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PROPOSED BASIC ESTIMATE

ON

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

O. S. S.

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August 28, 1942

PROPOSED BASIC ESTIMATE

ON

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

BASIC ESTIMATE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARESUMMARY

A statement of the present psychological warfare situation is given, including an indication of the incentive, the objectives, and the formulation of the mission. The means available and opposed necessary to a basic estimate on psychological warfare are reviewed. This review consists of a consideration of the general political, economic, psychological and informational factors involved and of the specific factors revealed in the analysis of this history, present policies, agencies and operations of the psychological warfare program of the United States, Germany, Italy, and Japan.

The capabilities of Germany, Italy, and Japan in this sphere of warfare are analysed in the light of the situation which confronts them and the effects they desire.

Various courses of action for the United States are presented and analysed for their suitability, feasibility and acceptability for setting up an effective psychological warfare organization.

One course of action is chosen for immediate consideration, and recommendations are made as to measures that should be undertaken to put this course of action into effect.

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BASIC ESTIMATE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BASIS FOR SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

A. SUITABILITY(1) Summary of the present psychological warfare situation

(a) The Axis countries, particularly Germany and Japan, are effectively using organized psychological warfare

1. to demoralize and mislead their enemies in the European, Near Eastern, North African, Far Eastern, and Western Hemisphere theatres of war, and in the countries which they dominate, especially Europe and the Far East;
2. to win the support of neutrals by propagandizing myths of invincibility, Germany's "New Order in Europe", Japan's "Greater East Asia";
3. to maintain the morale of their own armed forces and civilian populations.

(b) The United States, on the other hand, has to date confined its psychological warfare chiefly to a less formalized attempt to convince the peoples of neutral and occupied countries of the certainty of a United Nations victory and to win their sympathy for its war and post-war aims. There is little integration of its present psychological warfare activities and little effort to gear them into the strategy and tactics of military operations.

(2) Recognition of incentive

- 1. ~~subversive services engaged in sabotage, rumor-spreading, bribery, etc.~~
- 2. combat psychological warfare services directly attached to the armed forces, which act under the theatre commander and are exemplified by the German Propaganda Companies.

(c) intelligence services engaged in accumulating information by research and espionage on fundamental social ideological and leadership vulnerabilities of enemy populations and on the current attitudes and morale of civilian and military groups, in addition to the usual military, naval, political, and economic information.

(4) Formulation of the mission

To make analyses on which are based recommendations with respect to the proper functioning of psychological warfare waged by the United States, in order to assist in the attainment of the objectives of the Joint United States Chiefs of Staff.

B. FEASIBILITY AND ACCEPTABILITY

(1) Survey of the means available and opposed

(a) General factors

1. Political factors

Available

Opposed

Flexibility of a democratic structure

Nimbleness of policy provided by the centralization and absolute control in a totalitarian state

Alliances based upon mutual aim and effort rather than upon opportunism.

The absolute and complete political power of the totalitarian regimes.

2. Economics factors

Resources and industrial and transportation facilities of the United Nations.

Resources, and industrial and transportation facilities of the Axis and their occupied and satellite countries.

Capacity, organization, and mobilization of industry in the United States.

Earlier achievement by the totalitarian states of a total and absolute economy.

3. Psychological factors (expanded in detail later)

Greater self-reliance engendered in a democracy.

Development of high morale by totalitarian indoctrination and military success, and its maintenance by absolute political power.

Enthusiasm and dependability of free and voluntary support for our war effort.

Long pre-war period of training and discipline -- social and economic as well as military.

Prestige of the United States in material things and the hope of peoples abroad for assistance to come.

Absolute control of the State over all channels of influence upon the thoughts, opinions, and actions of the people.

United States reputation in many parts of the world for disinterestedness.

The impetus derived from the revolutionary origin of the Axis movements

The spirit of protest and revolt among the peoples oppressed by the Axis.

4. Information and counter-information measures

Potential development of agencies for the collection and analysis of information.

Total and absolute control of all sources and all dissemination of information.

Early and extensive development of a wide variety of intelligence agencies, particularly in Germany and Japan.

Early and elaborate development of espionage systems.

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(b) Specific factors

1. United States

a. History of psychological warfare in the United States

Psychological warfare of the modern sort appeared in the first World War. American activities were organized as follows:

i. General propaganda. This was carried on, in both the domestic and foreign fields, by the Committee on Public Information (the Creel Committee). It propagandized through press services, films, and pamphlets. It was the sole agency operating for the United States in the neutral and allied countries.

American propaganda in the last War was extremely effective in attaining immediate objectives and played no inconsiderable part in the final collapse of the Central Powers. Non-fulfilment of the promises implicit in Wilson's fourteen points and repudiation by the American people of the League of Nations did, however, undermine public confidence in America among both enemy and allied peoples and have seriously handicapped us to this day.

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ii. Subversive activities. Most of these activities (which were extensive) were carried out by the British and French, operating from Switzerland and Holland. However, the democratic movement in Germany received strong encouragement from the Friends of German Democracy, made up of Americans of German descent operating under the guidance of the U. S. Government.

iii. Combat propaganda. The principal organization for this was the Psychological (Propaganda) Subsection of the Military Intelligence Division. Most of the work consisted of distributing leaflets and pamphlets over the German lines and over cities by a variety of means. This agency cooperated with the C.P.I. and the propagandists of France and England. By the end of the war it had disseminated three million leaflets.

iv. Intelligence agencies

The Psychological Subsection of M.I.D. was specifically instructed to study enemy propaganda. It studied and graphed enemy morale, using the information sources of the Intelligence Division as a whole.

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v. The general nature of our propaganda

The aggressive and humanitarian foreign policy and war aims of President Wilson proved to be extremely effective weapons of psychological warfare, both in converting enemy peoples and in persuading those of neutral countries to sympathy with and active support for our war objectives. One of the main tasks of the propaganda agencies, including the subversive activities, was ensuring that Wilson's speeches were widely and accurately known within Germany. (See second paragraph of i. above)

b. Presidential directives. Certain recent

Presidential directives relate generally to psychological warfare. OWI is directed to

"formulate and carry out, through the use of press, radio, motion picture and other facilities, information programs designed to facilitate the development of an informed and intelligent understanding, at home and abroad, of the status and progress of the war effort and the war policies, activities, and aims of the government".

OSS is set up to

"collect and analyze such strategic information" and to "plan and operate such special services as may be directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff".

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The functions of FCC are to

"record, translate, analyze and report to the Government on broadcasts of foreign origin, such activities to be carried on for three major purposes: (1) to keep abreast of propaganda pressures on this country and others in which the Government has an interest; (2) to cooperate with other agencies to interpret present conditions in and future policies of countries whose broadcasts are analyzed; (3) to make available to the Government news and information not available in media other than radio broadcasts."

The Office of Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs is directed to

"formulate and execute programs, in cooperation with Department of State which, by effective use of governmental and private facilities in such fields as the arts and sciences, education and travel, the radio, the press, and the cinema, will further the national defense and strengthen the bonds between the nations of the Western Hemisphere.

"formulate, recommend, and execute programs in the commercial and economic fields which, by the effective use of governmental and private facilities, will further the commercial well-being of the Western Hemisphere."

The Board of Economic Warfare was established

"for the purpose of developing and coordinating policies, plans and programs designed to protect and strengthen the inter-national economic relations of the United States in the interest of national defense.

- c. Joint Chiefs of Staff directives. These directives are general, providing for the establishment of the Joint Psychological Warfare Committee served by a Working Committee and an Advisory

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Committee. The duties of the Joint Psychological Warfare Committee, with the assistance of its sub-committees, are in general to initiate, formulate, and develop plans for psychological warfare, coordinate the psychological warfare functions of other U. S. agencies, collaborate with interested nations in accordance with strategy, designate implementing agencies, and submit plans to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

d. Existing agencies and operations.

i. General propaganda agencies

Office of War Information

Section on domestic information -- news, radio, publications and graphics, motion pictures, special publicity projects.

Section on overseas information (formerly FIS) -- press, radio, motion pictures.

Psychological Warfare Branch of MIS -- engaged in propaganda operations and limited intelligence services.

Special Service Branch of the War Department -- activities directed toward educating and propagandizing the armed forces (soldiers' guides, motion pictures, orientation courses, etc.)

Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs -- general propaganda to Latin America.

State Department, Division of Cultural Relations. Engaged in maintaining friendly relations primarily with Latin America and the Far East. Uses films, etc.

Various private organizations.

CBS, NBC, Mutual and WHUL
U.S.O.

Many others aimed at raising domestic morale, increasing U.S. prestige abroad, and improving America's comprehension of foreign problems.

ii. Subversive operations:

SA/G in OSS

iii. Combat propaganda operations:

Psychological Warfare Branch, MIS
Special Service Branch of War Department

iv. Intelligence agencies:

State Department

JIC

MIS (g-2)

ONI

A-2

Naval Air Intelligence

OSS - Research and Analysis Branch, including especially Psychology Division

Foreign Nationalities Branch

SA/B

Interdepartmental Committee for the Acquisition of Foreign Publications

OWI - Section on domestic information ---
Bureau of Intelligence.

Section on overseas information ---

BEW - Intelligence Procurement Division

FBI

FCC - Foreign Broadcast Monitoring Service

Private Agencies, such as the Gallup Poll in the domestic field, the Committee on National Morale, and the American Friends of German Freedom in the foreign field.

2. The Axis --- GERMANY

a. History of German psychological warfare

The shock of military defeat and political collapse in 1918 stimulated many German leaders to emphasize the need for greater attention to psychological factors in both defensive and offensive strategy. The rise of the Nazi movement provided an opportunity to try out new propaganda devices and to perfect old ones by testing them on the German people. By 1933, after 15 years of planning and experimentation, the German leaders were ready to put their ideas into practice on an international scale. At the outbreak of the war the Nazi plans for totalitarian psychological warfare were ready and had already been tested in numerous crises.

b. Present set-up

On the Home Front German propaganda is supplementing appeals to German desire for revenge and a place in the sun with appeals for support on the basis of the fear of annihilation by the enemy. On the Foreign Front Germany is now attempting to destroy the internal unity and the external cohesion of the United Nations, as well as to dissuade the few remaining neutrals from sympathy with the Allied cause.

Germany's psychological warfare against her enemies is currently devoted primarily to subversive activities and combat propaganda. Radio broadcasts in considerable volume and variety are sent to Great Britain, the United States, and the U.S.S.R., although their effect is probably slight.

(For detailed operations, see Annex A)

3. The Axis -- Italy

a. History of Italian psychological warfare

Italy was first in the field of "totalitarian" high-pressure propaganda. Fascist use of psychological warfare began in the struggles and quasi-civil warfare in which the party was born. Italy was on the victorious side, but had suffered terribly in military casualties and in economic welfare, and felt that she was being treated as a defeated nation. Highly lurid propaganda tactics were devised to win support for Mussolini. These efforts were at first made chiefly for home use, but after 1924-1925 were directed at Italian "colonials" abroad and at foreign opinion.

From the start, Fascists put psychological considerations ahead of all others. They consistently planned the psychological effects desired, visualized the appropriate acts upon which to base propaganda to get those effects, and then carried out those acts for the sake of the effects. Their technique helped greatly to create the illusion of dynamism in their

movement, the inculcation of which has in the past been one of our enemies' chief triumphs in the field of psychological warfare against their own peoples and against us.

b. Present set-up

Highly conscious of publicity values, Mussolini has seen to it that a great effort has gone into the creation for his use of a mechanism for psychological warfare, with a large budget.

The propaganda ministry has in the past spent all it could extract from a poor country and from gifts or genteel blackmail abroad. The total has been lower than the Nazi total expenditure, not because the Fascist will and imagination were weak but because the country is poor. Junkets to Italy were subsidized, "culture centers" set up to disseminate propaganda and enlist sympathizers, films were made (not very successfully), and radio work was carried on, especially directed at the Balkans and the Moslem world.

Radio broadcasts are the chief means employed in reaching outside Italy, although contacts with subversive and other elements were systematically cultivated.

(For detailed operations, see Annex B)

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4. The Axis --- JAPAN

a. History of Japanese psychological warfare

Psychological warfare in Japan, so far as the home front is concerned, goes back to feudal days when the Shogun government developed procedures for controlling the thoughts and behavior of the population, procedures which have developed into the elaborate techniques of thought control practiced in Japan today.

Japanese methods for modern psychological warfare abroad are illustrated by the Manchurian affair in 1931, when private Japanese agents, sought to instigate revolts against the Manchurian authorities by printed appeals to the Manchurian populace to overthrow "bandits", and puppet Manchurians were all used to aid in the actual conquest of the area.

Since then all these techniques have been developed in the China and Southeast Asia area. For both these regions, as well as North and South America, stress was laid on intelligence work, so that military tactics and psychological appeals and threats could be coordinated in effective action.

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An example of the evidence of intimate collaboration with the military intelligence in other countries is the relation between Japan and Estonia up to the time of the occupation of Estonia by the Red Army, which included the exchange of intelligence concerning the Soviet Union and a subsidy to the Estonian Military Intelligence.

b. Present set-up

A series of governmental reorganizations during the past few years aimed at eliminating inconsistencies and conflicts among the military forces, the diplomatic corps, and the propaganda agencies in Japan.

Japanese psychological warfare in South-east Asia is based upon her "Greater East Asia" appeal of Asia for the Asiatics. Her psychological warfare in the Western Hemisphere is designed to exploit existing lines of social cleavage.

(For detailed operations see Annex C)

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(2) Survey of theatres for psychological warfare

(a) Priority areas

1. Areas of resistance. In these areas the objective of psychological warfare is to maintain the status quo by impeding enemy military or political infiltration. All propaganda and other psychological activities in these areas aimed at impeding enemy infiltration shall be limited by the necessity of maintaining diplomatic and political status quo.
2. Areas of strategic preparation. These are areas of intensive psychological and physical infiltration in view of active operations aimed either at assisting a military offensive of our own or in repelling an enemy offensive. Since the task in these areas is to prepare for the military operations, all propaganda and other psychological warfare activities during the preparatory period must be integrated with military and strategic plans and other activities be subordinated thereto.
3. Allied Nations. Only territories where organized military resistance still prevails shall be included in this category. The objective of psychological warfare in these areas is to sustain morale and increase when possible participation in the war effort of the United Nations.
4. Areas of harassment. Regions which are not considered promising as bases for offensive operations and where no strategic disadvantage can result from the change in the diplomatic or political status quo shall be considered Areas of Harassment. In these areas psychological warfare attempts by every means to create difficulties for the enemy, stimulate rebellion, sabotage, guerrilla warfare and all forms of active or passive resistance as well as create doubt, fear, and social disorder among the elements of the population supporting the enemy.

(b) Groups upon which psychological warfare must be focused.

1. Enemy - demoralization and conversion toward end of hindering their war effort and furthering our own
 - a. Armed forces
 - b. Civilian populations
 - c. Leaders - to be misled, provoked to overconfidence and rashness, etc.

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2. United States - development and maintenance of incentive and morale

 - a. Armed forces
 - b. Civilian population
3. Allied - development and maintenance of enthusiastic support and good will
 - a. Armed forces
 - b. Civilian populations
4. The peoples of neutral countries - winning them to favorable attitudes toward us, unfavorable toward the enemy
5. The peoples of enemy occupied areas - their conversion to hindering the war effort of the enemy and furthering our own.
6. The peoples of United Nations occupied areas - development and maintenance of attitudes of good will toward us and ill will toward the enemy

(3) Conclusions as to relative effectiveness

The Axis has two major advantages in the waging of psychological warfare.

- (a) It began its intelligence, propaganda, and operational activities, both at home and abroad, years before the actual outbreak of hostilities. It therefore has the tremendous advantage of indoctrination at home, and the even greater advantage of an experienced and established intelligence system, as well as an organization for subversive operations.
- (b) The structure and methods of the totalitarian state provide for a practically complete and absolute control of all influences upon its people, and for the unity and coordination of all its war activities.

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The United States is placed at great disadvantage by the belatedness of its preparation of psychological warfare and by the paucity of its pre-war accumulation of psychological intelligence. Its psychological warfare activities also suffer from the lack of coordination always difficult in a democratic state. On the other hand, the United States enjoys the psychological advantage which lies in the cause of a nation that has been attacked. We also possess the prestige of great material capabilities. and finally, a potential strength lies in our enemies' weakness - the resentment of oppressed and misled peoples.

Another disadvantage to the United States is the attitude towards psychological warfare as an inherited and ingrained aversion of the people to devious methods, even in warfare.

IIa. CAPABILITIES OF THE ENEMY --- GERMANY

(See Annex D)

IIb. CAPABILITIES OF THE ENEMY -- ITALY

(See Annex E)

IIc. CAPABILITIES OF THE ENEMY -- JAPAN

(See Annex F)

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III DETERMINATION OF SUITABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACCEPTABLE COURSES OF ACTION

A. ANALYSIS OF THE ASSIGNED OBJECTIVE

The assigned objective is to determine a plan for an integrated psychological warfare organization for the United States.

In conformity with the above definition of psychological warfare /I A (3)/, a plan must be developed:

- (1) To organize and coordinate operational and intelligence resources and agencies (both public and private) so as effectively to conduct American psychological warfare focused upon six major groups--our own civilian and armed forces, those of our enemies, those of our Allies, and the peoples of neutral, enemy-occupied, and United Nations occupied areas.
- (2) To insure the coordination of propaganda and subversive operations with military operations in the United States or in the several foreign theaters, and to assure the execution of these plans.
- (3) To increase the striking power of the United States and our allies by raising their morale and securing the cooperation of occupied and neutral countries; to decrease the striking power of the enemy by lowering his morale and his capacities to fight, by stimulating resistance in the countries he occupies, and by dissuading neutral countries from cooperating with him.

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- (4) To encourage wherever possible the growth of ~~political movements or ideologies sympathetic to~~ the aims of American policy and to combat from their inception any political movements or ideologies which may constitute a long-term threat to the external or internal security of the United States; to our prestige and influence abroad or to the tranquility and security of any international system supported by the United States.

B. SURVEY OF COURSES OF ACTION

The JPWC might translate the Directives of the Joint Chiefs of Staff into action by recommending to them any one of the following means:

- (1) Recognizing the Office of War Information as the proper agency to coordinate the psychological warfare activities of all other agencies.
- (2) Conferring upon the JPWC mandatory powers to coordinate psychological warfare with respect to areas outside the United States attaching to it a representative of the State Department and expanding it into a real General Staff of Psychological Warfare.

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