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STRATEGIC PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OF THE TRUMAN
ADMINISTRATION: A STUDY OF NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL
WARFARE AIMS, OBJECTIVES, AND EFFECTIVENESS

The University of Oklahoma

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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

STRATEGIC PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OF THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

A STUDY OF NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AIMS,

OBJECTIVES, AND EFFECTIVENESS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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BY

NELSON OVIA WOOD

Norman, Oklahoma

1982

STRATEGIC PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OF THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION
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OBJECTIVES, AND EFFECTIVENESS

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STRATEGIC PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OF THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

A STUDY OF NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AIMS,

OBJECTIVES, AND EFFECTIVENESS

CHAPTER 1

THE NEED FOR GOVERNMENT PROPAGANDA

The passage of Public Law 402 on January 27, 1948, was a seminal event in the history of United States government propaganda activities. This law established for the first time an official government propaganda agency that was to function in time of peace as well as war, under clear statutory approval. Theretofore, all United States propaganda activities had been carried out as an adjunct to an actual conflict, or as part of normal diplomatic activity under the general guise of 'executive affairs.' However, after the end of World War II, such affairs were far too encompassing and voluminous to be continued under the old, loose customs and more localized direction of the pre-war years. The event further marked the end of two eras in United States diplomacy: that of the struggling new power, eager to impress itself upon the world through diplomacy which at times was indistinguishable from outright propaganda, and the second strain that had begun under Theodore Roosevelt, of an emerging world power. In the aftermath of World War II, the United States had become the preeminent world power and, like the

British before, was beginning to realize that others could not be left the task of interpreting America on the basis of their own experiences; America would have to assume the initiative and explain itself to others. The policies, objectives, techniques, and some of the results, as well as the difficulties of the Truman administration psychological warfare effort, especially the "Campaign of Truth," is the focus of this dissertation.

Before 1948, the Congress had allowed overt propaganda agencies to function only during times of war, when 'normal' channels of diplomatic intercourse were blocked or disrupted. From its earliest days, the United States' leaders had subscribed to the view that direct representation to the populace of another nation was an unwarranted and uncivilized intrusion into the sovereign affairs of that state. Such action was not tolerated in the eighteenth century, and indeed wars have been fought for lighter reasons. This is not to imply that such conduct on the part of sovereign states was unknown, but that it was regarded as disreputable. American leaders in the eighteenth century, under the guidance of Benjamin Franklin, had put together a masterful campaign of propaganda during the American Revolution. The Declaration of Independence, both in its legalistic phraseology as well as its carefully calculated allusion to the Magna Carta, was itself a powerful propaganda thrust.

Such direct appeal to the masses, completely overleaping the normal bounds of international relations, was an accepted practice in time of war, for the winner. Despite their own success in such conduct United States leaders held similar actions on the part of others in

deep approbation. Especially during times of peace, United States leaders did not admit to such conduct, from the days of Citizen Edmond Genêt, and the harsh reprimand George Washington lodged, to the year 1917, when United States leaders protested Imperial German propaganda actions within the United States borders.¹

After World War II, international affairs not only lacked the isolation of the pre-war years, but also changed visibly under the unexpected impact of rapid, world-wide means of communications that often blurred the distinction between "official" and "native public" communications. Other nations, particularly the Soviet Union, were unwilling to relapse into older customs and insisted on utilizing the new communications means to further national objectives. It quickly was apparent that, insofar as the Soviet Union was concerned, no means found useful in war would be put entirely aside during peace. Passage of Public Law 402 also marked official recognition that the United States itself was under a propaganda attack. The law was designed to be a clear decision to act and, in the words of Harry Truman, to "tell the truth about America."

The major drawback to this Presidential declaration was that, in 1948, America, the most powerful nation on earth, had precious few assets with which to tell any audience overseas a thing about America, let alone the full truth that would counter Soviet accusations.

¹Robert Ferrell, American Diplomacy (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), pp. 85-6. George V. Allen, Hearings, House of Representatives, Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, 1949. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949), p. 718. It was not just propaganda that upset the United States about Genêt, commissioning privateers in American waters was another cause for anger.

The dual facts of a vicious propaganda attack and nonexistent assets was the critical situation which government leaders had been attempting to deal with since 1946. Early United States efforts in meeting Soviet propaganda were limited in scope and nature. State Department leaders had been reluctant to come to grips with a problem so far outside traditional diplomacy. Nevertheless, the increasing flood of Soviet-inspired propaganda that increasingly misrepresented United States actions, especially in the critical area of Western Europe, made some sort of counter-campaign a necessity.

Realization of the magnitude of the problem came slowly. One reason for this slow recognition was the nature of political planning for the post-war world. Aside from specifying that Germany and Japan would be occupied, President Franklin Roosevelt had avoided any firm discussions of the post-war political arrangements until very late in the war. In retrospect, one might well assert the doctrine of 'unconditional surrender' was more of a handicap politically than militarily, removing any impulse of domestic political leaders or the American public to look one inch beyond the end of the war. If such was the case with the public, many government leaders were similarly blinded, or reluctant to look beyond the needs of the immediate objective. The idea that once all the problems in Europe were smashed apart, the winners could calmly sit amid the rubble and fit the bits and pieces together to suit themselves was both reassuring, and anesthetic.

The first rumblings of what was to become, and has remained, a mighty cacophony of misinformation was at first accepted as merely a

lack of true understanding, a matter for diplomatists to clear up as an adjunct to normal diplomatic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Many of the items appeared in Pravda, or a communist-oriented newspaper in Europe, and thus could not be a basis for diplomatic protest. United States officials were not unduly alarmed with what seemed to be little more than the usual newspaper misunderstandings.

The first leading American official who grasped a part of what was happening was Secretary of State James Byrnes, during the period when he attended the Potsdam conference.² The Soviet reaction to the American and British proposals on important matters involving the Yalta agreement, especially recognition of new Hungarian and Rumanian governments, was a violent propaganda attack both at the conference table and within the public press across Europe. The focus of the attack was British action in Greece. An accurate foretaste of what was to come, Soviet propaganda accusations increased during the following months to a fever pitch.

To Truman and Byrnes it was apparent that the Soviet Union, whether from the basis of misunderstanding or deliberate desire for misrepresentation, had undertaken a concerted propaganda effort that amounted to psychological warfare against the United States and the British in Europe. The decision that the President had to reach was what the United States response would entail.

Before documenting the early actions of both protagonists in the Truman years, some basic definitions of the terms specialists of

²James F. Byrnes, Speaking Frankly (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974), pp. 73-5 passim.

the time used must be established, particularly in regard to the two terms "propaganda" and "psychological warfare." One result of the sensationalism and ineptness of World War I propaganda and the muck-raking which followed its conclusion, is that the word "propaganda" came to have a pejorative (or prejudicial) meaning to most United States citizens. Most non-specialized source definitions of the term are, in fact, hopelessly prejudiced because of a pre-conceived political or professional basis (i.e., journalism). This paper will therefore utilize those definitions which government specialists determined were the most accurate. "Propaganda" is thus defined as:

Any organized effort or movement to disseminate information or a particular doctrine by means of news, special arguments or appeals designed to influence the thoughts and actions of any given group.

In the same context, "psychological warfare" is:

The planned use by a nation of propaganda and activities other than combat which communicate ideas and information intended to influence the opinions, attitudes, emotions, and behavior of foreign groups in ways that will support the achievement of national aims.³

Perceptible Soviet psychological warfare began long before the passage of P.L. 402. In fact, Soviet psychological warfare began just prior to the conclusion of war in Europe. The earliest notable actions external to normal diplomatic relations began with the French Communist Party (PCF). The action was a vitriolic attack in the pages of the Daily Worker from Jacques Duclos, a leading French communist, against the American Communist Party for "collaboration" with nonrevolutionary

³ N.S.C. 74, "A Plan for National Psychological Warfare," (National Security Council, July 10, 1950), p. 25. U.S. State Department File 511.00/7-1050.

elements during World War II. The same paper also printed Earl Browder's contrite acknowledgement of guilt in April 1945.⁴

This was the beginning thread of a propaganda pattern which the Soviet Union has persisted in following with fair regularity to this very day. First, an outlying communist party, such as the French, Italian, or even AKEL (Cypriot Communist Party), or a communist-controlled newspaper such as the Daily Worker or Le Matin made a public statement. The statement was carefully designed to serve two purposes. It served to alert the party faithful to a new direction in Soviet policy. Such a statement also served as a 'trial balloon' to test public reaction. Should the action have created an immediate, highly-adverse public response, or the party leaders in the meantime decided on a different course of action, such an article or statement could have easily been disclaimed or ignored. If the statement was accepted, it was seized and expanded upon as an accurate 'reflection of public sentiment.'⁵ The Duclos article was carefully orchestrated, and marked a definite change in Soviet policy.

The cause of the change was not hard to determine. The Soviet Union, apparently believing the Teheran and Yalta meetings had resulted in an agreement to give the Soviet Union a completely free hand in Eastern Europe, was finding the United States and Britain increasingly

⁴ John Lewis Gaddis, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), p. 257. (Hereinafter cited as Origins.)

⁵ A particularly interesting example of this may be examined in regard to the charges of U.S. biological warfare in the Korean War. These charges were actually built upon earlier charges stemming from World War II.

intractable on the subject of Poland. Fearing secret negotiations with Germany, Stalin apparently decided about March 15, 1945, that a new direction, or effort in convincing the United States and Britain to desist needed to be made. The following month three events occurred which were to have a significant effect on post-war relations. In the period March 27-April 1, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill collaborated to send Stalin a message expressing concern and displeasure over the Soviet attitude following Yalta. On or about the first of April, the Soviet Union refused to allow United States and British observers into Poland during the agreed-upon "popular elections." Then, on April 27, the Soviet-Polish Pact was concluded in a sudden flurry of activity. These actions, considered in relation to the Duclos statement set an ominous trend.⁶ United States leaders were very tardy in recognizing all the implications, especially in the area of propaganda.

Throughout the spring and summer, 1945, United States officials concerned with East Europe were increasingly worried about Soviet actions in occupied nations. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal frankly believed that war was inevitable. In parallel with the strained relations, the flow of anti-American propaganda increased, and at the time of the Potsdam meeting was significant enough to attract the attentions of Secretary of State Byrnes even before the conference began. Soviet-inspired articles in the Eastern European press, as

⁶Byrnes, p. 54-7 passim.

well as Molotov's attacks on the British actions in Greece, were given to the interested world press and broadcast worldwide during the Potsdam meetings.

The propaganda effort and planned actions increased in scope and number for the London Conference, which began on September 11, 1945.⁷ In many cases, like the Duclos statement, the initial attack came from a communist-controlled newspaper or radio station in Eastern Europe, which would then be "reprinted" or "rebroadcast" in Tass or over Radio Moscow. In this manner Soviet leaders could claim that their news organs were merely reprinting the opinion of another "independent" news source, and certainly were not engaging in any campaign of slander or calumny. One immediate result of the London Conference was that Secretary Byrnes returned in the mood for a fight.

Stalin placed his official stamp of doctrinal approval on the Soviet psychological warfare against the United States and Britain in his speech of February 6, 1946.⁸ In this speech, Stalin stressed the enduring ideological incompatibility of communism and capitalism. In the Soviet leader's view, the world was irrevocably split between two hostile camps. In the following weeks, an intense internal campaign was launched within the Soviet Union to rid itself of capitalist influence, deny the existence of capitalist help in the Great Patriotic War, deify Stalin even further, and begin the external propagation of

⁷ Byrnes, pp. 93-105 passim.

⁸ Gaddis, Origins, p. 299. Walter LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War 1945-1966 (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), p. 30. Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), p. 194.

Stalinist dogma. After February 6, anti-American rhetoric was increasingly an overt, Kremlin-directed operation.

Soviet leaders did not, however, launch a full-scale attack in such a manner as to forbid a return to more amicable relations. While the internal propaganda campaign was in full swing, and thousands were being sent to the death camps, Stalin and other Kremlin leaders awaited the United States and British response. The response was hardly to their liking. First, Churchill set the new mood imperishably into history with his "Iron Curtain" speech in March 1946. In the same month, George Kennan organized and transmitted his "long telegram," in which he analyzed the current Soviet objectives and motivations, crystallizing United States government perceptions of the problem and setting the tone for a more inflexible stance. It was quickly apparent that there was a fundamental change in United States policy after March, away from accommodation toward hard-line containment.

Throughout the remainder of 1946, Soviet-inspired and Soviet-originated propaganda steadily eroded the spirit of Europe while American policy makers struggled behind closed doors to come to some agreement, some plan and methodology for dealing effectively with the Soviet Union in the diplomatic realm, at the very time when American military power had all but dissolved.

Events might have continued in this manner for some time, with ineffectual United States actions leaving little doubt in the student's mind that Soviet efforts to subvert and dominate Europe would

have succeeded.⁹ United States policy makers and especially members of Congress whose partisan struggles were paralyzing the government diplomatic and economic efforts, had completely failed to understand the situation in Europe. That winter of 1946-47 was the low point of European civilization since the Renaissance. Europe was dying; dying of cold, starvation, and hopelessness in the darkness. The European economy was shattered, its agricultural base all but destroyed, its transportation and distribution system wrecked. In that particularly dark, harsh winter fuel and coal reserves for the entire continent dropped to about five days' supply, and foodstuffs, already severely rationed, never rose above the same known-supply mark. In many areas of northern Europe death from freezing and starvation was so common as to call for no comment. In Britain, there was less food available than during the worst periods of the war.¹⁰

United States leaders did not comprehend Europe's distress, did not comprehend that Europe might well starve the following summer because the people had been forced to consume seed stocks in order to live that winter. Another winter would find Europe destroyed. United States leaders were brought to sudden reality on February 21, 1947. On that day they were notified that British aid to Greece would cease

⁹Colonel Peter Barry, "Overview of U.S. Military Policy, Posture, and Issues Since World War II," Subcourse 11/1, Strategic Studies, Lesson 3, "U.S. Policy, Posture, and Issues," U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1981), pp. 3-7.

¹⁰Acheson, p. 231. In addition to many contemporary accounts, numerous interviews with former servicemen who served as part of the American occupation force leaves the author no doubt as to the accuracy of the picture presented. For example, one bar of G.I. soap (5¢ value) was the price of a week's rent at any gasthaus.

in six weeks' time.¹¹ The subsequent details of what actions were taken are well documented in Secretary of State Dean Acheson's memoirs. In the realm of the propaganda battle, another significant event occurred: the beginning of United States government short-wave broadcasts in the Russian language.

In addition to the Russian-language broadcasts, United States actions in the next few months seem to have completely surprised the Soviet leaders, if their subsequent propaganda is any indication. As United States plans for an economic assistance program progressed, popularly known as the "Marshall Plan," the Soviet Union, itself in desperate need of financial credits, hastened to create a counterpoise. In a calculated move to rob the Marshall Plan of as much public impact as possible, the Soviet Union announced on July 2, 1947, that all the Eastern bloc countries had joined into a common agreement for economic and military assistance that was known as the "Molotov Plan." Four days later the Soviet government also announced the official formation of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform). This latter organization was a transparent revival of the Comintern, the pre-war overt communist propaganda agency that had been formally disbanded in 1943. Throughout its history the Comintern had been notable for its violent agitation of internal dissent in the populace of opposing governments, and its attempts at political subversion.

The Soviet Union made another move toward full-scale psychological warfare in Marshall Andrei Zhdanov's speech of September 21, 1947. This speech defined an official, inflexible two-world view, and

¹¹Acheson, p. 217

uncompromisingly committed the Soviet Union to that immediate course of conduct. In the same period, the Cominform ordered all members to foment strikes and begin revolutionary agitation in their home countries.¹² During the following months, as the Marshall Plan began in Europe, hundreds of propaganda attacks were made on United States policies and personnel in communist-controlled press, radio, and government statements.

While political developments in Europe and the United Nations kept everyone's attention, the less-public world of the propaganda conflict was marked with a new factor in February 1948. During this month, the first known jamming of Voice of America (VOA) signals to the Far East were observed.¹³ It did not take very long to determine that this jamming was a deliberate effort, and less time to pinpoint the source of the signals as lying within the Soviet Union. The following months confirmed early United States psychological warfare estimates: the jamming in the Far East was a pilot program, hopefully isolated, to determine whether or not large scale jamming of short-wave signals was technically feasible. In March and April, 1948, Soviet jamming activities commenced on the transmission channels of VOA and BBC broadcasts from Munich, Tangiers, and London. Throughout the summer of 1948, the BBC continued to report periodic interference.

¹² LaFeber, p. 62.

¹³ Jamming: The deliberate interference with a transmitted signal with a second, locally-more powerful transmitted signal for the purposes of degrading or denying reception of the original signal. See (C) FM 32-10, Electronic Warfare (U), U.S. Army (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1978). The U.S. Navy HF/DF station at Kanae, Hawaii made the initial determinations of location.

Official complaints through diplomatic channels, the United Nations, and the Hague (the International Court of Justice, because the International Communications Agreement was being violated) brought no response from the Soviet Union. Soviet representatives maintained that no one had a right to tell them what they could do within their own country, and that no signals were being broadcast to jam anyone's transmitters.¹⁴ United States protests may well have helped the Soviet government judge how effective this technique was, or at least judge how effective the United States felt that it was, and thus have sparked Soviet decisions in regard to extending the effort.

Nevertheless, it is inaccurate to say that only the American protests confirmed the Soviet decision to institute jamming, or encouraged an expansion of the program, because such a decision had long been made and acted upon. The seminal event in the deliberate interference with VOA broadcasts occurred on August 12, 1948. On that day, Mrs. Anna Kasenkina jumped to freedom from the second floor of the Soviet Consulate in New York. The news of this event was totally suppressed inside the Soviet Union and the Soviet-controlled areas of Europe. Both the American VOA and the British Broadcasting Corporation transmitters (BBC) aired the story. Within a few hours the story, with accurate details was being openly discussed across the tables of Moscow. Many observers, including Ambassador (General) Walter Bedell Smith

¹⁴Technically correct; one does not jam a transmitter. One jams a receiver. In this case, the Soviets were jamming their own nation's receivers, and thus were violating no agreement. At this time, the Soviets were jamming only those broadcasts in Russian or minority languages of Soviet-controlled groups within the Soviet Union. The American and British protests were ill-advised and totally ineffective.

later observed that this was a key event for the Soviet Union's psychological warfare program. The Soviet propagandists were forced to admit the existence of the "Kasenkina Affair" in public the following day. Soviet psychological warfare defenses did not immediately respond, but six months later, on April 24, 1949, full-scale jamming of all VOA and BBC transmissions into the Soviet Union and its controlled areas in the languages of Russian, Polish, and Czechoslovakian commenced. In a matter of weeks, United States signals reconnaissance personnel confirmed that there were over 250 different jamming transmitters in operation across the Soviet Union. This was not just the work of a few months, but had required a long "preparation . . . represent[ing] a long-range plan on the part of the U.S.S.R."¹⁵ A year later, Soviet jamming efforts increased to cover most foreign-originated broadcasts, utilizing in excess of 500 powerful transmitters.

At this time, the Soviet world-wide propaganda campaign was in full cry, blasting anti-American slogans in every country in the world. If the Soviet Union was feeling pressure, reflected in their decision to jam incoming radio signals, the United States found itself under no less pressure. The United States suddenly found itself on the psychological defensive everywhere, as Soviet-inspired agitprop (agitation and propaganda) agents organized local activities within their own nations.

The United States propaganda program was obviously not working in the view of many. Government leaders, especially Congressional leaders who returned from being embarrassed in Europe, urged not only

¹⁵ George V. Allen, Hearings Before the House Appropriations Committee, Supplemental Appropriations, 1949 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1949), August 7, 1949, pp. 95-6.

a formal program, but a re-vamping of the entire organization for conveying information about the United States and its policies. Thus, on April 20, 1950, President Truman decided openly to commit the United States to a psychological war with the Soviet Union. Calling for a "Campaign of Truth" to "combat Communist and Communist-inspired lies," Truman directed United States information specialists to counter Soviet lies, distortions, and half-truths wherever they were found, and to tell the "truth" about America, and the way Americans saw things, throughout the world.¹⁶

¹⁶ Edward W. Barrett, Truth Is Our Weapon (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1953), pp. 115-117. Harry S. Truman, Public Papers of the Presidents (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1954), pp. 260-4 passim.

CHAPTER II

EVOLUTION OF THE INSTRUMENT:

THE INFORMATION SERVICE

The decision formally to enter the field of international propaganda activities with a government agency was taken more in response to post-war activities of the Soviet Union than from a conscious desire to carry a positive message to the world. In fact, examination of the subsequent Congressional debates reveals that any consideration that this activity would advance United States interests in and of themselves because of intrinsic value was a wholly secondary consideration. When the decision was made in 1947, the true ability of any United States government organization to undertake such action was virtually nonexistent.

Before 1947, except in time of war, the United States had never supported an organ of government propaganda. When propaganda had been required, United States Presidents and Secretaries of State had either conducted the needed activities themselves, or selected propaganda agents on an individual basis for special cases.¹⁷ In fact, it was not until World War I, with its massive political and social problems, that

¹⁷ A good example of this is the mission of Henry Ward Beecher and Thurlow Weed to England during the Civil War.

the United States government established a propaganda agency, the Committee on Public Information (C.P.I., better known as the "Creel Committee" for its leader, George Creel). The end of the war brought a similarly swift end to the propaganda agency, along with its hard-won knowledge and limited expertise.

A lone exception to the wholesale elimination of any organized propaganda unit was the retention of a propaganda unit within the Army, as well as a Propaganda Section in the Military Intelligence Division.¹⁸ Given the political climate of the times, this activity and training in the Army was kept very low key and, sometime during the period after 1929, disbanded. The Military Intelligence Division of the General Staff thereupon assumed all psychological warfare duties as an adjunct to their regular duties. In the fall of 1943, the Psychological Warfare section was re-established to monitor the propaganda output of both Britain and Germany, and to design tactical psychological warfare activities in support of the armies in the field.

During World War II, United States psychological warfare activities were re-established. On paper, the Office of War Information (OWI) was solely responsible for the conduct of United States psychological warfare activities, but this was not the case in actual fact.

¹⁸ A report, dated April 19, 1918, stated "that in the 'strategic equation' of war there are four factors--combat, economic, political, and psychologic--and that the last of these is co-equal with the others," cited in Kenneth L. Korner, "The Truman Administration Foreign Information Program" (M.A. thesis, University of Illinois, 1954), p. 3. The U.S. Army unit, a single company, was called "First Printing and Propaganda Company," and was exclusively print-oriented. Normally, it assumed the duties of a field printing station at Fort Hollabird, Maryland. Pictures of this unit may be found within archives at (now) the First Psychological Operations Battalion (Strategic), Fort Bragg, N.C.

The establishment of OWI was a belated gesture, and suffered throughout its existence from a lack of support from its creator, President Roosevelt. Indeed, Roosevelt himself seemed on occasion to forget what the purpose of OWI was, and confuse it with the Office of Censorship. The key to wartime psychological warfare was Roosevelt himself. Roosevelt had reluctantly established a propaganda agency under pressure from his advisors who desired to provide adequate information to the American public in a controlled manner. However, after its establishment, Roosevelt, who refused to think of himself as a propagandist much less the key American propagandist, did not consider psychological warfare problems in relation to wartime decisions. He consistently undertook actions which would have the profoundest psychological impact without the least attempt at either coordination or warning. Since Roosevelt also acted as his own Secretary of State most of the time, the State Department could offer OWI little guidance or assistance, only sympathy.¹⁹ Like the State Department, the OWI often learned what its own government was doing and planning through the good offices of its counterpart British organization.

Also characteristically, Roosevelt allowed many different organizations to have an "interest" in psychological warfare. The following is a partial list of the major government organizations that

¹⁹Wallace Carroll, Persuade or Perish (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1949), p. 7; and Charles A.H. Thompson, Overseas Information Services of the United States Government (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1948), pp. 22-3. Good examples of Roosevelt's independent actions are the Atlantic Charter and the "Unconditional Surrender" doctrine.

participated in psychological warfare activities during the war years.

Interdepartmental Committee for Scientific and Cultural
Cooperation. U.S. Department of State.

Division of Cultural Cooperation. U.S. Department of State.

Office of the Coordinator of Commercial and Cultural
Relations Between the American Republics (OCCCRBAR).
Nelson Rockefeller.

Became: Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American
Affairs (CIAA) July, 1941;

Then: Office of Inter-American Affairs (OIAA)
March, 1945.

Coordinator of Information (COI). William J. Donovan.

Became: Office of Strategic Services (OSS) June, 1942.

Office of War Information (OWI). Elmer Davis.

United States Army, Military Intelligence Branch (active
all theaters of operations and allied areas).

United States Army, Military Government Division (active
all occupied areas, and about-to-be occupied areas).

United States Navy, Office of Naval Intelligence
(Zacharias, et al).

It was predictable, and fact, that constant fights were in progress over the control and direction of the psychological warfare program throughout the war years. At the end of World War II the OWI, OSS, and OIAA were all transferred to the Department of State without much forethought, and at a time when the wartime bureaucracy and staff of all the organizations were in the process of disintegration. The new President, Harry Truman, gave so little thought to this action that he did not even tell his Secretary of State, James Byrnes, who literally woke up the morning of August 26, 1945, in England, to find that the size of his department had been "almost doubled." Byrnes was not happy

with the event.²⁰

Organizationally, the newly transferred agencies were not happy with the arrangement. In late 1944 the OWI had re-organized into what was to be its final form, and was at long last beginning to see some measurable effectiveness, especially in the field of short-wave radio. The move to the State Department resulted in the transfer of everyone, including the heads of all the programs, to the jurisdiction of a department that did not have the clearest idea of what a propaganda agency was supposed to do; similar difficulties were experienced in the OSS and OIAA. The transfer exacerbated another critical problem. Since the war was obviously ending many of the best of the OWI personnel were contemplating a return to civilian life, especially in the advertising industry. Morale, already fragile, plummeted as propagandists from all three departments found themselves lumped together in a Department which resented their presence.

A new man, William Benton, was brought into the government to head the organization, labelled the Interim International Information Service (IIIS).²¹ The history of the United States propaganda organization for the next five years is one of constant turmoil and disruptions. The first change was a departmental reorganization on January 1, 1946.

²⁰Byrnes, pp. 243-4. Acheson, p. 127. James F. Byrnes, All In One Lifetime (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), pp. 320-1.

²¹For the sake of continuity, except when discussing specific organizational arrangements, the propaganda agency will be referred to as USIE--United States Information and Educational Exchange, since this was the usual term the propagandists used to describe themselves in the period.

William Benton, after surveying the hodge-podge of individuals and organizations assigned to him, concluded that nothing short of a complete reorganization was going to be adequate. The organizational arrangement which emerged was, in retrospect, nothing short of bizarre. The IIIS was organized basically along media lines. That is, it was divided between radio, press, publications, and persons. On the other hand, it was also organized into regions--Europe, Middle East, Far East, and South America. The result was an overlapping of responsibility, authority and opinion. Simultaneously the organization that emerged was dissolving its 11,000-person staff, and finding that there was a constant need for consolidation of function.

Benton was a newcomer from Connecticut, and a tyro in Washington. In his energy to prove his talent and obedience to his masters, he went too far. Cut-back of function and size was the order of the day for the entire government, but Benton distinguished himself. He discontinued all OWI magazine publications except the Russian-language magazine Amerika, because he insisted that the IIIS not publish anything which might compete with commercial services. Commercial magazines were barred from Russia, so Amerika was retained. The Wireless Bulletin, a daily news sheet transmitted to outlying embassies from Washington, was cut in half. The Libraries section, largely an outgrowth of binational centers in South America, was all but terminated. Expansion of the Binational Centers was halted, and the majority of them were told to begin depending upon local contributions, and saw their budgets terminated. Shortwave broadcasts, many of which had painstakingly evolved a wartime audience, were cut off the air, or drastically reduced.

The January 1 reorganization also changed the name of the organization. It was now known as the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs (OIC). The most significant action of the reorganization was to make the International Broadcasting Division (IBD) a separate arm, responsive directly to Benton rather than the various regional offices. Benton himself was given the title of Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs.

The reorganization, while badly needed, completely failed to solve the problem of the propaganda activity of the United States government. In the next eighteen months the size of the organization dropped from 11,000 to 2,500 employees worldwide. The impact on the effectiveness of the organization was just short of disastrous, and out of proportion to the size of the reduction. The most talented, experienced people left at a rate that no amount of shifting of responsibility and consolidation of function could effectively resolve. One long-time employee later recalled that one reorganization was accomplished only in time to plan for the next one. Another commented that "there are a number of things that the Agency as an organization has to relearn every couple of years . . . due to the turnover of top personnel."²²

In addition to the sharp decline in personnel strength, funds for the program diminished sharply and steadily. The following chart details some of the steady erosion of the program:

²² U.S. Department of State, A Study of USIE Operating Assumptions, Vol. 5, p. PE-47. Institute of Communications Research, Contract Study, December, 1954. USIA Archives Collection.

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Average Strength</u>	<u>Funds</u>
1946	3,500	\$45 M
1947	3,008	\$19 M
1958	1,728	\$14 M

Table 1

USIE Strength and Funding 1946-1948

Nineteen forty-seven (fiscal 1948) was the low point in the existence of the propaganda organization. What is less well-remembered is that there very nearly was no program whatsoever. Congress, under intense public pressure to reduce wartime expenditures (and taxes) was very reluctant to fund a program in 1946 of dubious value.²³ The war had been won, and there was no apparent need for any propaganda program. In 1947, the House Committee on Appropriations flatly refused to grant any funds to a program which did not have clearly-defined statutory authority to exist. It was a quirk of fate that both Europe and the United States government propaganda program approached extinction at the same time, and owe their resuscitation to the determined efforts of two men: President Harry S. Truman and Secretary of State George C. Marshall.

Marshall, both as Chief of Staff, and on special assignment to China had not had a direct concern with the national psychological warfare effort. In China, however, he gained an appreciation for Chinese

²³House, Hearings, 1945, 6, 7. "State Department Appropriations" 79:1, 79:2, 80:1.

propaganda techniques, especially after finding himself on the receiving end of them. After his appointment as Secretary of State, he had been far too busy with the problem of Soviet relations, and the emerging crisis in China, to be able to deal directly with the propaganda program. The sudden elimination of the United States' only organized propaganda operation at the very time when the United States was under a propaganda attack from the Soviet Union, and trying to put together an aid package to keep Europe alive was apparently unacceptable. Only fast action behind the scenes managed to salvage an "interim" budget on the clear understanding that a definite legislative bill would be presented to Congress. Within a month, the "Information and Educational Exchange Act" was proposed under the aegis of Senator Karl E. Mundt. The act required nearly two years of legislative fighting to become Public Law 402.²⁴

In the meantime, Secretary Benton had been experiencing his own troubles, only part of which were his own making. The worst of these was the fight with the Associated and United Press. It had an adverse Congressional and operational impact. During the war years the Voice of America (VOA) and the Wireless Bulletin (WB--part of the international press program) had been serviced with the wire transmissions of both the Associated and United Press organizations. Such stories as were needed were then broadcast or sent abroad for reprint. With the end of the war, both press services felt a need to escape from government censorship regulations, and disassociate themselves from the

²⁴Noted in Acheson and Barrett. See particularly Henderson, Origins, Chapter 2.

government. Viewing both German and Soviet propaganda efforts in retrospect, they were very concerned not to have their product connected in the public eye with a purely propagandistic agency. Thus, after the war, they simply refused to sell their product to OIC, and took back their leased teletype machines. Benton issued an angry, public attack at these actions. Benton's premise was that, not only was the AP-UP action an insult, but that they were implying that the government agency was distorting the news.

There was another basis for the strong reaction. During this period, USIE activities were heavily news-oriented. One-half of the organization's budget went to the VOA, and about seventy percent of the VOA programming was news. Certainly, the absence of the AP and the UP production was a serious blow, but it was not as critical as Benton was obviously ready to maintain. Alternate sources of news were available; any newspaper would do well for the bulk of the VOA reports. There was another factor, that of Congressional prohibition against direct competition with the commercial services. Benton could hardly afford to hire his own reporters and send them across America to gather news, especially under the Congressional mandate.

There was yet another fly in Benton's eye when he discovered that both news services continued to sell their product not only to the BBC, but to various Soviet consulates and other foreign governments. It was also extremely embarrassing to be unable to quote one's own national press reports. In retrospect, Benton's actions were ill-considered. In actual point of fact, foreign peoples really could not care less about most American events. What the American government said

was important, and Benton had excellent means of finding out what his own government was doing. Also, VOA continued to receive Reuters which, of course, retransmitted selected AP and UP news stories which would be of interest to a non-United States audience.

Benton's timing was ill-considered because the entire affair erupted just as Congress was questioning the information agency's funding. Congressional questions, dutifully reported in the AP and UP columns, did nothing to cool Benton's ire, which in turn raised the ire of AP and UP leaders. After several weeks of exchanges, the entire matter was referred to a panel of newspaper editors, who after investigation reported that not only were AP-UP fears wrong, but that VOA distorted the news less than the individual newspaper editors did in their daily output. The findings did not help; AP and UP continued to refuse to sell their product to USIE.²⁵ Moreover, the entire affair undeniably hurt the propaganda program, because the accusation was remembered long after the facts had been determined. Lack of the services did not really hurt the propaganda effort since other sources remained available. It also made Benton, an advertising specialist, look foolish. One cannot force a news service to sell one its product, especially not in a democracy. In retrospect, humor and simply poking fun at the AP and UP probably would have worked much better.

Other problems rose in regard to Congress during this period. Increased Congressional antipathy resulted not just from the AP-UP

²⁵LeRoy Robert Rubright, "Voice of America Themes in International Crises: A Case Story" (M.S. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1958), p. 6. See also the House Appropriations Hearings for 1947.

squabble, but from Congressional memories of OWI, and from dealing with Benton. The fight in public had serious implications for the propaganda program. Until Congressional approval in the form of a public law was granted, the existence of the program rested upon Congressional whim and regard for William Benton. Benton did not make a good impression upon Congress.

One example will serve to illustrate the point. During the 1947 House Appropriations Hearings for the 1948 appropriation, Benton was confronted with a copy of an oil painting which was part of an American art exhibit that was displayed overseas. The picture was in the hands of Representative Karl Stephan, who asked Benton what the picture was supposed to represent. Benton admitted that he could neither tell the Congressman what the title of the picture might be, or what it was supposed to represent. Nor, in fact, could he tell the panel if the picture was even being displayed right side up. When Stephan held the item a foot from his face, Benton had to admit that he would not "even hazard a guess of what that picture is." Stephan, never an admirer of the propaganda operation, was highly incensed because, "you paid seven hundred dollars for it and you can't even identify it."²⁶ This was not an altogether atypical performance in front of the Congress. It was also about eight years before the propagandists dared to have another American art exhibit.

Thus, despite some Presidential support, there was strong

²⁶U.S. Congress, House, House Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, State Department Appropriation, 1948 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 415.

reason to doubt the continued existence of any future propaganda agency or organization within the United States government. The propaganda agency was saved because of Soviet actions. In the fall of 1947, a joint Smith-Mundt Committee (named for Senator H. Alexander Smith and Representative Karl Mundt) toured twenty-two European countries. They spoke with many popular leaders who were shortly to vanish from the earth in the waves of communist purges, saw for themselves the desperate condition of Europe, and came back convinced that something positive had to be accomplished. As far as Public Law 402 was concerned, it was the key event. Their report stated that "it cannot be emphasized too strongly that the Soviets and Communists are today conducting aggressive psychological warfare against us in order to thoroughly discredit us and drive us out of Europe."²⁷ To these leaders it was clear that, not only did they need a propaganda program, but that the program as it existed in the United States had to be strengthened beyond all previous conceptions of size and scope. It was also time for William Benton to leave.

Passage of the Smith-Mundt Act required that the propaganda organization again re-organize itself, and assume the title of "Office of International Information (OII), which was designated an official part of the Department of State. It also gained a new chief, a seasoned diplomat, George V. Allen. Thus Allen, experienced in government operations, arrived at the time of another depressing reorganization.

²⁷ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, The United States Information Service in Europe, Report of the Special Mundt Subcommittee, 80th Congress, 2d Session, 1948, p. 1.

Allen arrived to find the organization disorganized and discouraged. In addition to all the reorganizations and budget cuts, and a loss of personnel that resembled the holocaust, it was also falling under the charges from Congress of "Communists in the State Department."²⁸ Allen did, however, have some support from two outside commissions which had been created as "watchdog" committees to oversee the propaganda operations, one for Information, and one for Educational Exchange. Allen determined that further reorganization was necessary, as well as firm, consistent leadership. Under Allen, the organizational structure began to emerge that can be recognized in the agency's structure today. Continuing the division of VOA under IBD, the remaining functions were placed under two general divisions: International Press and Motion Picture (IPMP) and Educational Exchange Activities (EEA). Later, Press and Publications would form a separate division from Pictures. However, from 1948 on the major outlines of the present structure are recognizable.

This is not to imply that the organization was rigidly fixed. From the low level of 1947, the propaganda operation was beginning to rebuild, to accomplish tasks beyond the achievements of OWI:

²⁸ Catherine Williston, "The Development of Propaganda as an Instrument of Foreign Policy 1945-1959" (Ph.D. dissertation, Radcliffe College, 1959), p. 47.

USIE ORGANIZATION

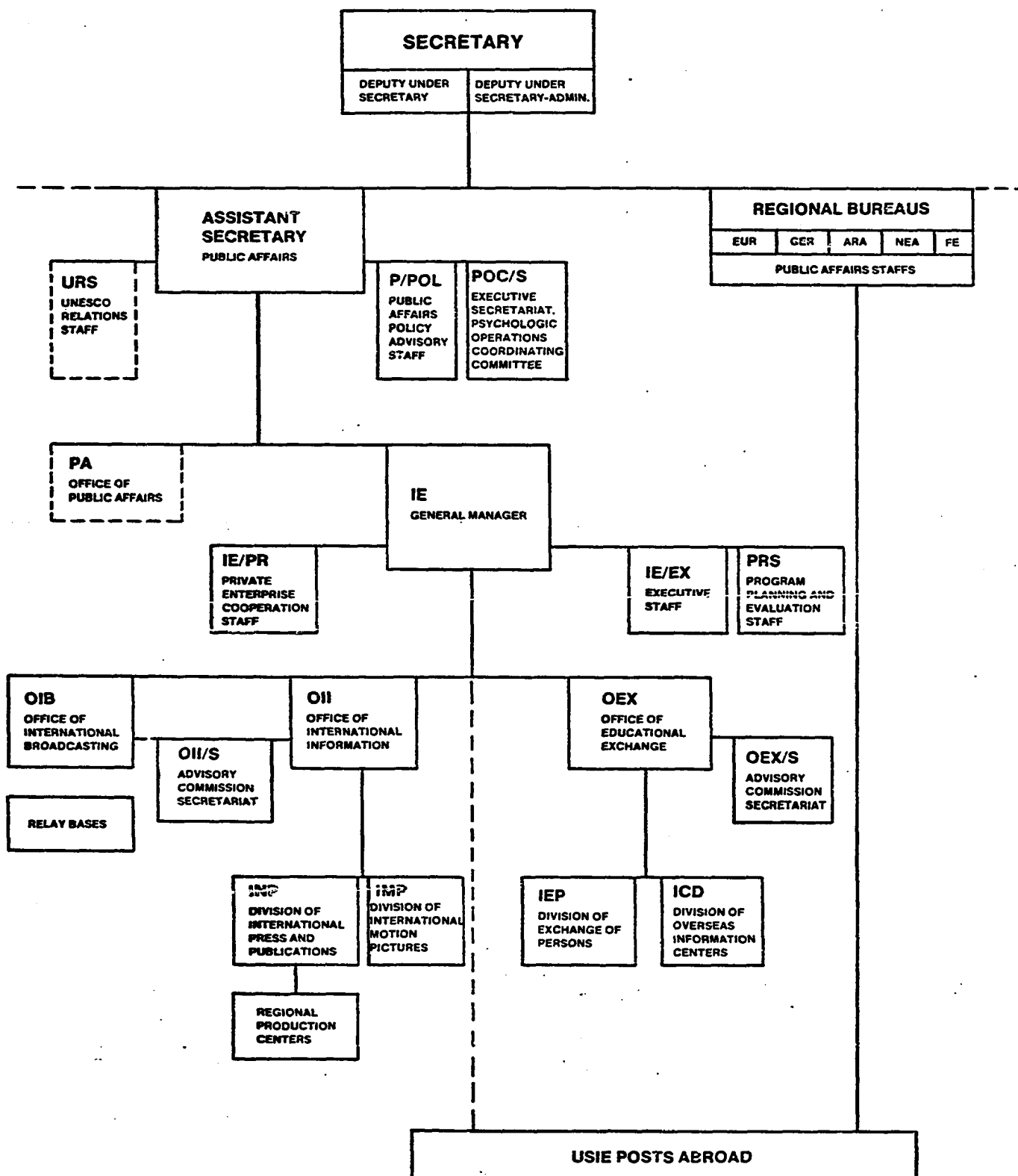


FIGURE 1

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Average Personnel</u>	<u>Funds</u>
1949	1800	\$27 M
1950	2857	\$36 M
1951	3800	\$97 M
1952	4500	\$63 M

Table 2

USIE Strength and Funding 1949-1952²⁹

Reorganizations within the propaganda operation were necessary because of the increased size of personnel and activities. The confusion these actions generated were inevitable, but they were often exacerbated because of the annual Department of State reorganizations which were superimposed upon the internal rearrangements. The Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine of containment, and an expanded worldwide role forced these reorganization efforts upon the State Department. Unfortunately, there seems to have been little planning for these distracting operations to coincide with any other reorganizations. The result was extensive confusion. Furthermore, the State Department had not yet been able to reconcile its own type and style of operations with the disturbing, irritatingly-active operations of the propagandists. Because of tradition, inertia, lack of time, and in many cases sheer jealousy, the State Department kept the propaganda organization very much at arm's length. The situation might have been resolved if

²⁹U.S. Congress, House, Hearings, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951. The 1950 appropriation occurred just prior to the outbreak of the Korean War.

the key individual of the period, Dean Acheson, had been able to adopt a different attitude toward the propaganda role.

The propaganda organization was also beset with the problem of finding more people once positions had been authorized. Not only were salaries low, but the security checks required for every person associated with the organization were agonizingly slow to arrive, and a person could not be hired without a completed security check. This meant a wait of perhaps six months after a person had been found before actual hiring. The person would then be liable to be blasted in public at the whim of a publicity-seeking Congressman. Qualified personnel were very scarce. Language-qualified personnel who could pass the security clearances were scarce to non-existent, depending upon the language. Area specialists were all too often home-grown "armchair experts" from a university who had never been in the country they were supposed to know well. The additional desire to hire personnel with press, publication, advertising, journalism, or radio experience made a fully qualified person something of a paradox, especially in the more responsible positions because private industry was willing to pay far more, and hire these personnel on an immediate basis.

George Allen brought much-needed experience to the organization, and not just from the standpoint of organizational ability. Allen initiated the "country paper" concept for the department. The idea was very simple: formulate clear and concrete guidance, and a firm, well-thought out propaganda plan for each and every country of interest, arranged in priorities, so that everyone concerned would know what the agreed-upon plan for a particular country might be. Of course, it did

no good to develop all these plans if the propaganda "word" was not getting to the desired recipients. Allen was also the guiding hand behind the development of the United States' response to Soviet jamming. This was known as the 'ring' plan, and was seen as a two-part effort. One part of the plan was centered around the design and installation of a new type of antenna for the existing transmitter sites. The antenna was called a "curtain" antenna, which had a highly-directional transmission characteristic that would allow the signal to be concentrated along the transmission pathway, thus arriving at the target area with greater amplitude, and having a greater chance of getting through the full-scale Soviet jamming. The idea had merit, because the existing antennas had first been designed in World War I and were scarcely as efficient or effective as the newer types.

The second part of the plan was generated from the philosophy that the Soviets could not manage to defend their airwaves against a concerted attack from all sides. Hence the "ring" was to be an actual ring of high-powered transmitters surrounding the Soviet Union, and broadcasting their messages simultaneously. Sheer volume and power were determined to be the keys in overcoming the Soviet jamming. This was naturally quite expensive, and required a large number of overseas installations because of the United State's poor electromagnetic position in relation to the target area.

In February 1950, the State Department tried another reorganization, and placed the OII directly under its own Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs. This "new" organization under the Assistant Secretary was named the "International Information and

Educational Exchange (IIEE). It was also internally reorganized under the "general manager" concept of the Hoover Commission on Government Organization, which placed daily operations and decisions under the responsibility of the General Manager, while policy decisions were the responsibility of the Assistant Secretary. Coincidental to this reorganization, George Allen was replaced with Edward W. Barrett, the former editor of Newsweek Magazine.

The new arrangements quickly proved cumbersome and largely unworkable, especially in the area of coordinating policy. It proved impossible to keep Barrett from dictating operations, and impractical to keep the General Manager, Charles Hulten, from making policy decisions and coordinating with his opposite numbers in the various departments. This was increasingly apparent under the impact of the Korean problem. Also, other entities having to do with propaganda operations suddenly came into being, to add confusion to an already difficult situation. The Interdepartmental Foreign Information Staff (later more formally known as the Interdepartmental Foreign Information Office, with the IFIS under it) was created to coordinate policy, and all too often operations between Defense, State, and CIA operations. It failed to work any better than the old Army-Navy-State board did; if there was any good accomplished, it was that very little of anything was accomplished. Within the State Department there was also created the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), in an attempt to coordinate psychological warfare and propaganda with foreign policy. This was later re-fitted into the Psychological Operations Coordinating Committee (POCC) on June 20, 1951. It, too, did little, which was about

the best thing that could have happened.

Coordination and implementation of psychological warfare, as well as just defining the problems and determining the priority of operations caused President Truman and the National Security Council so many headaches that they were forced to violate the whole concept of the NSC, and create the National Psychological Strategy Board in August 1950. This was an anomaly, because the NSC was conceived as a purely advisory body. The NPSB was, in fact, an operational unit that directly influenced and controlled various aspects of the national psychological warfare effort. It did not become fully operational until January 1951, and continued to operate directly under the NSC.

One would begin to believe that, at this time, the national propaganda operation would have been successfully defined and built. It had surely been through the fires of change and the hammer of reorganization often enough to satisfy even the pickiest organizer. Unfortunately, this was not the case, and the propaganda organization underwent another reorganization under the auspices of the State Department in January 1952. The new organization was titled "International Information Administration" (IIA), and placed under the leadership of Dr. Wilson Compton, former head of the Economic Cooperation Administration (the Marshall Plan), and a former president of Washington State University. This was the final reorganization of the propaganda organization during the Truman administration.

Organization of psychological warfare activities was a continuous problem during the Truman administration, because no consensus emerged as to function and purpose. The confusion over activities

paralleled that of authorization, funding, and manpower. Morale varied wildly as support and leadership of the program changed, and was never as high as it should have been to achieve a truly first-class operation. A major problem which had direct impact upon morale and efficiency was the interrelationship between a propaganda organization and the traditional policy-making, policy-implementing role and orientation of the State Department. The two functions proved impossible to resolve. Dean Acheson pointed out that in the final analysis, "either the department was not imaginative enough to see its opportunity or administratively competent enough to seize it, or the effort became entangled in red tape and stifled by bureaucratic elephantiasis." The eventual result was that the organization became autonomous and was "given a sort of bloodless life of administration without policy."³⁰ This is the background which must be kept in mind when discussing any propaganda operation undertaken in the Truman years. If an organization may be no more effective than its "task organization for combat," the United States propaganda effort was in serious trouble from its start.

³⁰ Acheson, p. 127. For expanded discussions of the actual organizational structure of the psychological warfare programs, one should consult John W. Henderson, The United States Information Agency, Charles A. H. Thompson, Catherine Williston, and Kenneth Kernher, as excellent references, each with particular insights on the organizational nightmare of the program.

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OBJECTIVES

1947-1948

To accomplish the usual tasks of the propagandist, that is, persuasion with a purpose, many techniques and channels are available to carry the desired message. Some techniques and channels are more effective than others, but there is no general rule which allows a propagandist to select one or two eternally efficacious means and methods; persuasion is always dependent upon resources and audiences. Each target audience approaches the world with a different viewpoint, with different collective experiences and prejudices, and perceives the world around itself with different symbology. The skilled propagandist must make a near-intuitive decision involving the complex relationships of media, message, technique, and target to achieve a desired effect. Before discussing the national objectives in detail, a brief discussion of these other factors is necessary.

Targets, in the parlance of the propagandist, are simply those groups, or individuals, having a common basis, viewpoint, and influence who, when successfully persuaded, will act in certain desired ways, thus accomplishing the desired propaganda objective.³¹

³¹U.S. Army, FM 33-5, Psychological Operations (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1974), para. 4-9b.

It is important to remember two pivotal factors: the target must be able to be reached and persuaded, and the target must be able to act with the desired effect to cause the psychological objective to be attained. A target may be either a distinct group within a population, such as a particular family, religion, or tribe (the Meo tribesmen of Vietnam are a good example), an aggregate, such as those persons in a common geographic area (the highlands of the Philippines, for example), or a category, that is, individuals identified through common characteristics such as age, sex, race, or language (the Jews in the Soviet Union). Whenever possible, the propagandist who desires broad-based action prefers to work with groups because expenditure of effort for return is less, and results are more easily discerned, which aids tactical changes or reinforcement of the message. In some cases, only through the actions of a particular group will the propagandist know that his message is being perceived and accepted.

To be effective, the propagandist must accurately communicate ideas to target audiences through the careful use of selected symbols and means. Selection of symbols is critical, because each audience will perceive the same symbol, be it visual or verbal, in different ways. The perception of the cross will be perceived in widely differing ways between an audience of Christians, Buddhists, and Jews, for example. It is even perceived in differing manners between Roman Catholics and Baptists. If the propagandist is to be effective with his message, he must either have precise knowledge of target audience symbology, or have the time and talent to be able to change the audience's symbology to match his own. This latter action is difficult,

and rarely fruitful; people prefer to receive information within the framework of their own symbols, rather than adopt someone else's. Some symbols which the propagandist needs to use may not even exist in the target lexicon. In this case, the propagandist must create the meaning of the symbol within the target lexicon, or find an acceptable substitute. Two examples of this problem come to mind in relation to African audiences: the symbol "money" is completely nonsensical to a Pygmy, living a hundred miles inside the densest of African jungles; the symbol "white as the driven snow," used to describe Jesus' robes when he entered Jerusalem was nonsensical to the Ebu tribesmen living on the equator—who never saw snow.

In addition to precise knowledge of target audience symbology, the propagandist must know, or be able to determine, the best means of transmitting the selected ideas to the target. All too often this is simply referred to as "media." The terminology is unfortunate, for "media" tends to place the term of reference as meaning mass-marketing communications techniques which are familiar to Western peoples. In many societies, even today, established means of mass communications do not exist, or are of distinctly secondary importance. Even today such a term is less than accurate, even in the United States, where "mass media" concentrates on communications and advertising all sorts of shiny conveniences, yet 1.7 million homes still do not have a bathroom within them.³² A more accurate term is "transmission means." In a

³²Howard H. Shapiro, "Our Bathrooms, Stark Naked," The Philadelphia Inquirer, vol. 306, no. 45, February 14, 1982, pp. 1-A, 16-17A.

great many places in the world ideas and concepts are transmitted through word of mouth, or very simple, uncomplicated distribution systems.

An example of this may be found in South America and Central America today. A key target group in these areas is the Catholic priesthood. Recent concern about "Marxist priests" in these areas has demonstrated the success of Soviet KGB propagandists within this key group. In this instance, standard "media" are worthless in reaching and affecting this target. Key transmission means with this group is face-to-face persuasion, personal letters, meetings, and a careful supply of facts to support desired actions or conclusions.

Transmission means may be generally defined. The most important, yet most limited is face-to-face contact. In this situation the propagandist is normally at his most effective state, and can take immediate, corrective steps in his symbols and ideas to achieve his aims. However, this technique is labor-intensive and time consuming. Normally this technique is limited to the most important targets. In another reference, the target must be able to influence large numbers of others, called the 'secondary target' or 'true target' in order to be worth the heavy investment of time and resources in a face-to-face meeting. In this context, telephone conversations may be regarded as a type of face-to-face meeting.

Group meetings, either in the form of speeches or discussion is another method. Although the propagandist loses some of the rapport of the tête-a-tête, the selected ideas may still be transmitted with little loss of efficiency or impact because effectiveness may be

directly judged. There are drawbacks to this technique, because opposition propagandists may attempt to seize the meeting for their own purposes, and gain a meaningful victory over the original propagandist in so doing. Nevertheless, the classic picture of the "soap-box agitator" is an accurate characterization of the propagandist using the group meeting technique.

Word of mouth is another effective method. While the propagandist himself may not be able to have many face-to-face meetings, if the proper initial target has been selected, word of mouth dissemination of the message can be a highly-effective tool. The transmitter of the message unconsciously places his or her "personal voucher" on the message with each transmittal. Word of mouth is a particularly effective method in areas lacking a good telephone and radio system, or in areas where news media are rigidly censored, such as the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries. The "rumor campaign" of literature is much more fact than fiction.

Films and pictures are also effective vehicles. During World War II, Walt Disney films and cartoons not only amused audiences around the world, but made friends for the United States and carried strong propaganda messages. One immediately thinks of the cartoons "Der Führer's Face," and "Bambi" in this context.

Letters from friends, or authoritative figures are another important means of transmitting a selected message. Letters from family and friends from the United States to occupied areas are still an important transmission channel. In addition to letters, ancient methods are still extremely effective. One thinks particularly of songs.

Spike Jones' version of "Der Führer's Face" incensed Adolph Hitler no less than Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind" did American leaders in 1967-1969. In the Middle Ages the wandering minstrel was a key propagandist, and his songs made the lowly happy, and the high uncomfortable; the technique persists to this day, and is an effective one that has been too often overlooked.

Often either the size, or spatial dispersion of a group makes the more direct, specific transmission means less efficient in getting the desired message before an audience. Also, there are many times when the propagandist just does not have a clear idea of which groups are receptive to his message, or exactly where they may be located. In these cases, the wide-spread, "mass media" techniques may be of use, depending upon the society involved. These include mass mailings, leaflets, posters, loudspeakers, newspapers, radio and television broadcasts, magazine articles, books, motion pictures, and even stage productions. Especially in the European and American societies the mass media of print, radio, and television have had a significant impact upon propaganda operations. However, it should be noted that far too often, the propagandist has a tendency to use these media, and fails continually to refine the target audience so that it may be reached with other, more effective methods. A professional propagandist must recognize that the more widespread and broad-based a message, the weaker its content and the less it is effective. This point should be remembered in examining USIE output and effectiveness.

There are other significant drawbacks to the "mass-media" approach. In the first place, the truly mass distribution and mass

production machinery is expensive, and may take a long time to come into being. A few homemade leaflets, placed in exactly the critical spot at the right time, are far more useful than ten million leaflets run on a high-speed web press and given mass distribution a week later. The distribution of the mass techniques is another problem. The propagandist rarely has much assurance that his message is reaching the desired target. Sometimes the propagandist is using the method in the hope that there is a responsive target somewhere within the reach of the particular media used (this is usually referred to as "shooting in the blind." Sometimes it works.). The wrong target audience may be receiving the message, which can often cause acute embarrassment, as well as make the effort helpful to one's opponents. An example of such a counterproductive mass message would be to advocate religious freedom in Iran, while trying to keep on good terms with Khomeini.

Moreover, the propagandist must realize that some mass techniques, however skillfully employed, just will not work with some targets. Targets which cannot read really do not have any need for leaflets or posters, except if they wish to wrap fish. In many areas of the world, target audiences do not have radios or televisions or, if such are available, are associated with the rich classes, a fact that automatically tends to prejudice the less-well financed target against whatever message the propagandist might have attempted to send over these channels. Many targets will not readily accept anything placed in public print, believing that the publisher is always an avowed propagandist, and is out to make his own particular point. This is

especially true in North African and Mediterranean nations. Others just simply do not believe what is placed in the printed word, knowing full well that such is rigidly controlled to the best interest of the political party in power. Other mass media techniques, such as motion pictures, may be difficult to use when the target audience has no electric power.

Nevertheless, in its proper place, the mass techniques can yield great success with minimal expenditure of effort. The effectiveness of such skilled propagandists as Joseph Goebbels and Father Charles Coughlin are beyond question samples of the utility of mass media techniques.

Essentially, the propagandist must select the general transmission technique for his selected, or desired target on the basis of its susceptibility: is it large, discreet, or diffused? The propagandist must decide on the most effective approach: will a pinpoint, "rifle" technique be best (such as face-to-face, group meetings, letters, word of mouth), or should the wide-based, "shotgun" approach of the mass media be necessary to communicate the desired message to the target, despite the increased probability of misunderstanding, dilution, counter-propaganda, or complete failure of the message to arrive. This question is the classic one of the propagandist; it faced the snake in Eden, and has continued to face every propagandist to this day. The question must be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The propagandist also has the less than easy task of selecting the correct propaganda "technique," or persuasion vehicle, for the desired message. In American society we are familiar with many of

these techniques, although actual recognition of the exact technique may not accompany one's experiences with its use. Commercial advertising makes use of virtually every one of these techniques, as well as other propaganda methods. This is the basal cause of the erroneous conclusion that a successful advertising operator is automatically a skilled propagandist. This is rarely the case except in the narrow realm of United States product sales. However, each and every radio and television commercial, newspaper or magazine advertisement makes some use of one or more propaganda techniques for transmitting an idea. These techniques are usually lumped into nine general categories.

The first, most used technique, as well as the least perceived, is the glittering generality. These are usually words, phrases, or images so closely associated with commonly-accepted ideas and symbols that they carry conviction in and of themselves without the target perceiving a need for supporting information or fact. For example, the word "democracy" or "peace" was such a glittering generality for James Byrnes that it required the experience of dealing with Molotov for almost a year before he came to the sudden realization that Stalin and Molotov had a completely different definition of those symbols.³³ President Jimmy Carter learned the same lesson the hard way in 1979. The glittering generality is used to transfer a sense of virtue to the propagandist's idea without the need for supporting arguments and effort. Another great example is the Chevrolet commercial theme: "Baseball, hot dogs, apple pie, and Chevrolet."

³³ Byrnes, pp. 152-8. Other classic words, which get many propagandists in trouble, are sex, God, family, and church.

A second technique is the testimonial, or personal statement. The more authoritative the source, the better, if the propagandist wishes to establish authenticity and an impregnable position. A variation of this is the "man on the street" testimonial, which is carefully arranged to seem unprompted, and the person's actual opinion. The inference to be drawn from such a method is that, since the person speaking had nothing to gain for lying, he must be telling the truth. Testimonials are carefully arranged and selected for their ability to relate directly to the target audience on both an intellectual and an emotional basis through the shrewd use of shared symbology.

Simplification is a third handy technique. Reducing complex ideas, concepts, and subjects to clear, concise statements without qualifying words is a long-standing, even popular technique. It makes perception easy for the target; no thought is required. American politicians have raised this technique almost to an art form. Since the propagandist is able to make a clear, concise statement, the statement itself is often given merit far beyond its content, especially when the opposing point of view, though more accurately expressed and cogently conceived, is also harder to understand. Americans are particularly adept at grasping a simplification, because of an underlying belief that all questions are really a simple choice between right and wrong. An example of this is the American Revolutionary flag that carried the motto, "Live Free or Die." Ethan Allen's concept of freedom was quite different from those of the politicians in Philadelphia.

The 'common man' technique is sufficiently familiar in American political history that little needs to be said about this

classic device to carry a persuasive message. Every presidential hopeful since Andrew Jackson has tried to present himself in this manner, even such obviously rich and well-born candidates as John F. Kennedy.

Less familiar, because it is sometimes harder to detect and requires some effort on the part of the listener, is card-stacking, or selective omission. Through careful selection of facts and events, the propagandist builds an apparent bedrock of truth, and from this apparently complete basis, projects as truth those ideas desired. This is very useful, especially if some of the facts are true, or all of them, because the propagandist's opponents cannot dispute truth. The gaps in the bricks are rarely apparent. A good example of this is the propaganda campaign conducted against nuclear power generation, using the "disaster" of Three Mile Island power plant. The fact that an accident, a serious one, occurred is indisputable. Public perceptions were so warped that several key facts have been largely overlooked: no one was hurt, no radiation escaped, and that the safety measures designed into the plant were adequate to contain even the worst possible combination of ineptness, error, and sheer confusion. The only "disaster" was to the profits of the electric company which owned the plant. Most of the local residents are not terribly concerned; they have continued to live next to the problem, and most have not even bothered to move their homes to other areas. Yet shrewd propaganda, building upon a few facts, some not at all related, has succeeded in fixing the idea of a "disaster" firmly in the average person's perceptions.

The obverse of this technique is the big lie. Senator Joseph McCarthy did not pioneer this technique, but he brought it to its finest form. The technique is really quite simple. If the facts do not suit one's needs, ignore them and make up others to fit one's preconceived notions or needs. In this manner, one may create a whole fabric of "facts" and "events" that, properly done, become so long, so involved, and so difficult to confirm or refute that no opponent may impugn or unravel the statement in sufficient time for the impact of the central lie to be negated effectively. One cannot use just one or two misstatements or lies. Multiple lies and misstatements are the key. Obscure facts, nonexistent references and events, details of which are not readily at hand are combined into dozens or in some cases upwards of a hundred erroneous items that support the central lie. Neither Goebbels nor McCarthy may claim this technique as original, but they have placed it imperishably in the lexicon of the twentieth century propagandist.

Another widely-used technique is the bandwagon or inevitable victory theme. The Soviet propagandists use this technique to the fullest extent, as do others, such as the NAACP with their "We shall Overcome" theme song. The target's own desire to be on the winning (and hence, "right") side are exploited to the maximum extent possible. The technique has been utilized since before recorded history.

Insinuation as a technique is usually used to cast doubt upon an opponent, or existing idea, doctrine, or figure. It may be used to shift the blame, hatred, or unwanted attention. Insinuation is often coupled, notably in Soviet propaganda, with another technique,

name-calling. Much more than insinuation, name-calling seeks to shift approbation upon an opponent, and arouse target prejudices against the opponent, as a causal means of getting the target to take the ultimately-desired action or attitude. Both techniques are most effective in "grey" or "black" propaganda.

Stalling or postponement is a time-honored technique used to evade, divert, or distract attention from embarrassing subjects. Diplomats have been using it as a standard technique for centuries when dealing with both opponents and the public.³⁴ A variation of this is the Soviet habit of launching a violent tirade of name-calling upon a wholly different subject than the one at hand. Such tirades are found, for example, in Molotov's speeches in Potsdam against the British actions in Greece when the subject of the Polish settlement was raised.

Entertainment is not necessarily a technique exclusive to itself, yet propaganda may use entertainment as a vehicle for transmitting a message or theme. The Woodstock and other similar festivals are outstanding examples of how skilled propagandists may use entertainment to gain and hold an audience. During the course of the entertainment, the propaganda message is advanced, often in the form of song or satire. The most famous example of the technique is the "Punch and Judy" show.

Propaganda techniques, transmission means, selected messages, and appropriate symbology form the tools of the propagandist.³⁵ The

³⁴ E.g., "no comment."

³⁵ For a doctrinal study of the use of techniques, see FM 33-5, especially Chapters 3-5.

psychological objective, a clear statement of the desired result of propaganda, gives the effort direction, scope, and meaning. For the national planners and operators, the objective is "a statement of U.S. national policy, expressed as a psychological warfare objective."³⁶ The objective thus forms the basis of all psychological warfare actions the United States propagandists undertake.

The actual implementation of propaganda in support of national objectives is often much less cut-and-dried than official definitions imply. All too often, there exists no clear, concise statement of national policy in relation to an event, an area, or a nation's actions. Lack of sufficiently prescient and broad objectives were the basis for a great deal of the propaganda program's difficulties in the period under study.³⁷ This lack was additionally the reason for much inter-departmental misunderstanding and conflict.

Despite fairly general agreement that something had to be done to counter Soviet propaganda, there was great disagreement as to how this was to be accomplished. Lack of clear definition of method and orientation sprang from the very basis of the program, Public Law 402. This law was vague to the point of uselessness. The Secretary of State was enjoined to "provide for the preparation and dissemination abroad,

³⁶ NSC 74, Enclosure B, p. 25.

³⁷ While it should be clearly understood that the United States program operating under PL 402 is a psychological warfare/propaganda agency, the term "information program" will often be used interchangeably with "propaganda program" in most literature. This paper will attempt to avoid this imprecision.

of information about the United States, its peoples, and its policies."³⁸ The deliberately-imprecise law was the result of many political and legal compromises, and the result completely failed to come to grips with the need for defining the basic philosophy of any United States propaganda program. The question has not been resolved to this day. There were, at the time, three discernable approaches to an official information program: a completely impartial, broadcast-type service along the lines of the BBC,³⁹ a frankly-propagandistic agency, such as Tass and Radio Moscow, or an unpalatable mixture of the two. Neither the Congressional debate, nor executive guidances resolved the problem.

Until PL 402, policy and guidance for the program had come from a mélange of sources, each bearing the imprint of the originator and their basic perceptions of function. During the OWI days the program had roughly mirrored the conflicting philosophies of Elmer Davis, William Donovan, and Nelson Rockefeller. Davis had been concerned almost exclusively with Germany and Japan using overt, hard-hitting propaganda designed to encourage resistance to the Axis powers and undermine the willingness of the neutrals to allow Hitler and Hirohito any support, as well as build up hope and confidence in the allies and victory. He was in constant turmoil with Donovan and the

³⁸Public Law 402, 79th Congress, 1st Session, 1948.

³⁹The BBC was not, and is not, strictly a mass-media operation, but United States government perceptions of the BBC operation have long been less than exact. The BBC is involved in the full range of propaganda methods.

OSS, who distributed covert, "black" propaganda, not always bothering to inform anyone else what they had done.⁴⁰

Nelson Rockefeller was involved with the flow of information to the southern Americas, and the improvement of relations with those nations. He was especially interested in binational centers, libraries, and the exchange of persons, all relatively "cultural" and long-range in nature. His was the long-range view that held the premise that the best propaganda was a true understanding between peoples based on shared experiences. He defended his prerogatives viciously and with determination against the incursions of both the OWI and the OSS.

President Roosevelt had a negative impact upon the program. As already noted, once the OWI was established, he took no further interest in its operations, and gave it no overt support. OWI was not only kept unknowing of United States political moves and decisions, but was also rarely informed about military decisions. The Army in particular was antipathetic toward the OWI, and normally refused to tell OWI anything about projected military operations. The OWI usually had to depend on their counterparts in the BBC to tell them about such events as the North African invasion, the Italian invasion, and Operation Overlord. The American military excluded the OWI planners on the grounds of security. Even State Department planners were excluded. This non-existent support, and lack of policy guidance left its legacy for the USIE after the war.

⁴⁰"Grey" propaganda--that propaganda unattributed, or originating from a stated, neutral source. "Black" propaganda--that propaganda which is attributed to a wholly different source than its origination. It is usually given the imprimatur of someone one does not like--such as Hitler in World War II, or Molotov and Stalin in the Truman period.

The virtual dissolution of the OWI following 1946 did not help the formulation and documentation of propaganda objectives. Not only were many experienced people lost to the operation, but their hard-won knowledge and area expertise was summarily thrown away in the rush to demobilize. It is no exaggeration to state that New York's Fifth Avenue advertising firms owe an enormous debt to the OWI, as well as television programmers and advertising executives. Some of the key people of OWI became advertising millionaires in the 1950-1960 period.⁴¹

The lumping of national propaganda and national intelligence operations under the State Department was no help to clear formulation of propaganda objectives. Throughout its history, the State Department has jealously maintained that it is a policy-making organization rather than an operational organization. Day-to-day actions were either the duty of the embassies abroad or some other branch of the government. With modern communications, this attitude has suffered serious deterioration, but in the 1950 time period it was still very much in force.

Indeed, the import of modern communications, which placed an ambassador approximately fifteen minutes away from either the Secretary of State or the President was virtually ignored immediately after World War II in favor of attempting a return to the traditional, comfortable "policy rather than operations" heritage. Unfortunately, the psychological warfare program, being one with a vital, continuous need for daily, sometimes hourly decisions on matters and events spanning the globe, often not of United States design or intention, could not

⁴¹For example, Paul Rand (Weyerhaeuser and Westinghouse monograms), Oren Stephens (television commercials), and Jack Ogen (the GE monogram).

exist in this tradition and became an anathema to the traditional diplomat. The traditionalists in the Department were even less pleased with the USIE program when it brought down the wrath and ridicule of Congress, such as the unfortunate Benton testimony, or when it became involved in the public brawl like the AP-UP controversy. Being dragged into daily, tactical decisions which on occasion backfired or miscarried further lowered diplomatist opinion of the propaganda organization.

On the other hand, the propagandists not only had the need to become involved with the daily events of the globe, but they usually welcomed the action. Propagandists not only had to be aware of hourly events, but whenever possible needed to have foreknowledge of the events. There is an implied relationship between good propaganda operations and intelligence which the Truman, and subsequent administrations, have largely overlooked.

Attitudes toward occurrences differed sharply between the traditional diplomatic officer and the propagandist. The latter, rather than seeking to minimize the impact of events on "normal relations," usually felt that he had to decide how best to utilize the event to gain the maximum advantage of the United States. An example of this attitude occurred in 1951, when news of the then-secret Turkish-Pakistan military pact erupted into the public news services. United States intelligence, diplomatic, and propaganda personnel had been aware of the pact for some time. The propagandists wished to carry the news in an attributed form as part of the general news of the world. The propagandists were overruled, and forbidden to carry any story about the pact in the news output of VOA. The propagandists found themselves in

the same position as Radio Moscow propagandists must have been in in 1947 during the Kasenkina Affair, forbidden from mentioning the story at all. The VOA was immediately charged with conducting a "cover-up" operation. The damage to VOA credibility was significant for the Near East region. As one disgruntled propagandist later commented, "[We] were fooling whom?"⁴²

Another propagandist pointed out the philosophical wellsprings of the two different tasks: "the first thing a diplomat thinks of is 'no story, shut it up.' The propagandist think[s], 'What can I do with this story?'"⁴³

In the period immediately following the war, the U.S.I.E. program was strongly influenced with the views of Archibald MacLeish, the interim director. MacLeish, a distinguished poet, was much less concerned with foreign information programs than with domestic information programs. In the narrow framework of the decay of Soviet-American relations, and American public reaction, this is somewhat understandable. Logic would dictate giving a domestic information program priority both for political and financial reasons, given the rapidly-shrinking resources of the OWI. However, this preoccupation with domestic objectives did the organization a great disservice and inverted the true orientation of the program from its actual, needed objective.

Others saw the question more realistically. The State Department asked its administrative consultant, Dr. Arthur McMahon of

⁴²"USIE Operating Assumptions," Vol. 5, p. P-39.

⁴³Ibid., p. 22.

Columbia University, to explore the entire question. With Halvadore Hanson, McMahon originated a report which was to provide the key guidance for the propaganda program until 1949. The report found, first, that international information was not the exclusive function of the government. Many sources of information about American aims, beliefs, and desires were available to the world at large: commercial newspapers, short-wave radio (CBS and NBC were still testing the commercial feasibility of shortwave broadcasts), commercial advertising which accompanied United States' products worldwide, industrial contracts, educational materials, films, and of course, private correspondence. There was no practical method to control this flow of information, nor should such an attempt be made. Neither should the government consider attempting to supplant this effort, which would cost literally billions of dollars, if it could be accomplished at all.

On the other hand, these non-government sources tended to follow financial or family interests. They did not necessarily reach, or attempt to appeal to those areas and target groups determined to be of most importance to the national interest. In many cases they were incapable of transmitting information to a desired area, or had no interest in doing so. For example, Manchuria evoked no commercial interests, despite the misty eyes of some old-time financiers. Much more important, most of these non-official sources were biased toward a particular viewpoint, or very limited in scope. While their messages did convey information about the United States, the message was fragmentary, distorted, and subject to both deliberate and subconscious misrepresentation. The McMahon Report pointed especially at the commercial

news services, such as the Hearst and Pulitzer publications with their tradition of journalistic sensationalism and muckraking. Even private letters, while helpful, could not be expected to convey a true, comprehensive message about the United States and what it represented.

MacMahon concluded that, while the United States could neither prevent existing information channels from conveying information from the private sector, nor materially effect their content, the United States should recognize that a clear need existed for a government-sponsored program. The government program should create a "full and fair" image of the United States with a philosophy vis-à-vis the private sector of being "facilitative and supplementary." The United States government should facilitate the distribution of helpful information, and whenever needed, supplement this information to provide a well-rounded presentation of the United States. Where information flow from the private sector did not exist, the United States government program should create and project a comprehensive, full and fair picture of the United States to that area's people.⁴⁴

The MacMahon Report, while never given an official stamp of policy, nevertheless formed the basic guidance of the propaganda operation. The Report did not, however, make any attempt to resolve a basic dispute, a philosophical conflict between those information personnel who regarded themselves as journalists working for the government, and those who saw themselves as propagandists working to accomplish national

⁴⁴ Arthur MacMahon and Halvadore Hansen, Memorandum on the Postwar International Information Program of the United States (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1945), Department of State Publication 2438.

objectives. The philosophical differences extended into debate over strategy and tactics of the information program.

The propagandists within the organization varied in skill and subtlety of thought. The true propagandist believed in a long-term approach, similar to that of the BBC, with a deliberate use of events to reinforce forward-looking themes to achieve propaganda objectives. Other propagandists believed that a shorter-term, more contentious style was necessary, especially in regard to the Soviet Union and its puppets. These individuals desired immediate, demonstrable reactions in support of the United States plans. The "government journalists," for their part, agreed with neither view, and firmly maintained that program objectives could be accomplished through the impartial, thoughtful use of news and feature articles. Many of these last noted individuals gravitated to the press and radio sections. They maintained that truth, accuracy, completeness, and above all, timeliness were major criterion for program content and actions. They did agree to an approach similar to that of the BBC, but desired to treat it much like a fast-breaking news operation.

Between these two bitterly-opposed camps, there existed a third position, which attempted to ignore both. This was the position of most of the survivors, and any new disciples, of the Nelson Rockefeller approach. These individuals formed a relatively small number, and believed that the only successful program would be the result of an exchange of persons program, which would bring foreigners to the United States and send selected United States citizens abroad, each to live for some time in the other's country, there to examine its society and

people through their own eyes, then to take their knowledge home with them. The idea was not unique, or new. Intelligence operations have used this approach for centuries, under the term "sleeper," or "deep penetration agent." In its narrowest sense, this program could be considered deeply subversive, although its personnel did not regard it in this light at all.

The propagandists had another source of conflict with the journalists within the department over their major propaganda vehicle, the news. The MacMahon guidance had clearly indicated that the United States government was not in the game of a fast-breaking news service. While it is true that a fast-breaking news service is sparkling and interesting, it is also ephemeral and transient, like a bumblebee barging from flower to flower, snatching a brief taste before hurrying to another flower, but never perceiving the larger pattern of the flower bed. These individuals pointed to historically-successful propaganda operations which affirmed the necessity for consciously working on selected themes, and extended use of a news story and topic in order to achieve a determined objective. One could not just broadcast the news and hope that "all the pieces would fall into place." Propaganda was what one made of events much more than events being the actual propaganda. A news issue could be history to a news service, and still serve admirably for the purposes of the propagandist. The propagandists also noted that news stories, even supported with feature stories, could hardly be expected to negate the unfavorable images already present, and continually-supplied from Soviet sources, or fully explain the United States to a foreign audience which had no basic frame of reference

or common symbology with the United States people.

The debate between the factions has never been fully settled, but enough dissention was evident that, on December 1, 1947, President Truman issued guidance directing the propaganda organization to pursue a "full and fair" policy, based upon the truth.⁴⁵ Since this did not clarify the basic philosophical difference, it was of limited use, insofar as tactics and programs were concerned. Each faction within the propaganda section continued to go its own direction. Fast-breaking news continued to be a major component of VOA transmissions, and the Wireless Bulletin. Longer-term objectives tended to be contained in feature articles and stories of the radio and press sections.

No coherent statement of national psychological objectives appears to have been created at this time beyond the general "full and fair picture" guidance. William Benton, rather than being concerned with objectives, seems to have been more preoccupied with reducing the wartime staff. After Congress wholeheartedly reduced the staff far beyond the recommended size, Benton belatedly found all energies consumed in the fight to preserve the psychological warfare program. During this time Benton did re-orient the thrust of the activities from inside the United States to an external projection of output. Major emphasis came to rest on the VOA news and more "cultural" propaganda to prove to the world that the United States did have a respectable grasp of "culture"

⁴⁵"U.S. Information Policy With Regard to Anti-American Propaganda," December 1, 1947. File 63D351, Box 4205, NSC-4, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Also, Edward W. Barrett to James Webb, Memorandum, "Psychological Offensive in the So-Called Cold War," November 30, 1951, p. 1. (Hereinafter cited as Barrett Memo 511.00/3051.) State Department File 511.00/3051.

in the European mold. The ill-fated painting display was an example of this latter attempt. Such objectives as the program had were largely the product of the various regional desks rather than Benton himself.

Program objectives were thus confused, inadequate, and perhaps in some cases completely nonexistent. The resulting propaganda program was not notable. Confusion in USIE was paralleled with confusion in the State Department during the immediate post-war years, when national perceptions and objectives were in a constant state of flux. Much of the confusion might be attributed to Truman's precipitous rise to the Presidency. In fact, when Truman assumed office, he found that Roosevelt had been conducting the affairs of government largely from within his own mind, a most dangerous and perishable system. Roosevelt's death left significant, sometimes critical gaps in knowledge as to what was happening, and what had actually been intended or decided. The lack of clear policy objectives for the propagandists was thus unavoidable. Truman spent the best part of a year just trying to keep his head above water, and to figure out what was happening. He had no time to try to define doctrine and objectives for a single agency of the government. Truman may be likened to the occupant of a house who is too busy in the basement, trying to shore up the structure and avert a major structural collapse, to be very much concerned about a leaky faucet on the first floor.

What should have been a major source of continuity, as well as operational guidance, the Cabinet, was of little help. It, too, suffered from sudden changes. State Department leadership was equally subjected to change, with George Marshall replacing Jimmy Byrnes, to be

followed within eighteen months with Dean Acheson. The propagandists were left to fend for themselves as best they could throughout 1946 and 1947.

Truman, forced to rebuild the Office of the President was forever scarred with his experiences. He decided that no presidential successor, elected or legal, should ever have to walk into the oval office to find a near-complete lack of plans, guidances, and references. The days of off-the-cuff decisions were past, and every department would follow suit. National planning was centralized in a planning staff which was responsive to the President, and the plans would thus be passed to the particular Departments. This idea became the National Security Council.

Unfortunately, good organization requires time, and that was a commodity in short supply from 1946 until Truman left the office in 1952. Soviet moves in Europe were coalescing into a most unfavorable pattern, as the propaganda war against the United States position and goals grew virtually unchecked. Official cognizance of the propaganda attacks was not lacking. The United States government had no plan for dealing with the Soviet attacks. The propagandists, operating under the "full and fair" image philosophy, moderately increased efforts to explain United States policies, especially in Europe, mostly through the VOA. This small change is noticeable after the receipt of the "Long Telegram," when State Department leaders began to understand that the Soviet attacks were not under any circumstances the product of misunderstanding, but the product of internal (Stalin's) requirements. The State Department did recognize that the VOA was a major, frequently

the only means of penetrating the "Iron Curtain." Policy continued toward the use of pure truth, in the apparent belief that this practice would eventually force the Soviet Union to change or modify its propaganda.

The Marshall Plan, which caused many Congressional leaders to visit Europe, was the greatest blessing for the propaganda operators. They "came smack up against the misrepresentation abroad of the United States and its policies."⁴⁶ They occasionally were the recipients of propaganda attacks themselves, in their public appearances. They returned angry, and determined that definitive action had to be accomplished. Official comments about the Soviet propaganda increased, and even surfaced in Secretary of State Byrne's address to the nation on November 18, 1947.

The National Security Council was still being formed, and finding its way toward rational policy-making, when Soviet actions forced it to provide firm guidance in the field of propaganda.⁴⁷ This instruction, known as NSC-4, was a significant step in the development and employment of United States propaganda. Soviet propaganda was clearly recognized. From available extracts, it is clear that the central policy statement was intended to allow United States propagandists to "counter . . . Soviet and Communist-inspired propaganda." This required substantial modification of the "full and fair" guidance. The policy directive did not go so far as to re-orient operations

⁴⁶ Barrett, Memorandum 511.00/3051, p. 1.

⁴⁷ NSC-4, "Coordination of Foreign Information Measures." December 4, 1947. The entire document is not available to the author at this time.

toward assuming the initiative. The overall guidance and objective was clearly defensive in intent. The role of the information program was seen in the narrow framework of "increas[ing] the effectiveness of the foreign policy of the U.S." The propaganda organization was to facilitate the attainment of national objectives through support rather than standing as an important element in its own right.

However, sharpening the tone and objectives allowed United States propagandists some latitude to respond to Soviet propaganda through attribution of that product's origin, or a direct response when that would be the best technique. Propagandists were to continue to counter Soviet propaganda themes with positive statements and presentations of the real policy and goals of the United States. Truth was still the major criterion for information, but was viewed in a defensive light.⁴⁸

NSC-4 assigned United States propagandists three additional objectives at this time, the last of which could have been the start of a full-fladged propaganda effort:

Impress the peoples of the world with the reliability, consistency, and seriousness of the United States and its policies.

Convince the peoples of the world that United States motives and policies are in their best interests and that the United States is capable of carrying them out.

Expose the extent to which Soviet motives and policies are not in the best interests of free countries through the

⁴⁸ Truth is still the best policy, especially for the propagandist. It is so terribly hard to deny. However, one does not always have to tell the entire, uncensored truth.

inconsistencies and insincerity of Soviet policies and demonstrate the falsity of the Soviet Union's charges against us.⁴⁹

These three objectives remained basic national objectives throughout the following decade. However, their emphasis, and application varied considerably, often at the whim or frame of perception of the individual propagandist.

In actual fact, the United States was not yet ready to commit itself to a full-fledged propaganda effort against the Soviet Union, however much the third objective might imply such action. The short-range, high-impact variety of propagandist might urge increased action, but there was no will to try anything of the sort at that time.

On the other hand, there was increasing evidence that the "full and fair" picture approach was not without serious flaws. It might be very noble, and very honest to assume that the United States would tell the unvarnished truth about itself, even if doing so showed all the flaws and warts. Such an approach would be all to the best, if the target audience was itself American, able to understand exactly what was occurring, and what the basic frame of reference of the reports happened to be; foreign audiences, as the young propagandists were finding, perceive events from a different framework. The absolutely-truthful approach allowed a great deal of derogatory information about the United States to be aired in public. Such actions did not make the

⁴⁹"U.S. Information Policy with Regard to Anti-American Propaganda." See also: Howland H. Sargeant to Robert Lovett, Letter, "Information Policy," December 8, 1947, State Department File 511.00/12-847, and H. W. Moseley to Robert Lovett, Memorandum, untitled, December 11, 1947, File 63D351, Box 4205, NSC-4, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

United States any friends, but it certainly helped reinforce other's distrust of United States' leaders and their judgement.

The kind assistance of the Soviet Union in promulgating these derogatory facts helped the situation none at all. Moscow was very prompt and dutious in labelling these derogatory items as "admissions" and "confessions," and really did a fine job of making certain everyone in the world knew when a black man, for example, had been found hanged in Mississippi. The more conscientious propagandists in the United States might point out that derogatory information could be found in relation to anyone, or any nation, but the faint defense went unheeded. The major section of the propaganda organization involved in this self-disemboweling activity was the VOA.

Angry Congressmen, upon returning to the United States, demanded that something be done to change both tone and content, and for the moment, the inner debate over techniques and themes was resolved in favor of the professional propagandists who viewed the problem as a long-term operation.

While policy was set in Washington, with the exception of VOA, execution was the responsibility of the field station (embassy, consulate, or legation). This practice paralleled traditional diplomatic practices, and certainly made life much easier for State Department leaders in Washington. Voice of America, because of its requirements for centralized planning and execution was recognized as an anomaly, and allowed to fall outside this traditional framework. However, since VOA was at that time located in New York City, it tended to be treated very much like a traditional field station rather than as an operating

instrument that could be immediately responsive to the needs of the Department of State.

Centralized planning and decentralized execution were very nice concepts, but there were many problems inherent in them which, for the propaganda operation, had not been deeply considered. A major stumbling block to the concept was that there were so few personnel available to undertake any program. In the low-point days of 1947, there were less than a thousand people available overseas to execute United States psychological policy. That figure included everyone from the librarian in a cultural center to the secretary in the embassy who did the typing. Actual propagandists involved with operations were considerably short of the full figure. At the same time the Soviet Union was utilizing not one, but several thousands of personnel and spending millions of dollars in its propaganda.

The only light in the gloom during 1947 and 1948, insofar as a useful United States propaganda effort was concerned came, oddly enough, from Europe and the Far East, where a modest increase in activity began. This work, much of which became the base for so much more in the next five years, was the work of the Army. In fact, the Army was solely responsible for the preservation, and often the construction, of vital strategic propaganda facilities and equipment in both areas.

At the end of 1945, the Army had found itself both victorious, and fully-engaged not only in trying to keep itself from dissolving, but in occupying both Europe and Japan, along with various Pacific Islands. During the war, the Army had developed a reasonably

sophisticated psychological warfare organization for the support of the field commander, as well as a large Military Government division (now called Civil Affairs). Following the end of the war, the Military Government section found that it needed to have under its control means of mass communications, so that its decisions and regulations could be quickly transmitted to the occupied peoples. Also, with such facilities under military control, subversion and sedition were much more difficult. Thus, much of the "fixed station" equipment such as large radio transmitters and printing facilities were transferred to the Military Government section, as well as many of its skilled propagandists. On the surface, the Army reduced its psychological warfare establishment from about four groups (10,000 personnel) to one.

Increased Soviet and communist agitation within Western Europe caused the Military Government to expand its methods of communication, and begin an increased propaganda operation. In Germany and Austria this fell under the province of the High Commissioner of Germany (HICOG), John J. McCloy. Since HICOG already controlled a production base, and the military section of the government already had quite a few skilled propaganda personnel who had been busy explaining the occupation policy and laws, very little additional funding resulted in a noticeable increase in a counter-propaganda program. This program was not directly answerable to the "national" organization within the State Department in Washington.

In Japan, General Douglas MacArthur controlled occupation policy in both Japan and Korea. Army psychological warfare units were not demobilized, but retained under the direct control of the G-2

(Intelligence) section from the beginning of the occupation. A major propaganda support center was located on Okinawa to produce printed materials in support of the "reeducation" of the Japanese. In Japan, Soviet and communist propaganda was more readily, and easily dealt with from the very start, in contrast to Germany.

Policy coordination for occupation policy, and propaganda, was supposed to be handled through the long-established State-War-Navy Coordinations Committee (SWNCC). In fact, the SWNCC had proven to be largely useless during the war, and had never been revitalized. Even the State Department recognized that it suffered from an overabundance of bureaucracy. Psychological policy and operations were usually coordinated informally in the field through State Department "information officers" meeting with their Army counterparts. State Department guidance was normally passed laterally at a low level, sometimes with unfortunate results.

The 1947 guidance did not find United States USIE propagandists incapable of response. Major propaganda vehicles that were capable of quick reaction such as VOA, RIAS (Radio in Allied Sector, Berlin under U.S. Army), and Radio Tokyo, as well as the larger printing plants overseas rapidly reoriented their output to target audiences along more forceful lines. Additional programs for educational exchange, especially the Fulbright Scholarship Program, allowed additional numbers of key target groups to be brought to the United States.

However, the trojan work of the United States propaganda programs continued to be borne by the United States Army. The key event of the period immediately after the USIE was given statutory existence,

was the Berlin blockade. United States propaganda output was vitally concerned about two objectives: first, that the German population of Berlin, as well as the western sectors of Germany, be assured that the United States was not going to meekly capitulate. The secondary objective was to let the Soviet Union know that its blockade was not going to weaken the United States' resolve. As the propagandists at the scene, HICOG, utilizing the U.S. Army, carried out the bulk of the work in regard to the first objective. Its key radio medium, RIAS, as well as the Armed Forces Radio network (a net of stations set up to make servicemen feel less alone overseas) promptly turned to the problem. The net radio hours increased dramatically, and kept the German people fully informed about the United States response. Daily airlift tonnages, for example, were broadcast, as well as many statements of solidarity, support, and encouragement. American leaders, such as General Clay and General Eisenhower, made periodic broadcasts, and kept the Germans fully informed. A product of the Berlin blockade was a tremendous increase in listeners, which has persisted to this day.

In the United States, VOA increased its daily German output as much as possible, given the extremely limited funds and limited transmission hours. A balanced approach seems to have been taken, inasmuch as there is no body of documentation exclusively concerned with just the Berlin blockade. Instead, USIE concern seems to have been that such an event did not become the source of a fixation, to the detriment of the other areas of interest. However, both factual reporting as well as special programming did keep the Soviets' actions before world attention. Also, several special propaganda actions were taken through

Army-State Department coordination which had long-term effects. One of these, with the participation of a candy company, resulted in a candy bar made just for Germany. This later became a favorite in the United States, and was called, "Forever Yours." These were dropped across Germany where just a few years before bombs had fallen from these same planes, as well as delivered in the thousands to Berlin.

Soviet pressure, the Marshall Plan, Soviet propaganda attacks against Congressional leaders, and the desperate situation in Europe all led the United States to adopt a formal propaganda program. However, as the Congressional record of the debate makes clear, the propaganda program was conceived as being defensive in nature rather than an active component in policy implementation.

CHAPTER IV

NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OBJECTIVES

AND AREA THEMES, 1948-1950

As 1948 emerged, it was plain that William Benton had largely served his purpose. He was replaced in March 1948 with a veteran career diplomat, George V. Allen. Allen faced a difficult task of rebuilding the propaganda organization while simultaneously under fire from Congress, and the pressures of the Soviet goals in Eastern Europe and Germany. Under Allen, psychological warfare policy and control changed from the "facilitative and supplementary" concept. More time was devoted to countering Soviet and Soviet-inspired propaganda. Emphasis changed from a "full and fair" philosophy to that of placing the United States in a more favorable light, a "showcase" approach. News continued to play a vital role in USIE operations, as the Kasenkina example proved. The truth could be used to deal great damage to Soviet images, and was very difficult to counter. Utilizing strict truth in attacking Soviet and communist opponents, USIE propagandists scored effectively against their adversaries, particularly with reports of the undemocratic Eastern Europe "elections." Stories of police repression, the loss of a free press, all were used to demonstrate the falsity of Soviet "democracy." One measure of the strength of truth in the psychological war, and the clear Soviet fear of any contrasting

viewpoint, was the consistent Soviet refusal to allow any printed literature from the United States or Western Europe to enter the Soviet Union, excepting the magazine Amerika.⁵⁰

Any contrasting literature or story hurt the Soviet leaders far more than would seem possible to the average American of the time. USIE Russian experts, however, knew exactly how much truth could hurt the Soviet regime. One of these was Alexander Barmine, formerly a member of Stalin's foreign service. Barmine, still actively an anti-Soviet propagandist in 1981, at this time headed a staff of expatriates at the VOA. One result of their efforts was the jamming of broadcasts into the Soviet Union.

In regard to this period of USIE operations, three somewhat different perspectives should be considered: the overall United States-Soviet problems, eventually climaxing in the most important event of the period, the Korean War, and the impact of the conflict at the national level; operational guidance and themes to the primary target, Europe; and the operational guidance and actions in what was regarded as a secondary theater, the Far East. Each area had a major event of Soviet

⁵⁰They had little option in the matter of Amerika. Averell Harriman had negotiated its entry under a mutual treaty that allowed Soviet publications reciprocal entry into the United States. The Soviet Union had a right to censor the contents of the magazine before publication, and took full advantage of this. USIE writers, many of them former Russian nationals, exercise great ingenuity in getting around Soviet censorship, much like writers under the Tsars. Eventually the Soviets found a means of stopping the distribution of the magazine within their country; they simply did not display it in any of the state-owned kiosks. Current distribution is to expatriate communities in Europe and covert channels into the Soviet Union. The magazine turns up in odd places, to include some State Police headquarters in the United States.

origin that had significant and nearly incalculable effect upon the small national psychological warfare organization, and that ultimately required immense national resources.

On the national level, the most significant event for USIE operations was the initiation of Soviet jamming operations. The Soviet jamming may be interpreted in two lights. One view, the obvious and immediate one of the time, was that the Soviet Union was deliberately and maliciously attempting to disrupt the United States and its allies' attempts to explain themselves to the world. This was not exactly correct, as the pattern of Soviet jamming operations became more clear with time. The jamming was not an effort to disrupt United States radio operations. Such an action would have lent them complete credibility in the view of many unaligned peoples. Instead, the jamming was a near-desperate, highly-expensive attempt to deny this information to its own captive populations; to shut out the voice of a contrasting philosophy and more truthful representation so that the only voice which might be heard was that of internal Soviet propaganda. Since the earliest days of the Soviet rule, internal propaganda has borne less relation to truth than political requirements. Stalin, however, added a codicil that would have made Goebbels envious--make certain no one else's voice may be heard to dispute the "organs of the state."

The pattern of the jamming supports this latter assertion. The jamming operation involved in its initial stages about one hundred transmitters, none of them less than an estimated ten kilowatts in power. At the time of the start of the jamming, the Soviet Union was known to have only about thirty of these transmitters. The effort which

went into building and installing these transmitting facilities so quickly was enormous. The number had risen to five hundred or so in 1950. Very often United States Radio Reconnaissance personnel detected Soviet transmitters being diverted from internal programming to become jammers, attempting to deny the VOA and BBC transmissions access. The Soviet jammers were sited in all major population centers, as well as in most other smaller centers. The Soviets attempted to cover with a blanket of jamming any place where a significant number of their population lived.

The Soviet leaders, and Stalin himself, stated that they were in an ideological conflict from which there was to be no truce and only one winner. After World War II, as the United States and other nations hastened to disarm themselves the Soviet Union remained on a wartime footing. In part, this was because Stalin feared his former allies. It was also because the end of the war found the Soviet army little more than a wreck. The front-line troops were good, but in 1945 there was little left behind them in the way of support or resources; the "front" was a shell. One must also recall that the greatest fear Soviet leaders have, even to this day, is their own people. Stalin had a true paranoid fear not only of the Russian people but of his own party servants. Soviet internal propaganda was based firmly on the principle of the "big lie." The United States was going to attack the motherland; after Germany had raped their nation, now the United States and their capitalist allies were going to come and take what was left. This was a current theme of the time. Stalin's fears were all-pervasive and unmanageable. Not even the means of victory, the front line troops of

the Red Army, were spared. Solzhenitsyn had personal experience in this matter, and has pointed out that 1946 and 1947 marked the purge of the frontline troops who had been involved in the European victory.⁵¹ Anyone who had seen the difference, or managed to live for a time in Western Europe and could tell of the difference in living standards, was ruthlessly eliminated. Others too, vanished from the Russian population. These were natural targets for United States propaganda such as the intellectuals, and minorities such as the Uzbekii.

United States propagandists, perceiving the true reason for the elaborate and expensive Soviet defenses, decided that this reaction would not have occurred unless the United States was not already having a telling effect and began exploring means of circumventing Soviet jamming and propaganda regulations. At the same time, perception at the national level that the United States was in the midst of an undeclared propaganda war increased apace with planning at the National Security Council level.

In Washington, it was clear to most planners that the key area of United States interest was Western Europe and the Mediterranean. Greece, the nation which sparked the Marshall plan, especially required immediate attention. The first overseas transmitter to be built under the Ring Plan was placed in Salonika, Greece, in 1949. It was designed to cover the entire Balkan area, as well as reaching into the

⁵¹ Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, The Gulag Archipelago, Book One (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), Chapters 3-5, passim. See also Book Two, in regard to the purges of the intellectuals in the early 1950's. Solzhenitsyn exposes many of the internal propaganda activities of the KGB far better than any other author.

Black Sea-Transcaucasus area of southeastern Russia. USIE officials worked closely with their Greek counterparts to increase and strengthen the Greek government propaganda programs. As an aid to this task, as well as to avoid charges that the United States was planning to "brainwash" the Greek population, the transmitter was "nominally . . . Greek owned and operated."⁵²

In Washington actual operations in the principle area of concern would have gone forward much more rapidly, and been far more effective had there not been a lengthy, inter-bureaucratic struggle for control of the propaganda program.

It often seems, when following the USIE through these years, that much of its ambivalent record was a product of the struggle for control. Many persons in government were strongly critical of the USIE. Simultaneously, many of these same persons went to surprising lengths in an attempt to assume control of the propaganda operation. In part this may be credited to the apparent simplicity of a propaganda operation--the surface concept is easily understood and simple to achieve, with the possibility for spectacular results always before the planner's eyes like a will-o'-the-wisp. Many followed that wisp.

Interdepartmental Fight for Control

As early as October 1948, there was no question but that national-level planning for psychological warfare was required. Many agencies ascribed to this doctrine. However, each interpreted it in the

⁵²NSC 42/1, "U.S. Objectives with Respect to Greece and Turkey to Counter Soviet Threats to U.S. Security," March 22, 1949. National Archives. Also found as Document 43B, 1978, Carrollton Declassified Document System.

best interest of the particular department. The basis of the fight was over which department would conduct the planning, carry out the bulk of the operations, and ultimately control the propaganda program in time of war or emergency. Initially, the dispute was a three-way tug-of-war between the Departments of State, Army, and Navy. The Army, quite aware for its recent war experiences and its continuing operations in occupied areas, was convinced that it could not afford to relinquish its internal propaganda capability. The Army thus maintained that, as the ground-gaining, ground-controlling national force, wartime psychological planning and execution was properly its prerogative. The Navy, with its own experience in the Pacific islands and long-range radio broadcasts (i.e., the Zacharias broadcasts and others) bitterly objected to Army control of psychological warfare, particularly in such areas as the Pacific where events would necessarily be controlled with seapower. The Navy believed that each service should be allowed to proceed in its own best way in the area of psychological warfare. The newly emerging Air Force complicated the picture, claiming that, as the vehicle for leaflet "drops," they too should have some say in planning and control.⁵³

Under the law, the State Department was of course responsible for peacetime overt psychological warfare policy and operations, while the CIA held responsibility for covert operations. It did not require the State Department long to realize the nature of the struggle, or the truism that whomever plans, usually controls. The State Department,

⁵³The intramural squabbling continues to this day. All services, to include the Marine Corps, have their own psychological warfare personnel and equipment. They occasionally pay heed to the ICA (formerly ISIA).

while not exactly overjoyed to have the USIE as an integral part of its structure, nevertheless was unwilling to relinquish it to any other department of government. The State Department position was that propaganda was a civilian rather than a military weapon, and as such must be maintained under State Department control as a facet of the civilian control of the government. This position ran counter to the "widespread belief in military planning sections that psychological warfare is primarily a military instrument for use in military theaters."

The State Department, marshalling its arguments, also maintained that military planners frequently neglected or failed to perceive the long-term political implications of their actions on the political objectives of the United States in favor of short-term military goals. The State Department maintained vigorously that psychological warfare in time of conflict had to be designed to influence foreign targets in such a manner as to "support the accomplishment of United States policy and aims." As such, wartime psychological warfare was simply an extension of the peacetime propaganda activities of the United States government.

Two factors were important in State Department planning. First, a mobilization would probably be very rapid, and would of necessity require modification of existing programs and operations, with the current USIE channels becoming the nucleus of the wartime effort. The services, engaged in the critical business of focusing on a specific enemy in a specific area, would scarcely be capable of appreciating where the key national efforts would have to be made, and certainly would not be competent to decide the best means of converting peacetime

operations to wartime footing. The major production and broadcast facilities would still be under USIE control, because the services did not have sufficient trained personnel to assume operations. Second, planning and control of wartime psychological policy had to be capable of effectively coordinating the long-term national political objectives with short-term military necessities within the broader framework of national policy and aims.

The State Department preferred to overlook the growing, effective work of the Army in the occupied areas. Furthermore, the State Department was in a position to ultimately carry the immediate issue, which it did on February 17, 1949, during a meeting of the National Security Council. President Truman directed that the State Department have responsibility for national wartime psychological planning. However, the military had a clear responsibility for intra-theater operations, and had to be able to have a voice in planning, as such pertained to their specific areas of combat operations. The NSC directed that an organization be located within the Department of State to "plan and make preparations for the coordinated conduct of foreign and domestic information programs and overt psychological operations abroad in the event of war or threat of war as determined by the President." The staff would include representatives from both the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the various military departments. Simultaneously, SWNCC was scrapped without objections.⁵⁴

⁵⁴NSC-43, "Planning for Wartime Conduct of Overt Psychological Warfare," March 9, 1949. Carrollton Declassified Document System, 253E, 1978. The referenced decision was action 184, February 17, 1949.

The fight was not, however, over. The State Department found it had been assigned conflicting objectives. Under NSC-4, as well as PL 402 an interdepartmental staff had been created to "assist the Assistant Secretary of State [Allen] in implementing the policy and plans established by the Secretary of State [Marshall]." ⁵⁵ NSC-43 created an interdepartmental staff under the Secretary of State for preparing and planning coordinated psychological warfare measures in time of national emergency or war. At what level did the actual responsibility lie? If it belonged to the Secretary of State, as Congress had intended, NSC-43 was clearly wrong; if one proceeded under the current NSC directive the current organizational responsibilities were completely overturned and the Secretary of State would be relieved not only of responsibility but of any control over the foreign propaganda operations originated from within his own department. In the meantime, there were two staffs in existence, each wondering what the other was doing, or supposed to be doing. Eventually Secretary Marshall and Secretary Louis Johnson agreed to merge the two staffs. This action was taken on August 15. The new organization was tentatively labelled the Interdepartmental Foreign Information Staff (IFIS).

The struggle for control did not end with the creation within the State Department of a combined staff; if anything, the struggle intensified. The Service members suggested that, with all wartime

⁵⁵ William T. Stone to Howland H. Sargeant, Memorandum, "Policy Issues Involved in Revision of NSC-4 and NSC-43 in a Single Directive for Foreign Information Program Planning and Psychological Warfare," October 13, 1949, National Archives File 63D351, Box 4206, NSC-43. Even at this distance, one gains a sense of the bureaucratic confusion and indecision involved.

planning under the Secretary of State, wartime and peacetime planning could no longer be distinguished in separate categories. They proceeded to push this to a logical conclusion: IFIS should be free to "develop plans, make recommendations, and otherwise advise and assist the Secretary in . . . current information programs as well as in wartime psychological operations." Since the services had a reasonable case to be the major contributors of wartime propaganda requirements, most of those requirements would actually be a fallout of wartime plans. In essence, the services would be asking the Secretary of State to provide psychological warfare support to the service with national assets. Further, if in the "driver's seat" in recommending plans and operations to the Secretary of State in time of peace, the services would in essence be controlling the peacetime effort as well. The services were still after control of the program; like a Trojan Horse, IFIS merely allowed the fight to be carried within the enemy's camp.

The State Department representative on the spot, literally, was William T. Stone, an experienced bureaucrat who moved to block the latest service challenge. He noted that, under paragraph 10, NSC-43, any time one of the service members wished, any plans developed under NSC-43 could be requested for review at the National Security Council level. This effectively passed over all the various staffs, and the Secretary of State as well who review and control any plan and allowed a relatively junior officer (Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel) to appeal to the President for a ruling. This totally subverted the role and function of the NSC. Stone also called Secretary Allen's attention to the fact that the military representatives refused to discuss coordinated

psychological warfare planning with any war contingency planning, despite the clear directive to do such under NSC 43 and NSC 43/1. The service members professed to believe that the directive required the national peacetime plans to be coordinated only when such might relate to military matters. In other words, the military would inform the Secretary of State what it required, period.

Stone had other problems with the service representatives. He could not get their agreement to the principle that the rapid transition from peace to war would necessarily be "based primarily on the expansion of the existing activities and facilities which constitute the essential wartime psychological operations." Stone failed to appreciate that the literal acceptance of this principle, so dear to the hearts of USIE planners, would effectively strip the services of their justification for maintaining organic psychological warfare capabilities. The Army, heavily involved in this effort in Europe and Japan, was especially obdurate. The Army had learned through bitter experience that propagandists are not so much born as trained, and that such esoteric training may require years. In the event of a hasty mobilization, the Army had no time to start from scratch.

The second problem was a result of the first: in the event of rapid mobilization, psychological warfare operators in the theater would have to belong to the military, at least for operations and control. The problem in this regard was not only personnel--who knew the psychological or physical abilities of USIE operators in this case--but equipment as well. A sudden takeover of existing facilities would result in the Army having to accept a logistics burden for unknown

types and quantities of equipment, much of which would not be of a single standard. This would quickly prove a bottleneck to effective, immediate psychological operations. For example, HICOG was at that time using about twenty different types of printing presses in Germany, most of them with different-sized paper. Naturally the services preferred to have their own, standardized equipment for use, and to let USIE have the headache for getting twenty different types of supply stocks to support an overseas operation. This required several months to resolve, before IFIS could finally begin work.⁵⁶

USIE, Washington

While IFIS and the State Department as a whole were having their problems deciding issues of national control of the USIE, Secretary Allen was having his own troubles with the organization itself. He needed to restructure the USIE into a more coherent and capable instrument of national expression. With the additions of over a thousand personnel authorized for 1949, the growing pains forced another reorganization.

Allen was pressured into the reorganization for another, equally imperative reason: operations in the field were not yielding desired results. A major source of the unsatisfactory results was the "decentralized execution" practice so dear to old-line State Department

⁵⁶William T. Stone to William Sheppard, Memorandum, "Staff Paper Combining NSC-4 and NSC-43," November 22, 1949; NSC-59/1, "The Foreign Information Program and Overt Psychological Warfare," November 30, 1949. Both found in File 63D351, Box 4206, "NSC-43" National Archives, Washington, D.C. Also found in the State Department Archives for 1949. The writer recalls speaking with a USIE representative in 1972 in regard to the problem of standardization.

officers. In setting policy, especially in the area of psychological warfare, the State Department was not controlling execution. The predictable result was uneven, contradictory, and counterproductive efforts between the various field posts. The uneven performance was as much a reflection of the varied talents and training of the USIE personnel themselves as the loose control from Washington.

The source of the uneven performance of the deployed personnel was less a reflection of the actual individuals than that of the method of their recruitment. Few propagandists are comfortable with all communications means, and fewer still with all the various techniques of propaganda. This was more noticeable during the days of reduced strength, when a single individual was often tasked with doing what should have been the work of a dozen. Throughout the period, USIE managers laid stress on the recruitment of personnel from the so-called "skilled" professions: journalists, broadcasters, librarians, writers, advertising specialists, and news specialists, to name the most important. The belief that there was no substitute for training and experience in mass communications techniques was all-pervasive. The shortcomings of this training were less obvious, and long escaped the USIE. A major shortcoming of this particular background was that these specialists had spent years developing their communications skills in one type of transmission media, often directed against one broad target group, the American public. When appointed to a foreign post these personnel tended not only to make the most use of the communications media that was their specialty, but also to use their favorite techniques of communications, with little appreciation for whether or not

their specialty was the best or most appropriate for the message they were attempting to convey. When these specialists could concentrate in their particular field of expertise, the results could be very good. On the other hand, regardless of whether or not the USIE operator was working with a favored media, most of them had difficulty understanding the concepts of their particular target audiences, or that USIE efforts needed to be ranked and differentiated based on target effectiveness and accessibility of communication. The comment of one experienced USIE officer sums up the lack of sophistication of many of the field personnel. Observing a post's propaganda plan, he noted that the plan contained a statement on psychological targets "that couldn't be beat: the primary group was all literates and semi-literates. The secondary target group was all illiterates and the tertiary target was all others. That amounted to two or three percent, and no one ever knew what they were."⁵⁷

The field personnel, as well as some in Washington, were equally hampered with language and cultural problems. Relatively few propagandists were foreign service officers with language training. The bulk of the field personnel were Foreign Service Reserve or Civil Service personnel. Language skills were scanty in many cases, and an understanding of the culture and traditions of the target country, and its political and social organization were often great unknowns for the propagandists. Thus, a lengthy 'breaking in' period was often required, held under the auspices of a more experienced officer at whatever post

⁵⁷ Operating Assumptions, Vol. 2, p. T-22.

the new personnel would find themselves. Personnel assignments did not always make use of the qualifications of the personnel. Difficulties could arise when, for example, a French-speaking officer was assigned to French North Africa. The real target audience was the native population which, for the most part did not speak French and did not like those who did. Similar difficulties prevailed in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. In these cases, assignment on the basis of what the imperial power spoke rather than what the native population spoke was less than inspired, and guaranteed a poor start for the USIE representative.

USIE personnel also went to the field with little or no additional training in United States national policies other than that they possessed upon arrival in Washington. Many did not have a briefing or good orientation on current psychological objectives in their area of assignment. Familiarity with current public affairs and two weeks in Washington at the Foreign Service Institute were about all that could be managed for the new person; many did not get that much. It was far short of what was needed. On the other hand, overseas slots were normally about thirty percent short of their authorized personnel. Since the authorized positions seem always to be about half of those actually needed, there was tremendous pressure to recruit, obtain the requisite security clearance, and post employees as quickly as possible. The entire hiring cycle required about six month's time and, all too often, a person hired to fill a particular slot in a post, when finally on board had to be sent elsewhere at the last minute to fill a more critical need. This sometimes resulted in the household goods and

clothes arriving in one country, while the personnel arrived in another half the world away.⁵⁸

Usually the performance of the field personnel was not as dismal as the administration of the department which hired them, but there were still many problems in output. Mass communications were just beginning to have a world-wide impact. Many nations were just getting, or were dreaming of getting their first nation-wide transmitters and airlines.⁵⁹ It was suddenly true that what was said to be the United States view in Karachi would speedily be examined in New Delhi. The fears of old-time diplomatists had suddenly become reality; what was said in an isolated nation would be heard around the world. A propagandist's target audience in a nation was no longer strictly isolated from the world; propaganda could no longer be conducted against specific targets, or a specific nation without due regard to other nations and other targets.⁶⁰

United States citizens, with the best communications system in the world as well as long experience with their elected officials often had a difficult enough task in determining United States objectives in the fast-paced events of the post-war era. A foreign audience, newly

⁵⁸ Fact, not a comedy scenario. See Robert Peurifoy's testimony before both the House and Senate for years 1949 and 1950, as well as Allen's.

⁵⁹ For example, the Panagra Air Service to Brazil. Brazil at this time greatly desired its own national airline.

⁶⁰ For example, one of the most thorny problems that came to face USIE personnel in the late Truman period, and continues to this day is that of Cyprus, and what the United States was supposed to do and say to Greece and Turkey. The situation remains one that has the potential for destroying the Southern flank of NATO.

exposed to the posturings of United States congressmen and accustomed to, if not a more centralized government operation at least a more centralized information program wherein the government spoke with one, authoritative voice, had a most difficult time comprehending the United States, which seemed to speak with many "official" voices at odds with each other. The result of the normal democratic controversy and contradictions of the American process of achieving a decision was confusion and bitterness among the foreign nationals and a loss of credibility. The increase of foreign nationals who could understand English, and hence the VOA, made this an even larger problem for the USIE personnel.

It was clear that the United States had to speak to the world at large with, if not one monotone voice at least a unified opinion on what United States policy might be in a particular circumstance. Allen made a significant step toward achieving a more unified voice and coherent control of the USIE program in one of his earliest policy directives. The Wireless Bulletin, sent daily to posts and dealing with topical United States events, soon became more oriented toward what information the Department wished to have presented in output. The USIE directive gave clear instructions in regard to major themes to be utilized and helped to resolve conflicting interpretations in field posts about what was and was not to be promulgated. Allen backed the general policy guidance with "overnight telegrams" to particular posts that had problems of especial importance.

This more centralized approach helped the changeover from the "full and fair" approach to one that placed the United States in as

favorable a light as possible, even when unpleasant or awkward truth had to be published. This is not to imply that unfavorable information was not broadcast, for it certainly was, but that the selection of the facts was made with due regard to the fact that the Soviets would do a credible enough job of making the United States look bad; it was USIE's task to make the United States look good. This was called the "showcase" approach, and utilized the technique of selective truth. In its own way, the showcase approach to propaganda operations distorted the image of the United States as much as the "full and fair" output had, if not in the same manner.

While George Allen did make the output more effective, he had little success in improving his lines of policy communication with his superiors. The State Department, responsible for both diplomatic relations and overt psychological warfare, does not seem to have made a determined effort to include Allen or his successor in the NSC meetings dealing with psychological warfare even as an "interested observer." Policy coordination was generally accomplished at the IFIS level, far below that of a co-equal in diplomatic and military concerns. Moreover, State decisions about psychological warfare guidance and permissible themes could take an inordinate time to clear the various approving "desks" within the State Department. All too often the VOA ignored a significant item because the necessary guidance had not arrived. This allowed Radio Moscow to make their presentation first, leaving USIE the task of defending against what was said earlier. The diplomatic habit of allowing a "cooling off period" did not work for the psychological warfare struggle.

In the broader perspective of the time, it is clear that the Secretary of State, whomever he might have been at the moment, spent a lot of time away from the office, either overseas or in front of Congress. The practical result was that the Secretary was often not an effective conduit for national policy decisions. The person actually responsible to both the Secretary and the President during these times was the Undersecretary of State.⁶¹ The normal functional route should have been: President, Secretary of State/Undersecretary, and thus to the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs.

In fact, the actual channels of policy decision do not seem to have followed this doctrinaire route. Secretary of State George Marshall, shortly after assuming office, initiated a Policy Planning Staff, under the direction of George Kennan. This staff was put to work on longer-term planning and, occasionally, immediate projects. None of any of the released "function statements" of this staff reflect that psychological policy guidance was a responsibility of this section, yet P/POL, as it was abbreviated, was a normal point of contact for many of the operational decisions which USIE required. Further, after the reorganization under the "General Manager" concept, there is no documentation that would indicate a close and continuous written coordination of policy between the Assistant Secretary and the operational head of USIE. Most coordination was conducted through Charles Humelstine, the Director of the Executive Secretariat, or Dean Rusk or John Peurifoy, the Deputy Undersecretaries. Occasionally queries went

⁶¹ Acheson makes quite a point of this in his autobiography at various places throughout the book.

directly to the Undersecretary, James Webb, but always through Humelstine. From the available documentation it appears that throughout the Truman administration the Secretary of State tended to keep the USIE very much at arms' length, and required it to formulate guidance and directives at a relatively low level, isolated from the centers of policy decisions. Thus, as the Korean War approached, and even during this critical period, the USIE was placed and kept in a position more difficult than its predecessor had been in World War II.

Soon after the reorganization of the USIE, Allen departed to become the first Ambassador to Yugoslavia. He was replaced with Edward Barrett, an advertising executive and at that time the editor of Newsweek magazine. The appointment came at a time when it was clear to all involved in psychological warfare that a stepped-up program and increased funding for equipment and personnel was a critical requirement.

President Truman, recognizing the need for some action and a national program of considerable size, intended to make a speech on the subject. In one of the few documented times Truman called Barrett in for consultation, he asked Barrett for ideas. Barrett suggested that the President call for a "Campaign of Truth" to be launched against Soviet lies.⁶² Truman liked the ringing sound of the phrase and on

⁶² Although Barrett claimed many times in public and print that the idea was his own, the writer is not wholly persuaded. A coherent propaganda operation against large-scale targets is usually called a 'campaign' in all target scenarios, just as in an advertising 'campaign.' U.S. programs were based upon truth. Barrett, a newcomer to the program would certainly have received the full in-briefing where the phrases, or at least the two key words, would have found frequent use. One feels the 'inspiration' was convenient.

April 20, 1950, stepped before a convention of newspaper editors and did exactly that.⁶³

Despite the brave-sounding term "campaign," and the moving call for a crusade, USIE was not necessarily prepared or capable of undertaking President Truman's intentions. The USIE had recently been authorized to increase its strength again, now to 3,800 personnel, but it was in fact only at half strength due to the long recruitment "lead time" required. There was little short term improvement. At the start of the campaign, most of the employees had been with the program for less than eighteen months. Funds too were clearly inadequate for anything near what Truman obviously envisioned--a mere thirty-six million dollars for all of USIE, half of which was committed to VOA capital improvements to include the costly "curtain" antennas.⁶⁴ Elsewhere the starting base was decayed or nonexistent. The American "cultural centers," usually built around a library of selected United States publications, had obsolescent holdings and in many cases only a single American present on a part-time basis. Many centers had been closed completely. Motion pictures, a prime media for rural targets and illiterate areas, were old and outdated. The few mobile units functioning were a mixed lot, approximately half of which were left over from World War II. The years of bouncing throughout the back areas across nonexistent roads had more than taken its toll.

⁶³Papers of the Presidents, Harry S. Truman, Speech, April 20, 1950, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1953.)

⁶⁴Average cost \$750,000. Not a cheap system, but badly needed.

The organization was very unbalanced, and not well understood. To both Congress and such State Department officers as John Peurifoy and William Hall, Budget Officer, USIE was the Voice of America.⁶⁵ VOA was increasingly bedeviled with Soviet jamming, and thus less effective than ever before. More funds had been requested from Congress the month before (February 1950), but no action had been taken. In fact, the Congressional tone throughout the hearings of 1950 would seem to indicate that substantial increases in personnel and funds would not be forthcoming. The initial fund approval of \$36 million, to include an additional \$11.5 million for a new system of high-powered transmitters, would actually result in a net decrease in available operational funds when economic inflation was considered.

Also, though the additional radio funds were encouraging, two facts were very clear. First, it would require eighteen to twenty-four months for the first of the new transmitters to be placed on line. Second, the entire ring plan would require five years of funding, and seven years to complete. Congressmen, especially Senator Kenneth McKellar, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, failed to appreciate the need for long-term financial programming and support.

The Congress was unsophisticated in their appreciation of the problems of a psychological warfare campaign, or the time elements involved. When desiring to know how long Foy Kohler, head of VOA, believed that the psychological warfare operation would require, they were

⁶⁵Hearings, House, 1949, pp. 17, 65, 714-721, 873-4 passim.

totally unprepared for his immediate answer of "fifty or one hundred years."⁶⁶

Barrett faced an equally difficult task to coordinate the campaign. Rather than fewer organizations involved in the post-war effort, there were actually more organizations attempting to get a share of the action:

U.S. Army (Germany, Austria, Trieste, Far East)

U.S. Navy (Far East and Pacific)

U.S. Air Force

Central Intelligence Agency (Covert psychological warfare, worldwide)

Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) (The Marshall Plan)

HICOG (High Commissioner for Germany--Germany, Austria and sometimes France)

U.S. Department of Agriculture (South America, Middle East)⁶⁷

Within USIE Barrett began a series of changes that centralized more of the operations in Washington. While the field operators were still responsible for placing propaganda against target groups, the themes, topics, and content of the propaganda was increasingly formulated

⁶⁶Hearings, Senate, 1950, p. 1012.

⁶⁷The Department of Agriculture maintained extension offices worldwide, especially in the areas noted. Their actions frequently had a deep psychological impact, and had to be coordinated. They were usually very cooperative. ECA, budgeting \$10-11 million for 'information programs' for ECA recipients, was very xenophobic in the early days. HICOG and the Army in Europe were increasingly cooperative as the end of the occupation came into sight. The CIA rarely told USIE what they were doing, and thus cooperated to a minimum degree. The Air Force, terribly anxious in its new-found status, was difficult to live with at the best of times.

in Washington. The instruments of this centralization were the Overnight Telegrams, Special Directives, and the Weekly Foreign Information Guidance bulletins. The latter, normally referred to as "Guides" began circulation on April 6, 1950.

The Weekly Guides were a major instrument of the centralization of output that Barrett desired. These two and three page messages were used to draw all the field stations together in regard to content and subject matter. What was to be said, or not to be said, found frequent expression in the Guides. The problem of different USIE propagandists saying different things about the same subject was largely obviated. Unfortunately, an equally-sensitive problem was revealed: what was said in one country could give offense to another country. This was quickly demonstrated in France and Germany, and Greece and Turkey. Another problem with such highly-centralized yet limited output was that many of the Guides did not address what was of interest to many smaller countries. In some of these, such as Malaysia or South Africa, since Washington did not care to exercise central direction, the individualistic propagandist was still in his element. The Guides gave an evenhandedness of output that was remarkable for USIE. In the cases of new and poorly-trained personnel, the Guides were of immediate value. On the other hand, the trained, talented propagandists often found them dull, unimaginative, and stifling.

A second project Barrett initiated was the rewriting of the USIE country papers. These were studies which laid out the psychological objectives and target groups, as well as approved themes, for each country of interest. These documents had previously been compiled and

maintained in each of the various countries, but apparently were not standardized until Barrett's appointment. Under Barrett, these papers were drafted in Washington, forwarded to the field for comment, review, and suggestions, then returned in final form for implementation after the final Washington review. The approved paper could then be used as a reference during current operations, and could serve as a primary orientation document for new personnel. Since many countries also had a regional problem as well, regional guides soon had to be developed to cope with this problem.

The third major undertaking which Barrett began soon after his appointment was the re-issuance of centralized guidance on the national psychological objectives. This was badly needed, for the only current guidance was that of UM D-86, now a year old. Policy had been changed since then in a piecemeal fashion, and many within the organization no longer had a perspective on the "big picture."⁶⁵ This was more noticeable because the country papers, under revision, illustrated the shortcomings in many areas of knowledge. The initial guidance, issued in Weekly Guide 10, was not of much use. It restated the vague guidelines of UM D-86. It was not until late spring, 1950, that more meaningful guidance was dispatched to the field.

In the period April-June, 1950, Washington policymakers were most concerned with the transparent Soviet expansionism in Europe. Two major objectives were given to the field operators. The first was the requirement to place before all their target audiences the solid

⁶⁵ Shepard Jones to Walter Schwin, Memorandum, "Psychological Objectives," June 12, 1950, State Department File 511.00/6-1250 CS/W.

evidence of the basic strength, unity, and purpose of the non-Soviet world. Emphasis in the propaganda to Europe and the Soviet Union was to be oriented around the theme of "firmness and strength of Western European peoples against [the] USSR war of nerves."

This was an encouraging start, and indicated that someone in Washington seemed interested in doing something, but it was not much more than VOA and the European field officer had already been doing. More was needed, backed with some produced materials from Washington. A fuller, and more appropriate guidance came from Edward Barrett's office, from Wallace Carroll. Carroll designed the new instructions in late May through early June, and they were finally presented for approval at the Undersecretary's Meeting of June 12, 1950. Carroll's statements, after approval, were significant from several standpoints. The statement accurately defined the climate of the period as one of "intense political warfare," and called for both a "vigorous offensive action" as well as plainly indicating to the field operators that direct attacks upon the Soviet Union were now authorized. This was a clear reversal of the policy of four years before. The new policy reflected changed national policy considerations as well as the changed perceptions of the post-war world. The philosophy underlying the new directives was that of the short-range propagandist: the United States might "be able to register a truth which is harmful to our opponents when we cannot undertake the longer . . . effort to implant a truth

which is helpful to ourselves."⁶⁶ This guidance any newspaper reporter would recognize. The effect was to launch a psychological attack intended to realize immediate, short-range results. Exactly why immediate productivity of the psychological output was desired is an unresolved question. One might conjecture that Barrett wished to impress his new masters, or that it was felt that the President's call should seem to bear immediate fruit. Contemporary documents reveal that, despite public protestations to the contrary, United States leaders expected a war in the immediate future that would be under the leadership of the Soviet Union. In particular, the scene for this expected conflict was thought to be Europe or the Middle East.⁶⁷

The Carroll Guidance, arriving so appropriately, served as the initial framework for the USIE in the opening months of the Korean War. The guidance had identified three immediate psychological objectives. Creation of a healthy international community through a "climate of peace" throughout the world was the first. This was seen to be a probable result of fostering a spirit of self-help, self-reliance, and international cooperation. The second objective was to "deter to Soviets from further encroachments." This might seem to be the 1949 guidance restated, but it in fact went much farther than assisting the policy of containment. The effect of the supporting statements gave the field posts a free hand to directly counter Soviet propaganda within

⁶⁶ Wallace Carroll, "Psychological Pressures--Our Global Objectives," June, 1950. Adopted about June 12, 1950, as "Basic Information Guidance." State Department File 511.00/6-750.

⁶⁷ U.S. Department of State, Public Affairs Weekly Information and Policy Guidance 5, May 4, 1950. File 511.00/5-450 CS/H.

their own areas of representation. In particular, psychological warfare was to be used to "frustrate the Soviet regime's psychological preparations for war." Clearly, the USIE operators were to direct a major effort toward the Soviet peoples rather than the Soviet leaders. The various communist leaders were meanwhile to be targets for propaganda designed to foster self doubts that they had correctly estimated the strength of capitalism. The propaganda was to be especially reliant upon a clever expansion of Eugene Varga's writings.

The USIE propagandists were directed to utilize themes that would alienate the Soviet leaders from the Soviet people, as well as between the various factions within the Soviet leadership. The first objective might be of doubtful utility, except in a breakdown of Stalin's rigid control. However, the latter target had definite possibilities under the aging, increasingly-paranoid Iron Man and the perceptible vying for power within the hierarchy. The CIA was especially active in this field with black propaganda. The rumors of a "new purge," whether or not real, were repeated in U.S. propaganda as a move designed to carry forward the objective of estranging Soviet leadership from the population.⁶⁸

The third objective was to roll back Soviet power. Clearly this was not a defensive measure in intent. USIE propagandists would have to take the offense, and engage in open psychological warfare to accomplish this mission. Three major tasks were outlined to support

⁶⁸ Solzhenitsyn has generally pointed out that Stalin did an adequate job of estrangement, without any outside help. How much the USIE and CIA accomplished is an open question.

this objective. Foremost, USIE propagandists were to make the captive peoples feel that they had not been abandoned.⁶⁹ Additionally, propagandists were to undertake political subversion within the communist-dominated areas, most probably among the rank-and-file of the party members as well as the general populace.⁷⁰ Finally, USIE operators (and presumably CIA) were to "encourage Titoism in the satellite countries."

Both propagandists and policy-makers were urged to adopt a more sophisticated approach, to soften the brashness of the current USIE propaganda statements. Increased emphasis was to be placed on the use of persuasive techniques and incentives rather than the straight diatribe or bandwagon techniques that some were using. Carroll pointed out that, as an example, more soap was sold through the appeal of "the skin you love to touch" than that of "buy our soap." The same might be done with propaganda of a more political nature.⁷¹

The directive raised an important point that demonstrates a certain maturation of USIE propaganda operations. Enough information work had been done to educate the world in the less obvious workings of

⁶⁹Whether this was a contributing factor in East Germany (1954) or Hungary (1956) is, at this point, problematical. However, Radio Free Europe and other expatriate enterprises were much more virulent in relation to anti-Soviet themes than VOA and, as escapee reports note, listened to for this reason.

⁷⁰This passage was largely excised from declassification. Later, more comprehensive and more highly-classified plans of the NSC give a very good idea of what was to be done. The censor's pen slipped in regard to the second and third theme. See NSC-74.

⁷¹The soap company referenced was Palmolive Soap.

American democracy that USIE leaders felt that foreign audiences could appreciate that government policy pronouncements were not necessarily the sole prerogative of the diplomat or the President. The various instruments of propaganda would have to accept the lesser government official dealing with foreign diplomats, foreign correspondents, and foreign visitors, as well as United States officials and tourists abroad and members of Congress as perceived sources of United States policy. USIE operators would have to take these personnel into account, for they could each and all be "helpful as well as not" to the national effort. Sometimes these sources had been the instruments of beneficial propaganda. As often as not, they had been the unwitting and unwelcome sources of damage, such as a warlike "brandishing of the atomic bomb." The Congressmen were the great transgressors in regard to this last problem. It was problematical if the inexperienced incursions into national policy explanation and psychological warfare had deterred the Soviets, but they had certainly managed to "frazzle the nerves of our allies." The directive suggested every attempt to coordinate the statements of these various sources.⁷²

Objectives in Europe

Throughout 1949 propaganda operations in Europe were increasingly concatenated in support of the national policy of containment. This was a significant move away from the objectives of 1947. In March 1950, this was very clearly restated in a directive to "assist

⁷²"Psychological Pressures," pp. 1-4 passim.

the policy of containment of the USSR drive for domination."⁷³

Reflecting both foreign policy moves as well as local Soviet pressures, USIE programming and field operations for Europe moved from a relatively bland facilitative and supplementary program in 1946 to the more consciously-directed and responsive instrument for the support of United States foreign policy.

Another key theme was that of supporting a picture of solidarity among the Western European nations. This frequently took the form of reports of joint government ventures and agreements in the areas of trade, armaments, and finance, as well as peace and alliance treaties. Unity of action and discussion in the new United Nations was stressed, as were statements of solidarity which other governments issued. The Berlin airlift became a symbol of this solidarity and support, that Western Europe was standing firm against the Soviet pressure. The creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was both a diplomatic triumph and a propaganda tool of significant value. No firmer expression of unity could have been devised.

Simultaneously, and without a great fanfare, a more subtle approach to the problem was indirectly presented to the Soviet leadership, designed to play upon well-known fears of their own people. In this effort, largely sparked from Europe, two themes emerged. The first was the recurring topic that the people of Western Europe were united

⁷³ State Department, "Foreign Information Objectives UM D-86," March 26, 1950. This document was not directly available to the researcher, but is partially quoted in Donald C. Blaisdell to Mr. Sandifer. Memorandum, "Comment on Foreign Information Objectives UM D-86," March 27, 1950. State Department File 511.00/3-2750.

behind their leaders, but that Soviet leaders obviously could not claim the same. The publicity that the Soviet press gave to "traitors" in propaganda trials was of great value in this effort. It was further clear from the mass arrests before and following World War II that the Soviet leaders feared many in their country were secretly in support of the Western powers. Therefore, should the Soviet leadership start a war, they might find themselves in exactly the same position as the last Tsar.

The second theme was nearly the opposite of the first: encourage the captive peoples as well as Soviet citizens to believe that the actions of their own leaders were leading inevitably to a destructive war, which the common man did not want and which could not be won. Efforts were also made to encourage the religious and national minorities within Soviet control to resist. One should note that at this very time the Ukraine was experiencing a nationalist guerilla war.⁷⁴

In addition to encouraging the captive peoples to resist, the USIE also began working on the objective of demonstrating at every opportunity the "contradiction between USSR actions and USSR protestations of peaceful purposes." USIE propagandists were given a free hand to unmask Soviet power grabs and the destruction of the non-communist parties and leadership in such countries as Hungary and Rumania. Field personnel, as a part of this objective, were to focus on the Soviet

⁷⁴ Basic Information Guidance, June 10, 1950, Department of State File 511.00/6-1050, pp. 2-3.

Union's "phony peace campaign." This latter, known as the "Stockholm Peace Petition," was of great concern to United States leaders. The Soviet propaganda campaign played upon Europe's fears not only of another war, but one of annihilation. The target was the United States and NATO. The Soviet campaign especially stressed the United States' use of nuclear weapons already, and attempted to blame the United States for the first use of such weapons even before the actual conflict began, thereby making the United States the automatic aggressor whomever detonated the first nuclear round in Europe. The Soviet propaganda utilized a highly emotional issue, the people's desire for survival, and placed a difficult problem upon the United States and national political figures in Europe who advocated disarmament. The fact that the initial petitions were started through "front" organizations and people was not immediately apparent. Many famous and influential Scandinavians attached their names to the petitions.⁷⁵

USIE tactics, which were predicated upon the assumption that an immediate, frontal attack would be more helpful to the credibility of the Petition than otherwise, instead began an attack designed to undermine Soviet credibility in regard to "peace." USIE propagandists utilized such topics as the Sinkiang exploitation, Soviet pressures on Iran and their reluctance to leave that nation, the Berlin blockade, and the Soviet orders to Poland and Czechoslovakia to refuse to accept MDAP aid, regardless of how much aid was needed, as well as the Soviet

⁷⁵ If this story sounds topical, it should; the KGB has not changed this appeal or tactic at all. Recent successes just demonstrate the benefits of determination.

efforts to block the free flow of information to its own people.⁷⁶

Within Western Europe, USIE output concentrated upon the long-range, beneficial effects of NATO. Exposure of the Soviet "peace propaganda" was of course a major factor, but the initial exposure was usually the task of other nation's pronouncements. For example, once it became known that the major impetus behind the Stockholm Peace Petition was a group of communist-led or communist-sympathetic organizations, the Swedish government became interested in stopping the movement. Thus, many of the famous and influential Swedish citizens who had signed the Petition, after learning from their own government who the real leaders of the peace petitions were, began to publicly withdraw their support, and refused to allow their names to be associated with the movement. This material USIE could then exploit.⁷⁷

A useful means of coordinating this effort was the Weekly Guides. In fact, until early June 1950, they were the principle means which Edward Barrett used to notify the USIE field officers about recent policy changes and new objectives. Specific area guidance was also sent in the Weekly Guides, and was useful to others because everyone would then know what their opposite in another country was going to say. In the case of Belgium, the guidance for one week was to "continue to refrain from taking sides in the monarchy crisis . . . after the

⁷⁶U.S. Department of State, "Public Affairs Weekly Information and Policy Guidance 1" and No. 2, Telegram, April 6, 1950, and April 13, 1950, State Department File 511.00/4-650 and /4-1350. Hereinafter cited as "Weekly Guide."

⁷⁷Ibid., No. 9, June 1, 1950. More will be said in relation to this in Chapter VII, p. 210.

fact, reflect U.S. gratification that the Belgians have solved their problem."⁷⁸

USIE personnel were not just concentrating on the Soviet peace petitions at this time. There were many other problems demanding attention: German unification, Soviet proposals regarding Berlin and their attempt to get the United States and its allies to withdraw from that city, and the Austria-Trieste negotiations. All were thorny problems and did not diminish as the Soviet Union kept pressure on the United States and European problems, perhaps hoping to make Americans tired of the trouble and withdraw once more into isolation.

As noted before, it was not until early June 1950, that the field offices received a more definitive, comprehensive set of guidances for their efforts. Indeed, in the weeks just before the start of the Korean War no less than three major policy statements were issued. Considering the paucity of such guidances in the preceeding four years, it was an embarrassment of riches.

The first of these was actually a Weekly Guide, Number 10, issued on June 8th. As a coherent statement of United States foreign policy within the series, it is distinguished from all other Guides. The Washington staff believed that the recently concluded Paris-London Foreign Ministers Conference had been a seminal event, "terminat[ing] one phase of political events and initiat[ing] a new stage in the postwar period." USIE officers were directed to assume a more positive approach to their output, and fully espouse the United States

⁷⁸"Weekly Guide," No. 4, April 27, 1950, State Department File 511.00/4-2750, CS/C.

conviction "that [the] threat of Russian Communist imperialism confronted by manifestations of strength will be overcome." Strength and containment were the key ingredients for Europe in the immediate term. USIE propagandists were to present their European targets with the facts that the United States was determined to mobilize its "overwhelming moral and material strength" to attain a "peace consistent with freedom and mutual welfare."

This guidance, as well as President Truman's call for a Campaign of Truth, was a watershed event in the United States psychological operations program. From a "full and fair" approach the United States had progressed to a "showcase" presentation of facts, and with these guidances, proceeded into a full-fledged psychological war. Those propagandists who desired to initiate direct attacks upon the Soviet policy and actions were now free to attack their opponents in their most vulnerable spots. The Campaign of Truth also was the death blow to the philosophy that underlay Public Law 402, that the United States only needed an information program that would simply explain the policies, objectives, and culture of the United States to foreign peoples as an assistance to achieving United States goals.

While affairs throughout late 1949 and early 1950 were coming to a boil in Europe, and most United States and USIE attention remained centered in this critical theater, the Far East was not neglected. Three local themes were employed, each of which had some effectiveness. The first of these was Soviet expansionism in the region, and its threat to all the peoples. Soviet influence and expansionism in Vietnam and China were the major examples. In fact, United States

planners thought that China would make a great deal of trouble for Formosa in the summer months, and predicted heavy attacks on Quemoy, to include air attacks. USIE themes were the open Soviet support of Ho Chi Minh, and the presence of large numbers of advisors in China.⁷⁹ A second concern was Soviet propaganda in relation to Japan. The Soviets were attempting to make a great deal of capital (and were making a great deal of noise) about the early parole of some Japanese war criminals and the fact that Emperor Hirohito had not yet been tried as a war criminal. Since many people naturally assumed that the Japanese Emperor was responsible for the conduct of his nation, the propaganda was quite useful in embarrassing General MacArthur and SCAP. USIE, Washington, determined that the best reply to these questions was a series of questions to the Soviet Union: what happened to 350,000 Japanese citizens who had been in Manchuria, especially the known 30,000 or so prisoners of war? Obviously the Soviet accusations against SCAP were just so much smoke to cover the fact that the Soviets had once again failed to live up to their pledges and were in fact war criminals themselves. Soviet propaganda against Hirohito quickly ceased.

⁷⁹The Soviet Union was not particularly bright with their use of advisors at this time. First, they lived apart (as Soviet advisors and diplomats do to this day) in what would be considered luxurious quarters. This scarcely lived up to an image of a "proletariat of workers" without class distinctions. Second, they spent, not Russian rubles or Chinese yen, but American dollars. One may imagine the fun which the CIA had with that item. Third, the Soviets really flocked to the markets, and bought consumer goods to ship home as if they had never seen such merchandise which, in all probability they had not. Their hunger for consumer goods was so patent that it was an easy target. Again, the CIA must have had a great deal of fun with this theme; certainly VOA broadcasts did not skimp these points in the telling. Nor did they neglect to emphasize Mao's subservience to Moscow. This bore telling fruit ten years later.

The third regional theme dealt with Korea. During May 1950, the first Korean elections were held with what were now predictable results, when Soviet maneuvers in Europe were recalled. The fact that the United Nations Commission on Korea (ONCOK) had been denied access to the North was a major point, and the USIE was not slow to use the opportunity to take the Soviets and their "puppets" in North Korea to task. Further propaganda attacks were made against the Soviet "bond" drives in North Korea. These "bond drives" took much needed capital from North Korea to the benefit of a nation obviously in a much better economic position. VOA was quite active in pointing out the Soviet Union's economic imperialism. One suspects, but cannot prove, that covert psychological warfare in China was asking the question, "after they get through in North Korea, are they coming here? Is this not just like the Opium Wars, without even the bad excuse of a fight, just that they, too, claim to be communists?"⁸⁰

Far Eastern psychological warfare, on the eve of the Korean War, was more active, aggressive, and probably more telling than that of United States propaganda in Europe. At this critical moment, U.S. Army operations were terminating in Korea. In fact, on the first day of June 1950, the Army began formally to turn over their propaganda operations and fixed equipment to USIE personnel. This was accompanied with a transfer of operating funds for six months' running expenses, until USIE Washington could apply funds granted in the 1949 budget.

⁸⁰ The writer's estimate. The writer has two and a half years of experience in strategic psychological operations in the U.S. Army and feels that such a theme would not have been neglected.

hearings. The SCAP program had been gradually transferring to the USIE, as the Korean elections came closer. Much of the propaganda just before and after the Korean elections came, not from SCAP, but from USIE propagandists.⁸¹

New Policy Guidances--the NSC

Concurrently with the June 10th statement, the National Security Council was considering a revised, greatly-expanded plan for the nation's psychological warfare activities in the initial stages of a sudden war. This plan, known as NSC-74, also was developed during the March-June 1950, period. This plan was written on the basis of four assumptions. The prime assumption was that the Soviet Union or one of its allies (satellites) would begin any war. A national emergency might or might not have been declared at that point, depending upon how much warning the United States received through its intelligence resources. In either case, psychological warfare would be executed in a decentralized fashion and a "national psychological warfare organization" would be established for the subsequent stages of the war. As noted before, in Weekly Guide 5, United States officials believed that the Soviet Union was intending to "start something." In his public writings, Edward Barrett subsequently stated that the United States leaders guessed that such actions would be an offensive in a "limited area, with a satellite doing the official fighting." Certainly NSC-74

⁸¹"Weekly Guide," "Far Eastern Annex, No. 9," May 31, 1950, State Department File 511.00/5-3150, CS/M, No. 10, June 7, 1950, File 511.00/6-750 CS/MC, and No. 11, June 14, 1950, File 511.00/6-1450, CS/H.

may be regarded as prescient. However, everyone guessed wrong, for the action was not in Europe or the Middle East.⁸²

None of the more recently-declassified documents call into question the fact that United States leaders were surprised. Dean Acheson's statements leave little doubt that the State Department was totally surprised. Acheson had been away from the Department all that week, and had left early Friday to spend the weekend at home. President Truman was also at home, in Missouri. Both General Bradley and Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson were in Tokyo, about as far away from the centers of decision as possible, and Warren Austin, United States Ambassador to the United Nations, was in Vermont. In fact, none of the first-line policy personnel were available in the Washington area, to include the Joint Chiefs of Staff.⁸³ Certainly, had anything been expected in the early weeks of June, more people would have been "on duty," or at least available in the Washington area.

NSC-74, though approved subsequent to the outbreak of the conflict, is not written to reflect the thought that an actual conflict was imminent. Outbreak of a war prior to July 1951, was presumed only for the purpose of planning and the political intelligence estimate. The document identified eleven major objectives for national psychological warfare activities. However, it is interesting for reasons other than the immediate objectives. One of the more important points

⁸²NSC-74, "A Plan for National Psychological Warfare," July 10, 1950, The Carrollton Declassified Document System, 1978, No. 128. Also in National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁸³Barrett, Truth, p. 72. Acheson, pp. 402-5 passim.

of the paper is the clear statement that "psychological policy is an instrument of national policy and an integral part of the national war effort." No clearer recognition of the 1917 assessment could be constructed. Further, NSC directed that "national policy should be coordinated with all major aspects of national strategy."⁸⁴

In order to support the national psychological objectives, USIE propagandists had to create an understanding among the peoples of the world about how and why any war was "forced upon us." Also, propagandists were to assist the diplomats in gaining worldwide cooperation and support for an Allied victory, which was presumed to be in the best interest of all peoples. Simultaneously, the Soviet populace was to be infiltrated in such a way that the military, economic, and political power of the Kremlin rulers were reduced to a significant degree, both as an aid to undermine the Soviet leadership and to help force basic reforms in Soviet international relations. The United States propagandists were also targeted onto the effort to cause the destruction from within of the international communist party control apparatus, and to encourage the ultimate establishment of representative government within the communist-dominated areas.

Within the satellite governments and nations, psychological warfare was given the objective of "influenc[ing] the peoples [and] . . . eliminat[ing] Soviet control of their affairs." Within the Soviet-occupied or controlled areas, psychological warfare was tasked to encourage and support elements of resistance and, where desirable,

⁸⁴NSC-74, p. 2, para. 9; p. 3, para. 12. A later discussion will consider whether or not this was accomplished.

"to identify those elements with our cause." Within the Allied-occupied areas, the propagandists were to assist the Allied forces in fostering friendship and a spirit of cooperation in the control of the people.

USIE was also directed to operate within the allied nations themselves, assisting the maintenance and strengthening of "friendship, mutual interests, and cooperation." Neutrals were not overlooked, for the propagandists were to foster their friendship, demonstrate to the neutral nations the morality of the United States interests in the particular nation addressed, and gain their cooperation in the defeat of the Soviet Union. When such would seem to be advantageous, the propagandists were to create an identification between the neutral nation and the United States' cause.⁸⁵

Altogether, NSC-74 is a well-reasoned document, especially in regard to the Themes and Intelligence Annexes. The latter highlighted three major Soviet vulnerabilities for psychological exploitation which exist to this day. These were, first, the belief that within the Soviet people there was widespread disillusion and resentment as a result of the constant exactions, repressions, and personal insecurity characteristic of Stalin's rule. Second, there was a clear perception of the peasant's resentment of collectivization. Private ownership of the land as a cause had been sufficient to gather great support for the Germans when they initially invaded Russia in 1941. Had the German Army and political leaders not been so incredibly stupid in their

⁸⁵ NSC-74, pp. 13, 27-30 passim.

handling of the occupied population, Soviet partisan operations would not have had a chance of success. United States leaders believed this desire still existed. Finally, as noted earlier, there was significant resentment among the various minority nationalities. The major areas of nationalist disaffection were specified as the "Baltic States, the Ukraine, the Caucasus, and Soviet Central Asia."⁸⁶ It is doubtful, however, that very many USIE field operators were aware of the objectives, guidances, and themes in the then-Top Secret document.

The precise degree to which NSC-74 was enacted in the months following the outbreak of the Korean War is difficult to document. Certainly there is cause to believe that many of its themes, and therefore objectives, were implemented.⁸⁷ One clear indication that some, at least, were placed into operation is the greatly-increased authorization for funds, sixty-one million dollars in 1951 beyond the then-authorized levels. It would be erroneous to believe that this figure was due solely to the Korean War; the actual budget request for the "Campaign of Truth" was for ninety-two million dollars. Despite the initiation of the Korean War, Congress did not grant carte blanche to USIE. The initial request suffered cuts even under the shock of events in the Far East, and despite some efforts from President Truman. Still, the additional funds authorized a three-fold increase

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ See Weekly Guides 15-40, dealing with the first six months of the war. There is no formal implementation notice available, but the Guides reflect an increasing use of the NSC-74 themes based upon current events.

for USIE, which was about all that the organization could realistically administer.⁸⁸

At the same time, about one thousand additional personnel were authorized. These personnel, though slow in materializing, were sorely needed. Further, under the new procurement of funds, the first step of the Ring Plan was approved and funded to place the Soviet Union within a ring of high-powered transmitters. VOA transmitting time was increased as much as possible in reaction to the Korean War, though in fact the additional hours represented no new material, but repeated material as funds for additional transmitting hours could be purchased. VOA, like much of USIE, was unable to significantly increase its original output during the first few months, because its personnel were already operating at just about full capacity.

Now, with the Cold War suddenly very warm indeed, with the curious logic of such wars, USIE found itself having to return facilities and program responsibility for psychological warfare in the Korean theater back to the United States Army. Until the end of the conflict, USIE could advise, but not direct, the combat (tactical) psychological warfare effort unless that effort began using output directly contrary

⁸⁸ Edward W. Barrett to James Webb, Memorandum, "Campaign of Truth Program Figures," July 6, 1950, State Department File 511.00/7-650 CS/MD. Barrett to Webb, Memorandum, "Presentation of the Expanded Program," June 16, 1950, File 511.00/6-1650. James E. Webb, Memorandum to the President, "Campaign of Truth Appropriation Request," June 23, 1950. File 511.00/6-2350 CS/H.

to national policy.⁸⁹ USIE began an enormous task of giving the Army worldwide psychological warfare support.

⁸⁹ A check of the 1953 Hearings gives a reasonable picture of USIE broadcast hours. Considering the staff, and the normal production time required per air-hour, the output is remarkable. The documentation is a bit technical and confusing, and runs to nearly three pages. In short, VOA was broadcasting about one and a quarter air-years per transmitter, thanks to repeats and rented air time.

CHAPTER V

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE POLICY 1950-1952

The last two years of the Truman administration found the USIE facing new, unexpected challenges and problems. The Korean War was a very difficult problem which nearly overshadowed all other activities. The USIE found a changing role in Europe, as the Korean War moved the Allies toward strengthening NATO and accepting a de facto partition of Germany. New Soviet challenges were as important to USIE as were renewed challenges for control from the various armed services. Many of these challenges were reflected in new issuances of psychological policy decisions. In fact, if the period before June 1950, may be considered a poverty period for policy guidances, the years after the start of the Korean War are an embarrassment of riches.

Many of these guidances stemmed from a National Security Council plan designated NSC-68, "A Plan for National Defense," which was the driving strategic document for the remainder of the Truman years. This plan was given to the National Security Council about August 1950. The document stated that "frustration of the Kremlin design requires the free world develop a . . . vigorous political offensive against the Soviet Union." United States planners were convinced that they were involved in a struggle "in which ideas and principles play an equal

part with guns and butter." Such weapons were indispensable to the United States, and clearly gave great importance to psychological warfare as an instrument of national policy.

Five psychological objectives were identified in NSC-68 as vital to the national defense. The first objective was to "build psychological resistance in the free world to Soviet aggression." This was not a new objective, but it was greatly elevated in importance due to Korea, the entire question of the North Atlantic Treaty, and the clear requirement for an integrated European defense. Both the United States' and the European allies' confidence was shaken under the spectacle of the fledgling United Nations Command reeling back toward Pusan. Psychological resistance, better known as hope, was about all anyone on the southern side of the battle lines in Korea had, and Europe was in little better straits.

Psychological warfare was also directed to "create doubt regarding . . . Communist leadership" within the Soviet Union. Propagandists were also to encourage, or create, deviation from the communist leadership and principles. This objective fit in nicely with that of making life difficult for Soviet personnel charged with solidifying U.S.S.R. control of the Eastern European nations.

Within the non-Soviet countries, propagandists were to "create a community of interest . . . and a manifested determination to act together." This would assist the national objective of establishing and maintaining world conditions "conductive to the security of the United States." The total cost of such a program was estimated at about 110 million dollars for 1951 and 1952, and about 150 million in 1953.

It is noticeable that the projected wartime psychological operations were not a great deal more expansive or extensive than the then current USIE objectives which were being acted upon. Only allowing USIE to directly attack the communist leadership, rather than continuing the indirect approach, implied a significant change in tactics. The preliminary August document was designed for NSC staff consideration, and goes into substantially more detail than many finished NSC documents, including the assumptions which lay behind the various objectives. State Department planners regarded current Soviet propaganda as "bordering on open psychological warfare . . . [and] are a major threat to the foreign policy objectives of the United States." Nevertheless, although psychological warfare was essential to the support of any military actions, the psychological warfare of the United States had to be "based on truth . . . if the United States is to succeed in its foreign policy objectives."⁹⁰

The August document started the national wartime planning effort; a fuller exposition was included in the detailed cost proposal the State Department submitted to the National Security Council on October 18. This paper, later known as Annex 5 to NSC 68/1, identified six major objectives beyond the original five of August. Psychological warfare planners believed that demonstrated shared interests would form a strong psychological basis for cooperation with the United States

⁹⁰NSC, Interim Report, "The Programs and Cost Estimates of NSC-68 and Their Implications for the United States." Estimated August 1950, The Carrollton Declassified Document System, 1977, document 44A. This later became NSC 68/3 on December 8, 1950. The entire NSC-68 was not available to the researcher at this time.

and its objectives.⁹¹ National planners were also becoming increasingly concerned both with pacifism as a force, as well as signs, especially in Europe, of the pre-war attitude that "we can do nothing."⁹²

Development of psychological resistance was thus a prime concern for United States leaders. One means of accomplishing these objectives was the exposure of the Soviet threat to other people's self-interests.⁹³

This dovetailed nicely with the third objective, to expose the "nature, intentions, and capabilities of the Soviet Union to . . . [the] peoples and nations outside its sphere." Hope for eventual liberation to

subvert the ever-restive occupied satellite areas, was not overlooked.

Propaganda in the occupied nations was to be specially targeted toward intellectuals. An overall objective was to develop a sense of urgency,

especially in the creation of psychological resistance. Who could tell

what the Soviets would do next, with the United States almost totally

committed to Korea? The Europeans would have to become determined to

defend themselves. Finally, psychological warfare specialists were to

develop a world-wide confidence in the ability of the United States to

lead the resistance to Soviet imperialism.⁹⁴

The Korean War stirred the pot of Washington policy planning at all levels. Even the IFIS, heretofore relatively quiescent, began

⁹¹One can question this underlying rationale, but that is not the purpose of this paper, but one on psychological manipulation.

⁹²The spectre of the Third Republic, 1936-1939 still lingers.

⁹³In retrospect, one doubts the theme was appropriate to the objective.

⁹⁴NSC 68/1, Annex 5. "The Information and Educational Exchange Program," October 18, 1950. State Department File 63D351, Box 4208, NSC 68.

planning psychological warfare. On July 20, 1950, the IFIS chairman, William T. Stone requested from the director of the Interdepartmental Foreign Information Organization, IFIO, Edward Barrett, reference material to meet planning responsibilities. Stone especially required approved foreign information objectives for each target country and "such detailed plans and programs as may be developed [in the] individual U.S. departments and agencies to implement the national foreign information program."⁹⁵

This letter merely added to already strong reactions from the Administrative section of the State Department. The initial reaction had already occurred on June 9, 1950, when the IFIO had directed a communication to William Sheppard entitled, "Terms of Reference, Interdepartmental Foreign Information Organization," which Edward Barrett had signed as the Director.⁹⁶ Sheppard obviously had no idea what this strange bureaucratic beast might be, and sent a query to his own resident propaganda specialist, James Reber. Reber admitted being "so far removed from needs and knowledge of the psycho business that my comments have little validity." However, Reber, as an operational specialist in the Secretariat Staff, made several pointed comments from the perspective of proper organization and operations. He noted that from the beginning of NSC-level psychological warfare planning he had had doubts,

⁹⁵William T. Stone to Chairman, IFIO, "Current Planning Responsibilities, IFIO," July 20, 1950. State Department File 63D351, Box 4207, NSC 59/1.

⁹⁶Edward Barrett to William Sheppard, "Terms of Reference, Interdepartmental Foreign Information Organization," June 9, 1950. State Department File 63D351, Box 4207, NSC 59/1.

feeling that "there was some awfully muddy thinking organizationally on this problem." The June 9 paper merely confirmed this suspicion.

Reber pointed out that "we now have an interdepartmental staff [IFIO] compounded upon interdepartmental staff [IFIS]." He conceded that, while he was not directly concerned, he had great difficulty thinking that "the A[dmistrative] Area had anything to do with it," and suggested that a great deal of money would be saved if someone would hire a "staff advisor for Mr. Barrett."⁹⁷

The problem was sent to Carlisle Humelsine, Deputy Under Secretary for Administration, who certainly had many more pressing problems. One sympathizes with Humelsine, who had found the USIE a headache from its very assignment to the State Department. Humelsine, moreover, had no idea what this sudden organization was doing, popping into existence within the State Department. He sent the entire matter to his assistant, Charles Johnson, for a recommendation. Humelsine also requested, under separate cover, "your recommendations on whether the top structure of the P [Public Affairs, Edward Barrett's section] should be studied immediately or in the near future." Barrett obviously had made an enemy of Humelsine.

Johnson responded in a frank, strongly-disapproving memorandum. He not only concurred with James Reber, but also pointed out that NSC 59/1 unfortunately gave the IFIO the same authority in psychological warfare as the Secretary of State. In essence, Barrett could be his

⁹⁷ James Q. Reber to William Sheppard, Memorandum, "Interdepartmental Foreign Information Program," July 18, 1950. State Department File 63D351, Box 4207, NSC 59/1.

own Secretary of State whenever he wanted, simply through IFIS. Nothing appeared to have been gained in "permitting peacetime information operations to become officially recognized as an 'interdepartmental' problem." No one in State Department Administration had approved the organization of IFIO or IFIS, nor had seen the terms of reference. He rendered the gloomy conclusion that "we've had it and have to live with it until some opportunity presents itself" to eliminate NSC 59/1 and IFIO.⁹⁸

The dual existence of USIE and IFIO poses a question for the researcher as to precisely where national psychological strategy was originating, and precisely how policy was actually being implemented. USIE was the operational organization of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Edward Barrett. Ostensibly, this organization received direction and guidance from the Secretary of State or Under Secretary of State. The IFIS, supporting the IFIO, with Edward Barrett as the Director, reported laterally to the military, vertically to the Secretary of State and, under NSC 59/1, directly to the NSC. All that was required for maximum confusion was one more national-level psychological warfare planning agency.

The National Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) was established on June 20, 1950. Its Chairman was Edward Barrett. The PSB was to report directly to the NSC "on its evaluation of the national psychological operations, including implementation of approved objectives, policies, and programs." The objective of the PSB was to provide for...

⁹⁸Carlisle Humelsine to Charles Johnson, Memorandum, July 19, 1950; and Charles Johnson to Carlisle Humelsine, Memorandum, "Terms of Reference, IFIO," July 27, 1950. State Department File 63D351, Box 4207, NSC 59/1.

more effective planning, coordination, and conduct of the national psychological warfare effort. Simultaneously, IFIO was re-named the "Psychological Operations Coordinating Committee" (POCC).⁹⁹

Confusion over who, or which organization was controlling and originating psychological warfare policy and operations was further increased when the Defense Department began new agitation for the implementation of NSC-74. The CIA now fully supported this recommendation. Crucial to the dispute between these departments and the State Department was the required activation of an "interim board to coordinate and control propaganda," and the clear requirement for the organization of a separate propaganda agency, similar to the OWI. President Truman, in establishing the PSB, was acting in accordance with the previously-approved war plan envisioned under NSC-74. This was not necessarily a product of reflection, but of reaction.

The quarrel between the Departments of Defense and State about the activation of the Psychological Strategy Board was a reflection of each Department's deeper concerns about immediate problems that, inevitably, placed them at opposite ends of the psychological warfare strategy debate. The Department of Defense, especially the Far Eastern Command of General MacArthur, greatly desired the full wartime mobilization of USIE in support of operations in Korea. Especially in the

⁹⁹ Department of State, Press Release No. 846, August 17, 1950. Lincoln White, Transcript, "Press and Radio News Conference" Thursday, August 17, 1950, 5:10 p.m. Press release, "Presidential Directive Establishing the Psychological Strategy Board," June 20, 1951. Department of State, Press Release No. 532, June 20, 1951. The Press releases in 1951 merely confirmed and formalized the existence of the PSB, which until that time had been known as the "Psychological Operations Coordinating Committee," not the same organization as IFIS was to become.

early days around Pusan, and then after the Chinese intervention, no effort seemed sufficient to meet the needs of the United States soldiers who were bleeding and dying in the least likely of lands.

The spectre of the "yellow hordes" was never far from the minds of many in the Far East, and it seemed entirely logical that the full wartime contingency plans to disrupt the Soviet control over the area and its leaders was necessary. In the early days of the conflict, responding to imperative Defense Department requests, President Truman took two actions that had lasting psychological significance for the conflict: neutralization of the Formosa Straits, and commitment of a regimental combat team into South Korea. Both these actions had immediate and far-reaching repercussions within China, where memories of foreign intervention and occupation were fresh and acute. Not only were foreign powers again projecting an unwelcome presence from the sea, but Korea, the "lips over the teeth" was again in a state of war, with a foreign power intervening. Korea was no less vital to the security of China than to Japan, and China could not allow the situation to continue without grave concern for its own interests. Both issues were sources of psychological tension for the Chinese, and both had a negative impact upon the Chinese people. It appeared to USIE planners that unleashing full psychological warfare throughout the area, rather than just within Korea, would only exacerbate the problem.

The USIE leaders, on the other hand, while sharing a deep concern for the fighting and dying in Korea, tended to keep greater attention on the larger problem as outlined in NSC-74. Edward Barrett had correctly pointed out that the Soviet Union seemed to be planning

some "peripheral action" designed to distract and debilitate the United States' energies and resources. Unfortunately, no one in Washington managed to decipher the puzzle of where this peripheral action would take place. After all, no area at that moment was more peripheral to United States concerns than Korea. In retrospect, Korea was quite the safest choice for the Soviet Union: it was fairly close to Soviet-occupied territory, it was comfortably far away from the United States and therefore would be difficult for the United States to support in terms of materiel, and conflict could be safely limited, accomplishing Soviet objectives of distraction, debilitation, and preoccupation of United States energies away from Europe and the Mediterranean area.

Central to United States concerns and State Department planning was Europe. Growth of apathy and neutralism were already regarded as serious, and United States preoccupation with Korea could easily accelerate this trend, especially if United States contributions to NATO were reduced or significantly delayed because of Korea.

It would take very little to make Europeans believe that the United States would abandon the Europeans for a distant Asian nation where American troops were in an actual rather than a threatened war. Europe, in USIE estimates, was still suffering from a crisis of confidence. Any reduction of effort, or perceptible wavering from the European objectives could wreak incalculable harm. The State Department and USIE had to be concerned about the broader picture and requirements to counter Soviet aggression worldwide, not just in Korea. Conflict over psychological warfare policy control was as important as the fighting for a few bloody acres of ground in Korea, considering the

potential long-range consequences.

Thus, both the State Department and the National Strategic Resources Board (NSRB) opposed the activation of the PSB and the creation of an independent agency. NSRB believed the latter organization was premature. The State Department position in the question was more reasoned. Events since the beginning of the Korean War had not proven that the existing provisions for coordinating psychological warfare were inadequate. If NSC-74 provisions were followed, and an independent interim board were established, the State Department could not admit to being persuaded that such a board (as the PSB) would "actually provide a stronger and more effective coordinating mechanism." State Department planners were concerned that such a board would "undermine the responsibilities of the Secretary of State." The State Department held the position that such localized hostilities as Korea did not "call for the activation of arrangements in NSC-74," which were designed for a general, world war. Activation of the "interim board" would be inconsistent with the Secretary's responsibilities under PL 402 and NSC 59/1 until war was actually declared. Thus, the State Department believed that activation of the wartime arrangements were "unsound and unrealistic." The majority of the propaganda mission was still present for the Department in the form of the uncommitted nations and Europe, not involved in Korea.¹⁰⁰ The State Department further argued that "we should not go over to the wartime organization at the same time the U.S. policy stresses our peaceful intentions." The latter view

¹⁰⁰ Department of State, Memorandum, "Department of State Views on NSC-74," October 9, 1950. State Department File 63D351, Box 4207, NSC 59/1.

apparently prevailed, and Barrett was ordered to re-word and submit a new text for agreement on NSC-74.

Edward Barrett apparently decided that such a re-working should be accomplished through the POCC, which had IFIS as its staff. In November IFIS published a second "terms of reference" paper, as well as the proposed re-draft of NSC-74. In this document, IFIS presumed the role of psychological warfare in general war was to "assist military operations and policy actions . . . and achieve . . . maximum benefit from these actions." The reference paper identified seven major objectives for planning purposes. The first objective was to "affect the will of the people and armed force of the aggressor nation as to make them refuse to continue the war." Apparently the United States Navy program in 1945 was highly regarded as having been instrumental in the Japanese surrender, and thus it was reasoned that a similar program could succeed in 1950.¹⁰¹ A more realistic objective was that of encouraging the satellite peoples and governments to abandon the aggressor nation, the Soviet Union. Certainly the general populace would be willing to abandon the hated occupation forces, but government leaders already doubted the efficacy of persuading the Communist leadership of those countries to leave the protection of the Soviet Union.

In any realistic war scenario it was expected that large areas of Western Europe would likely be overrun. These areas would support the formation of resistance elements, and psychological support for

¹⁰¹Department of State, "View on NSC-74."

this development was a major objective.¹⁰² This objective was further developed as "assisting in enlisting, preparing, and mobilizing the people of enemy-occupied areas" to begin guerrilla warfare in support of United States military and psychological plans.

Creation of maximum goodwill among neutrals was a necessary psychological objective. In direct support of military operations, national psychological warfare would "seek to reduce the effectiveness of the armed forces of the aggressor nation and its allies." Finally, throughout the world, propaganda programs were to increase the confidence and belief in the "consistency and objectivity . . . of US-Allied statements and actions."¹⁰³

IFIS, under Edward Barrett and William Stone was apparently proud of these proposals, and forwarded them through State Department channels to the NSC. While the proposal is very revealing about the thinking of all psychological warfare planning in the months following the outbreak of war in Korea, they are more interesting from the standpoint of evaluation of the quality of such planning. Field personnel, while they may be able to achieve miracles locally, ultimately have an effect no better than the quality of planning which gives them scope and direction. In this case, the planning was cited as "inadequate and confusing . . . add[ing] very little." It was returned

¹⁰² One cannot help but wonder what the CIA would think about this invasion of their responsibility. See also NSC-74, p. 14.

¹⁰³ IFIS, "Terms of Reference for IFIS Working Group on the National Warfare Plan," IFIS 19/1, November 15, 1950. State Department File A/MS, National Psychological Warfare Plan, and "IFIS 19/1-National Psychological Warfare Plan for General War," January 12, 1951.

to the planners for a complete rewrite.¹⁰⁴

At the same time, the larger propaganda staff in USIE produced, and passed through Barrett another policy paper on NSC-74. It added to the confusion of policy control and formulation. It did make one valid point, which should have been clearly recognized six months before: rather than a world-wide war footing, what the United States propaganda organizations really faced was a "need for intensified psychological effort under conditions ranging from cold war to localized hostilities and general war."¹⁰⁵

About this same time, the National Security Council reviewed NSC-68, the "United States Programs and Objectives for National Security," in light of the Chinese Communist intervention in Korea. An accelerated program of re-armament and psychological warfare was recommended to the President. The various programs were to achieve, "under the shield of a military build-up, an integrated political, economic, and psychological offensive designed to counter the current threat to national security [from] the Soviet Union." At this critical juncture, it is clear that the NSC still regarded a psychological warfare program as a co-equal of political and economic programs. Within this context, psychological warfare was to concentrate on the

¹⁰⁴ Leon Crutchen to William Allison, Memorandum, "IFIS 19/1-National Psychological Warfare Plan for General War," January 12, 1951. State Department File AM/S, "National Psychological Warfare Plan."

¹⁰⁵ Edward Barrett to Carlisle Humelsine, Memorandum, "NSC-74," November 21, 1950. State Department File AM/S, "National Psychological Warfare Plan," and Department of State, "Statement of Major Differences Between State and Defense Departments Regarding NSC-74," November 20, 1950. Same File.

most critical targets, the Soviet Union, its allies, and the most vulnerable free-world areas.¹⁰⁶ Two national objectives were assigned. First, psychological warfare personnel were to gain "popular and government confidence . . . in support of the shared interests of the people of the free world." Second, the propagandists were to create psychological resistance to further expansion of the influence of the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁷

Within USIE, new programs and policy planning were underway. In particular, under the urgings of Charles Hulton, the directive machinery was re-oriented in response to Truman's call for a "campaign." Hulton, as the General Manager, had several years experience in foreign service, particularly in Soviet Russia, and about five years experience in the USIE. He insisted that a more refined course be created to orient propagandists both in Washington as well as in the field onto a country-by-country approach, mapping out specific, defined targets. When all these elements were pulled together, a coherent world-wide program would be laid out. The initial steps in this effort began before the Korean War, in April, 1950. With few exceptions, it was

¹⁰⁶The "crucial periphery" was identified as Republic of Korea, Austria, West Germany, Yugoslavia, Burma, Indochina, Thailand, Malaya, Afghanistan, Iran, Finland, Greece, Turkey, Japan, and Trieste. William T. Stone, Memorandum, "Current Planning Responsibilities, IFIO."

¹⁰⁷NSC 68/3, "United States Objectives and Programs for National Security," December 8, 1950. National Archives. Also Carrolton Declassified Document System, 1977, 43D.

not until early 1951 that the new "country papers" were approved for use in the field.¹⁰⁸

All of this long-range, high-level planning was to the good, and had been sorely lacking before 1950. However, in the immediate aftermath of the Korean invasion, none of this was of any assistance to the personnel in the field. Initial Weekly Guidances emphasized a moderate tone, and it was not for several weeks that the United States propagandists were allowed to connect the North Korean invasion directly with the Soviet Union. The Weekly Guidances were a distinct aid in this effort, for immediate policy coordination. However, the Guidances were primarily useful in short-range themes and tactics, and dealt best with short-range issues. The field stations and embassies needed such guidance, but they had a greater need for a coherent body of long-range objectives as a springboard for their actions rather than a body of conflicting, short-range guidances.

In part, this need was finally filled in January 1951, with a statement on the overall objectives and directions of the foreign information program. The directive was widely circulated throughout USIE, and there is good reason to believe it was circulated to the field as a confidential-level document. It was, in fact, the same as Annex 5, NSC-68 of October 1950, excepting the financial sections, and omitting any identification with the parent document, which was classified Top Secret.

¹⁰⁸ Edward Barrett, Memorandum, November 13, 1951. Department of State, Directive, "USIE Country Papers," April 5, 1950. State Department File 511.00/4-550 CS/H. Department of State, Letter of Transmittal, "Draft Country Plan," February 8, 1952, State Department File 511.00/2-852 CS/H.

During 1951 and 1952, the Weekly Guides formed the major means of transmitting psychological warfare policy and themes from Washington to the field posts, including VOA. The VOA, however, also used the long-distance telephone network to good advantage, and kept more closely in touch than other activities. In the immediate aftermath of the Korean invasion, the Weekly Guidances concentrated on two major objectives: exposure of the nature, capabilities, and intentions of the Soviet Union was the foremost effort. This objective was addressed directly in propaganda attacks and through discussions of the contradictions between "words, ideals, and deeds of Soviet Communism, internally and externally."

In regard to China and the urgent needs of the Defense Department, portions of NSC-74 that pertained to that area were activated very quickly. Although it was clearly recognized in planning and psychological warfare circles of the time that the Chinese Communists and Mao Tse-tung were quite different from subservient East European communist parties, United States propaganda did not reflect this fact. There were very important reasons why United States propaganda had to portray Chinese communist actions as being a part of what was later called "monolithic communism."

The United States psychological warfare planners, considering Chinese participation in any war, presumed that China and the Chinese leaders would remain loyal to the Soviet Union at least through 1951. Moreover, Chinese entry into any war that occurred would be required "as a categorical act of political loyalty." China, threatened with Formosa and the enmity of most of the non-communist world had no ally

to turn to but the Soviet Union. If the Chinese communist party was to maintain itself and rebuild a war-torn nation, only the Soviet Union would help; the price of that help was obvious.

United States propagandists began employing prepared themes as soon as Chinese intervention was confirmed. Planned as a contingency, these themes were designed to split the Chinese leaders from their popular base, as well as disrupt Sino-Soviet relations. The most profitable of these themes was the contention that China's involvement in the Korean War was the result of the Peiping regime's subservience to foreign control, specifically, Russian control. This theme struck at multiple psychological vulnerabilities, and hurt the Chinese communist leaders. In the first instance, the theme struck at the unpopular thought that the communists in Peiping were no better than the Kuomintang or the Imperial regimes that had ruled before. China was still under the foreign yoke, despite the true nationalist desire of the masses that had been the heart of the support for the Chinese communists, and the communist statements to the contrary. Second, China was under Russian control. The inference of this was very significant, because the Chinese as a nation had a long blood-score against Russian expansionism in the north, the very area again under contest. The Sino-Russian war was hardly forgotten. If there was one nation in the world the Chinese disliked, it was Russia. Thus the United States propaganda emphasized the key words Moscow (traditional throne of the Tsars) and Russian in relation to stories of external control. The Chinese leaders were openly portrayed as communists, but communists ever-subservient to Moscow's bidding.

Finally, the theme of foreign domination twined with that of continued warfare struck a two-fold blow at the Chinese communist leadership. First, much of the Chinese communist support was "based upon the promise of peace to an utterly war-weary people." The Chinese communist leaders had not only thrown their people into a war, but were obviously "insincere" in their promise of peace, one of the most damaging of charges to a Chinese. Further, not only were the Chinese leaders doing Moscow's wishes, they were sending Chinese youths to die fighting Americans, a traditional friend, for Russians, a traditional enemy.

Another potentially-vulnerable point was the expected operations of Soviet economic relations with China. Psychological planners anticipated that such relations would follow the pattern established in Eastern Europe. If this occurred, the economic relation would clearly favor the Soviet Union. Thus, charges that the Chinese leaders were happily reducing China to colonial status again to serve Moscow were prepared. Parenthetically, it should be noted that these were the very charges used against both the Imperial and Kuomintang leaders, a point which would not be lost upon the Chinese.

Throughout the USIE planning and propaganda operations, one omission is quite notable. No provision was made for the use, or limited use, of Chiang Kai-shek or the Chinese forces on Taiwan. Although no written documentation is available, reasons for this may be suggested. First, Chiang and the Kuomintang party were so clearly associated with the very war-weariness and warlordism that had sparked the rise of the Chinese communists to power that any use of this theme

would have had the undesirable effect of driving the Chinese people more fully to the support of their communist leaders. In the choice of "which devil," it was obvious that the Chinese people would choose the one they had, rather than the one they had driven away. Second, Chiang was far too well-associated with foreign intervention and support. The fact that he was completely open to charges of foreign subservience was obvious. In the case of a choice between the two, there was little difference between leaders under the control of Moscow, and leaders under the control of Washington and London. Either choice would amount to a foreign domination that would be totally repugnant to the Chinese people. No clearer indication that Chiang was the creature of the British-American powers could be constructed than the presence of the Seventh Fleet in the Straits between Formosa and the mainland. Psychologically, Chiang was a liability to United States propaganda, and was thus clearly avoided.¹⁰⁹

Thus, the major objective of U.S. propaganda was to present the Chinese communists as an outgrowth of Soviet control in the overt

¹⁰⁹ NSC-74, pp. 14-17 passim. It is interesting to note that official notice was taken elsewhere of Benjamin Schwartz's book, Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao Tse-tung. The book was officially proscribed from USIS libraries and propaganda. Accurately pointing out precisely what the then Top Secret studies held as fact, the book could have completely wrecked USIE propaganda themes. It should also be noted that at no time in currently-available government documents did any official challenge Schwartz's thesis. The prevailing attitude in USIE would seem to be slight embarrassment that Schwartz was so distressingly correct. In regard to the psychological liabilities of Chiang Kai-shek, the conclusions are the writer's. Subsequent events would seem to substantiate the claim, particularly Truman's response to MacArthur's trip (and press releases) to Taiwan. The lack of United States support for a Kuomintang return to the mainland in the years since Korea is another point in support of this conclusion.

propaganda. It is interesting to note, however, that such an identification was not pursued in the classified literature of the period. The object of this propaganda tactic was two-fold. The less-apparent objective was to cause the Chinese, with their proud heritage, to be shamed with the conduct of their leaders in following the lead of the long-time Chinese enemy, the Russians. The ploy on Chinese xenophobia was especially effective when it could be demonstrated that the Chinese leaders, especially Mao Tse-Tung, literally echoed the words, and did the bidding of the leaders in Moscow.

Another major objective, occurring in over two-thirds of the Weekly Guides, was the development of hope and confidence in the United States.¹¹⁰ This objective was addressed through both positive presentation of facts and United States policies and actions, as well as through pointing out Soviet lies. The keynote of United States propaganda continued to be the truth. Truth, once perceived as such, builds credibility, which in turn allows greater use of judiciously selected truths. Exposure of deliberate falsehoods diminishes credibility. Hence, a great deal of effort from both United States and Soviet propagandists went into discrediting their opponent's propaganda as lies.

The Korean War, of course, was a focal point for much of the propaganda each week. The charges of bacteriological warfare, for example, were a serious problem, and will be discussed below. One problem, in relation to the Korean War, was the rapid changes of United

¹¹⁰"Weekly Guidance," guides number 40-140. Dates vary.

Nations fortunes, and the constant need to readjust USIE output. For example, International Motion Pictures Division (IMP), soon after the war began sent camera crews to Korea to make a film, titled "In Defense of Peace and Freedom." The film was originally envisioned as a two-reel effort, and needed to be made very quickly. Quickly is a relative term for making, producing, and finishing a two-reel film. When all the various language tracks had been dubbed and the film was ready for distribution, USIE personnel found that things had changed rather dramatically in Korea. Therefore, IMP decided that, since it had taken so long, they would place the film back into production, incorporate additional footage of recent events and make a finished, three-reel film production. Scripting approval was slow and uncertain, and when the three-reel film was completed, USIE found that the situation had changed again, and that the three-reel film was almost worthless. The film was sent back into production, with orders to chop it down to two reels again, and to get it into the field quickly. Again, scripting problems were tremendous, and approval from the various area desks took far too much time. It was finally released in late 1952.¹¹¹

A similar experience occurred with regard to the Weekly Guides, as field personnel found that they had a large number of past file copies which were increasingly out of date. Thus, only the most recent Weekly Guides came to be used. This fostered an unfortunate tendency to focus on short-term events in some cases. Weekly Guides also

¹¹¹See the Hearings, House, 1952 for a full discussion of this particular problem. The House, and later the Senate, were not placated with an explanation of the production problems.

reflect the increased effort at centralization of output during Barrett's term. Two examples will serve to illustrate this. On August 6, 1951, the following guidance was issued:

Avoid undue emphasis ECA announcement (FEB 183, July 29) plans QTE fullest UNQTE use of JAP industry ECA program for Asia . . . Avoid implication that U.S. seeks any return to pre-war JAP concept QTE co-prosperity sphere UNQTE.¹¹²

A second example may be taken from the April 30, 1952, Guide:

SOAFR: Although efforts of Premier Malan's NATLIST Party GOVT implement policy apartheid have inflamed SOAFR constitutional and racial problems, this issue must be considered essentially an internal one on which any representations by or comment from U.S. inappropriate.¹¹³

Taken as a whole, the Weekly Guides were an excellent vehicle for coordinating and controlling a unified body of propaganda output dealing with world-wide problems, as well as some local problems. The local propagandist, of course, must continue to carry out the specific country plan, adding to the Weekly Guides as necessary. The Weekly Guide also served as a means of bypassing the sticky problem of disseminating the more highly-classified national objectives, as well as being a more reflective instrument in the ever-changing propaganda environment.

Use of this centralized policy guide technique was greatest, and had the best results in Austria-Germany occupation zones. In this case the guidance did not come from the USIE, but from HICOG. The High Commissioner of Germany passed the State Department guides through to

¹¹² Weekly Guide 70, August 6, 1951. State Department File 511.00/8651 CS/H.

¹¹³ Weekly Guide, No. 107, April 30, 1952. State Department File 511.00/4-3052 CS/H.

various field personnel, but in addition originated its own "Public Affairs Guidance" messages which would deal with one or two very specific issues. The HICOG guidances not only determined what was to be said, but exactly how a matter was to be treated. For example:

Shuman Plan. Prolonged negotiations in Paris provide opportunity stress careful efforts to take into serious consideration all aspects and interests before taking essential steps to supra-national organizations. Character of negotiations provide argument plan may not take into account German interests.¹¹⁴

The major dangers of both the State Department and the HICOG centralized directives were two-fold. First, the guidances inevitably sapped field initiative. This was not too significant in a small, cohesive area such as the one controlled in Germany-Austria. But such a weakening of initiative was a serious flaw when the program was spread across the world and the guides often took four to six days to reach their intended recipients. Under an Ambassador or Consul who had relatively little interest in an information or propaganda program, there was no additional pressure to go much beyond the Weekly Guide topics. Even a strong, creative propagandist cannot overcome antipathy in an Ambassador. A weak propagandist, or one interested in only a few aspects of his task, could depend excessively upon the guides, pointing out that those were the issues Washington was interested in addressing. In either case, the USIE program and national objectives suffered.

The second danger of the central approach was over-enthusiasm for a centralized program. Lack of local knowledge among the area desks and programs in Washington also took its toll. Insistence on

¹¹⁴HICOG, "Public Affairs Guidance 69," April 16, 1951. State Department File 511.00/4-1651 HH.

following Washington guides could, and often did, result in inappropriate themes, words, and symbols being used. For example, the word cia should never be used in Brazil. The Portugese word cia has rather unfortunate sexual connotations. While the CIA quickly learned this fact, USIE Washington was rather slow to adjust its output.¹¹⁵

Throughout 1951 and 1952, USIE themes increasingly shifted from a defensive posture toward exposure of Soviet actions and overt attacks against Soviet propaganda, political, military, economic actions and the various leadership personalities. Sometimes USIE output could become just as personal and direct as its Soviet counterpart. For example, "Andrei 'peace talk' Gromyko" and "Andrei 'laughing' Vyshinski" were well-used themes in 1951 and into 1952.

The Weekly Guides also mirrored the increasing firmness and definition of national psychological objectives. Much of the impetus for this crystallization came as the result of the Chinese intervention, and Soviet actions in Europe such as the Czech and Hungarian purges. Continued pressure came from the American military, especially the Joint Chiefs of Staff who, rightly enough, saw two-thirds of U.S. available military strength engaged in a shooting war in Korea. The Joint Chiefs desired the full wartime mobilization and activation of NSC-74.

General of the Army Omar Bradley reported to the Secretary of Defense the conclusions of the JCS in a report on 15 January, 1951.

¹¹⁵ Personal experience in active psychological operations. Also cited in the U.S. Army Psychological Operations Course, 1969, "Themes and Words." Every propagandist who knows what he is about asks for a list of taboo words, phrases, and themes in regard to the area of interest, first. VOA, with its instant world-wide dissemination is most sensitive to this problem, as well as the most frequent offender.

In the document, Bradley made several points in regard to psychological warfare. The JCS recommended that the "information and intelligence measures behind the iron curtain" be intensified. He recommended that a "coordinated and integrated propaganda crusade against Kremlin-dominated communism everywhere" be developed. In addition, the nation should "rapidly implement a large-scale program of psychological warfare, including special operations" as a part of an over-all national program. This program should be designed to "wrest the initiative from the Soviet Union . . . force the U.S.S.R. to the defensive, and ultimately to reduce to impotence the threat of Kremlin-dominated communism." The national plan, moreover, should utilize psychological warfare and clandestine operations to "foment unrest and revolution in selected strategic satellite countries and Russian political division." The JCS felt such a program "must be carried out aggressively with full acceptance of the risk of war."¹¹⁶

These grim recommendations from the most highly-regarded military expert in the United States could not help but have an impact. One of the results of this memorandum for the USIE was an increased, emergency plan for offensive psychological warfare. The plan, largely an IFIO document generated under the direction of Edward Barrett, was founded upon two assumptions. The first assumption was that the Russian peoples would be reluctant to suffer another world war so soon after the end of World War II. This reluctance would be a deterrent to Soviet

¹¹⁶ Omar Bradley, General of the Army, to Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, Memorandum, "Review of the Current World Situation and Ability of the Forces Being Maintained to Meet United States Commitments." January 15, 1951. The Carrollton Declassified Document System, 1976, 192A.

leadership. The second assumption was that it was within the capabilities of the United States at that time to "increase the force of this deterrent."

Both these assumptions might well be questioned. The first simply presumes that Stalin was amenable to public pressure, however remotely. It overlooks the point that Stalin had a truly effective instrument for controlling the public's opinion on anything: the OGPU 2nd MGB (Beria's Secret Police), and the slave labor camp system (the Gulag). The second assumption was equally suspect, for in Congressional testimony, already noted, estimates of VOA "effectiveness" in the U.S.S.R. ranged from five to thirty percent penetration of the jamming. Multiple repeats of the broadcasts did, of course, tend to raise this level, but to what extent no one could accurately estimate.

The VOA was at that time the principle source of United States propaganda penetration of Soviet-controlled areas. The emergency plan was thus little more than an emergency programming guide, although covert propaganda was supposed to have the same objectives. The first of these was emphasizing to Soviet "rulers and people the reckless nature of Soviet policy and its consequences." Deterrence from the public was to be built through the establishment of a "reservoir of good will" rather than friendship between the "peoples of the USSR and those of the free world." Third, propaganda was to concentrate upon "widening the schism which exists between the Soviet peoples and their rulers."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ Department of State, "Emergency Plan for Psychological Offensive (USSR)," March, 1951. State Department File 511.00/3-2351 CS/E.

United States psychological warfare planners clearly were optimistic, and seem to have been operating on the evaluation of a defector in regard to the third objective. When asked during an intelligence debriefing when communism would be complete in the USSR, the defector stated, "on the day when the people fail to see the discrepancies between Soviet propaganda and their daily life."¹¹⁸

The sharpening propaganda attack against the communist areas led to the use of more telling themes which were aimed specifically at a number of perceived "soft spots" in the communist order, especially within the Soviet Union. One of the most vulnerable psychological points was the continued failure of the Soviet leaders to produce a better life for their people. The "pie in the sky" promises were wearing thin after thirty years of sacrifice and depression. In actual fact, the standard of living for the average Soviet citizen was no better than in 1917. Housing was, and remains, a critical shortcoming. Whole families were crowded into what Americans would call slums, but the Soviets called "good." The United States propaganda called these shortcomings to world attention with increasing vigor, and also pointed out that the slight rise in the standard of living during the past two years was now being ruthlessly sacrificed to support a puppet imperialist attempt that was foredoomed to failure. Further, USIE propaganda pointed out that the Soviet leaders were constantly blaming internal enemies for the failure to achieve the promised standard of living. The

¹¹⁸ Edward Barrett, Letter of Transmittal, "New Propaganda Approach to the Soviet Union." April 11, 1951. Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's File, Subject File, Harry S. Truman Library.

VOA especially played upon this theme, implying that these "enemies" were created to hide the fact that the real enemy of the people, and the reason for the low standard of living, was within the communist party itself.

In line with the defector's statement, quoted earlier, VOA continually asked the question, who was getting the benefits of the improved conditions in the Soviet Union? Did the average citizen get these benefits, or only well-connected communists? The same communists who possessed dachaus on the Black Sea? The same individuals who were privileged to use the state-supported luxury shops in the land of the equal laborer? After asking these embarrassing questions, the VOA would then couple the obvious answers with other Soviet lies about the United States as a contrast. For example, the Soviet Union reported increased numbers of adequate, modern family housing units, and simultaneously reported increasing numbers of United States citizens living in slums, in a state of destitution. The VOA propagandists would then innocently pose the question, if the Soviets claimed that there was an increase in housing, so that every family could have a modern home, who had seen such? If this was not true, could any Russian citizen be sure that the Soviets were telling the truth about the United States, if they lied about themselves? In fact, could it be that the Soviet leaders were merely writing the words "United States" across the top of the mirror into which they were peering?

Domestic decisions of the Soviet government were also attacked on the basis of wisdom and "human nature." Many defector reports cited that there was great dissatisfaction with the Soviet regime because its

decisions "went against human nature." For example, the attempts to displace the family as the basis of Russian society with the Communist Party, and the continuous work week became ignoble failures. The VOA cited these attempts as not only against human nature, but used these ill-thought decisions to call into question the decreed infallibility of the Communist Party and Marxism-Leninism as a socio-economic statement of eternal historical "laws." The VOA propagandists asked, for example, why was it right to do away with the family as the basis of Russian society at one moment, and a few weeks later, be decreed as a great wrong? Why was it right to put the army on a fraternal basis before the beginnings of a conflict, and yet before any conflict, suddenly re-impose Tsarist military discipline? Why was it correct to have political commissars in the army one moment, and terribly wrong the next? What was so "Scientific" and correct about purging the officer corps of the Soviet armed forces on the eve of war with Germany, then recalling these same discredited officers from the concentration camps and making them national heroes? The VOA used these questions extensively, as well as others, to develop psychological doubt in the Soviet citizen's mind in the ultimate justness and infallibility of his leaders, especially Father Stalin, though Stalin was carefully never named.

The Voice of America, in asking these questions, was at last beginning to demonstrate a maturity in psychological warfare that resulted in damaging themes against the Soviet Union. The use of expatriate Russians at VOA was returning unexpected dividends, for these individuals knew well the key Soviet vulnerabilities, and exactly how to speak to the Russian people in the most telling manner. Nothing is

so difficult for a propagandist to deal with as an unanswerable question which, if answered, will confirm a psychological adversary's charges.

Other questions were asked which further embarrassed the Soviet leaders as well as the military. One theme was oriented around the well-known Soviet paranoia about allowing its citizens travel abroad. Defectors throughout the last thirty years have confirmed that this was an effective theme, because the average citizen is quite aware that there are always some facts that any government is unwilling for its citizens to know, especially in regard to the Soviet government. Thus, the simple question, "why should the Soviet citizen believe that life is better in the Soviet Union than in America if his government will not let him see America?" held immeasurable headaches for Soviet leaders. One of the most dynamic, and unstoppable of human emotions is the hope for something better beyond the horizons of the immediate present. In this case, the common human emotion acted as a positive reinforcing element of USIE propaganda.

Humor, or poking fun at the Soviet leadership was another very effective technique. Gently chiding Soviet leaders for their egerious efforts to replace the family with the communal gymnasium, for example, was a theme. Humorous definitions of Soviet laws was another theme. For example, "anti-Soviet conversation" meant telling the truth. Obviously, no communist leader could be accused of "anti-Soviet conversation." This point was sometimes illustrated with a joke about one commissar accusing the other of being insincere, because the second had told the first the truth, which the first had automatically assumed

was a lie, and had acted accordingly.¹¹⁹

On the other hand, the grim fact of the secret police, Beria's MGB, was another significant weakness of the Soviet leaders. Beria was likened to the Tsar's last secret police chief. Additionally, one suspects that VOA propaganda scored when it ridiculed the fantastic charges of the police officers when they accused someone in order to send them to the gulag.¹²⁰

Most of the themes illustrated were presented in such a way as to avoid any criticism of Russian backwardness or inferiority. In most cases, USIE propagandists believed that the less explicit the point made, the better for the ultimate effect of the propaganda. One study drew attention to the idea that "it might be wise to imply the final point so clearly that the Russian [listener] cannot fail to draw the desired conclusion . . . the less educated Russian likes to regard himself as khi'tri (clever-sly-hard to dupe)." Further, the less obvious the conclusion USIE propagandists wished the Russian listener to draw, the harder it was for Soviet counter-propaganda to accurately neutralize the USIE efforts. The above themes, as well as many others, became the basis of much of the propaganda against the Soviet Union during 1951 and 1952.¹²¹

¹¹⁹The well-known Minsk-Pinsk joke is an example. One may occasionally find it revived in Reader's Digest.

¹²⁰How useful Solzhenitsyn's Gulag. One would have been at this time! For example, the term "theft of seven hundred feet of sewing material" in reality meant the theft of one spool of thread from a state factory. See Solzhenitsyn, Chapter 4, for these and other fantastic charges brought in order to justify arrests to make the MGB quotas.

¹²¹Department of State. "Emergency Plan for Psychological Offensive (USSR)," Undersecretary's Meeting UM-D-138, March 23, 1951,

State Department psychological warfare planners, especially W. J. McWilliams, regarded the themes in the "emergency plan" as "no new departure from existing U.S. policy toward the U.S.S.R." McWilliams agreed with Barrett that the plan sharpened and systemized the current approach to the Soviet Union. McWilliams further pointed out, after UM D-138, that the plan was a "psychological offensive against the Politburo" rather than against the Soviet Union as a whole. On the other hand, McWilliams also cited the plan as increasing the Soviet people's "reluctance to be led into an aggressive war."¹²² Despite McWilliams' confusion about the actual objectives of the plan, the paper was discussed in the Under Secretary's meeting of March 28, and forwarded to the VOA and other concerned parties as approved policy on April 11.

The plan was carried into effect, and is mirrored in the Weekly Guides following its issuance. As time passed, more objectives were inevitably identified. More important to USIE operations, personnel turnover took a regrettable toll on the "personal experience data base" of the organization. Time rarely existed to review past documents, to try to ascertain if past objectives and themes were applicable to the present situation. In order to accommodate the changes, a restatement of the objectives was issued on 15 November, 1951.

pp. 11-13, 17, passim, File 511.00/3-2351 CS/E and Department of State, "Emergency Plan for Psychological Offensive (USSR)," 11 April, 1951, Papers of Harry S. Truman, President's Secretary's File, Harry S. Truman Library, pp. 13-16, passim.

¹²²W. J. McWilliams, Letter of Transmittal, "Emergency Plan for Psychological Offensive (USSR)," March 23, 1951. State Department File 511.00/3-2351 CS/E.

The November memorandum on psychological objectives shifted emphasis in the matter of tone, and stressed that United States objectives could best be forwarded on the basis of recognized shared interests between foreign governments and peoples, and the United States. This general orientation was "fraught with greater danger and therefore charged with greater urgency" than when the earlier guidance had been issued. USIE personnel were informed that this condition existed because of Soviet and Chinese actions, loss of time in acquiring important facilities (especially radio), and a "narrowed base of operations due to Congressional action."

Five major psychological objectives were identified for 1952. The most important objective from the view of policy planning was probably that of multiplying and intensifying "psychological deterrents to aggression by Soviet Communism." This was especially important in light of renewed Soviet agitation in Europe and the Middle East. Of second importance was intensifying and accelerating the "growth of confidence in and among the governments of the free world." Combatting "extremist tendencies threatening the undermining of the cohesion and stability of the free world and . . . withdrawal of governments and peoples into neutralism" was the third objective. This was especially oriented toward Near and Middle East countries, and Southeast Asia nations.

The fourth task was delicate, and was perhaps not handled delicately enough. Propagandists, especially in VOA, were to "maintain [the] hope of ultimate liberation" among the captive peoples. Finally, and of slightly less importance, was the maintenance among the "peoples

and governments traditionally linked with the United States" continued recognition of mutual interdependence.¹²³

¹²³Edward Barrett, Memorandum, "Foreign Information Programs," November 15, 1951. State Department File 511.00/11-1551 (partially excised), pp. 1-6 passim.

CHAPTER VI

OTHER POLICY ACTIONS, 1951-1952

Throughout 1951 and 1952 plans were underway to turn the HICOG psychological warfare program over to USIE. This planning accelerated throughout 1952, as the probability for German independence increased. Additional control over Marshall Plan (ECA) propaganda activities was also implemented, even as ECA personnel went through the change-over from the ECA to the Mutual Defense Assistance Program (MDAP). This changeover, and increased controls, was not accomplished without some friction.

HICOG personnel in particular felt that there were problems. Previously the HICOG propagandists had responded through Frankfort and McCloy who, as High Commissioner, was as responsible to the President as the Secretary of State. This fostered an independent attitude among the HICOG personnel which resulted in irritation when USIE attempted to assert more centralized control over propaganda output. HICOG officials were aware of a number of incidents which "would seem to prove conclusively that there is a basic lack of understanding of the principles of our policy and our program at critical levels in Ed Barrett's shop." There were also "personal animosities" between various individuals. HICOG was directed to transfer its propaganda operations to USIE

on July 2, 1952. Some HICOG representatives felt this was unwise for two reasons. The notable lack of rapport was a major problem, but also USIE was "under heavy attack by Congress," and there was a great deal of reluctance to subject the successful HICOG program and personnel to a tarring with that particular brush. The Congressional budget hearings, in fact were raising increasing doubts about the USIE and "major change[s] may have to be made . . . programwise and personnelwise." There was also the still on-going debate over a separate foreign information agency, and the attendant policy coordination problems such a move would necessarily entail. In short, HICOG officials frankly asked why they should forego a successful, effective, tightly-knit, well-controlled and directed operation to join USIE?

On the other hand, USIE desired to assume control of the HICOG program, and its approved funding for 1953, as part of the national effort. There might have been some envy involved. USIE was in fact under very heavy Congressional criticism and, as so often is the case, Congressional disapproval was in direct proportion to funding allocated which, in 1953, amounted to a thirty percent decrease in funds while every other government program of comparable size was growing. Furthermore, USIE officials regarded HICOG propaganda as "carried out at approximately the level required for an optimum overt . . . program."¹²⁴ Similar problems were encountered with the ECA/MDAP personnel, especially with its American subsidiary organization, the Technical Cooperation

¹²⁴ Henry J. Kellerman to Henry A. Byroade, Memorandum, "Transfer of German Public Affairs Over to USIE," May 5, 1951. State Department File 511.00/5-551 CS/H and Edward Barrett, Ibid., p. 11.

Administration (TCA). The HICOG position was, for the moment, sustained and HICOG propagandists remained apart.

Late in 1951 a further effort was made to centralize control of propaganda themes and program direction. From the time Barrett had come to the USIE, he had wanted some method of "firing all the guns" on carefully selected themes.¹²⁵ The vehicle created for this purpose was the "Quarterly Propaganda Emphasis." The concept for the quarterly emphasis was to create during the calendar year four distinct, yet interrelated propaganda campaigns which would "involve themes and aims which are being sustained and will continue to be sustained for the foreseeable future." In 1952, all of the quarterly campaigns were directed toward "building unity and confidence."

Preplanned major propaganda campaigns held certain advantages. First, such a campaign allowed all the various media divisions to prepare and coordinate their output. Press and Publications Divisions could prepare sufficient text in advance so that their output would coincide with that of IBD (VOA). Even the motion picture division (IMP) could get enough lead time to chip in with several films on the appropriate themes. A second advantage was that such an approach lent itself very handily to centralized planning and origination of the desired product. Field posts, also, could take better advantage of such a campaign, for they would have adequate time to secure translations, arrange printing, distribution, and local support.

¹²⁵ A. A. Miccocci to Foy D. Kohler, Memorandum, "INP Propaganda Campaigns," November 9, 1951, State Department File 511.00/12-1351.

The 1952 "campaigns" were conducted under the basic title, "Progress Through Strength Towards Peace With Freedom." One doubts the propagandists in the field had much luck deciphering that theme to their targets. Happily, specific themes were easier to cope with. The first quarter emphasis was conducted under the more limited topic, "Peace With Freedom," and was a planned intensification of the effort to wrest from Soviet propagandists the word, and theme "peace." Soviet propagandists had made much of this keyword through such organized propaganda efforts as the "Stockholm Peace Proposals," the "World Peace Congress," and the International Youth Festival.¹²⁶ USIE propagandists were allowed ninety days to gain the initiative in the use of the word "peace." This seems inadequate, regarding the Soviet Union's use of this key word since 1946.

Personnel within and without the program had doubts about this approach to the problem of mass propaganda. One difficulty would obviously be the "somewhat radical change in the operations of the several media." Coordination between the various media were always difficult, without a combined output requirement. Within IBD there were heated debates over the themes and their sequences. One critic pointed out that the United States was "not likely to acquire in the . . . free world the strength required to achieve security in a three-month period." Other themes, such as "peace with strength" would have to be subject to very shrewd guidance to avoid offending some neutralist and pacifist nations, as well as to prevent field operators from "run[ning] riot

¹²⁶ Department of State, Circular Airgram, "Quarterly Propaganda Emphasis," November 17, 1951. State Department File 511.00/11-1751 CS/R and Circular 21, "Quarterly Propaganda Emphasis," February 15, 1951, State Department File 511.00/2-1551 CS/MD.

with it." A further problem was quite properly identified: while Barrett had been wanting something like this, the real planning spark was IBD, and the other media had to be given adequate time to survey and consider the problems before the document was sent through the policy section. Moreover, unless strong guidance was provided, the "campaign" might well turn into a case of the tail (VOA) wagging the dog.

In fact, IBD (Washington) sent the directive through Policy and to the field before IBD in New York, and its Director, Foy Kohler, was aware of the final content. Kohler was aware of the benefit of reaching a larger audience simultaneously, with reinforcing (overlapping) messages. However, the correlation introduced in Washington would also "be apparent at the receiving end, and would stamp the product for what it is--concentrated American propaganda." Justifiably, Kohler did not believe this was at all desirable. Kohler urged that more thought be given to the inclusion of grey propaganda, especially when the ideas "bear on tearing down the opposition." Conducting the entire campaign in the grey area would not be untoward, to include the radio field with "blind transcriptions." That is, unattributed broadcasts transmitted from various regional, non-VOA stations, on different frequencies than normal. Kohler stated that thematic planning could not be conducted on an independent basis; the other media would have to be included in all planning. Moreover, he completely disagreed with the concept of Barrett's "worldwide one voice" plan. His long experience in propaganda had left him convinced that "themes cannot be selected for their applicability on a world-wide basis." Not even such a presumably-universal key-word as "peace" was usable. In East Europe "peace" meant the

status quo, or slavery. The key word in that particular area was "freedom." In the Middle East, it was, for example, "self-determination." Regional themes and emphasis were requisite, although much harder to plan, resolve, and carry out.¹²⁷ Kohler further pointed out that thus far, the quarterly campaigns totally lacked "telling slogans."

Leo Lowenthal and Ralph White, two officers in the Policy section also questioned the quarterly campaigns as a worldwide approach. White in particular disagreed and believed the regional, or area basis was the most desirable because "the differences of emphasis as between what we say to the Communist . . . and Free World are especially great." He thus called into question the already-published themes, recommending a stronger anti-communist line of greater subtlety and projection than the original ideas.¹²⁸

Non-government sources also questioned the concept, in particular Larry Byrd of the Chicago Tribune. He queried the State Department as to whether they were now turning intensively to "sloganeering?", especially since the Russians were so effective with posters and slogans. He understood it was to be "Four P's--Peace, Power, Plenty, and something else." The Department representative did his best to "put him on the right track." He also questioned how the reporter apparently

¹²⁷Foy D. Kohler to O. C. Anderson, Memorandum, "Quarterly Propaganda Campaigns," December 13, 1951. State Department File 511.00/1-952. Soviet propaganda on the "peace" theme had failed woefully in the Middle East because of this regional perspective. It was subsequently changed.

¹²⁸Ralph White to Leo Lowenthal, Memorandum, "Mr. Kohler Memo to Anderson on Quarterly Propaganda Campaigns," January 9, 1952. Marginal notation of approval, Lowenthal, January 10, 1952. State Department File 511.00/1-952.

had secured a classified INP staff memo on the subject. At any rate, the question was not at all wide of the mark, for such an approach did bear an uncanny resemblance to a commercial United States newspaper or magazine advertising campaign based on a slogan.¹²⁹

The "Quarterly Campaign" plans seem to have lasted only two quarters. In part this was probably due to the inherent media coordination problems. Undoubtably the flood of material from Washington, in addition to the daily responses required to news events, as well as the on-going country plan, simply overloaded the field USIE staffs. The additional burden, without additional personnel, could only have hurt daily operations. The lapse of the quarterly approach was also due to the inadequate basis on which the entire concept was formulated. The quarterly campaign tended to "fall between two stools: not sufficiently thoughtful as policy guidance and not sufficiently specific for operational purposes."¹³⁰

Increased criticism from Congress, along with difficulty in determining actual levels of effectiveness began to cause another shift in targeting emphasis: Barrett, with his limited OWI background and his extensive experience in commercial advertising and publications had concerned himself with broad-based, centralized questions, similar to those of 1943-1945. Increasing doubt within USIE as to the wisdom of this approach forced a change to more precisely-defined targets.

¹²⁹John L. Dunning to Frederick Oescher, Memorandum of Conversation, "Inquiry on INP Quarterly 'Campaign' Plans." December 5, 1951, State Department File 511.00/12-551.

¹³⁰D'Alessandro, p. 2.

Targeting was referred to in terms of the "shotgun" approach versus the "rifle" approach.

The basis for the debate was simple. If one could accurately identify the desired target, usually as identified "opinion leaders" or "key communicators" within a community or target group, communicating with these individuals would be much more effective and cheaper in terms of time, money, and effort than attempting to reach everyone. These key individuals would, once persuaded, in turn persuade others, and accomplish the necessary communications with the rest of the target. On the other hand, in areas where there were no identifiable key individuals (i.e., communist-controlled areas), the shotgun technique had a higher chance of successfully getting the message through. In many areas of the world, a rifle approach would bring maximum results for minimum effort, allowing the increasingly-restrictive funds available to USIE to be used elsewhere. The real drawback of a rifle approach was that other sections of the society might well remain virtually untouched, allowing Soviet propagandists a free hand. Funds as much as policy determination forced an increased emphasis on the "rifle" approach.

As 1952 began, USIE planners felt fairly confident. The year-end mood of the non-communist areas showed "certain signs that morale [was] improving." The USIE faced the major task of converting the existing mood into one of steady confidence. Six major psychological objectives, in addition to those of the quarterly emphasis, were defined in early 1952. The major objective was, of course, multiplying and intensifying "psychological deterrents to aggression by Soviet Communism."

The obverse was the forementioned conversion of the existing European mood. Propagandists were to continue to combat the extremist and neutralist tendencies of various nations and targets.

Within the zone of Soviet control, the subject peoples needed to be addressed in such a manner that they maintained their identification with the non-communist world, and "help hope for ultimate liberation." Among the peoples and governments traditionally linked with the United States, the theme of mutual interdependence was to be stressed. Finally, "sharpest recognition" was to be sought of the shared interests between the United States and the various target governments.¹³¹

Other than the Weekly Guides, this policy statement appears to have been the last major policy definition issued to the field during the remainder of the Truman Administration. No other comprehensive statement has been found in the files for 1952. January 1952, also marked a change in USIE leadership. Edward Barrett retired to private life and Dr. William Compton, formerly administrator of the ECA, as well as a former President of Washington State University, assumed the helm of the propaganda organization. The lack of periodic guidances may be attributed to this change of leadership, as well as the increasing Congressional criticism (McCarthy and Nixon), and the latter stages of the Korean War.

In retrospect, the Truman psychological warfare program emphasized about twelve psychological objectives that were used with fair consistency throughout the period. The first, and nearly overriding objective was also the fundamental reason for the USIE to

¹³¹Weekly Guidance 91, Jan. 4, 1952. State Department File 511.00/1-452 CS/H.

increase the effectiveness of United States foreign policy.¹³²

Throughout the time investigated, this objective suffered no alteration or modification. A second objective was to "impress the peoples of the world with the reliability, consistency, and seriousness of the U.S. and its policies." This early objective was modified into developing "hope and confidence in the U.S." In late 1951 this was further transformed into "develop hope and confidence among free world nations."¹³³

Like the second objective, the exposure of the "extent to which Soviet motives and policies are not in the best interests of free countries" evolved during the period. Particularly under the impetus of the Korean War, the third objective became "exposure of the nature, intentions, and capabilities of the Soviet Union."¹³⁴ In comparison, the exposure of the "discrepancies between professed Soviet ideals and actual practices," incorrectly identified as an objective, was properly downgraded to a tactic, and used to destroy Soviet credibility.¹³⁵

One objective did a complete reversal in employment and direction. Destroying the Soviet myth that the United States wanted war metamorphosized in 1951 into the objective of supporting "deterrence" in the face of Soviet aggression and "new imperialism."¹³⁶ In a similar

¹³²1947-1952. See footnotes earlier for the list of all pertinent policy guidances.

¹³³1947-1950; 1950-1951; 1951-1953 were the respective periods for each mutation.

¹³⁴1947-1950; 1950-1953, respectively.

¹³⁵1947-1951. After 1951 this was a tactic, not a theme.

¹³⁶1949-1951. In 1951 the defensive concept was replaced with Free World "deterrent" power for the remainder of the period studied.

transformation from a defensive to an aggressive psychological position, assisting the "policy of containment" became deterring the "Soviets from further encroachments." Ultimately the objective was sharpened into "deter Soviet aggression."¹³⁷

Some objective shifts were logical, and obvious refinements of the original ideas. For example, encouragement of ultimate representative governments quickly changed into "encourage Titoism in satellite countries."¹³⁸ Similarly, persuasion of the "peoples of the world that U.S. motives and policies are in their best interests" was belatedly changed into emphasizing shared interests of the target and the United States.¹³⁹

One objective, encouraging and supporting elements of resistance, stated in July 1950, quickly split into two objectives, as planners recognized the matter as a twin problem. The major thrust of the objective was recognized as fostering psychological resistance, a proper overt psychological warfare objective in regard to the peoples under communist rule.¹⁴⁰ The other objective, more properly a covert objective and hence a responsibility of the CIA, was to use the hope of ultimate liberation to produce "subversion within and defection from" those areas under communist rule.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ 1949-1950; 1950-1951; 1951-1952 respectively.

¹³⁸ 1950; 1950-1953.

¹³⁹ 1947-1950; 1950-1953, respectively.

¹⁴⁰ July-August 1950; August, 1950-1952.

¹⁴¹ 1950-1953. Especially clear in the 1951 statements of 1951, to include Omar Bradley's message, previously cited.

In the last twelve months of the Truman years, the final two objectives were added. The first was to encourage and gather support for participation in "effective actions to deter or repel direct or indirect aggression." The objective, based upon Korea, clearly envisioned United States leadership. Finally, psychological warfare personnel were to combat extremism among the various nations which threatened the free world unity, as well as the drift of many nations into neutralism under the pressure of having to choose between two increasingly-polarized views of the world.¹⁴²

The above were the basis of United States psychological warfare objectives throughout the Truman period. For the most part, these objectives remained fairly constant from late 1947 through 1952, or at least evolved logically under the impact of events. More striking, when these objectives are surveyed, is the fact that over one-third of these objectives were formulated in 1947, two were formulated in 1949, another one-third of these in 1950, before the Korean War began, and only two, very defensive objectives were issued after the outbreak of the war.

Examination of the generation of United States psychological objectives clearly indicates that the bulk of those objectives were generated relatively early in the Truman administration years. Counting

¹⁴²National Psychological Warfare Plans, The various documents referenced before are: "Information Policy," December 1, 1947; UM-D-86, March, 1949; NSC-74, July 10, 1950; "Basic Information Guidance," June 10, 1950; "Psychological Objectives," June 12, 1950; Annex 5, NSC-68, October 18, 1950; "Terms of Reference, IFIS- National Psychological Warfare Plan," November 15, 1950; "Foreign Information Programs," January 31, 1951; "Draft Cost Estimates, NSC-68, August, 1950; "Special Guidance 83, "NATO-MDAP," March 16, 1951; "Emergency Plan for Psychological Offensive

the period up to the North Korean invasion, over two-thirds of the national psychological objectives that were ultimately employed had been generated. After Korea, under Edward Barrett, virtually no new objectives were identified. One would have suspected that the Korean invasion and its aftermath, would have shaken the United States, and USIE into new, bold initiatives. Instead, USIE objectives merely continued pre-war planning.

Barrett, the expert whom Acheson and Truman wooed to assume the helm of the United States psychological warfare program proved to be not an innovator but a bureaucratic manipulator who invariably strove to achieve aggrandizement of power. While there was a sharpening of objectives, an emphasis on offensive, aggressive psychological warfare, there was no new departure or change to indicate a sharp new initiative, any "Campaign of Truth." A more accurate title might be "campaign of changes" from the truth about the United States to the truth about the Soviet Union.

The lack of change in national psychological warfare objectives after 1950 would seem to accurately reflect concurrent national foreign policy objectives. The Korean War seems to have had the effect of hardening the objectives into a near-inflexible stance. Therefore, the significance of psychological objectives after June 1950, is not the number, but the fact that they remained so unchanging. Stress, rather than forcing change and innovations confirmed the Truman administration

(USSR)," March 23, 1951; Special Guidance 91, "Mutual Security Program," Revision, October 24, 1951; "Foreign Information Programs," November 15, 1951; "Weekly Foreign Information Policy Guidance 91," January 4, 1952; "Psychological Exploitation Plan," March 10, 1953.

and USIE in its original policy, regardless of its pertinence.

In retrospect, the final two years of the Truman administration psychological warfare were, rather than a period of growth, a period of sterility and stagnation in policy definition and implementation.

CHAPTER VII

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE USIE PROGRAM

During the Truman years, the United States government spent over three hundred million dollars on the USIE national propaganda programs alone. The key question of such Congressional leaders as Senator Brian McKellar was, what did the nation get for this investment? The period 1949-1952 is important for the long-term funding implications for the program which General Eisenhower had testified was "critical." Thus, a major task of USIE was not only the persuasion and influencing of a foreign audience, but also convincing the United States Congress that the program was effective and was having the desired impact. Failure to convince Congress would result in lack of funds. Regardless of how well-directed and well-conceived a program may be, it cannot continue without funds. In retrospect, USIE failed to persuade Congressional leaders the program was either well-directed or well-conceived.

A major point of contention between Congress and the USIE was the basis of judgement for effectiveness. Far too often in Congressional testimony, USIE leaders gave attention to the size of the program, apparently in the belief that any program of sufficient size would automatically be effective. This is not always the case. Nor did attention to the "amount of material distributed, the number of persons

exposed to this material," which occupied such large amounts of Congressional testimony successfully respond to the question of how many of those particular people had been persuaded that the United States information was correct.¹⁴³ Concrete figures, and hard proof of success, were rare instances in Congressional testimony. One may sympathize with Congressional leaders who attempted to come to grips with the operations, and justify funding to support such an amorphous enterprise.

Nevertheless, at the same time that USIE officials were trying to impress Congressional leaders with the size of the program, the size of the Soviet program, and the needs for a larger program, there existed at least four sources of program evaluations for the USIE. The sources were: field reports from USIE personnel, refugee debriefing reports, limited intelligence reports from the CIA, and the volume of audience response. After July 1952, two other evaluation programs were normally available: an evaluation of ambassadorial comments, and an evaluation of a survey of personnel opinions and beliefs taken in the Washington offices. Field surveys were not undertaken until 1952, and were incapable of dealing with the communist-dominated areas. Since 1953, limited research has been done on USIE effectiveness in these critical, formative years. There seems to have been no subsequent effort to retrieve these early files, or to promote research, to determine where the USIE was most effective, and from what wellsprings of good will current programs might be of most use.

¹⁴³ Stanley K. Bigman and Nathan Joseph, "Ambassadors Evaluate the Information Program," Bureau of Social Science Research, Washington, D.C.: American University, October 1, 1952, p. 20.

Each of these sources of information about effectiveness provided a different type of viewpoint, and often different evaluations. The overall evaluation of these divergent views seems never to have been systematically presented to Congress; at least, nowhere in the normal budgetary testimony, which became the major investigative forum for the USIE, does a coherent attempt at effectiveness evaluation appear. One feels strongly that this was due to a failure of USIE leadership to distinguish between activity and audience response. That is, activity in the form of so many millions saw a film, for example, versus an evaluation of how many of the audience were persuaded. Response was usually described not in terms of the target reaction, but that of the Soviet Union. In this latter action, USIE officials seemed to consistently 'mix apples and oranges.' Effectiveness, to be a meaningful term, must be expressed in terms of target reaction to propaganda, not the reactions of one's competition, for in that direction lies defeat.

On the other hand, Congressional perceptions of the problem of effectiveness were little if any clearer than those of USIE representatives. For example, in the 1949 testimony before the House Appropriations Committee both State Department Representatives John E. Peurifoy and John Nicholson, as well as the Chairman, Representative John J. Rooney, consistently referred to Public Law 402 as the "Voice of America Program."¹⁴⁴ While this does speak well for the impact of VOA on government personnel consciousness, it does not speak well for either their understanding of the program, or the ability of USIE leaders to

¹⁴⁴House, 1950 Hearings, pp. 17, 65.

explain their program and organization.

In 1949 one of the major questions regarding effectiveness was the impact of Soviet jamming on VOA broadcast frequencies. With a concerned, aroused, and willing Congress, the testimony of George Allen was less than prescient, definitive, or timely. Allen identified "about forty-four important transmitters" within the Soviet Union, of which about eighteen were at one time or another devoted to interfering with the Voice of America broadcasts. Since this interference was accomplished only at the expense of the Soviet Union's own, internal propaganda broadcasts, Allen confidently estimated that "not more than ten percent of the time" in the past year had VOA not been heard in Moscow on any of the "9 or 10 frequencies used."¹⁴⁵ As events were quickly to prove, this estimate was far wrong, and CIA estimates, if any were submitted, were very far in error.

Representative Karl Stephan in particular was not satisfied with such an answer to a question for "specific results." He desired more than just the Embassy report of General W. Bedell Smith, or Professor Mark May's notes on his trip to Europe. Allen offered the report on "Audience Mail for December 1948," as evidence of effectiveness. This one month report was accepted prima facie as evidence of USIE effectiveness, and subsequent testimony devolved into a discussion of some specific country programs.¹⁴⁶

The testimony offered in 1949 failed either to persuade

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p. 731.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 733-4.

Congressional leaders of the House that the Russian jamming was a real threat, or the USIE program was really very effective. While it might be all to the good to build up estimates of program effectiveness through minimizing the effectiveness of jamming in official reports, USIE officials also implied through this testimony that new equipment requested was not really that necessary. In the House Appropriations Committee judgement, USIE "failed to provide adequate justification" for the purchase of "curtain" antennas and new transmission facilities. In fact, so lackluster was USIE testimony that the House Committee recommended virtual elimination of the "planned increases over operational levels attained in 1949," and denied any broadcast facilities expansion. In a period of post-war inflation, the actual effect was a budget cut for the USIE, which certainly would have USIE effectiveness in the coming months.¹⁴⁷

When the budget request came before the Senate subcommittee, any questions about USIE effectiveness had become overshadowed with the advent of full-scale Soviet jamming. The Soviet capability for mass jamming of broadcast transmissions caught the USIE as well as the fledgling CIA completely flat-footed. No one had dreamed, and certainly not estimated that the Soviet Union had such a capability, nor had anyone detected signs of such preparations. A parenthetical note that allowed some cheer in the gloom was that the British had not had any idea of this possibility either. This was graveyard cheer, because it

¹⁴⁷"Curtain" antennas were 200-300% more effective than the obsolescent rhombic antennas first designed about 1918. See Senate, Hearings, 1950, pp. 175, 177. There was also keen interest as to the ultimate ownership and residual (scrap) value.

meant that the United State's allies were fully as much in the dark as the CIA. However, the previous complacent attitude that the Soviet jamming, aided with the normal atmospheric interference, had only succeeded in blocking about ten percent of the VOA signals now vanished, replaced with a dramatic estimate that eighty-eight percent of the signals were blocked. However, it should be noted that this was still an estimate. USIE personnel had to testify before the mercurial Senator Kenneth McKellar. At this moment, Senator McKellar was less than enamored with the propaganda effort, and unfortunately was even less informed about the program's operations than most citizens.¹⁴⁸

Soviet jamming was the main force and source of concern with Senators McKellar and Pat McCarran, who wanted to know what the State Department was doing about the problem. At one point, Chairman McKellar was even more specific: "What I want to know are the facts. I don't care about the theories."¹⁴⁹ Unfortunately, at that moment, theories were about all the USIE had to offer. The entire possibility of massive jamming had not been considered viable, nor had anyone objectively attempted to solve the problem of countering high-power jamming. In fact, no one had really considered the problem of countering jamming at any power or wavelength.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 182-4, 192. In one of his more memorable declarations, McKellar charged the Exchange of Persons program of "as near being claptrap in the Government as I have ever heard of," and went on record as intending to offer a bill to repeal that section of PL 402.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 190.

¹⁵⁰ Countering jamming has been a persistent problem since the 1950's. Basically, there is no such thing as "counterjamming," a term coined from total ignorance of electromagnetic transmission principles. The

In their testimony, two USIE officials, Mr. Lehrbas and Mr. Thayer, identified the immediate measures being taken. There were only two options immediately open: increased broadcast hours, and an amplitude "chopper" device that gave an effective increase of ten percent. They further testified that "fundamentally, the only answer to jamming is more transmitters, more frequencies, and more power." The officials, under Senate pressure, identified the jamming as affecting only the programs in the Russian language. However, they were quick to point out, there was no reason why jamming could not be extended to other programs as well. Thayer also gave a revised estimate of jamming transmitters, up from eighteen to over one hundred. When Senator A. Willis Robertson pressed him for a more definitive statement on program effectiveness, George Allen used the massive jamming effort as his proof. Allen's reasoning, which was to be used in subsequent years, was that the Soviet government would not be attempting such a massive, expensive, and concentrated effort if USIE was not hurting the Soviet leaders. Also, the Soviets would scarcely be making an effort if they "did not care what the Voice of America was saying, if it did not make any difference whether the Russian people heard or not."¹⁵¹

In retrospect, however, Soviet jamming efforts would seem to be more an indication of Soviet fears for potential damage rather than actual damage. Stalin, in the middle of his later, post-war purges,

only solution thus far found is to generate more effective radiated power at the point of attack--through higher power, directional antennas, and a narrower-band signal.

¹⁵¹Senate, Hearings, 1950, pp. 190-225 passim.

was again seeing plots and capitalist threats everywhere he looked. The infant radio broadcast program in Russian from the United States was scarcely a major threat at this time, given the estimated size of half a million internal security forces engaged in Secret Police work.¹⁵² However, the Senate did vote increased funds for the VOA, clearly in reaction to the Soviet jamming operations rather than from a belief in USIE effectiveness.

In August, during supplemental budget hearings, USIE estimates about the size of the Soviet jamming effort again increased dramatically, above the estimate of six months earlier. It was then estimated that "more than two hundred fifty different jamming transmitters have been identified in operation" rather than the previous one hundred. More were believed to exist, and Allen again pointed to the increased jamming as proof of USIE and VOA effectiveness. Further, Allen noted the very real danger of "USSR large-scale jamming operations in connection with American broadcasts to other parts of the world," and the potential use of jamming as a weapon "in the event of world emergency."

General Albert Wedemeyer, appearing as a witness for the USIE, stated that he believed the VOA had had some effect, and indicated that CIA agent reports of which he had a personal knowledge, gave "corroborative evidence that the Voice of America is having a definite effect and it is hurting them." No documentation was introduced into testimony, however, and Wedemeyer's testimony was essentially unsupported. Congressman John Rooney asked for two items: how effective was the

¹⁵²See Solzhenitsyn, Gulag Archipelago, Vol. I.

Soviet jamming, and how effective was VOA? Despite all the questioning about effectiveness, the Congressman's requirement seemed to surprise the USIE officials. Thayer, for one, confessed to the Committee, "frankly I did not think [the question of effectiveness] would come up, and I did not bring the evidence down from New York." Thayer was equally unprepared to give the Committee specific figures on the effectiveness of Soviet jamming. His best estimate, as the VOA expert, was that "I think perhaps our effectiveness (in getting through the Soviet jamming) is a little better than two percent at the present time, but not much." Such unpreparedness was astounding, but not unusual for USIE.

While unprepared, Charles Thayer and George Allen did offer some hasty evidence of effectiveness. First and foremost was the extent, and strength with which the Soviet government would answer VOA broadcasts directly, citing in distorted form what the VOA had earlier broadcast, and refuting the USIE propaganda. In the case of Poland, Soviet-controlled radio even had a spot that was regularly set aside to specifically answer VOA broadcasts.

Second, escapee evidence was alluded, and one report was cited as estimating that fifteen to twenty million people listened to the VOA in Russia. Finally, the evidence that the Soviet government was willing to jam their own broadcast channels rather than to allow a stronger VOA signal through was cited, as well as the Kasenkina case.

One doubts if the Committee was wholly persuaded, but in the face of such strong Soviet reactions, there did exist a reasonable doubt that the USIE was having some effectiveness in the war for men's minds

and ideals. The key question, from John Rooney, was whether or not, should Congress give USIE money for more facilities, would there be any assurance that the Soviets would not simply increase their own facilities, effectively wasting the USIE investment? Thayer assured the Representative that there was little evidence that would support such a possibility, because the Soviet Union had a very limited electronics industry. One must note that this referenced industry was the same one that had just shocked the world with the large-scale jamming operation, and had apparently been able to place over two hundred transmitters on line in little more than two years. Representative Rooney remained unconvinced, and asked if there were any further facts which the USIE representative would like to submit "which might convince us that there is some merit in this request, that we are not pouring money down a rat hole." Despite repeated attempts, USIE testimony was little more than a string of assurances that the jamming could be overcome, given time and money. The House Committee did nevertheless vote \$11.5 million for facilities.¹⁵³

The following year found USIE personnel little more prepared to answer questions on program effectiveness. Congressional leaders, on the other hand, exhibited increased concern and awareness of the program and asked specific questions on motion picture operations, the Wireless Bulletin, and the Libraries operations, as well as the usual interest in VOA. Foy D. Kohler, an experienced Foreign Service Officer

¹⁵³ House, Supplemental Appropriations Hearings, 1950, pp. 95-163 passim. While not as inept as Benton, none of Allen's personnel managed a strong presentation, nor did Allen himself particularly impress the Congress.

with two year's recent experience in the Soviet Union, as well as experience in broadcast operations, had been made the General Manager under the Hoover Commission recommendations, and proved to be the most effective witness at the Hearings. Kohler was what the various Committees had been seeking for some time: an honest expert in the field, who could speak from personal experience. From his personal observations in 1947, Kohler testified that he had been able to verify "a great deal of reaction" to the VOA broadcasts. He also identified about "250 jammers which work[ed] all the time" against VOA and BBC broadcasts. Kohler pointed out to Senator McCarren that the jamming was "largely concentrated in the great urban centers . . . all testimony is that outside those centers it is reasonably easy to get a [VOA] program."

During the time since the jamming had begun, the VOA and BBC had pooled their transmitting resources twice daily, utilizing over seventy transmitters, all of which played the same program, in an effort to overcome the Soviet jamming through sheer brute force. This effort was successful, according to embassy reports. Kohler was also able to give evidence that the program was having some effect, and gave three sources of his evidence. The first source was that of the Soviet government itself. He quoted the magazine Novi Mei of January 1950, which stated "millions of Soviet people" recognized the Voice of America programs. He also pointed out that there had been about one hundred attacks against the Voice in Soviet press and radio during the last six months. As noted before, the United States did not move from a "full and fair" approach toward a selective truth, and a refutation of Soviet propaganda, until that propaganda was becoming painfully effective.

The same events would seem to be motivating the Soviet attacks.

Kohler made the point about the attacks, but did not make their significance clear to the Subcommittee.

Kohler also mentioned defectors, and quoted one defector letter that asserted even KGB officials listened to the VOA. However, Kohler did not offer much hope for quick results or resolution of the problem. "Fifty or one hundred years" was his estimate of the length of the program.¹⁵⁴ His estimate both shocked and dismayed the Subcommittee of the Senate. Despite Kohler's sterling performance, additional funds for radio were not forthcoming, and only a modest program increase was granted for the 1951 appropriations year.

The final appropriations year of the period, 1952, found the United States deeply enmeshed in Korea and a bitter psychological war with the Soviet Union. One result of the impact of the Korean War was a large, supplemental increase in funding for USIE operations which effectively doubled the size of the propaganda operation. However, for the 1952 budget year, both because of the increased level of funding for USIE, as well as increasing Congressional experience with the USIE, an increased questioning and testimony was encountered.

The Congressional mood was not one which any administration official would delight over. The tone was set quickly in the pointed questions of Chairman John Rooney of the House, in regard to the progress on construction of the authorized radio facilities expansion. He simply

¹⁵⁴Senate, Appropriations Hearings, 1951, pp. 995-1014 passim. Kohler was, in fact, an electrical engineer of some note, and held a patent for development of the "chopper" circuit.

asked how many of the six radio construction projects authorized the previous year were complete? Chairman Rooney asked the question ten times. It required ten questions, and one hundred ninety words of testimony before Rooney could force William Barrett and Charles Hulten to specify: none. Rooney vented his annoyance upon Barrett who, as "top administrator of this entire operation," could only accept the blast in silence. After all, Chairman Rooney justifiably pointed out that there were not "so many of these highly expensive facilities that you could not reasonably be expected to know" how many facilities were completed.¹⁵⁵

House leaders were additionally unhappy over the USIE's liberal, and highly irregular diversion of funds, as well as demonstrable USIE inefficiency.¹⁵⁶ House members also gave increased attention to the question of effectiveness. Soviet jamming was of course a keen concern, and the House members expressed dismay over the proposed cost of such a system of long-haul transmitters that would be required to overcome the jamming. House members were also concerned about inconsistencies in USIE testimony. In 1950, only two percent of the broadcasts were believed to be received within Russia. But in 1951, "we suddenly heard that 25 percent was getting through . . . and in some cases as much as 50 percent" without any additional equipment or money being spent. Representative Clevenger in particular wanted to know how this could be true, and Barrett had a great deal of trouble convincing

¹⁵⁵House, Appropriations Hearings, 1952, p. 742.

¹⁵⁶In the words of Representative Daniel J. Flood, "this confounded, ridiculous comedy of errors, or amalgamation of stupidity and negligence, and dereliction of duty . . . " Ibid., p. 772.

Clevenger, and the Committee, that in fact more equipment was in operation, but that it was "British, the Greeks, and the Italians" all broadcasting the same program together which was responsible for the increased effectiveness.

Barrett did such a poor job of persuading the Committee that Clevenger, previously a strong supporter of the program, found himself at complete odds with the proposed budget. He went on record as feeling that "this program ought to be cut back to where it was in 1950."

Strong words for the official United States voice in the international propaganda arena, at a time when its country was fighting a very bloody, highly-political war, and faced an equally unpleasant psychological climate in Europe. Clevenger further directly challenged Barrett to produce some proof of effectiveness.

Barrett's response to the challenge was trite and weak. The now-standard references to the Soviet jamming did not carry the impact of the previous years, even though the jamming had steadily increased in scope and precision. Barrett offered little else in the way of proofs. Foy Kohler gave better testimony in regard to effectiveness later that day. To Kohler's thinking, one of the most telling indications of effectiveness was the constant attention of the Soviet press and radio against the Voice of America. In the last three quarters of that year, there had been 35, 40, and 76 attacks, respectively. A significant trend of rising innuendo, and slander. Kohler estimated that the Soviets had expended \$30 million installing their jamming equipment, and were expending between \$5-10 million a year operating the now-extensive network. Kohler offered further evidence in regard

to the documented, positive audience reaction, some of which had come through smuggled letters from Soviet-controlled areas, including Russia itself. Some letters had in fact come from the Soviet occupation forces (GSOF-G or, Group Soviet Forces-Germany). Defector letters and audience mail volume had doubled in the past year. Finally, Kohler offered into testimony the results of audience study reports which Gallup poll associates had conducted under contract in Sweden, Norway, and France.

As a last report to the Committee, Robert May, of IBD (VOA), introduced excerpts from a report from James D. Chase (Crosley Broadcasting Corporation) and Merrill C. Phillips, IBD, on locally-produced radio programs in Germany, Austria, Tangier, Italy, and South America. The reports were highly laudatory, although they did identify some problems in VOA programming and product which tended to limit their effectiveness.

Nevertheless, the House Subcommittee remained unimpressed with USIE operations and effectiveness, especially Representatives Cliff Clevenger and Daniel J. Flood. Clevenger summed the budget request up as having "gone distinctively into the realm of the fantastic." Daniel J. Flood was even less enthusiastic, stating that "in view of the magnitude of the undertaking . . . the mountain has labored and brought forth a mouse."¹⁵⁷ The conclusions of these two leaders was further underscored with the House action to delete nearly \$30 million, or over one-fourth, of the budget request.

USIE testimony before the Senate subcommittee was, if possible,

¹⁵⁷Hearings, House Appropriations, 1952, pp. 741-1109 passim.

less impressive, though a better presentation from a point of coherence was made. The problem in the case before the Senate was, apparently, no one in USIE seriously believed that Senators read the pre-budget reports which are submitted prior to a hearing. The Senate also was increasingly concerned about the subject of effectiveness. One major new item of evidence introduced before the Senate was a report of VOA effectiveness produced, not with VOA funds or contracts, but through the BBC with a contract to Reuters. The VOA received a copy as a courtesy from the BBC. As an outstanding independent study of the period, the researcher has found nothing to compare with this report. Reuters gave VOA very high marks for audience and effectiveness in Western Europe as well as the Eastern portions, and in fact noted that VOA and BBC were essentially even in effectiveness and appeal throughout the region studied.

The Reuters report did not impress Senator Kenneth McKellar or Senator J. Lee Kilgore. McKellar complained that Barrett "has not been able to show us where we have gained a particle by the expenditure of . . . \$115 million . . . we do not know what we are doing. We are just appropriating millions of dollars." Senator Pat McCarran pointed out that in USIE's own semiannual report the organization had admitted that heretofore, effectiveness had been presumed on the basis of the program having an arbitrary standard of quality and quantity, rather than attempting to discover how the program did or did not actually influence the behavior and beliefs of the target audiences. McCarran was not impressed at all, and summed up Barrett's testimony as: "We are going to do better next year--just give us more money, and we will do better next year. We cannot tell you what we have done this year or

the year before." It was thus not unexpected that the Senate Committee found that the USIE did not need their full request. What was shocking to USIE personnel was the recommended amount: \$63 million, or slightly more than half what had been requested. Major cuts were delivered against Press, Motion Picture, Library, and Exchange of Persons programs.¹⁵⁸ It is clear, both from Congressional statements during the course of the hearings, as well as the resulting cuts of funds and support that USIE, as well as State Department personnel, abysmally failed to persuade the holders of the government purse-strings that the propaganda programs were having a significant effect.

A major question which plagued USIE at the time, and has remained largely unanswered since is what was the actual effect of USIE output in their major theaters of operations, Europe and the communist-dominated countries. In fact, was any definitive answer possible at that time, or at the present? After all, the Congressional leaders were quite correct in desiring to know how effective the USIE was; they were spending the citizen's monies, and there should have been some means of demonstrating a tangible result. Certainly a more definitive answer could have been attempted. Sources included not only audience mail and USIE field reports, but also reports from Ambassadors afield, research projects, foreign government evaluations, Soviet government reactions, and numerous debriefing reports from the stream of refugees arriving in the West from the communist areas, as well as a few CIA reports could all contribute to a fairly clear picture of USIE

¹⁵⁸ Senate, Appropriations Hearings, 1952, pp. 1643-63 passim.

effectiveness, though respectively, each would necessarily view the results from a different perspective.

One major source of input to effectiveness evaluation should be the various embassies and outposts themselves. Four different periods of responses to such questions from Washington are available from the State Department files: September, 1950; December, 1950; December, 1951; and August, 1952. Each should have had some impact in judging program and targeting effectiveness and content. The first of these surveys, undertaken as noted in September 1950 (but actually lasting through November), revealed several problems in program effectiveness. These problems may be generally classified into three categories: shortage of money, shortage of personnel, and shortage of proper materials.

Shortage of money generally referred to the lack of funds to support local programs in press or radio, or representation funds which would allow USIE personnel to "wine and dine" local persons of influence within the selected target groups. Face-to-face meetings many times are best conducted over dinner, or at a party, and penury does not inspire confidence. On the matter of local programs, this was a continued battle between the proponents of highly-centralized operations and those of more decentralized operations. Especially in South America, the tradition of decentralized execution was strong, and a local radio and press infrastructure made the tactic especially appealing. Indeed, when local Ambassadors supported such operations, sometimes with counterpart funds, results were often surprisingly good. In fact, during this time period, one of the most popular radio commentators and program hosts was an American, working for USIE in Ecuador. He was

sufficiently popular that local radio broadcast organizations voted to give him the award for best radio personality of the year (1951), much to the embarrassment of USIE Washington, who had to instruct that individual to refuse the award because acceptance violated foreign service regulations of the State Department.

Shortage of personnel was another headache, because often the USIE office had much more to do in the way of propaganda than the existing personnel could even dream of accomplishing. The real problem in this regard was an unwillingness to admit that certain tasks could not be accomplished, and thus not attempt those tasks. The tendency was always to try to "cover the waterfront," and attempt to do a little in relation to everything that Washington wished to have done. The result was often that the program personnel and effort expended on any one point was insufficient to accomplish any task well. This greatly weakened program effectiveness.

Shortage of the proper material was closely related to the question of funding. If local programs were adequately funded, the local USIE office could produce much of its own materials. If, on the other hand, the bulk of all funding (and personnel) were held at Washington, then Washington should furnish the local operations with the propaganda materials they required. This was a very sore point with many USIE operatives in the field, because adequate materials were rarely provided. Production in the centralized Washington organization was a slow, and often uncertain process. Furthermore, produced materials were often unsuitable for local distribution because they failed to address local, versus regional, interests and key words. In 1952,

for example, Congressional investigators under Senator McCarthy were to stumble across thousands of pamphlets and posters in various European embassy basements, all of which had been found wanting. In the view of those propagandists favoring a more decentralized operation, the centrally-produced materials lacked both appropriateness and timeliness.

This particular survey also offered some keen insights into several local USIE posts, especially Egypt and Manila. Of especial interest were some of the local problems, such as the Huks in the Philippines, and the local USIE operations designed to support local government actions, as well as recommended actions from Egypt which would serve to make USIE propaganda more effective.¹⁶⁰ The survey clearly outlines local post perceptions of required actions in many parts of the world that should have borne fruit, especially in response to the calls for a "Psychological Warfare Offensive."¹⁶¹

The second survey, occurring on the heels of the first, reveals a fair agreement among the posts around the world that the Weekly Information Guide, intended to be a major instrument in coordinating policy and output, was for the most part unsatisfactory. Except in a few places the Guides were received too late to be useful in generating locally-derived stories in the fast-breaking news programs

¹⁶⁰The report also is interesting because it reveals what, in retrospect, were the fatal targeting flaws in Angola. Specifically, USIE propaganda was aimed at the white, upper-class landowners and political leaders of the African nation who were, of course, Portuguese. USIE effort was spectacularly nonexistent in relation to the indigenous people, a gap Soviet propagandists were happy to exploit. The results bore fruit twenty years later.

¹⁶¹Joan Stowe to John L. Dunning, Memorandum, "Psychological Warfare Offensive," January 16, 1951. State Department File 511.00/1-1651.

of the host nation. In fact, most of the Guides seem only to have been used as "background material" for the personnel of the mission, either for general information, or occasionally for support in a speech. However, of the posts reporting, only Hong Kong was clearly displeased with current program results.

From Hong Kong, E. J. Wilson pointed out that there were three major problems in the field. The first and foremost problem was "an absolute lack of producers of material." Not one person was given sole responsibility for writing propaganda for the region. Everyone was jointly responsible, it would seem, which in practice meant that no one was responsible, especially in Washington. A second problem was that, from the perspective of the local USIE office, USIE operations were becoming increasingly fuzzy and overlapping. Rapid changes in program direction and emphasis had the practical result of each Public Affairs Officer (PAO) firing off in whatever direction, on whatever project most interested him. Finally, there were a lack of people who were experienced in the media that they were dealing with on a daily basis. Wilson felt that this was such a problem that new personnel should be selected on the understanding that "area experience is not a prime requirement here, job experience is."¹⁵⁹ Obviously, Hong Kong, as a regional center, was more concerned than those in Washington with regional developments and daily operations. Washington did not become overly enthusiastic about Wilson's efforts to enlighten them, and one official scrawled in the

¹⁵⁹ American Embassy, Hong Kong to Department of State, Telegram, "Recommendations for Implementation of USIE Program," December 7, 1950. State Department File 511.00/12-750 GB.

margin of the telegram, "What does EJW(ilson) think we have been doing?"

The question of effectiveness, from the viewpoint of those in the field in 1950 was therefore a rather mixed assortment. On one hand, the telegram which sparked the replies asked for proof of effectiveness "for planning purposes and for purposes of justifying expanded appropriations." Dispatched on December 6, it required until January 15 for most personnel to reply. Ten specific questions clearly dealt with proof of effectiveness, particularly positive results. It was quite as clear then as to the reader today that USIE Washington desired items for Congressional impression rather than true program evaluation. Most posts had about thirty days, which kindly included New Year's day and Christmas, in which to attempt a meaningful reply; obviously there was no question of any in-depth study.

The second survey, while dealing primarily with the Weekly Information Guides, did allow the posts to make comments about the subjects, themes, and effectiveness of the program. With few exceptions, such as Hong Kong, there was no attempt in the field to submit any overall evaluation. The perceived usefulness of the Guides may be characterized as about that of the Consul General, Dakar, French West Africa (D. Y. Gilmore). Guidances were received about two weeks after the date of issue. This was satisfactory because "No special use is made of the guidances." Rome, which never received the guidances through the telegraph, reported that "the guidances are seldom used in a literal, direct manner . . . Admonitions to 'play up' or 'play down' cannot be taken literally." Some posts did specifically criticize the slow arrival of the Guides, stating that policy guidance instructions might

have been used if they had arrived in an expeditious manner. Karachi (Ray E. Lee) was particularly tactless in relation to content:

San Francisco: Action was completed before comment was received . . . served no immediate purpose. Washington Foreign Minister's Talks: mailed comment would have served adequately. Kaesong: Guidance repetitive. DeLaltre: Plan for visit has been known for weeks.

Other posts were not quite so critical, but a similar feeling may be discerned, in that, if the material was not received promptly and had immediate usefulness, the Guides were simply examined and dropped into a file drawer.¹⁶²

Other Embassies dutifully sent in semi-annual evaluation reports dealing with program scope, content, targeting, and effectiveness. That of the American Embassy, Port-au-Prince, is perhaps typical of most of these reports. Under the topic of "evidence of effectiveness" the Embassy USIE personnel reported simply: "increased request for services." With a little more effort in the report, one may puzzle out that these requests were for motion pictures, agricultural brochures, and exchange of students. Thus, in relation to Embassy reports, while it is undeniable that there was some evidence available, evidence in some cases very pointed and useful, there was perhaps insufficient emphasis placed upon these reports to the field, and there was certainly

¹⁶² American Consul General, Dakar, FWA to Department of State. Air pouch, "Weekly Information Policy Guidances," September 6, 1951. State Department File 511.00/9-651. American Embassy, Rome to Department of State, Telegram, "Request for Comment on Weekly Information Policy Guidances," July 24, 1951, State Department File 511.00/7-2451. This was very tardy, but seems to belong with the December request. American Embassy, Karachi to Department of State, Telegram, "Comments on Weekly Foreign Policy and Guidance Directives," September 12, 1951, State Department File 511.00/9-1251.

a lack of response from the field that would have helped to sharpen perceptions of effectiveness.¹⁶³

However, the 1952 reports brought forth a great deal more information, and a surprising unanimity of opinion on program weaknesses and strengths which in retrospect is remarkable. In this collation of opinion the State Department had requested the various Chiefs of Missions personally to submit their perceptions and comments. The consensus was that the USIE was generally effective in what it was attempting to accomplish in the various countries. Ambassadors felt that the most widely-effective program was press and publication activities. On the other hand, there was near-unanimous agreement that the exchange of persons was the most valuable and important of all the efforts. The most shocking revelation was the opinion that, except in the communist-controlled areas, VOA was the least valuable program. The most roundly-criticized aspect of the program was the Wireless Bulletin. However, given a choice, the Ambassadors felt that the most productive activity for their USIE personnel was the use of personal meetings. Various ambassadors called for some specific improvements in the program activities and content.

These American representatives abroad emphasized the continuing need for specialized, locally-oriented output of all services. There seemed to be little doubt among the ambassadors that current USIE output was not of sufficient quality to do a proper job with local

¹⁶³ American Embassy Port-au-Prince to Department of State, Air Pouch, "First Semi-Annual Evaluation Report for USIE," September 14, 1951, State Department File 511.00/9-1451 AR.

audiences. There was no consensus that these materials should be produced locally, just that they should be locally acceptable and use local issues and key words. The ambassadors and other chiefs of missions also emphasized the need for "less blatant anti-communist material while dwelling on more positive values of democracy and American culture." Critical needs were seen to be greater local autonomy, expansion of the program activities into the varied outlying areas, and additional funds for personnel in the field. The chiefs of the missions nevertheless felt, and usually stated clearly, that USIE had the most effective international information program.¹⁶⁴

Other indications of effectiveness were available. The most significant of these were the defector reports. Senator McKellar might well ask for witnesses, such defectors who were willing to state that they had come to America because of the VOA (and in fact attempted to subpoena one defector), but such action was fatuous. People defect from, or flee their homelands for a variety of reasons of personal decision rather than persuasion. For example, a Boris Georgeovitch Bajanov would flee the Soviet Union because of a deep revulsion toward the Stalinist corruption and a complete disenchantment with communism, whereas Lieutenant General Alexander Orlov fled to preserve his life. Others, such as General Penkovsky defected because they could no longer tolerate the destruction of their country and their people, but Georges Agabekov defected for love of an Englishwoman. Nevertheless, recent defectors

¹⁶⁴Bigman and Joseph, pp. 1-3. One should note that the chiefs of the missions did not address, and in some instances probably did not have knowledge of, Soviet (OGPU) covert propaganda activities, which were extensive and important.

could serve as an excellent gauge of VOA effectiveness, or at least impact, through careful evaluation of the manner in which the recent refugees perceived the United States before they defected. Since defectors had begun arriving in 1945, a fair number of them were available for questioning at any time, especially in the expatriate colony in France.¹⁶⁵

Almost forty percent of the Czechoslovak refugees in the early 1950's reported frequent listening to the VOA broadcasts, despite strictures against such activity. Their reasons varied, although the major reason was "its status as an official voice of the U.S." The VOA was considered to have the best international news service, even though there was little interest in news not clearly relevant to liberation from the Soviet and communist yoke. These refugees overwhelmingly agreed that the USIE policy of fostering long-term hope and faith in America, rather than the harsh, rabble-rousing tone of some broadcasts was a major factor in building a large following and a significant reservoir of good will. However, the "showpiece articles" on American life, explaining for example how an average family lived, were uninteresting except when they were contrasted with the facts of life under communism.¹⁶⁶ The Czech refugees also gave overwhelming approval to the

¹⁶⁵ Gordon Brook-Shepherd, The Storm Petrels (New York: Ballantine Books, 1982). An excellent biography of the early, most important Soviet defectors. General Penkovsky, of course, belongs to what might well be called the "third wave" of defectors, those of the post-Stalinist era. The "second wave" belongs to the period 1945-1955.

¹⁶⁶ Obviously the "revolution of rising expectations" which one heard extensively in the late 1950-early 1960 time period applied not just to undeveloped countries, but to such nations as Czechoslovakia as well. We have had more recent examples of the phenomenon in Poland and

VOA technique of "full and fair" presentation of United States life. Such willingness to admit, without excessive breast-beating or shame, some of the less-desirable facets of American life built credibility. There was also general agreement that it was both good, and had beneficial results, to attack and refute communist propaganda. The results of VOA Czech broadcasts were generally effective. The VOA was believed and listened to carefully, although not with perfect understanding, for information that the Czechs could use to their own advantage, and their own inspiration. For example, when the VOA announced that the Czech government intended to ration flour before any such government announcement had even been hinted, hoarding and purchase of flour was immediate and significant. The Czech government was greatly embarrassed with the "flour run," and even more embarrassed a month later when they did, in fact, raise the price of flour.

Voice of America effectiveness was demonstrated not just in reaction to VOA broadcasts, but in the accuracy of their images of life in America. Economic advantages dominated the Czech perceptions, which, considering the communist system of economic determinism they had been trapped under is wholly understandable. The United States was seen as "a land of plenty, with employer and employees enjoying relative ease." Class perceptions, and definitions in the eyes of the Czechs were made on the basis of two categories: employees and employers. Most of the

Bangladesh. One believes that a people, and a nation, may be enslaved for just so long before misery, despair, and hope drive the people to destroy their oppressors. While such an aim was never the clear point of United States national propaganda policy, if this was, in fact, the intention then USIE was certainly on the right track.

refugees stressed their belief in the mobility between the two classes depending only upon how hard a person was willing to work to improve himself. Civil rights, while of secondary importance, were often cited in three specific categories: a right to acquire property, a right to work, or choose not to work, and a right to enjoy leisure time in whatever manner one chose. Less frequently cited were the rights to strike and union protection. Ninety-two percent of the Czechs asserted their belief that there was true democracy in the United States, and cited free speech, freedom of political preference, and the freedom to be non-political to support their perceptions. Altogether, one is impressed that the Czechs, most of whom knew of the United States only through word of mouth and listening covertly to various broadcasts, had a fair grasp of many of the basic values which form United States society. Granted, the perceptions are simplistic, but so are most United States citizens'.

Equally interesting was the refutation of the communist propaganda stereotype assertions that "Americans worship money" and "do not know how to enjoy life." The Czechs also rejected the communist theme that "America was out to dominate the world." Czech intellectuals did cling to the notion that "Americans lack culture." Thus, Czech targets seem to have held both a high regard for the VOA, but to have been affected much as desired in their actions and perceptions, especially when such were in their own self-interest, and much more so than the Italian or Irish immigrant of fifty years before.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ International Public Opinion Research, Incorporated, "Media of Communication and the Free World as Seen by Czechoslovak Refugees,"

Many Hungarian refugees had also listened to the VOA before deciding, or managing to flee their homes and relatives. In fact, Hungarian refugee listening was the highest of any recorded group--ninety-three percent. While motivation for listening to the foreign stations was completely anti-regime, VOA was the preferred station when it was available. Nearly forty-three percent usually chose it above all other competing stations, especially the city dwellers. VOA was considered to have the best international news service, although this perception was inseparably mixed with the approbation of VOA as the "official voice of the U.S." Notable was the revelation of the refugees that VOA news was particularly tailored to urban populations. Even more Hungarian refugees (66%) felt the presentation of Hungarian domestic affairs was the most important part of any VOA broadcast. Feature broadcasts of American life were again of interest only in contrast to life under communism, especially when done in a humorous or satirical vein.

In Hungarian perceptions, the VOA gained credibility three ways: contradicting communist claims, which the respondents knew from personal experiences to be false, reporting embarrassing incidents about the regime which proved to be accurate, and broadcast admissions of Western setbacks, or other events unfavorable to the West. Eighty-four percent of the Hungarian refugees endorsed the "full and fair" policy.

Demonstrable VOA effectiveness was known to approximately one-third of the refugees. Normally these were such things as the

New York City, February 20, 1953, USIA Archives, Washington, D.C. A condensed copy exists in the Library of Congress. This report is cited, despite its issue date, to demonstrate both effectiveness, and the fact that such information was available beforehand, had USIE thought to ask the questions.

hoarding of food when VOA announced that the Hungarian government intended to initiate food rationing, and similar incidents. Such information that VOA broadcast was widely spread, widely known through oral dissemination, despite strict official prohibitions against "rumor-mongering." "Important" news such as the proposed rationing spread rapidly, and was believed as if heard or witnessed in person.

VOA effectiveness in presenting life in the United States was not quite so good as in the case of Czechoslovakia. General perceptions were about the same, especially the employer-employee class distinctions. However, other factors were perceived in a different order of importance, especially the rights of workers: right to enjoy leisure time, rights to choose one's job, the right to acquire property or a business. In part, this may be a reflection of the differences in the particular regime the people were under, but it may have been due to a slightly different program emphasis. Slightly fewer (66%) asserted that there was true political democracy in the United States, although no one expressed a truly unfavorable view of United States political conditions. Civil rights were perceived in a different order of importance also. The most mentioned were, respectively: freedom of political preference (49%), free speech (35%), and the freedom to be non-political if one chose (30%).

Conversely, VOA was effective in reinforcing, or forming the Hungarian rejection of communist stereotypes of the United States. There was low acceptance of the notion that "Americans worship money," "do not know how to enjoy life," or "lack culture." Hungarians perceived that Americans liked money, but seemed to feel that this was

quite acceptable. Apparently Hungarians like money as well. Almost half the refugees had some knowledge and understanding of the Marshall Plan, and over one-third knew about the United Nations.

One potential problem was revealed: the Hungarian refugees believed the "America can be thoroughly relied on for help in liberating their country from Russian controls." One presumes that those Hungarians who were unable to fashion an escape from their homeland felt the same. The Hungarians unanimously anticipated a world war in the near future which would lead to Hungarian liberation.¹⁶⁸

A very similar pattern emerged in interrogation of Polish refugees, although it was the BBC which had the largest number of listeners (96%), even though the VOA had the largest number of regular listeners (82%) and was the preferred station of around forty percent of the refugees. In the total population of the country, foreign broadcast listeners were apparently fewer than in Hungary or Czechoslovakia. However, like the other two national groups, Polish interest in the VOA stemmed from its position as the "official voice of the U.S." Similar to the other two, VOA was also considered to have the best international news. It was again impossible to separate the appeal of the news from the importance of its origins. Similarly, long-term maintenance of hope in liberation was seen as good. No broadcast was more important than the presentation of unbiased domestic issues and affairs. Feature programs about American life were regarded as important

¹⁶⁸ International Public Opinion Research, Incorporated, "Media of Communication and the Free World as seen by Hungarian Refugees," New York, March 3, 1953. See especially the summary statement. USIA Archives Collection, Washington, D.C. A summary exists in the Library of Congress.

only in contrast to life under communism. Unlike the other groups, Polish refugees warned of devoting too much program time to this topic, and a full one-third disapproved of the current presentations of American life. Two-thirds expressed approval of the "full and fair" approach, and cited this as being a major factor in credibility.

VOA effectiveness in Poland was apparently lower than in the other national groups. Only thirteen percent knew of specific actions within Poland that occurred in response to VOA broadcasts. The most notable incident was a buying spree among the people when VOA announced an impending currency reform. This latter action, for the Poles as well as other Eastern European groups always meant that the Soviets took their money away, and left them with even less than before. Therefore, a buying spree on the eve of a currency reform made good sense. It also embarrassed the Polish government.

VOA attempts to project an accurate image of United States society had different results than in the previous two groups. While the employee-employer class distinctions were still the same, as was the view that the United States was a land of plenty, significant differences in perceptions emerged. Almost unanimously, Polish refugees referred to "privileges and luxuries" that the United States workers enjoyed. These were seen to be the right to choose the job of one's choice, the right to acquire property or own a business, the excellent physical working conditions, the right to enjoy leisure time, as well as ample children's educational opportunities, the right to strike, and the lack of production quotas. Considering the proximity of Poland to Moscow, the order of these in importance may not be so surprising.

Polish perceptions of United States life were also different. While eighty-nine percent asserted that there was true political democracy in the United States, three refugees held a completely unfavorable view of United States political conditions. Two-thirds of the refugees mentioned minority discrimination, especially against Negroes, but less than ten of the refugees interrogated were willing to blame the United States for the problem. On the other hand, a solid one-third denied that real discrimination existed. Individual rights were admired, but were emphasized in a surprisingly different order: free speech (69%), freedom of political belief and preference (44%), and freedom of movement (39%).

The refugee perceptions of "typical Americans" was somewhat dissimilar, also. Acceptance of the stereotype that "Americans worship money" was low, but some acceptance of this image did exist. The idea that "Americans did not know how to enjoy life" on the other hand was "meaningless" to most of the refugees. One suspects that some of these perceptions were as much a result of the conditions under which the Polish people were living as VOA broadcasts and Soviet propaganda.

Voice of America and USIE effectiveness was undoubtedly hurt in Poland because the Polish refugees, more than any other national group, distrusted the United States. Almost half expressed distrust, not in liberation, but in post-liberation relations. The cause cited

was "the U.S. betrayed Poland in Yalta." This distrust was especially prominent among the expatriate Polish intellectuals.¹⁶⁹

Other gauges of effectiveness, or at least interest in what the United States was saying to the world, were indicated in the various audience sizes in areas where that could be accurately measured. There was an increase in West Berlin (RIAS), up from thirty-eight percent of the population in 1949 to fifty-five percent in 1950. Overall, thirty-nine percent of the population of West Germany listened to VOA or RIAS broadcasts. This audience actually represented sixty percent of the entire listening audience in West Germany. In 1952, ninety-eight percent of the population of West Berlin who had radios, or access to radios, were regular listeners.¹⁷⁰

In another critical area, Greece, which stimulated the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine, USIE effectiveness should have been relatively easy to judge. In fact, a study was available in 1954 that had nothing to do with the USIE. This study pointed out that USIE had selected radio, rather than print, as its best means to transmit its ideological campaign to Greece. This might have been subject to some questioning, because the Greeks themselves "often report that the newspaper is as vital to the Greek as his bread and butter." On the other

¹⁶⁹International Opinion Research, Incorporated, "Media of Communications and the Free World as Seen by Polish Refugees," New York, March 31, 1953. USIA Archives Collection, Washington, D.C. A summary exists in the Library of Congress.

¹⁷⁰Department of State, Bulletin, September 18, 1950, p. 449. More important is Howland H. Sargeant, Lecture at the National War College, "The Overt International Information and Educational Exchange Programs of the United States," February 8, 1952. State Department File 511.00/2-1952, p. 22.

hand, newspapers in Greece, as in the United States sixty years before, were privately-owned, and reflected the owner's political opinions and attitudes. Greek newspapers could also give points to United States news services for sensationalism, and likely still win any contest. Thus, the Greek took anything in print with a block of salt. Normally the Greeks, like their neighbors to the south, bought several newspapers of varying opinion and read them all to arrive at a more balanced viewpoint of any event.

On the other hand, the average Greek citizen regarded radio as being a more trustworthy medium for two conflicting reasons. The first reason was that private enterprise was accepted as acting with "a high degree of irresponsibility," whereas a government-owned radio station was not. Second, the average Greek citizen was well aware that a radio was heard "by too many people outside Greece," so that lies could easily be checked, and quickly exposed. On the surface then, the USIE decision to use the VOA as its primary tool in Greece was reasonable: it had selected a media that was from the first regarded as responsible and authoritative. The problem that gave rise to uneasiness on the part of the researcher was that radios in Greece were few and far between. The land of the bouzoukia still relied upon the village musical talents at the local tavern rather than a radio for entertainment and stimulation. Whatever audience existed in Greece, it was, at the time largely potential. While this reality was accepted, until it could be overcome USIE operations in Greece were largely ineffectual. The Soviets lost their effectiveness in Greece not through USIE competition, but their own ineptness and belief that a campaign of terror would finally

overcome Greek resistance. United States policy and psychological warfare in Greece owed most of its success not to the USIE programs, but to the United States Army operations with Greek Army units in anti-guerrilla operations against Soviet-sponsored attacks from the north, as well as the return of the ten thousand from Yugoslavia.¹⁷¹

USIE effectiveness in Western Europe was mixed. Holland, a strong ally in the worst as well as the best of times, was relegated to what can only be described as a "holding action" status. The result was a rather tasteless program which had little effect on the nation or its people.¹⁷² On the other hand, in both Sweden and Finland the USIE could claim some success. Surveys taken in 1951 indicated that about four percent of the population of Sweden listened regularly to the VOA programs, and about fifteen percent, or seven hundred thousand Swedes, listened to the VOA on a casual basis. This was significant, and should have been brought to the Congress' attention in commanding terms because at that time VOA had no Swedish-language program.

¹⁷¹Mary Konstans, "Effectiveness of the Voice of America in Greece" (M.S. thesis, University of Illinois, Urbana, 1954). USIA Archives, Washington, D.C. USIE had, for several years, been attempting to purchase or have made cheap radios for free distribution, but had been unable to find anyone willing to make them cheaply enough. This was a very sore point with the Congress. It is the author's feeling that USIE should have been willing to pay a little more, or get fewer radios, in order to get them into the field. As it was, they were never purchased. The "ten thousand" referred to were the ten thousand children Yugoslavia returned to Greece. These children, part of fifty thousand, had been taken forcibly by the Greek communists at the end of World War II to the Soviet-controlled areas. Of the other forty thousand, no word has ever been heard.

¹⁷²Ton Pietr DeVos, "A Field Study in the Effectiveness of the United States Information Service in the Netherlands" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1961), pp. 240-260 passim.

The energetic Swedes were tuning in to English, German, Dutch, or an occasional Russian program just to hear VOA news and commentary. This is indeed evidence of strong VOA appeal, that VOA was having an effect, and was indeed carrying forth the United States word to the world.

Finland offered an even stronger example of effectiveness. That little nation, living eternally in the shadow of Dzherjinsky Square, not only listened regularly but in one instance, given the choice between attending a communist party rally or attending a USIE motion picture which was showing that same night, most of a town attended the USIE film, including several party members and party officials.¹⁷³

Italy, a higher-priority target than Holland, had a much more imaginative staff. This staff created, wholly on its own in the largest part, two propaganda coups from which the Soviets took years to recover. The Italian Communist Party was in 1950 one of the most vociferous, as well as one of the largest, of any communist party in Europe. It also had one of the best party distribution systems, so that every party member was constantly getting party literature to reinforce the beliefs. When the Soviet Union began its "peace campaign" in Europe, designed to remove the United States presence and influence from Europe, the Italian Communist Party enthusiastically issued a "peace" brochure with a white dove on a striking red cover.

USIE personnel somehow obtained copies of this brochure before it was distributed (they had better distribution from the Italian communists than from Washington, it seems), and decided that this was a golden

¹⁷³Howland H. Sargeant, Lecture, pp. 22-4.

opportunity. Happily ignoring any CIA interest, or perhaps with CIA knowledge and participation locally, the USIE field personnel cheerfully utilized "black" propaganda. They simply had the cover replicated, but changed the inner contents to explain, not United States greed, but Soviet peace offensive propaganda in terms of demonstrated Soviet imperialism and policies. The copies thus produced were cunningly substituted for many of the Italian Communist Party brochures, and the ICP then unwittingly distributed "their" publication through normal channels to all the party faithful as well as propaganda targets throughout Italy. The result was that hundreds of ICP members turned in their party cards to the USIE officers. How many more were turned in to the ICP headquarters, or simply burned, shredded, or thrown in sewers, one will never know. It was a disaster for the ICP.¹⁷⁴

The second major psychological victory was the larger effort of the 1950 drive to defeat the Communist Party candidate in the Italian presidential elections. This was seen as a critical operation both in Italy and Washington. Italy, at the time, was tottering on the brink of economic collapse. The communist candidate seemed to have great strength, and the OGPU was placing a great deal of covert funds and

¹⁷⁴This story has never been fully documented in public form. Part of it may be gleaned from the Appropriations hearings of 1950 through 1952. Other bits may be gleaned, here and there, from the State Department correspondence of the same period. Barrett also mentions it in Truth is Our Weapon, but actually adds very little to the public testimony. The fact that these two instances became known so early, within months of the event, was due not to USIE publicity, but to Soviet propaganda attacks and Italian Communist Party public admissions about, in particular, the "Peace Brochure" incident. The story as revealed to Congress was, in the author's opinion, ineptly presented, and carried little weight. Nor was a determined effort to support other local initiatives begun.

assistance into the campaign. USIE Italy managed a shrewd campaign across most radio stations throughout Italy, usually using unattributed broadcasts or, in some instances, using the attribution of a political party that was non-communist. USIE also bought space in newspapers for political advertisements, and with the State Department arranged for the Mediterranean Fleet to pay a visit shortly before the elections. USIE material was designed to show the various non-communist candidates in a good light, and expose the communist party candidates as pawns of Moscow. USIE does not appear to have favored any particular non-communist candidate. When the communist candidate was defeated, USIE felt justified in quietly claiming some of the credit, especially the Italian posts, who actually targeted much of the propaganda, and selected the media and messages to be used.

A direct measure of effectiveness was also available long before 1952, in the form of actual measures taken within the various communist controlled nations to prevent the population from listening to any foreign broadcast. While the jamming program was a widely-known measure, and a clear admission that the external broadcasts were bothering the Stalinist regime, other actions far more clearly demonstrated the actual perceptions of effectiveness in the regard of leaders in those target countries. In East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Lithuania civil ordinances were promulgated to prevent listening to foreign broadcasts. These ordinances were enforced with secret police and paid informers. Further measures were taken, such as requiring attendance at communist party meetings during VOA and BBC broadcasts. In most of those nations, licenses were required to

possess a radio receiver, and radio receiver set owners were subject to increased surveillance as well as a "radio tax." Ordinances were enacted specifically forbidding anyone from listening to the VOA or the BBC ("anti-revolutionary actions"). In several areas, power was regularly turned off in entire cities during VOA and BBC broadcasts. The most striking anti-listening law was passed in Czechoslovakia. Titled the "Defense of the Peace" law, in December 1950 the ordinance was an effort to muzzle the informal information networks that ran across the entire country (that is, word of mouth, or the "grapevine"). This network quickly retransmitted VOA, BBC, and other foreign sources of information. Anyone caught "spreading warmongering news or propaganda by word of mouth" was sentenced to prison terms of up to ten years. This was obviously a measure of effectiveness, that the communist leaders should so fear the truth that they would go to such lengths to prevent its spread. One is left with the indelible impression of a Czech secret police officer attempting to place surveillance upon every back yard laundry line in the country. In some areas throughout the occupied lands, communist leaders attempted to confiscate radios, to replace them with speakers erected on street corners and public squares in an effort to make certain that all information being channeled to the population was state-controlled. It was slightly ironic that this was the same technique the people had recently experienced under Hitler and Goebbels. One suspects, but cannot prove, that some of the very same speakers were used that had recently been torn down when the Nazis were defeated.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵Refugee reports cited under "Media of Communication" passim, and Howland H. Sargeant, Lecture, pp. 25-6.

Another key indicator of effectiveness was various communist admissions to the extent of USIE effectiveness in their particular countries. Defector reports revealed, for example, that many Group of Soviet Forces, Germany (GSOFG) soldiers listened to VOA or RIAS, despite very harsh penalties for being caught doing so. Repeated accusations and reactions in communist press and radio output verified this effectiveness, as well as allowing USIE personnel insight into propaganda themes and topics which really hurt their opposite numbers. There were also the continuing, and enlarging anti-VOA, anti-USIE campaigns in Europe and the Mediterranean areas. Klement Gottwald, the puppet President of Czechoslovakia publically admitted that the "VOA broadcasts . . . intentionally harmed the economic relations of my country." President Bierut of Poland, in a speech to the Polish Communist Party stated that VOA and BBC broadcasts were being listened to in "the most backward [innermost] cells" of the party. In his view, listening to the free world broadcasts "had to be stamped out in the interest of the Communist State." Other intimations of adjudged effectiveness came from the Soviet Union itself, when Novy Mir attacked the VOA, and incidentally noted that the symbol VOA was familiar to millions of Russian citizens.¹⁷⁶ Other reports should have been available for the 1952 hearings, since the USIE had reported the intent to complete some twenty-nine studies and effectiveness surveys in the preceding year.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶Senate, Appropriation Hearings, 1952, pp. 1846-9 passim.

¹⁷⁷House, Hearings, 1952, pp. 908-9.

Obviously, there was evidence, and an increasing amount of evidence, that USIE programs were having the desired effect. Judgement of that effectiveness was best calculated in light of the concrete actions which the communist leaders took in the various target areas. There were evidences of an effective program, not just in the communist-dominated areas, but in Western Europe as other non-communist areas as well.¹⁷⁸

No study of USIE effectiveness would be complete without some consideration of USIE success in dealing with Soviet-originated propaganda. Sometimes called counter-propaganda operations, there were some propaganda initiatives from the Soviet Union which had to be directly answered, regardless of the credibility such a response would lend that propaganda. During 1949-1952, the USIE dealt with three major initiatives from Soviet propagandists. One initiative, in fact, became a central Soviet propaganda "campaign" that has continued until the present.

The Soviet campaign was the "peace offensive" that Soviet propagandists, both overt and covert, conducted throughout Europe. Using as its keyword "peace," the Soviet campaign was an attempt to portray the Soviet Union as a peaceful nation, and the United States as just the opposite. As an example of Soviet leaders looking in the mirror, and labelling the resulting image that of the United States, it is indeed instructive. The start of the campaign occurred in mid to

¹⁷⁸Howland H. Sargeant, Lecture, p. 27; W. C. Compton to John Hamilton, Memorandum, "Part II, Projection of IIA Program," October 17, 1952. State Department File 511.00/10-2052, p. 18.

late 1949, and was first readily observable in the "Stockholm Appeal" of early 1950. This "appeal" was a peace petition that began in Stockholm, as part of a peace rally. The petition attracted numerous famous writers and Swedish leaders. These notables allowed their names to be used to encourage others to attach their names to the petitions. Within a few months, hundreds of thousands of signatures had been gathered from citizens throughout Europe.

It required Western intelligence services about two and a half months to determine beyond reasonable doubt the origins of the "appeal": that of several communist front organizations. Once this was perceived, it did not require a long time, or much prescience, to determine the most probable use of this petition would be to present it to the United Nations General Assembly in June-July, 1950, as a means of causing the United States great embarrassment.

On the surface, the appeal for peace was both logical and quite legitimate. No one, after all, wished to see Europe plunged into another world war, especially the Europeans. However, the appeal quickly was subverted, if it was not so originally intended, into an attempt to label whomever used the first atomic weapon as the automatic "aggressor" in any future war. This meant that the United States, and its clear reliance on nuclear superiority to secure Europe, would be so labelled just on the basis of announced intentions. Soviet propagandists were not slow to make this connection. From this position it was very easy to further discredit the United States presence in Europe, and NATO as its instrument for future atomic aggression against the peace-loving Soviet Union. Thus, the rather simple, naïve hope for

peace was quickly subverted into a Soviet propaganda instrument for pre-labelling the United States an aggressor, and to force a strategic United States retreat from Europe.

As soon as sufficient hard evidence was accumulated, USIE propagandists publicized the Soviet connection with the Stockholm Appeal. With rather shrewd calculation, USIE officials in Europe did not take the immediate lead in denouncing and exposing the Stockholm Appeal. Instead the facts were diplomatically presented to the Swedish government and people. The Swedish government, and many leading citizens were incensed at the Soviet Union's bald use of their status as neutrals, their manipulation of innocent citizen's hopes for communist propaganda ends.

As a result, throughout Europe the Swedish government and citizens took the lead in repudiating and exposing the false peace petition. Many of the prominent citizens who had affixed their names to the petition publically withdrew their support. USIE propagandists quickly picked up the refutations and the public statements of the Swedes who had originally supported the Appeal. In this instance, USIE could legitimately claim to be reporting the news just as the Soviets had done in similar instances from communist-front European newspapers. In fact, USIE and BBC propagandists gave every assistance to anyone who stated that they no longer supported the Stockholm Appeal, and similar appeals and peace petitions which later appeared. However, USIE continued to allow the Swedish government to take the lead in the repudiations.

Throughout the remainder of the Truman administration, the Soviet peace offensive continued, with such events as the World Peace Council, the Students for Peace, the World Festival of Youth, and similar peace meetings and rallies. However, once the methodology had been exposed, USIE propagandists were quick to seize the events, associate them with the communist-inspired Stockholm Appeal, and associate the event with the Soviet propaganda effort. While USIE did not stop what was to be a long-term Soviet operation, USIE effects were sufficient to prevent any use of the petitions in the General Assembly or in any European Government assemblies.¹⁷⁹

Soviet propagandists in the peace campaigns of the period were ill-served. Soviet leaders were shockingly insensitive to the needs, and program content and thrust of Soviet psychological warfare operations, and literally destroyed without thought much of the results, impact, and credibility of their own propaganda. The performance of some of these leaders such as Andrei Gromyko or Andrei Vishinsky

¹⁷⁹ For reference to the original program, and subsequent operations, see the following Department of State Weekly Guides: 4, April 27, 1950, File 511.00/4-2750 CS/C; 10, June 8, 1950, File 511.00/6-850 CS/H; 47, February 21, 1951, File 511.00/2-2151 CS/W; 48, February 28, 1951, File 511.00/4-2851 CS/W; 67, July 11, 1951, File 511.00/7-1151 CS/H; 69, July 25, 1951, File 511.00/7-2551 CSA; 82, October 24, 1951, File 511.00/10-2451 CS/R; 115, June 18, 1952, File 511.00/6-1852 CS/H. Also See HICOG Public Affairs Guidances 107, August 2, 1951, File 511.00/8-2511 RMD; 109, August 7, 1951, File 511.00/8-751 JMD; 110, August 10, 1951, File 511.00/8-1051 RMC; 113, August 14, 1951, File 511.00/8-1451, and HICOG to Department of State, Telegram 3426, October 26, 1951, File 511.00/10-2651. Quite a few other references are to be found in USIE correspondence, because this Soviet campaign caused continual problems for USIE propagandists, and required constant attention to counter its inherent appeals to the war-weary European population. The propaganda battle on this subject continues today, in the guise of anti-nuclear rallies, demonstrations, and speakers. One notes that, in the peace-loving Soviet Union, such rallies are not allowed.

may only be described, charitably, as inept.

The most damaging event in regard to the Soviet peace offensive was the Korean War. While the Soviet propagandists immediately attempted to label the South Korean and American forces as the aggressor, such propaganda attacks just did not hold up under the subsequent events of the war. No one seriously believed the United States was prepared to attack the North Koreans, then retreat two hundred miles just for the fun of it all. In retrospect, Soviet propagandists seem to have been just as surprised about the event as the South Korean army on the morning of the attack. Soviet propaganda attempting to show the United States as the aggressor did not have any success until the United States forces crossed the 38th parallel, and at that point, the issue was largely dead.

USIE propagandists felt a need to counter the Soviet and North Korean claims, if only because they were so patently false, and presented an excellent chance to damage Soviet credibility. Though initially barred from connecting the Soviet Union directly with the attack, in an effort to achieve a political solution with a nation that had determined that a political solution was not desired, USIE propagandists were eventually released to pursue their objectives without hindrance. Evidence of the well-prepared offensive was not lacking, both in battlefield events as well as captured documents and captured personnel. Tying these plans and directives into the Soviet "peace" propaganda, the USIE greatly damaged Soviet credibility and prestige. The Soviet Union quickly decided that the "peace" rallies had to be held inside the Eastern European countries, because that was the only place

where they could guarantee adequate numbers of crowds to provide "spontaneous demonstrations" of support. Insofar as the Soviet "peace offensive" was concerned, the Korean War was a disaster.

Similarly, Soviet representatives and diplomats did not help their propagandists in their public conduct. An outstanding example of a Soviet error in judgement was that of Andrei Vishinsky. While the Soviet Union propagandists in Europe were attempting to make a great hullabaloo in relation to everyone's desire for peace and prove Soviet peaceful intentions, when arms reductions talks were publicly proposed, Vishinsky responded that he "laughed" at the idea of any such talks. This was scarcely a correct attitude to portray for a nation ostensibly pursuing "peace" in the face of United States imperialist warmongering and attacks on innocent, peaceful North Korea. USIE propagandists promptly used "Vishinsky's laugh" as a major propaganda symbol for a number of months. Vishinsky was more embarrassed when the United Nations overwhelmingly rejected the Soviet charges that the United States was the aggressor nation in Korea.¹⁸⁰

A third initiative, starting in February 1952, was to charge the United States with using Bacteriological Warfare in Korea against the Chinese Communist forces. The attempt was ludicrous, but potentially serious, and in retrospect should be used as an example of the ineffectiveness of a psychological warfare attack that is based on a lie. The basis of the charge lay in the Chinese communist armies in Korea.

¹⁸⁰ See the following Far Eastern Annexes to Weekly Guides, 45, February 9, 1951, File 511.00/2-951; and 46, February 15, 1951, File 511.00/2-1551. See previous footnote on Vishinsky's laugh, and other personal appellations that USIE propagandists hung on Soviet representatives.

In that winter of 1951-2, hundreds of thousands of Chinese soldiers became sick with pneumonia, influenza, and dysentery. In fact the numbers of sick troops had the proportions of an epidemic. There was relatively little sickness south of the battle lines. Someone in either the Chinese or Soviet command drew a simplistic conclusion that the United States was responsible, using bacteriological warfare. Exactly where within Chinese or Soviet decision-making circles this notion germinated cannot be determined at this point. However, Soviet propagandists were told to use the theme and in so doing made a major blunder in levelling the charges without any real proof, other than numerous sick Chinese soldiers.

Not only were Soviet propagandists ill-advised enough to make the attack a public one, rather than a rumor campaign, but Soviet representatives made the charges in the United Nations. On the surface the Soviets had done a fair job of organizing their attack for an immediate, favorable impression. Not only were there thousands of sick Chinese soldiers to point the finger at, but the Soviets used the fact that the United States government had refused to ratify the 1925 Geneva Convention against chemical and bacteriological weapons of war. The Soviets also had several important scientists who stated that the "evidence" of United States biological warfare was plain and irrefutable.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹The most prominent communist scientist was Joliet-Curie. Bacteriological warfare experiments did take place in the area. However, they were conducted in 1943-45, under the special Unit 731, Imperial Japanese Army. See The Boston Globe, Volume 221, No. 98, April 8, 1982, p. 3.

Had the United States been willing to do the expected thing-- deny everything and refuse to explain itself, Soviet propaganda might have scored an initial, impressive victory. Unfortunately, Soviet leaders and propagandists badly miscalculated, and completely misunderstood the temper of the United States leaders they were facing (a consistent attribute when they dealt with Truman). The United States did not try to defend itself, or ignore the charges. Instead, United States leaders, led in person by Dean Acheson, simply attacked. Acheson immediately asked for a full investigation of the charges, preferably with representatives of the International Red Cross. When the Soviets did not like that idea, he suggested the World Health Organization. The Soviet Union did not like that idea either. In fact, the Soviet Union, and North Korean and Chinese leaders refused to permit any neutral medical inspection.

USIE propagandists had what may only be described as a "field day" with the Soviet Union and Chinese Communists. Medical opinion was quickly marshalled, to include nine Nobel-prize winning medical scientists, who stated that charges of bacteriological warfare were idiotic. In fact, medical opinion was close to unanimous in favor of the United States innocence. Health experts quickly pointed out that, if the Chinese were suffering from an epidemic, it was entirely due to their own poor health practices, sanitation, and medical abilities. Scientists, except for the communist scientists thus far exposed, were incensed that the Soviet Union was trying to use science as a propaganda vehicle-- in a lie at that. In fact, Soviet propagandists and leaders became almost painfully eager to allow the subject to drop, without apology,

into the past. USIE was hardly willing for this to happen, and kept right on hammering away until summer 1952, brought better prospects for peace in Korea, and the Presidential campaign really got underway. As a classic example of a propaganda attack that was "turned," the bacteriological warfare charges of the Korean War can hardly be topped. USIE effectiveness in this instance was impressive, and Soviet propaganda suffered a great loss of credibility for many years throughout the Far East and Europe.¹⁸²

Truly definitive judgements of USIE program effectiveness are impossible, both because of the long-range nature of much of the propaganda operations (an exchange student, for example, who kept a good impression of the United States, did not begin to pay handsome dividends until twenty years later, when he began emerging at the top of his profession), and because USIE never operated entirely alone. As pointed out, many other agencies and organizations had a share in propaganda operations, as well as countless private citizens in their letters, and their conduct during foreign travel. Of course, Hollywood movies, quickly becoming the rage throughout the world, had an immeasurable impact on popular perceptions of the United States. Many areas of the world were denied to USIE researchers, and many others were very

¹⁸²See in particular Weekly Guides: 99, February 26, 1952, File 511.00/2-2752 CS/H; 100, March 5, 1952, File 511.00/3-552; 101, March 12, 1952, File 511.00/3-1252; 102, March 19, 1952, File 511.00/3-1952 CS/H; 103, March 26, 1952, File 511.00/3-2652 CSA; 115, June 18, 1952, File 511.00/6-1852 CS/H; Far Eastern Annex to Weekly Guide, 72, August 17, 1952, File 511.00/8-1752, Department of State Circular Airgram 968, May 20, 1952, File 511.00/5-2052 CS/H, and Department of State Circular Airgram, "Statements Refuting Communist Charges of Biological Warfare in North Korea," May 19, 1952, File 511.00/5-1952 CS/H.

difficult to travel within. However, from the then-available information, whether actually obtained, or merely present if sought, it was apparent to the field operators just as it is apparent thirty years later that the propaganda program of the United States was having a measurable effect in the target areas, and that this effect was in the desired direction. USIE was accomplishing some, if not all of the goals the NSC had directed it to achieve.

The major USIE failure was the consistent, sterling inability of that organization's leadership to logically present, in accurately-documented form proof and indications of the assertion that the psychological warfare program was working, and accomplishing its intended function. Congressional complaints and demands for proof were persistent, and chronically unanswered. It was not that the questions were unanswerable. Much information was already extant, and a more imaginative leadership should have been able to find this proof. For example, there was nothing in the laws that barred USIE from bringing a whole group of recent defectors before the Congress, and allowing them to relate to those worthies what they thought of the United States propaganda program, what they liked and what they disliked. It was less effective, for example, to state that seventeen Czechs had heard a VOA broadcast and decided to steal a train and drive it to freedom, than it would have been to have produced all seventeen for Congressional view. In terms of the millions USIE needed, the expenditure for the appearance would have been miniscule, and the potential rewards great. Another example is in relation to the very successful USIE program in Italy. What happened to all those ICP member cards which were turned in to

USIE offices in Italy? They could very well have been dramatically dumped in Senator Kenneth McKellar's lap, when that gentleman asked for proof of effectiveness.

It is not surprising that funding was withheld from USIE at critical times, given such stunning obtuseness. It would seem in retrospect that USIE could do a credible job of convincing, persuading, or informing foreign target audiences, but that it was totally unable to accomplish the same task with the people most responsible for providing for USIE's continued existence. Oren Stephens was quite accurate with the phrase "persuade or perish" in relation to the requirement for the United States to have an effective psychological warfare organization. However, the remark is more accurate in relation to USIE needs to persuade the source of the funds, Congress. In this case, USIE failed lamentably to properly identify, target, and persuade the key individuals of the group.

CHAPTER VIII

PROBLEMS OF THE PROGRAM

The USIE operation was a very active, involved, and extended program. Problems within the organization and its efforts were expected. During the Truman years, many of these problems were determined, defined, and solved. Unfortunately, many problems which had a truly detrimental effect on United States goals and their attainment were never solved and, in some cases were never identified or seriously addressed.

If one had to choose the key problem of the period, it would have to be that of personnel. Quantitatively and qualitatively, USIE never had the people it needed to completely achieve national goals. That is not to say that USIE did not have good personnel, for it certainly did. The problem was that there were never enough good personnel to go around within the organization. The massive fluctuations of strength during its first six years of existence did not help the situation at all. In 1947, personnel left faster than functions, responsibilities, and knowledge could be replaced or passed on, dropping in one three-month period from about ten thousand experienced personnel to about three thousand. Later, the total number dropped to about one thousand, seven hundred people, as was noted earlier. In such circumstances it is impossible to retain trained, able, and energetic personnel.

One is left with a majority of "careerists" whose major purpose in life is to remain in the service long enough to retire and then forget all about their old jobs. Edward Barrett rebuilt the program to about the wartime high, but never achieved quite the same type of personnel as before. In some cases functions were different, and so the same type of personnel would not have accomplished the task. However, during Congressional testimony personnel recruitment and placement problems were chronically cited. There were several reasons for these problems: salary, prestige, security investigations, and visibility to Congress that resulted in Congressional mauling were the reasons most often cited as problems. The more able personnel usually could find, or were already holding, much more lucrative jobs in the civilian advertising and communications industry. There was little incentive for them to forego so much for so little reward. Even after the beginning of the Korean War, there was little more incentive to join the USIE. Therefore, USIE unless very fortunate usually could only hire the less-talented, or the inexperienced person. Less-talented personnel resulted, quite naturally in a less-effective program. Field reports consistently registered complaints about the lack of an adequate number of people to accomplish the tasks at hand, or any expansion of current operations. The complaints ran about as high for the lack of qualified personnel. Additionally, those personnel who were sent, or present, were often less than enthusiastic or able.¹⁸³

¹⁸³ This may be seen in reading the responses to the inquiries about the Weekly Guides, for example. The responses ranged from thoughtful, useful evaluations to a minimal, "rubber stamp" type response. Interviews in USIE Washington revealed the same problem. See Leo Bogart, Premises for Propaganda. Also, see the various Congressional testimony previously cited.

USIE was no exception to the rule that an organization, or an operation is no better than its people. In an area where one's error may have vast repercussions, and one's impression be a major factor in effectiveness, personnel strengths and weaknesses were particularly noticeable.

A closely-related problem to that of personnel was that of training. One might have some very bright, talented personnel. However, without proper training these personnel are less effective, and in some cases may in fact be counter-productive. It may be years before these personnel learn the ins and outs of propaganda, if they do not become discouraged from failures and disappointments before that time. Benton, in his overly-enthusiastic cutback eliminated the corps of trained OWI personnel. Edward Barrett, on the other hand, went to extreme lengths to secure personnel from the public communications media, especially press-trained personnel. Barrett himself later went back into private life, and reassumed the chair of the editor of Newsweek Magazine.

George V. Allen, coming from a strong foreign service background, was fully sensitive to the need of any overseas personnel being able to speak the local language of their area of assignment. During 1948-1950 USIE made strenuous efforts to recruit language-qualified personnel who had some knowledge of propaganda-related operations. All too often this resulted in a linguist being posted to a spot, but having only the most rudimentary knowledge of propaganda operations and techniques.

Barrett, when he came back into government service from private life felt that the problem would be best solved if experienced media

experts were hired and sent abroad. The propaganda function was to be their specialty, and local interpreters could, it was assumed, be hired to assist the American nationals in their work.¹⁸⁴ Much of the USIE targeting was concentrated on indigenous, educated "leaders," many of whom spoke English. Under Barrett, when the newly-arrived person had little real knowledge of propaganda operations or skills, and usually no knowledge of local customs or practices, their training was the responsibility of the senior USIE operator in the country. All too often these senior USIE personnel did not have time to "stop the war" and conduct training. Such training as they were able to give was usually quite hit-or-miss in nature, and tended to follow the course of that operator's own media preferences, thus perpetrating much of what might have been a problem of unbalanced media usage. Moreover, skills in radio, newspaper, and public relations did not necessarily translate into the skills a propagandist needed. There is a great gulf between reporting the news, however pejoratively, and persuading a foreign audience that one's version of the news is correct. Symbols, themes, and interpretations of meanings may be, and usually are vastly different than in the United States.

Training and learning were further hampered with the short turn-around times of foreign post "tours." Officially, an operator was supposed to remain at a post for three years. Many assignments in fact

¹⁸⁴ This same technique was used in the early days of Vietnam, to the great embarrassment of some USIE operators, as well as some Army officers, when a language expert translated the supposed remarks of the locally-hired translators. They were, in quite a few instances, found to be communist propaganda personnel.

lasted only two years or less, and there might be as much as a six month gap between the USIE "replacements." There was no "replacement pool" in USIE Washington from which to draw personnel. Personnel were usually replaced with other field personnel, or with someone sent from Washington, who had had to wait for their replacement before moving. Many field operators made strenuous efforts to avoid a tour in Washington (a necessity for a person in a junior grade who liked to eat regularly), and they could only be replaced after someone else had been replaced. The dependency of replacement upon a whole string of other sequential replacements, many of which required forty-five days to accomplish, resulted in long gaps between transfer and replacement.¹⁸⁵

Malassignment of the linguist-qualified personnel was a further problem. For some areas, such as Japan and China, it was clearly mandatory for the USIE personnel to know the language, which was unfortunately often one of those least-available within the language-poor American culture.

Dr. Wilson Compton, coming from a strong educational background could quickly identify this problem of training. Compton directed a change in USIE training practices. First, Compton noted that the presumption "that our advertising agencies would be a useful training ground and reservoir of [propagandist] skill" had rarely proven to be accurate. Such an approach as was used in Holland and France "to the extent that it has followed advertising . . . techniques has been less

¹⁸⁵ Usually, thirty days of leave within the United States was granted between tours of duty, plus allowable travel time. Even if the personnel flew, this usually meant thirty-five days or more. Most, however, had to proceed via boat, which was considerably slower.

effective."¹⁸⁶ He complained that "propaganda . . . should be classified as an art . . . [and] there is no reservoir of experienced artists." To solve this problem, Compton directed that systematic professional training would be given to the staff of USIE Washington, and extended to the field operators as quickly as possible.¹⁸⁷

The task of Washington-field direction and coordination of activities was another significant problem for USIE that never was satisfactorily resolved. USIE went through three gyrations in relation to this problem and, as the Truman years drew to a close, never achieved a solution which would satisfy everyone. Under William Benton, operations continued in a fairly decentralized form, and frequent problems arose when the field did not "keep up" with Washington and the changes that were being forced upon the new administration. There were also problems when the output of one country did not match that of a neighboring country, or the colonial power. For example, it was embarrassing when, in France, the United States would express interest in helping France in Vietnam, but at the same time inside that country advocating the people proceed with reasonable speed toward full freedom.

Under George Allen operations became more centralized, but there was still a fair amount of "local autonomy" which seems to have existed, based upon either the lack of importance of the post, the experience of the senior USIE person in the country, and sometimes the uniqueness of the area, such as Malaysia. Finally, under Barrett, a

¹⁸⁶ William T. Compton, "Projection," quoting Ambassador Dunn, p. 23. Also DeVos, Ton, "Study," p. 225.

¹⁸⁷ Compton, p. 25.

highly-centralized program was devolved, directed and orchestrated from Washington. Items were produced for the field in the Washington offices, printed, and shipped to the distant posts. Funding for field post operations, other than that needed to show films, local travel, and the like, increased little beyond that of Allen's years, and in some cases was much less than those times, despite a three or four-fold increase in funds.

The increased centralization had both good and bad benefits. From the good side of the ledger, there were fewer instances of operators in one country producing output that would be embarrassing to USIE operators in another country. Also, output could be sharpened, and wielded en masse as a significant propaganda weapon that spoke to world audiences with a single, powerful voice. On the other hand, the increased centralization removed local impact and local interests from the output in many cases. Washington concerns were not necessarily those of Marrakesh, for example. The importance of the propaganda message that had been "tuned" to a local, specific audience was that it got the best results. It was, moreover, closer to the "rifle" or pinpoint approach to propaganda that was both the least costly and the most effective. This was sacrificed to a program that often neglected regional, not to mention local, concerns, symbols, and prejudices in an effort to achieve a voice of greater unanimity.

A second problem of the centralized approach was that materials, especially printed and filmed materials, took an excessively long time to produce. The obvious short-term solution to the problem of immediacy and relevancy was to use the local news media to "flash" the message to

the target audience, when such was based upon a world event, and then follow it up with more deliberately-produced material. In this regard, the Weekly Guides rarely were received in a timely enough manner to be so used. The Wireless Bulletin, or Overnight Guidances, were the greatest help, but they usually just reported events, without always providing definitive guidance for the propagandists.

The practical effect of the centralized production of most of the USIE material changed the image of United States propaganda from that of an orchestra with the occasional off note and missed cue, to that of a wearisome monotone, in the opinion of many foreign observers. Criticism that used such terms as "ineffective," "stereotyped," and "unimaginative" from the field increased substantially. It was especially noticeable in such low-priority nations as Holland, where, as DeVos has pointed out, all of these criticisms were voiced both in private and in the public print. The lack of funds for locally-produced materials was most noticeable in this regard, because there was nothing to break the tone set in Washington. It is fair to assume that, if the United States regarded communism as "monolithic" in this period (although declassified documents make it clear that this was not the case), then it is equally fair to note that the centralized output from Washington tended to give the target audiences that same image in relation to the United States and its closest allies.

A final major problem for the USIE was determining the proper approach in output. As one has noted, the approach varied from the "full and fair" through the "showcase," to the overt, anti-communist period under Barrett, when the actual purpose of the statutory authority of

the program was all but ignored in an effort to counteract Soviet propaganda and political maneuvers in the world stage. The problem was never solved, because each administrator seemed to have a different opinion how matters were to be done and no basic guidance was provided from the President. The constantly-changing approach caused problems in coordination and in the field. A great deal of the confusion would have been avoided had national plans and perceptions been explained in a fuller manner to the field personnel, or had a truly effective planning staff and operational staff been evolved under USIE.

This latter flaw was one which USIE never overcame. There was no true operations section, which was responsible for tight, quick determination of output, and coordination with the interested parties of the propaganda event. In part, this is due to the cumbersome, and at the time antiquated organization of the State Department. The notion that a select group, responsible for operational decisions on a twenty-four hour a day basis, with authority to cut across lines of authority and control in order to get the task done, seems never to have occurred to the higher levels of responsibility. The result was that the Assistant Secretary of State, whomever he might have been at any time, was constantly being drawn into daily, tactical decisions that ran USIE operations. Additionally, the Secretary was drawn into, and sometimes promulgated needlessly, a plethora of committees, staffs, and the like. All of this immersion into detail, while fine for running a relatively small magazine (in comparison with the national effort), was not effective in the larger situation facing the USIE. The upper levels of the organization rarely spent the time they should have

determining and setting policy, and developing policy because they were too busy trying to run the operations. This had an adverse impact on the direction the organization as a whole was proceeding.

Confronting the record of USIE operations, one is repeatedly struck with one impression: the lack of speed. USIE Washington was so bogged down in paperwork, policy disputes, and clogged procedures that there seems to have been no feeling of the need for speed, no sense of urgency. Vital radio transmission facilities, which should have required less than eighteen months to complete required thirty months. A building for VOA studios and offices, desperately needed in New York City, required over a year to obtain, and in fact had to be requested through the administrative channels three times, because the slowness of the procurement meant that three buildings were leased to other parties because the USIE could not, or did not manage to move the paperwork fast enough to secure the buildings. The cheap radio sets were never built until 1967-8 time frame, when a United States manufacturer made them from transistors.¹⁸⁸ This, indeed is a long procurement! The need for speed was great, the rewards and penalties vital, but like the space program, in fact nonexistent.

¹⁸⁸ The author had personal control of some of these expendable receivers, which in fact were built for action in Vietnam. There is (or was) a conex in what is now 4th Psychological Operations Group, Ft. Bragg, N.C. with, as one recalls, 272 of these little radios in storage. They were air dropped across North Vietnam during 1967-1971, as well as surrounding nations, in an attempt to get the propaganda message to the target audiences. Their success was mixed.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

The end of World War II, despite the first-hand experience of Nazi and Japanese propaganda operations, and the experience of the proven effectiveness of certain OWI programs, found the United States more than willing, even anxious, to abolish its only organized instrument of international persuasion. Given the desire for demobilization after the war, a reduction of effort was inevitable. However, there was little appreciation in the executive department, and no appreciation in Congress for the "fourth instrument" of national political action, psychological warfare. As with the military, postwar demobilization assumed the proportions of a disaster.

The propaganda instrument, as well as the intelligence functions of the United States government were recovered from virtual oblivion and tardily rebuilt into usable conduits of government power only in response to clear actions of the Soviet Union in Europe. It is possible that, had the Soviet Union been less aggressive and overt in its actions, the United States might well have lapsed into the peaceful somnolence of the prewar days. Reaction governed the formation of USIE operations rather than a realization of an inherent need.

With intelligence, propaganda was lumped into the State Department on what seems to have been the less than logical assumption that anything dealing with extra-United States affairs belonged under that Department. After the rebuilding period began, propaganda was the last major operational instrument to be withdrawn from under the bureaucracy of the State Department. Dean Acheson accurately admitted that, like so many other operational organizations, the essentially representation-oriented State Department found the USIE "indigestible."

Despite the occasional glowing words and glittering speeches, the overall record of both State Department and Executive Office operations clearly indicates that there was virtually no appreciation for psychological warfare. Words aside, it was actions that mattered, and the actions were nearly nonexistent. There was demonstrated little appreciation for psychological warfare, and little understanding of its critical interrelationship to national strategy, diplomacy, and policy operations. It is notable that, in a lengthy book devoted to explaining the genesis of United States policy and diplomatic operations during this period, Dean Acheson, the Secretary of State during much of this time, devotes little more than a single page to describing any sort of USIE problem. There is no mention in the autobiography that propaganda was seriously considered an element of policy expression or formulation. State Department files, now unclassified, reveal little more evidence that Acheson concerned himself much with USIE. The State Department leaders dutifully appeared before Congress to testify, and would dutifully pass selected problems to Truman, usually dealing with the need for Presidential persuasion of Congressional leaders for funds, but

little more. As far as the documentation of State Department files and public memoirs are concerned, the USIE was largely nonexistent, and consulted but rarely in policy formulation and decision.

Congressional understanding of the psychological warfare operation remained, at best, low. The Congressional attitude was one of very mixed perceptions. On the one hand, Congressional leaders were convinced, or became convinced, that the United States needed a propaganda operation to counter the Soviet Union's propaganda. On the other hand, the Congress was never wholly persuaded that the USIE was quite what was required to accomplish the task. Responsibility for the poor understanding, and the chronically-bad relations must be placed at the door of the State Department, especially USIE. Poor planning for Congressional testimony, poor knowledge of their subject, scanty to nonexistent preparation for the Congress all contributed to a very poor example that lowered Congressional estimation of the USIE. Little liason during the operating year did not help the USIE in the least. No particular committee maintained an oversight on USIE operations at that time, and thus only the budget hearings allowed Congressional members a chance to delve into what USIE was doing. The budget committee was neither the best place, nor the committee members the best qualified to conduct such inquiries. Performances of USIE representatives lacked coherency and completeness and, in the case of William Benton, might best be characterized as demonstrating a "sterling ineptness."

USIE internal organization problems had a deleterious effect on planning and continuity. Little was accomplished during the Truman years to resolve this problem, although constant reorganizations did

take place. One further feels that a serious error was committed with the appointment of Edward Barrett to head the operation. Barrett's emphasis on obtaining journalists and broadcasters from the public-sector, on the presumption that technical training was more important than formal propaganda operations training and experience held serious flaws. These personnel often gave the impression, as DeVos has pointed out, of cheap news hawks and were regarded in Europe as definitely second-class citizens. Additionally, Barrett's personal inclination toward expansion of function and staff resulted in an obvious inability to accomplish specific operational tasks with a maximum of efficiency and dispatch--direction and paperwork bogged down in a half dozen dissimilar staffs and committees.

Public awareness of the United States propaganda organization, its role and functions remained very low throughout the period, despite many press reports. It was very easy for the press to criticize the USIE for "losing the word war" or "losing the radio war" when there was little apprehension among the United States public for what was actually being accomplished or attempted. The news media in the "legitimate" press could well be regarded as a further contributor to the level and type of criticism most harmful to United States interests, handing Soviet propagandists easy "disclosures" which could be manufactured into damaging propaganda. It is always easy to be critical, when only the outside or most noticeable aspects of a problem are known. Since Congress had specifically banned intra-United States operations, USIE could not adequately explain its purpose, function, or operations directly to the United States public. Press releases were kept under

the State Department function, which did virtually nothing to enlighten the public. In fact, the majority of public awareness of USIE operations came from overseas correspondents reporting back to the United States public. The predictable result was a superficial, fragmented, sensationalized view of USIE operations. The vast public and Congressional ignorance of the propaganda operations was thus tailor-made for the onslaught of self-serving politicians who desired to make sensational, headline-grabbing accusations that would assure re-election.¹⁸⁹ The lack of any substantive public education effort was, and remains today, a serious flaw in the propaganda effort of the United States.

USIE effectiveness throughout the period appears to have steadily increased, but not always in response to the centralized efforts of the Washington bureaucracy. The evaluations of ambassadors seem to make clear that major impact and effectiveness within the various countries was usually due to the quality and enthusiasm, or lack of such, in the various USIE posts and officials assigned overseas. Except in the Iron Curtain nations, VOA was regarded as the least useful of all the media. Excepting Europe, where valid surveys were able to be

¹⁸⁹ Would the McCarthy accusations had the same impact, or been as damaging if made against the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the various armed services, given the wider public knowledge and confidence in those organizations? The lesser-known USIE, and the inherent "fuzziness" of the concepts with which it dealt, made public slander and ridicule much easier. In its lack of public knowledge of its function and successes, USIE was an easy target. Diplomats have rarely been popular figures in United States history; propagandists have been favored even more rarely. In a way, the USIE was a "sitting duck" for anyone in Congress who cared to take a shot at the organization, a situation not likely to exist untested in Washington. The surprise is that such a campaign of terror did not happen sooner.

obtained, it seems fair to state that the VOA audience was relatively small in regard to the total population. Hence, the VOA effort to cover many languages was actually a "shotgun" approach, and often consumed funds and effort that might have been more profitably spent elsewhere. Use of VOA as a fast-breaking news service was not especially helpful or beneficial except in regard to the communist-dominated countries.

In relation to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, VOA transmissions were important and seem to have succeeded in many of their basic tasks, although never to the overt level that United States leaders might have wished. Despite the increasingly "hard line" propaganda tone and approach, VOA broadcasts never fully assumed the "propaganda offensive" that Barrett claimed for that division. Examination of VOA broadcast hours supports the assumption that VOA hours increased in response to crisis situations. However, as with the rest of USIE output, VOA broadcast increases were the result of Soviet actions rather than a planned United States initiative. The VOA never fully escaped from its original defensive attitude, nor did the remainder of USIE. Nor did the VOA, except accidentally, create significant propaganda situations. VOA was, however, very quick to exploit such situations when they were offered. Soviet charges of bacteriological warfare against the United States was one such initiative that the VOA happily seized upon, and made the Soviets regret their actions.

Measurements of USIE effectiveness were never satisfactory, and often were more a survey of VOA listening habits than a reaction to total USIE output. The gauges of effectiveness were sometimes less than well-designed. All too often, as the USIE admitted in Congressional

testimony, effectiveness was assumed on the basis of a certain number of leaflets, articles, or broadcast hours of an arbitrary standard of quality. Nor was there a great deal of sophistication demonstrated in relation to determining the actual mechanisms of communication. For example, USIE broadcast to the Soviet Union in Russian, and later many of the minority languages such as Ukranian. These languages were quickly detected in the Soviet Union, and just as quickly, once the equipment was in place, jammed. However, an unanswered question at the time was the susceptibility of the communist party members within the Soviet Union to VOA propaganda. The defector reports that GSOFG soldiers listened to VOA broadcasts, as well as reports of some party members listening would certainly support the supposition that communist party members could be swayed. Additionally, a key target group in most countries, and the Soviet Union was no exception, was the young intellectual class. It is at this point that USIE targeting and effectiveness measures seem to be inadequate. In the Soviet Union, the intellectual class is, as it was at that time, largely members of the Komsomol and, later, the communist party. These were the same persons who were receiving foreign language training, notably English, and thus were able to listen to the VOA English broadcasts to Europe. In at least one case, documented much later, we know that listening to such broadcasts was routine among the young party elite.¹⁹⁰ It was known at the time that English broadcasts were not jammed. Thus, it would seem that targeting was short-sighted, and did not make use of a very

¹⁹⁰ Vladimir Sakharov, High Treason (New York: Ballantine Books, 1980), p. 56.

useful vehicle to separate the communist party members from the leadership, a key national psychological objective in NSC-74.

Personnel qualifications were a major problem throughout the period, as discussed earlier. The point to be made is that there was never a clear perception of a viable solution to the problem, and no strong attempts were made to train propagandists as opposed to news-handlers. While learning their job, and the country of their assignment under the centralized directives of the Barrett years, local propagandists were expected to utilize the Washington-based materials which certainly failed to place any premium on individual ability in favor of what became a monotone of output. The USIE consistently ignored the formal training and body of doctrine within the United States Army, carefully hoarded since 1917. Moreover, the USIE failed to create its own equivalent body of doctrine to guide its operators, or even a dictionary of common terms so that each operator was using a technical word with the same meaning. The result was a highly-varied assortment of personnel qualifications and ability.

Equipment posed other significant problems for the operations, running the range from major capital plant investments to mobile sound and motion picture units. Throughout the period USIE procurement was hamstrung because of two interrelated problems. The first was budgetary uncertainty. Funding for USIE operations varied radically from year to year, thus virtually precluding any long term or "open ended" contracts which would assure both lower costs as well as a ready supply of needed equipment and supplies. The second factor was the exceptional amount of red tape, previously noted, that stifled activity and

accomplishment. Two and a half years that were required to procure and bring into operation a radio transmitter meant not only great delay, but that USIE was incapable of quickly responding to crisis with anything more than the equipment on hand for such a time period as to be almost meaningless, in terms of enhanced capability. The horror story of the New York building lease, adequately covered in Congressional testimony, serves as proof that, with its approved procurement system, the USIE and the State Department were incapable of dealing with the funds granted to that organization. Program effectiveness suffered accordingly. In the case of USIE procurement, "making haste deliberately" was carried to an illogical extreme, and the blame for this can be laid at the desk of the top management of the USIE.

Operational techniques were long constrained into the moulds of commercial United States services which were roughly comparable. A noticeable parallelism to civilian industry was found in the organization and functions of the USIE. While there is an inescapable necessity for some similarity, due to the same type of production problems if nothing else, the actual organization suffered from over-centralization and under-utilization of decision-making personnel who could make a decision that effected more than their own particular section. Very few people appear to have been involved in the actual decision-making process, but they were isolated behind barriers of procedure and bureaucracy to the point where, often, no speedy decision could be reached.

Perhaps a more viable approach would have been a closer parallel to the services. Nevertheless, USIE organization, and operational

characteristics long remained tied too closely to that of the civilian marketplace rather than a propaganda, news-making organization. The length of time required for the USIE to "discover" the benefits of "grey" propaganda is a case in point. The BBC and British SIS had long known of the benefits of this type of propaganda, and used it extensively. Yet it was not until after Barrett ventured to London, and found out how the British made it work that he became an advocate of this type of output, regardless of how much use older, experienced field operatives were making of such a technique.

USIE leaders seem to have had little faith in their own, or their personnel's powers of ingenuity. The excessive emphasis on straight news, amounting at times almost to an obsession with some, such as Benton, is a case in point. The problem of discovering and developing communication channels into the Eastern European areas was not left in the hands of USIE personnel, or in the care of the CIA, but was instead contracted to an outside, civilian organization—M.I.T. (Project Troy). This certainly revealed a lack of confidence, and a startling immaturity on the part of USIE leaders and senior technicians. In fact, so barren of ideas were USIE leaders that a public invitation was extended to the entire United States population to contribute ideas on how to overcome the "Iron Curtain." One is forced to agree with the USIE officer who stated "I am totally convinced that we don't know what the hell we are doing."

The Campaign of Truth was a brave title, but the reality belies the hyperbole. At the moment President Truman called for a campaign, the USIE had neither the equipment nor the funds, nor the trained

personnel able to accomplish the task. Not until President Eisenhower assumed office did the structure have sufficient equipment, material, personnel, and experience to efficiently, and effectively initiate a world-wide "campaign" that could make the Soviets hurt. A study of the higher-level State Department correspondence seems to support the conclusion that, if propaganda was actually utilized as a significant instrument of national policy attainment, the action occurred under Eisenhower, not Truman. The true accomplishment of the Truman administration was the salvage and re-forging of the propaganda organization. Recognition of its true usefulness and purpose did not occur in that administration.

Nevertheless, USIE learned and, as it grew, it became more effective, despite Congressional criticism, budget problems, and often less than inspiring leadership. As the Truman years drew to a close, while in many cases USIE was speaking with what seemed to be a monotone, it was a more confident monotone that was capable of a multiplicity of operations, given additional funds and some additional personnel. The cadre, destroyed in the aftermath of the war, had been rebuilt and was becoming increasingly effective, as the rising tide of refugee reports and communist reactions indicated. One is left with the impression, despite grave misgivings as to purpose and Presidential support, that USIE was on the edge of greatness, given better leadership, better training, and better support. The equipment was finally in place, or at least much of it. In three years, satellite "bouncing" of transmissions would be feasible, making relay to the Soviet Union more practical, and harder to jam. The weapon, despite all the problems.

of the past, was finally taking shape. NSC agreement was finally accomplished, and a reasonably good basic outline of national objectives had been defined which were now within the grasp of reality. All that was lacking was the understanding of the weapon, and the will to use it.

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