) (5). - *Summaries of Home Press.*

M.I. 7 (b) (5) was formed early in November, 1917, under Major Goldman, to produce daily summaries of all matter in the Home Press having a bearing on the war. The maximum number of staff has been 15, including the officer in charge, two summary writers, 11 leading officers and one record and filing officer.

The number of summaries produced was increased as time went on. The following were being issued on 21st November, 1918:-

*Daily -*

- 9.30 a.m. - Brief summary of London morning Press.
- 2.30 p.m. - Considered summary of London and Provincial Press.
- 2.30 p.m. - Summary on Russian affairs.
- 5.00 p.m. - Summary of London evening Press.

*Weekly -*

- Monday. - Summary of Labour Press.
- Tuesday. - Summary of weekly Press.
- Wednesday. - Summary of weekly Provincial Press.

The 9.30 a.m. summary had a small circulation among heads of branches in the War Office. The Russian summary was circulated only to Branches concerned and to the Foreign Office. Other summaries had a circulation of about 150 copies, being sent to His Majesty the King, the Members of the War Cabinet, Secretaries of State, various Government Departments, General Headquarters (France and Italy), and to various branches of the War Office.

About 550 newspapers were read per week, including all London daily and Sunday papers, the 30 leading Provincial daily papers, all weeklies of importance, all the principal Labour and pacifist newspapers, the religious Press, and some 70 weekly provincial newspapers.

Each of the principal summaries was issued under six main headings, viz., Military, Foreign Politics, Home Politics, Labour, Food, and Shipping. Broadly, the line adopted was to deal with all editorial comment, news from military and foreign correspondents, reports of meetings, strikes, protests, &c. Official news was not as a rule dealt with as such.

Under the supervision of the officer-in-charge, the general policy was guided by the senior summary writer, the junior summary writer dealing with the allocation of work, &c. A certain set of papers was allocated (usually in geographical groups) to

each reading officer so that he might become familiar with them, and these reading officers produced their "copy" on slips under their appropriate headings. The summary writer then built up the various reports into a comprehensive summary, in the course of which general tendencies could now be indicated. Officers with peculiar knowledge were usually confined to certain subjects, e.g., Russian affairs, pacifism, &c.

Each newspaper was indexed by means of adhesive slips, on which items of special interest were recorded, and these items entered in a card index. All newspapers were filed for at least 3 months.

This filing and index system proved to be of value on many occasions, as, for instance, when the Prime Minister was supplied with a complete series of the attacks upon himself and the Government in connection with the "Robertson" affair.

In addition, special reports were compiled for the use of the authorities, showing the tendencies of the Press on matters of importance, such as the League of Nations. When the question of peace negotiations and conditions became topical special weekly *résumés* were issued of the views of the Press.

Special reports were also made from time to time on journals of a mischievous or suspect character, with a view either to legal action or the prohibition of export abroad; and attention was constantly drawn to the utterances and writings of persons engaged in pacifist and revolutionary propaganda.

A task which fell to the sub-division later in its career was that of sending to the forces in Russia a daily telegram giving all news of importance.

6. M.I. 7 (b) (6). *Liaison with Press Representatives and arrangements for Official Press Lectures, &c., Cable and Wireless Propaganda.*

(a.) This subsection was originally created, under Captain du Vallon, to provide a link between the War Office and the representatives of the Press. The need of some such medium for the issue of authoritative information, whether for publication or, confidentially, for guidance, had long been felt, and when the system of official lectures mentioned on page 2 was inaugurated, the supervision of the arrangements was entrusted to M.I. 7 (b) (6).

These lectures were given by the Director of Military Operations or his representative.

They began on 26th October, 1916, with a weekly lecture to American correspondents; and later, in May, 1917, after the entry of America into the war, this lecture was thrown open to accredited Dominions, Allied and neutral correspondents.



A separate weekly lecture was also started in December, 1917, for representatives of the British Press, to which, from April, 1918, Dominion correspondents were also admitted.

The British Press representatives were under the control of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association, which was responsible that no unauthorized person was admitted. This was secured by a system of permits. The Dominion, neutral and Allied correspondents were under the charge of the Ministry of Information, which accepted the same responsibility.

The lectures were attended by from 30 to 50 correspondents and were very successful. They supplied a great deal, if not all, of the information required on the military situation, and afforded opportunities of asking questions. Even if no full answer could be given to these questions, it was at least possible to point out why a full answer could not be given.

To prevent misunderstanding, a typed copy of the lecture was issued to each representative before leaving, in which the publishable and confidential matter were clearly distinguished. With very few exceptions this distinction was loyally observed.

The lectures had originally been intended to be used as a basis for leading articles, and to assist editors in checking the statements of their correspondents; but as time went on the custom grew up in the Press of giving a paraphrased summary of the lecture, and ascribing it to "a high military authority," "the British General Staff," &c. This occasioned some difficulties particularly on the appointment of a French General as Generalissimo; and early in June, 1918, it was prohibited (though the publication of the paraphrase was still permitted).

(b.) Another branch of the work of M.I. 7 (b) (6) was the production of various military summaries for transmission by cable and wireless.

A weekly summary of operations on all fronts was prepared for the Ministry of Information, and cabled to His Majesty's officials in foreign countries. Later, this summary was issued also to the British Provincial Press.

A tri-weekly military article of 200-300 words was prepared for the Ministry of Information for the Carnarvon Wireless Service. It was headed "Military Correspondent of the British Wireless Service," and was intended to inspire neutrals with belief and confidence in the Allies' cause. It was not always easy to combine this policy with the necessity of impressing the gravity of the situation on our Allies; but it was clear that the articles were intended for neutrals, and this, on the whole, our Allies understood. It was, for instance, considered more important to point out Germany's difficulties in 1918 than to insist on the Allies' need of reinforcements.

The articles were so frequently quoted in neutral papers that the request was increased to one daily military and one or two daily counter-criticism articles; and in the end the Ministry of Information asked for all possible output, offering to send by cable whatever could not be included in the wireless service. The editor of the cable and wireless service was of opinion that with these contributions he could fight the enemy service.

The staff of the subdivision averaged four officers.

This concludes the history of all subdivisions of M.I. 7 (b). Except for M.I. 7 (b) (5), demobilization was begun on 23rd November, 1918.