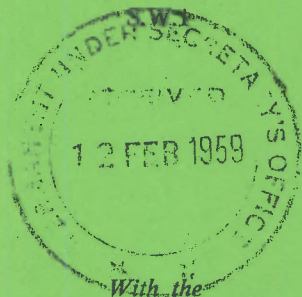


NR Gilbert Laithe 16  
*[Handwritten signature]*

Dec 194

CABINET OFFICE,  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,

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*line to 16*

Secretary's Compliments  
RECEIVED

Sir Gilbert Laithe, KCB, KCMG, CSI.  
OF LETTER  
OF ENCLOSURE  
LOCATION

12th February, 1959

(11)

I was very glad to see, from the letters which you, <sup>(12)</sup>

<sup>(14)</sup> Laithe, <sup>(15)</sup> Macpherson and Powell sent me, that the S.P.A. liaison arrangements [REDACTED]

This bears out my hope that they would serve both to keep Departments in touch with counter-subversion work generally in overseas territories and to help with the preparation of specific projects. It is encouraging that all the Departments concerned are in favour of keeping this group in being.

I am sending copies of this letter to Laithe, Macpherson and Powell.

Sir Frederick Hoyer Miller,  
G.C.M.G., C.V.O.

TOP SECRET



TOP SECRET

*line 6.15*

*Page 13*

RRP/124/59

*✓* 4th February, 1959.

I undertook to let you have my views on the first few months' working of the new S.P.A. organisation.

I am advised that the group is performing a useful function and would agree that it be continued in its present form. Incidentally, the appointment of an officer to represent the Chiefs of Staff and the Ministry of Defence on the group has worked well and has proved to be a useful channel for the flow of information in both directions.

I am sending copies of this letter to Hoyer Millar, Macpherson and Laithwaite.

R. R. POWELL

The Right Honourable  
Sir Norman Brook, G.C.B.



*312  
for  
C. B. White  
YH  
5  
2*

With

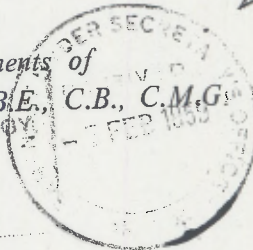
the Compliments of

St. Richard Powell, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G.

COMMUNICATIONS RECY

- 3 FEB 1959  
DUPLICATES

OF LETTER .....  
OF ENCLOSURES .....  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, S.W.1.



TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Doc 12

Commonwealth Relations Office,  
Downing Street, S.W.1.

26th January, 1959

Mr. de la Noman

(8) I promised in my letter of 6th October [redacted] S.S.A. section, to let you have further C.S.O. comments on its working early in the New Year.

I think the arrangement has worked very well, and we should be entirely in favour of continuing it. We have found the time spent in attending the weekly meetings of the S.S.A. Advisers well worth while, particularly for keeping us in touch with counter subversion work generally in overseas territories. The details of S.S.A. projects are of course by their nature better dealt with directly between the departments concerned than at an inter-departmental meeting. But it is most useful to have something like the Adviser's Group which runs over the ground in the field of covert counter-subversion activity and gives us an opportunity to make any C.S.O. comments that may be worthwhile on general points which might not otherwise come to our notice.

As to the work of the C.S.O. Adviser outside the weekly meetings, this has hitherto been restricted to a minimum by mutual agreement, on account of the continued shortage of staff in the C.S.O. We would hope, however, that this may be remedied in the near future and that we may then be able to devote more time to strengthening the link between the C.S.O. and the S.S.A. section.

I am sending copies of this letter to Macpherson, Powell and Pat Dean.

Yours ever

The Rt. Hon. Sir Norman Brook, G.C.B.,  
Cabinet Office.

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14

Doc 11

TOP SECRET

[Redacted]

23 January, 1959

(10)

In my letter of the 9th October, I promised to let you have our views at the end of the year on the S.P.A. liaison arrangements [Redacted]

I can now say without hesitation that we think that the present arrangements for part-time liaison should be continued. The experience of the extended trial period suggests that we have now found the most practical and economical method of securing a coordinated inter-departmental approach to counter-subversion problems. The S.P.A. Group appears to provide the right kind of working-level consultation to ensure, on the one hand, that no opportunities where S.P.A. might effectively and profitably be invoked in support of policy are overlooked, and on the other that in developing their ideas and activities in this field, [Redacted] have continuous access to the policy considerations and requirements of the Departments concerned.

I am copying this letter to Laithwaite, Powell and Dean.

The Rt. Hon.  
Sir Norman Brook, G.C.B.

TOP SECRET

COLONIAL OFFICE  
The Church House,  
Gt. Smith Street,  
London, S.W.1

25 JAN 1959

With the Compliments  
of

Sir John Macpherson

*382*  
*W. C. G. W. W. W.*  
*W. C. G. W. W. W.*

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Sir Gilmore Laithwaite, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

13



With the compliments  
of  
Sir Frederick Hoyer Millar

RECEIVED
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
23 JAN 1955
DUPPLICATE
OF LETTER
OF ENCLOSURES
LOCATION

*V.L.H.*  
*26/11*

Sir Gilbert Iraithwaite, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.  
etc., etc.,

enc to B

TOP SECRET

(OD 106)

January 23, 1959.

(2)

The outcome of your enquiry of October 3 last about the value of the new S.P.A. group [redacted] was an agreement that there should be a further review early in the new year.

I have been looking at this question again in the light of our further experience since then. I have no doubt that the group in its present shape is performing a useful function both in expediting the conduct of S.P.A. business between the departments concerned and in acting as a sorting house for S.P.A. ideas. As far as we can see ahead, we expect there to be a growing need for this form of activity rather than the reverse.

The Foreign Office would certainly strongly recommend its continuation in the present form.

I am sending copies of this letter to Stephenson, Lathwaite and Powell.

F. R. HOYER-MILLAR

The Right Honourable  
Sir Norman Brook, G.C.B.,

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Doc 9



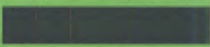
With the compliments of

Sir John Macpherson, GCMG.

COLONIAL OFFICE  
GREAT SMITH STREET, LONDON S.W.1

*R*  
*W. J. Macpherson*  
*W. C. Kelly* *Alia*

*14/3/10*



TOP SECRET

9th October, 1958.

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of the 3rd October to Laithwaite about the S.F.A. liaison arrangements [redacted]

My understanding is that these arrangements are shaping well, and I readily agree that the trial period should be extended until the end of the year when we shall let you have our views on their working.

I am sending copies of this letter to Laithwaite, Powell and Dean.

(J. Macpherson.)

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THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR NORMAN BROOK, G.C.B.



With

the Compliments of

Sir Richard Powell, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G.

RECEIVED  
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 - 9 OCT 1958  
 DUPLICATES  
 OF LETTER.....  
 OF ENCLOSURES.....  
 MINISTRY OF DEFENCE S.W.

*W.R.P.*  
*H. Macpherson*  
*M. Laithwaite*  
*P. Dean*



TOP SECRET

RRP/927/58

7th October, 1958.

Thank you for your letter of 6th October (8) about the arrangement for officers to work part-time with [redacted]

2. I agree that the period of trials should be extended until the end of the year and that we should review the working of the scheme early in the New Year.

3. I am sending copies of this letter to Macpherson, Laithwaite and Pat Dean.

R. R. POWELL.

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The Rt. Hon. Sir Norman Brook, GCB.

TOP SECRET



TOP SECRET

8

6th October, 1958.

My dear Norman

Many thanks for your top secret letter of  
(7) 3rd October about the arrangement under which  
officers work part-time [redacted]

I readily agree to extending the period of trial  
until the end of the year and we will so arrange.  
I will also let you have our comments on its working  
early in the New Year.

I am sending copies of this letter to Macpherson,  
Powell and Pat Dean.

Yours ever

*W. A. H. 7.10.58*  
*Mr. Hamilton*  
*Mr. Conroy White*  
*312*  
*V.P.H.*  
*G.P.O.*

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The Rt. Hon. Sir Norman Brook, G.C.B.  
Cabinet Office,  
Great George Street,  
S.W.1.

TOP SECRET

7



WHITEHALL 5422

3rd October, 1958

Dear Gilbert,

(3)

At our meeting on 25th April (GEN.645/1st Meeting) we agreed that the Commonwealth Relations Office, Colonial Office and Ministry of Defence should arrange for officers to work part-time

[REDACTED]

The new S.P.A. group was set up in July, and at that time we had in mind a trial period of some three to four months.

[REDACTED] suggested to me that, as the group has not been able to operate at full strength during the last few months, there would be advantage in extending the period of trial until the end of this year. I hope that you, Macpherson and Powell will be ready to allow the present arrangement to run on until then and to let me have your comments on its working early in the New Year.

I am sending copies of this letter to Macpherson, Powell

REC and Pat Dean.  
 COMMUNICATIONS REGY.  
 - 7 OCT 1958  
 DUPLICATES  
 OF LETTER .....  
 OF ENCLOSURES .....  
 LOCATION .....

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Yours etc.

Norman Brooks.

Sir Gilbert Laithwaite,  
 G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

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Doc 5  
04537

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*W. Hamilton*  
*M. C. Kelly White*  
*302* *V.A.L. 1/58*  
*8*

CABINET OFFICE,  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,

PERMANENT UNDER SECRETARY  
- 1 AUG 1958

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Secretary's Compliments  
AUG 1958  
DUPLICATES  
OF LETTER  
Shirley Laithwaite  
LOCATION, ROLE, CSI.

**TOP SECRET**

*enc 6*

**1st July, 1958.**

**Special Political**

At our meeting on 25th July, we considered the following

papers:-

- (a) A memorandum of 23rd July, circulated by myself *not read* and dealing mainly with Secret Vote Finance. *w R312*
- (b) [REDACTED]
- (c) A Foreign Office paper on counter-subversion operations financed on the Secret Vote.

I am writing this letter to summarise the main conclusions reached at our meeting, which were as follows.

(1) We agreed that our respective Departments should recognise that S.F.A. has a useful part to play in the cold war and is likely to be a continuing feature for some years, and that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] for processing S.F.A. projects and putting them into operation. (I revert to the question of organisation in paragraph 5 below.)

(2)

Sir Frederick Royce Miller,  
C.C.S.G., O.V.O.

(2) On recent experience, the annual cost of S.P.A. is likely to be not less than £1-1½ millions. So far as may be politically possible, the Secret Vote must be increased to provide accordingly. But it must be borne in mind that, short of war, a Supplementary Estimate for the Secret Vote cannot be taken in the course of a year. It follows that, if new projects arise during the year and are of sufficient urgency, they may have to be undertaken at the expense of projects previously admitted to the programme. Therefore the Foreign Office should keep the priorities for S.P.A., to include British and Commonwealth as well as foreign territories, under constant review, and operations of limited duration should be preferred to continuing projects of the "long haul" type. Finally, the Secret Vote allocation for S.P.A. should not be fully committed early in the year, but a margin kept in hand to cover unforeseen requirements that may mature later in the year, for we must remember that the programme must be kept flexible and that the essence of S.P.A. is improvisation.

(3) We agreed that, wherever possible, S.P.A. services should be provided on Open Votes - not only because of the need to limit the increase in the Secret Vote so as to avoid the risk of provoking Parliamentary controversy about its use, but also because the Executive is pledged to Parliament not to spend Secret money on

services/

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services which could properly have been provided by an open vote. It is true that any S.F.A. operations are by their very nature unworkable and must necessarily stay on the Secret Vote. On the other hand, we have evidence, including the instances mentioned in the Foreign Office paper, that these votes might have been changed to the Open Vote had been financed from Secret funds because of accounting or procedural difficulties. We therefore confirmed the principle that for S.F.A. as for Secret expenditure the cost of our operations should, where possible, be borne on Open Votes, and we instructed the Treasury (Sir Edward Crompton) with assistance from the Foreign Office, Ministry of Defence and Home Office, to consider and report upon the extent to which this procedure might be developed, what were the accounting and other procedural difficulties, and how those difficulties might be overcome.

(b) We agreed that on grounds both of policy and of finance it is to our advantage to co-operate to the maximum with the Americans in S.F.A. There is now full co-ordination between United Kingdom and United States authorities over S.F.A. objectives and targets. We agreed that, in the allocation of responsibility for operations between United Kingdom and United States agencies, our representatives should take advantage of United States willingness to bear the major financial responsibility.

(5)

TOP SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

(5) We discussed the administration of S.P.A., including the allocation of responsibility. We agreed that the responsibility for policy and execution should rest (as now) with the Foreign Office [redacted] and the responsibility for finance (as now) with the Foreign Office and the Treasury. The other Departments represented at our meeting will continue to participate in the formulation of policy and, as occasion arises, make their bids for allocations of the finance. But a central control of both policy and finance is essential, and we agreed that that control should continue to be centred in the Foreign Office. As regards the formulation of requirements and processing of operations, we agreed that the fullest possible use should be made of the standing staff [redacted] to which representatives (at present part-time) of the Colonial Office, Commonwealth Relations Office, Ministry of Defence [redacted] have now been appointed in addition to the Foreign Office whole-time representatives.

(6) We discussed the position of Ministers. We agreed that they should be aware of the S.P.A. effort in general terms but should know as little as possible of particular operations. If a Minister has personal knowledge of such an operation he should be warned that it is not a matter for discussion with his colleagues. Ministers should also be warned that (on account of the exigencies of the Secret Vote) funds for such operations are strictly limited.

~~TOP SECRET~~

10/

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We discussed ways of channelling communications on S.P.A. operations so as to avoid unnecessary disclosure to Ministers, and recommended for all Departments (a) the Foreign Office system of keeping the circulation of counter-subversion teleg. under the personal control of the Permanent Under-Secretary, (b) the use of [REDACTED]

(7) Finally, the Permanent Secretaries have hitherto met once a year, but it is now clear that in future we shall have to meet more often. It remains to be seen how often: but at least two meetings a year will now be required - in December, to review the Intelligence Estimates, and in the summer to review the S.P.A. effort.

I have sent a copy of this letter to the others who attended the meeting of 25th July, viz., Tomlin, Baker, Leitchaito, Hooperston, Fossil [REDACTED]

TORWAM BROOK

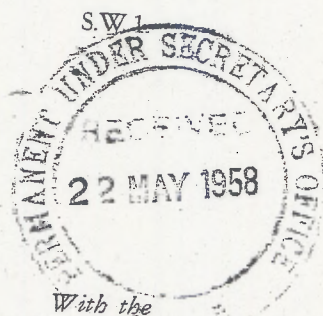
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Sir W. ~~White~~ <sup>5</sup>  
(plus two not seen)

Mr ~~White~~ <sup>White</sup>

CABINET OFFICE, 22/5  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,



With the

Secretary's Compliments

RECEIVED

COMMUNICATIONS REGY.

Sir Gilbert Leithwaite

22 MAY 1958

OF LETTER.....

OF ENCLOSED.....



TOP SECRET

enc to 5

312 for file

21st May, 1958

Dear Pat

(3) At our meeting on counter-subversion on 29th April (C.M. 645/1st Meeting) I undertook to consider whether the Committee on Permanent Secretaries which deals with the Intelligence Estimates and the Secret Vote would constitute a suitable steering committee for counter-subversion work overseas and S.P.A. activities. On reflection, I think that it would; and I propose that the Committee should meet for this purpose as often as you and the others concerned think necessary. Compton has advised me that the Committee should in any case meet about the beginning of July to discuss the financial implications of planned S.P.A. activities: and I will make arrangements accordingly.

Yours ever

MORRISON

Sir Patrick Dean, K.C.M.G.

TOP SECRET

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It is issued for the personal use of Sir Gilbert Laithwaite

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Copy No. 2

GEN.645/1st Meeting

CABINET

COUNTER-SUBVERSION

MINUTES of a Meeting held in Sir Norman Brook's Room,  
Cabinet Office, Great George Street, S.W.1., on  
FRIDAY, 25TH APRIL, 1958,  
at 12 Noon

P R E S E N T:

The Rt. Hon. Sir Norman Brook  
Cabinet Office (In the Chair)

Sir Gilbert Laithwaite,  
Commonwealth Relations Office

Sir John Macpherson,  
Colonial Office

Sir Richard Powell,  
Ministry of Defence

Sir Patrick Dean,  
Foreign Office

Secretary ..... Mr. D.R.J. Stephen

SUBJECT

ACTIVITIES OVERSEAS



*Sir H. Laithwaite*  
*file re-constituted*  
*30/4*  
*V.L. 29.10.58*

TOP SECRET

ACTIVITIES OVERSEAS

SIR NORMAN BROOK said that counter-subversive activities overseas, often described as Special Political Action (S.P.A.), were being increasingly developed. Originally S.P.A. projects had been directed to foreign countries, but of late much had been done in areas for which the Colonial Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office were responsible. These Departments had themselves sponsored S.P.A. projects, which now formed a large item in the Secret Vote administered by the Foreign Office. The Committee on Counter-Subversion in the Colonies was not appropriate for the detailed planning of such projects; and it seemed desirable to replace it by new arrangements. He had it in mind that these should be based [REDACTED] the Foreign Office, various forms of unattributable counter-action against Communist and anti-Western nationalist activities in foreign territories. A Foreign Service officer was attached to [REDACTED] and if part-time officers could also be seconded to it from the Colonial Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office, the section would in effect become a central forum for the planning of all counter-subversion work in oversea territories. It would also be helpful if the Ministry of Defence were to be represented in this organisation, possibly through the Directorate of Forward Plans.

These proposals would not affect the responsibility of each oversea Department for deciding its own policies; it would remain responsible for authorising action in the territories with which it was concerned. For the Colonial Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office, the proposals would have the particular advantage of keeping them in touch with S.P.A. projects either (a) planned for foreign territories bordering on Colonial or Commonwealth territories, or (b) requiring to be mounted from Colonial and Commonwealth territories.

Some form of steering committee for counter-subversion work overseas was, however, desirable, and he was considering whether this might be provided by the Committee of Permanent Secretaries which met (at present annually) under his Chairmanship to deal with the Intelligence Estimates and the Secret Vote. The Committee would, in that event, need to meet twice or possibly three times each year.

SIR PATRICK DEAN, supporting these proposals, explained that the Foreign Service officer who was attached to the S.P.A. section spent about two-thirds of his time with the section and the rest in the Foreign Office. The requirement for S.P.A. projects in foreign territories was stated by the political division concerned, though sometimes the suggestion [REDACTED] The details of a project were worked out in the S.P.A. section, which kept in constant touch with the Foreign Office through the officer attached to the section. This close contact had led to the growth of confidence on both sides.

Discussion showed that Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, Sir John Macpherson and Sir Richard Powell felt that there would be advantage in the proposals. It would be difficult for them to spare officers for this work. But they would each select someone suitable, and arrange for him to spend as much time as possible with the [REDACTED] for a trial period of (say) three months, after which the position would be reviewed.

TOP SECRET

The Meeting -

Invited the Commonwealth Relations Office, the Colonial Office and the Ministry of Defence, in consultation with the Foreign Office, to arrange for officers to work part-time with the [REDACTED] for a trial period, and to inform the Chairman of the result of this experiment.

Cabinet Office, S.W.1.

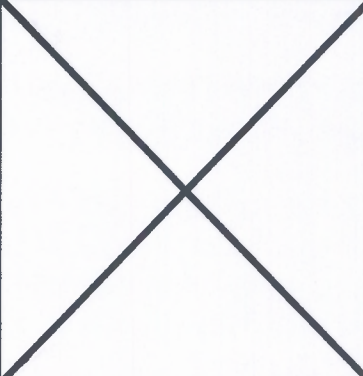
28th April, 1958

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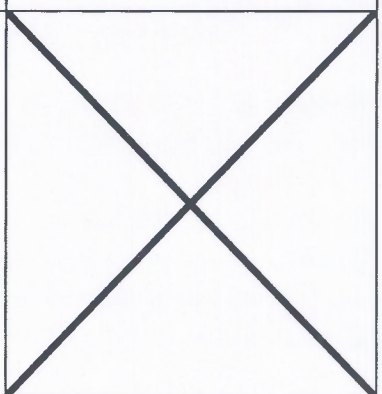
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