

PRESIDENT FORMS TOP NEWS AGENCY; ELMER DAVIS CHIEF

**Office of War Information Gets
Control of Official Publicity
but Not of Censorship**

OTHER SERVICES ABSORBED

**Director Will Decide on Policy
for Matter to All World
Except Latin America**

The text of the President's order appears on Page 31.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, June 13—President Roosevelt today named Elmer Davis, nationally known radio news commentator, author and former newspaper reporter, as director of a new Office of War Information, with authority over dissemination of all official news and propaganda within the United States and, except for Latin America, abroad.

The President by executive order put an estimated 30,000 Federal workers under the authority of Mr. Davis, who will be subject to orders only from the Chief Executive himself. Three "over-all" Federal information services and part of a fourth will be absorbed by the Office of War Information.

Has Full Power Over Policies

Mr. Davis will have full power, subject to Mr. Roosevelt's approval, to set policies for and to reduce or expand the public relations divisions of all government departments and agencies, except the Office of Inter-American Affairs.

In many respects Mr. Davis will have far greater authority than did George Creel as head of the Committee on Public Information in World War I. Mr. Davis will not, however, have power over censorship as well as news and propaganda, as did Mr. Creel. He is instructed to cooperate closely with Byron Price, director of the Office of Censorship "for the purpose of facilitating the prompt and full dissemination of all available information which will not give aid to the enemy."

In giving Mr. Davis the power to decide what shall be made public by the government, the President stated that it was "the right of the American people and of all other peoples opposing the Axis aggressors to be truthfully informed about the war effort."

The executive order consolidated in the new agency the Office of Facts and Figures, headed by Archibald MacLeish; the Office of Government Reports, headed by Lowell Mellett; the Division of Information headed by Robert W. Horton, in the Office for Emergency Management, which has controlled the press relations of such agencies as the War Production Board, the Office of Price Administration and the War Labor Board, and the Foreign Information Service of the Office of the Coordinator of Information. The office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs was not affected.

Strategic Services Unit Formed

The intelligence and other special war service activities not directly connected with publicity which have been under the control of William J. Donovan, Coordinator of Information, will be transferred to an Office of Strategic Services under the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This new agency is to be headed by Mr. Donovan, and the Office of the Coordinator of Information will be abolished.

A new Committee on War Infor-

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mation Policy will "formulate basic policies and plans on war information" and advise Mr. Davis. The Executive Order states that Mr. Davis has the final decision. On this committee will be representatives of the Secretaries of State, War and Navy; the Joint Psychological Warfare Committee; the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs and such other agencies as Mr. Davis, with the approval of the President, may determine.

The President emphasized that Mr. Davis and Mr. Price, as Chief Censor, "shall collaborate in the performance of their respective functions for the purpose of facilitating the prompt and full dissemination of all available information which will not give aid to the enemy."

Two Divisions In New Office

The Office of War Information will be divided into two main divisions. The first will concentrate on dissemination of information within the United States and the second on foreign news and propaganda. Mr. Davis will have an administrative officer yet to be designated.

The President decreed that, in accordance with his own policies, Mr. Davis would have authority to issue "binding" directives "to all departments and agencies of the government with respect to their informational services."

"He will have full authority to eliminate all overlapping and duplication and to discontinue in any department any informational activity which is not necessary or useful to the war effort," a White House statement said.

"While the actual information service of the different departments and agencies will continue to remain with such departments and agencies, their informational activities must conform to the directives issued by the Director of the Office of War Information."

Mr. Davis will be chairman of the Committee on War Information Policy. While this body will formulate policies, "the director, after consultation with such committee, will have full power as the executive head of the new agency."

During World War I virtually all information relating to the war was given out through the Creel committee, but Mr. Creel's powers with regard to the various departments and agencies were not nearly as great as are those given to Mr. Davis.

It was not believed that Mr. Davis would issue all communiqués and releases through the Office of War Information. He was expected to continue the present system by which the various departments and agencies issue their own releases. Mr. Davis has the power, nevertheless, to do as he sees fit. The order states that "the director may exercise his powers, authorities and duties through such officials or agencies and in such manner as he may determine."

Powers of the Director

The director was authorized specifically to do these things:

1. Use the press, radio and motion pictures for information programs designed to form an intelligent public understanding of the war and of government programs.
2. Coordinate Federal activities to assure "an accurate and consist-

ping and repetition of duties and personnel.

"But I don't know yet just how those agencies will be affected," he added.

He said his staff would be composed of persons dropped from agencies where "overlapping" was found and that he did not believe new employees would be engaged.

The office would have an administrative officer to handle executive matters, Mr. Davis said, adding, "Which will be a relief to me; I've never been an executive."

ent flow of war information to the United States and the world."

3. Obtain, study and analyze information on the war and decide when agencies were to make it public and how.
4. Review, clear and approve Federally-sponsored radio and motion picture programs.
5. Maintain liaison with information agencies of the other United Nations for correlation purposes.

The publicity work of some agencies may be decreased or ended, the executive order indicated. It stated that the director "may require the curtailment or elimination of any Federal information service, program or release which he deems to be wasteful or not directly related to the prosecution of the war effort."

The records, contracts, property, powers, personnel and funds of the organizations absorbed by the new agency will be transferred to it.

Davis Is Ready for Action

Elmer Davis said yesterday he had practically no plans for directing the Office of War Information. He said he would get started "as soon as they give me a chair to sit on in Washington."

He ended a contract with the Columbia Broadcasting System to accept the post.

His office, he said, would collaborate with established information agencies and slice off overlap-