

OR. 9/P. 11

SECRET

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE IN WAR

p. 4

COS.732/23/4/58 was accepted by the Chiefs-of-Staff to-day together with Annex II by Mr. Drew. The Chiefs were inclined to mix up the Committees proposed in this paper with the question of political warfare in peacetime and they were very keen that whoever came on to the Committee in paragraph 8 of our paper on the Service side should be somebody who knew the Chiefs-of-Staff's mind and was connected with the Planners. I think it is now of some urgency to get this Committee composed. Perhaps I.R.D. in consultation with P.U.S.D. will suggest its composition.

2. The Chiefs-of-Staff then said that they recalled a directive by the Prime Minister in December 1956 on the subject of political warfare which arose out of misgivings over Suez. The Prime Minister laid down that the responsibility was that of the Secretaries of State of the Oversea Departments and in the first place of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Lord Mountbatten recalled that they, the Chiefs-of-Staff, had not liked this and they were now trying to find the directive in order to raise the whole issue again.

3. I pointed out that there had been some adjustments in the arrangements for information co-ordination which had given the Ministry of Defence representation on the co-ordinating committees at both official and ministerial levels. They still seemed to be a bit unhappy and then asked me what, if there were a crisis in the Lebanon, *for example,* involving our landing troops, I would do. I said that as a piece of information machinery it would present no difficulties at all. The difficulties would lie in the policy statement presenting it to world opinion, but pushing out that statement was something which we could do with the existing machinery. This seemed to satisfy them but I suppose they are still looking for the Prime Minister's directive and will express their dissatisfaction with it.

4. Sir Patrick Dean has asked me to do a minute on the whole issue for the Secretary of State's eye. Would I.R.D. please very urgently find the Prime Minister's directive concerned since it would be prudent that our minute should make reference to it.

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5. COS.848/12/5/58 was also noted and I made the point that it was wrongly headed and referred to immediate operations.

Ralph Murray

(Ralph Murray)
May 13, 1958

Sir Patrick Dean ✓
P.U.S. ✓ *File 120*
I.R.D.

/The memorandum

OPS/1/55
P. 43
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find this, etc.

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The memorandum by the then Prime Minister of December 14, 1955, is attached (page 43 in OPS 1/55). I think this is what the Chiefs of Staff are referring to and it of course has nothing to do with ~~issues~~ Suez which took place a year later. The origin of the memorandum was an agitation, again conducted by the Chiefs of Staff, to set up a sort of super committee to conduct the cold war and to counter subversive activities in foreign, Commonwealth and Colonial territories. A careful study of the whole question was conducted by Sir N. Brook who prepared the original draft of the Prime Minister's memorandum. The essential point in the memorandum is that to deal with subversion it is essential to have a vertical type of operation i.e. a direct responsibility from the Minister responsible to the operators and not a horizontal one, namely, a committee system, which is useless and time-wasting.

2. At the time it was agreed that the Foreign Office problem was easier because the Foreign Office were already fairly well geared to deal with subversion in foreign territories. We set up the so-called Overseas Planning Committee which did useful work for a time but has now been put into commission with the growth of the SPA section in our friends and the close relationship between that section and the territorial departments in the Foreign Office concerned, P.U.S.D. and I.R.D.

3. Subversion in the Colonial and Commonwealth territories was dealt with by the establishment of a special committee under Sir Norman Brook. The Foreign Office, the Commonwealth Relations Office, the Colonial Office, our friends, the Security Service and a representative of the Chiefs of Staff were on that Committee. In practice it did not work at all well because there was no subordinate body as in the case of the Foreign Office committee, to analyse potentially dangerous situations or to make suggestions. Very recently it was decided to abandon Sir Norman Brook's Committee and in its place to invite the Colonial Office, the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Ministry of Defence to appoint representatives to sit in and work with the SPA section of our friends. Personally I believe that this will lead to good results since it is in accordance with the vertical system of organisation and will mean that the planning and conduct of these operations would be in the hands of those whose job it is to know about it and the responsibility for seeing that they are carried out will rest with the Minister concerned.

4. The Chiefs of Staff never liked the Prime Minister's memorandum but their criticisms are beside the point. If they do seek to reopen the question I think it should be possible to show that the new arrangements arising out of the memorandum together with the arrangements about psychological warfare, for which Mr. Murray is responsible, are the best possible in present circumstances.

5. So far as psychological warfare in wartime is concerned what is required is a submission showing exactly what our resources are and how we operate them. If the same could be done for peacetime too it would be helpful. Most of the

/criticisms

criticisms of the Chiefs of Staff, apart from their irritation that they feel that they do nothing about the subversion problem, spring from an ignorance of what is being done.

P. Dean.

(P. Dean)
May 15, 1958.

C) Mc Kee Cos Ltr. Apr. 23. Cos. 732/23/4/58.

D) Amendment to above.

E) Mr. Goly Cos Ltr. May 12 Cos. 848/12/5/58.

F) Fin/Expense May 14. Cos(58) Working (held May 13)

NSB
3 Nov