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1 August 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Status Report on the National Psychological Effort and First Progress Report of the Psychological Strategy Board

1. I am forwarding herewith the above subject document on which there is a National Security Council deadline of 15 August.

2. This is not a good report and I am certain both State and Defense are of the same opinion. It is lacking in specific factual information and contains too many relatively meaningless generalities. It does not really give a clear or meaningful picture of the status of this Government's general psychological effort. Except for recommended revision of the two general conclusions on pages 1 and 2 of the report, State and Defense have submitted no comments of consequence. Notwithstanding all this, I do not feel that it is either up to us or worth the time and effort of this Agency to rewrite the report either ourselves or in conjunction with State and Defense. However, I am forwarding for your consideration: (a) a revised draft of the two general conclusions referred to above, as Annex A, and (b) some specific comments which I believe will correct major inaccuracies, as Annex B. The revised general conclusions are being coordinated with State and Defense, and I have been informed that they are acceptable to them.

3. Unless you feel that the CIA staff comments in Annex B are of sufficient importance to warrant further delay and coordination, I recommend you approve the report with the revisions noted in Annex A, above, and that you merely attach Annex B for the information of the Psychological Strategy Board.

(Signed) FRANK G. WISNER

Frank G. Wisner
Deputy Director (Plans)

Enclosure:
Status Report, TS 82294

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ANNEX A

Revised Text of General Conclusions

1. To be fully effective, psychological planning at the strategic level should ideally be based on an agreed over-all strategic concept for our national psychological programs. While efforts to date underline the difficulties of formulating such a concept, some progress has been made in achieving agreement on certain broad criteria to be utilized in establishing relative priorities within existing capabilities. Further progress toward the development and implementation of an agreed strategic concept for our psychological effort can take place only in conjunction with a corresponding development of capabilities and resources and an accompanying adjustment of basic national policy.

2. The United States is not making significant progress in the psychological field toward its objective of reduction and retraction of Soviet power as laid down in NSC 20/4. In considering the total cold war position of the U.S. as contrasted with that position a year ago, it is evident that in certain areas, such as Western Europe, our position has been strengthened by the good progress recorded under NATO. However, there has been some deterioration of strength in certain other areas, notably in the Near East. But this should not necessarily be attributed to superior effectiveness of Soviet propaganda.

3. A major handicap in psychological operations outside of the Iron Curtain derives from growing resentment in parts of Asia and throughout much of Europe to a "made in America" label on part of our psychological output. Of even graver significance is the increasing reaction against the military character of some of our political and economic activity. Programs designed to have a deterrent effect on the Soviet Union are distorted and exploited by communist or anti-American propaganda and thus are occasioning resistance, neutralism, and charges of aggressiveness to the detriment of our psychological effort.

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Annex B

Specific Comments

Paragraph I.A., page 3:

Your staff recommends that, the first complete paragraph on page 3, commencing, "In the Middle East," be rewritten as follows: "Irresponsible nationalism is the current major threat to free world interests. United States capabilities for effective psychological action have declined, though some slow progress is reported in certain sections of the Moslem World."

In subparagraph 1, of the last paragraph on page 3, your staff feels that Western Europe should not be singled out. The statement that the US label has damaging effects is possibly even more applicable to areas such as the Middle East. Accordingly, it is recommended that the words, "particularly, but not solely Western Europe," be deleted.

Paragraph I.B., Page 5:

The first sentence is so worded that it might misrepresent what appears to be the real picture. The following is suggested as a substitute:

> "The Soviet grip in the Communist-dominated areas of Europe and of the Far East appeared to be even firmer at the end of the fiscal year 1952 than at the beginning."

The following is suggested as a rewrite of the first sentence of the last complete paragraph on page 5:

> "In the overt propaganda field behind the Iron Curtain, the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe appear to be the only significant remaining programs which effectively reach the peoples of either or both the USSR and the satellites."

Annex B - Summary of the Report of the Department of Defense

With respect to the section on page 5 dealing with Department of Defense comments on "Deficiencies in the National Psychological Program," your staff takes exception to subparagraphs (1) and (2) of the last paragraph on page 5 on the following grounds:

(1) In view of

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(1) In view of the "hate America" and the [redacted] campaigns, the less said about this subject at this time, the better. 25X1

However, propaganda material should now be prepared as a contingency measure which could effectively be released at such time as the President or other properly constituted Government authority deems advisable.

(2) The frequent "flexing of our atomic muscles" has tended to worry a good many of our friends. Your staff considers that further headline publicity about our atomic prowess would be following a very questionable line of policy. (Total Soviet silence about its own atomic capabilities has kept many people guessing.)

The most that seems to be required at this time is an occasional guarded but reassuring statement to the effect that the US national interest, with respect to atomic weapons, is being effectively safeguarded.

Annex D - Summary of the Report of the Central Intelligence Agency

Paragraph 2, page 1:

Your staff recommends that the first paragraph under "Europe" be revised as follows:

25X1 [redacted] CIA reports that Soviet power and influence apparently is being contained. Increased and most effective covert psychological operations in Western Europe may account for the increasingly violent and indiscriminate nature of the Soviet and indiginous Communist propaganda barage against the anti-Communist organizations in that area.

Paragraph 3, page 4:

Your staff recommends that the following sentence be inserted at the end of the paragraph on "Korea":

"These are expected to result in some modification of CIA's responsibilities to ensure that CIA does not commit itself to actions which are beyond its present or anticipated capabilities."

Annex E - Planning Activities of the PSB

Page 1, final paragraph:

Your staff questions the validity of the statement that the "Pinay Government is . . . stable." The following rewrite of the last sentence on page 1 is

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sentence on page 1 is recommended:

> "Unlike its predecessors, the Pinay Government has demonstrated far more courage and affirmative leadership, and, on its own initiative, has been moving vigorously against the Communists within the last two months. However, this is no guarantee of stability."

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