

From: J.G. Ward, Esq.

TOP SECRET

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20th February, 1950.

Dear Air Marshal,

As agreed at our talk the other day I have put down in writing the conclusions which I have come to as a result of the investigation I have been able to make into the question of the future organisation of "Deception". I have cast this in the form of a Minute to you and enclose it herein. I am afraid that I have been rather long-winded and that you may have wanted something shorter. However I hope that the document may be of some use to you.

*Yours sincerely,
JG Ward*

Air Marshal Sir William Elliot,
K.B.E., C.B., D.F.C.,
Ministry of Defence,
Storey's Gate,
S.W.1.

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Sir William Elliot

"DECEPTION" ORGANISATION

This minute is intended to confirm the oral report which I have already given you upon the enquiry (I fear inevitably rather superficial) which I made at your request into the working of the London Controlling Section and the ways in which this organisation might be improved to fit the needs of the present time.

2. I am personally convinced of the need for retaining a "Deception" Organisation and for trying to expand its activity and usefulness as part of our measures to resist the menace of Soviet Communism. I think the problem must be considered broadly under three heads, viz: The three broad fields of activity for such organisation.

3. The first two of these seem to me to be:-

(a) To work alongside the Joint Planning Staff, and in close liaison with them, to consider and where necessary prepare ~~plan~~ a "Deception" counterpart to military, strategic and other planning entrusted to the Joint Planners.

(b) To study and where possible exploit every opportunity for using "Deception" in connection with other military requirements and planning, whether in collaboration with the Joint Planners, or the individual Service Departments, or departments responsible for secret weapons, or any other branch of the Government Service interested in deceiving our potential enemy.

α F.M. Montgomery's Staff

4. The third broad head seems to me to be:-

(c) The possible employment of "Deception" in connection with our efforts in the political field designed to combat, resist and where possibly nullify the use of Communism as a political weapon by the Soviet and Satellite Governments.

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This third head brings "Deception" into the field of political "subversion" and I am aware that it is arguable whether, taking a strict definition of "Deception" as a term of art and as a particularly military science brought to a fine pitch ^{of} development during the late war, it is either logical or expedient to bring this political function into my enquiry and suggestions. However, I do not think that this aspect of the matter should be neglected or passed over in silence, particularly as the Government are now turning towards the idea of competing with the Kremlin in the matter of subversion and have set up a small Top Secret Committee, under Foreign Office leadership, (hereinafter referred to as the "Jebb" Committee) for this purpose. It seems clear to me from my superficial enquiries that successful "Deception" requires a highly complicated technique, and that both this technique, and the channels which it must use, would in many respects be similar for political "Deception/Subversion" as for purely military "Deception". But of course subject to the obvious rider that whereas the ⁽ⁱ⁾ controlling voice in military "Deception" must lie with the Chiefs of Staff organisation and the Service ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Departments, the leadership of control in the political field must rest with the Foreign Office.

Yes but it is essential that the two should be closely linked and that each should work as the knowledge of what the other is doing.

5. I think that the best way of setting out my very rough ideas as to how the organisation might be perfected, and arguably enlarged, is to relate them to what seem to me the present deficiencies.

These I suggest are as follows:-

- (i) The need for more practical terms of reference. ✓
- (ii) The need for a definite place for the "Deception" Organisation in the inter-Service machinery for planning and Co-ordination.
- (iii) The lack of clear direction from the highest authority that "Deception" is important and is to be given its voice and opportunity wherever possible.

(iv) ...

- (iv) The need to have at the head of the "Deception" Organisation a vigorous personality with the right qualifications and direct access at high level to officers and officials responsible for military and political policy in Whitehall.
- (v) New machinery to draw on suitable sources, both military and political, for fresh ideas for possible operations.
- (vi) A closer link between ^{the} "Deception" Organisation and the competent officials in the Foreign Office (without prejudice to the decision on the points mentioned above whether or not the "Deception" Organisation could play any direct part in political operations under the "Jebb" Committee).

6. Terms of Reference. (i)

I submit that these as they stand at present for the London Controlling Section are impossibly grandiose, with their reference to the deterrence and if possible prevention of the Soviet Union and her Satellites from embarking on armed aggression. It seems to me that to give what is at present a tiny, and could never be more than a small, organisation like the L.C.S. such a tremendous task is bad psychologically since it leads to ^{a feeling of} ~~leading to~~ frustration and futility. This is admittedly not a very important point, but I suggest that there would be an advantage in re-casting terms of reference on more practical lines, in the sense that the organisation's task was (in addition to its routine functions such as keeping a library, planning for expansion in the event of war, etc.) to collaborate with the appropriate military and civilian departments in proposing or processing ideas for the "Deception" of our potential enemies (within the limits of policies as laid down from above) and ensuring that agreed schemes were put into execution through suitable, available, mechanism. Actual terms of reference could only be provided after appropriate decisions have been taken as to the future scope of the organisation. If it were decided to entrust it with any part in political subversion then careful wording would be required to

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define the respective fields in which responsibility lay to Chiefs of Staff or to the Foreign Office etc.

7. Place in military planning machine. (ii)

It seems to me that this point is already met by the present proposal in the paper by the Joint Planning Staff, whereby a special new "Deception" Section would be established alongside the "S" and "O" Sections of the Joint Planning organisation. I do not think I need elaborate, except to assume that:

- (a) this "Deception" Sub-Section would be given sufficient authority to ~~negotiate~~^{purview} and bring to the level of the Director's ^{of} Plans, its ideas on "Deception" counterparts to J.P.S., and also
- (b) to ~~negotiate or~~ follow up through ^{the} Joint Planning machinery, (where this seemed to be more appropriate than by collaboration with individual Service Departments) any bright ideas for "Deception" schemes not directly arising out of normal J.P. planning. The necessary liaison with the Foreign Office ought to be assured through the existing Foreign Office representation in the Joint Planning Staff.

8. Emphasis on the importance of "Deception" (iii)

It has been suggested to me that one reason why more progress has not been made with "Deception" schemes in the past has been lack of a "push" from on high so that busy people concerned with day-to-day work have been disinclined to give time and trouble to what may often seem to be at first sight strange or tortuous ideas of doubtful utility. I feel that there is something in this and that it is for consideration whether the C.O.S. - possibly with mention of the expressed approval of the Foreign Office - might ^{not} be moved to issue a general directive emphasising the importance of "Deception" and their desire that everybody should keep its possibilities in mind and co-operate with the L.C.S. where necessary. Conceivably consideration might also

be given to a similar directive within the Foreign Office (for security reasons not ~~of course~~ going below the Head of the Department), since even if the L.C.S. is confined to military "Deception" there must always be connections at a certain moment with political affairs and in any case officials at the Foreign Office from their experience may often have useful ideas about military "Deception" and how it can be best put across.

9. Colonel Wild has taken me through some of the individual files of projects on which the L.C.S. has been working during the past three years, and also the Minutes of the Hollis Committee. This has certainly given me the impression that promising ideas have flagged or petered out not only because of the difficulty of pursuing them while broad policy was still fluid, but also because of the other interested parties losing interest or being distracted by more apparently pressing tasks.

10. Leadership of the "Deception" Organisation. (London Controlling Officer). (iv).

I think the need is obvious, and need not be argued in detail, for the appointment of a high-grade full-time personality who could give a real push to the work and would have the character and status to achieve direct access at a high level to other departments and branches, including the Service and inter-Service machinery, interested Civilian Ministries, and all sorts of personalities in the official and non-official world whose help could be usefully enlisted. I should say that no one is keener on this than Colonel Wild, who at present has the rather thankless task of acting Head of the L.C.S., although his main functions are essentially technical. Although I think that the work to be done requires full-time application, I do not suggest that an otherwise ideal person with some ^{light} outside business interests might not fill the bill, although in that case it might be necessary to assist him with a strong deputy.

11. Expansion of machinery so as to draw on fresh sources for ideas. (v)

Possibly something could be done, with due regard to security, to re-establish the Advisory Committees, drawn from a wide range of interests, which I understand assisted "Deception" planning during the war. One specific suggestion, which I venture to mention, is that a regular link might be established, (e.g. by periodical meetings) between the strengthened L.C.S. and the Commandant and Directing Staff of the Imperial Defence College.

12. Further I suggest that without prejudice ^{to} decision whether or not the L.C.S. is entrusted with any work in connection with political "Deception/Subversion", there ought to be a regular link between the L.C.S. and the Jebb Committee. This seems necessary both to achieve co-ordination between military "Deception" and political subversion plans, and to enable the L.C.S. and the Jebb Committee to exchange ideas to their mutual benefit. Perhaps this objective could be obtained by periodical meetings or the establishment of some specific liaison machinery.

13. Closer link between "Deception" Organisation and the Foreign Office. (vi)

I suggested under ^{the} previous sub-head that this is in any case necessary from the point of view of co-ordination and exploitation of ideas. Apart from establishing connection at high level between the new London Controlling Officer and the Jebb Committee, I suggest consideration should be given to a regular standing liaison (possibly through the appointment for this purpose of an appropriate junior official at the Foreign Office) to facilitate the clearance and co-ordination of the "Deception" plans on which the L.C.S. will be working with the Foreign Office. Referring ^{again} back to sub-head (v) above, it also seems to me that an active Foreign Office liaison officer might be able to keep in regular touch with the Heads of appropriate departments in the Foreign Office and collect from them ideas and comments which would help the L.C.S.

14. The main question under this head however is whether or not a revived and strengthened "Deception" Organisation, incorporated in the Chiefs of Staff machine, could or should be given any role to play in the field of political subversion under the new leadership of the Jebb Committee. This is possibly a controversial subject and involves delicate questions ~~into~~ ^{of} Departmental responsibility in which I do not feel qualified, or authorised, to go. But I feel ^{if} that, both the Jebb Committee and the Military "Deception" Organisation get going vigorously, it is a question which will inevitably have to be considered. I say this because it seems to me from my investigations (superficial though they have been) that the same technique and the same channels will often apply to both classes of operation. For example in order to carry out successfully military "Deception" it will be necessary to embark on the long, tricky and expensive task of building up channels into the Soviet machine. It seems obvious that ~~unless~~ ^{if} we can get such channels they should and could be used for both classes of operation, and in the same way they could be used in the reverse direction to get political as well as military intelligence. Further it seems to me that the art of "Deception" is not purely restricted to the military field and that in the political field it ought to form an integral part of Subversion. Again, the requirements of the political side of the house might often influence the directions in which the L.C.S. sought their channels.

15. The actual operation of establishing, controlling and running channels, would of course remain, ^{under} as ~~in~~ the present L.C.S. organisation, with the appropriate secret departments. The question therefore concerns the best use of a strengthened L.C.S. as a planning, co-ordinating body and as the connecting link between those taking the decisions and those carrying them out in detail.

16. In addition to what seem to me to be the present deficiencies considered under (i) to (vi) above, there has of course obviously been

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the great impediment caused by the lack of clear-cut policy from on high as regards both military/political plans. I mention this separately from apparent ^{defensive} ~~decisions~~ concerning the "Deception" Organisation as this lack of firm policy is due to a large number of factors quite out of control of anybody connected with "Deception". But it now seems that we are entering into the phase when policy, both military and political, is getting much firmer and this should greatly help the development of "Deception" and is a reason for upgrading it in our machinery.

17. Finally I think I ought to record that it has been impressed upon me very strongly by the experts that it takes a very long time to establish and nurture "Deception" channels and that if we intend to take the subject seriously we should at once step up our efforts and develop "pilot" operations so as to get some more light on the still very obscured question of how and whether we can achieve the necessary penetration into the lines of our potential enemies.

20th February 1950

J G Ward
(Chairman Member of the
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