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MEMORANDUM FOR: Col. Sands

SUBJECT: Psychiatric Warfare

1. Paragraphs 2 and 3 contain my comments on Lt. Geiger's paper, which he submitted to the Psychological Strategy Board.

2. Psychiatric warfare is not clearly defined in Lt. Geiger's paper, though it is described as a facet of psychological warfare which aims at reducing an enemy's will to fight by undermining the collective emotional stability of target groups. In a sense, all psychological warfare operations contribute to the emotional instability of the enemy by appealing to the fears, suspicions, anxieties, and hostilities of the target audience, and certainly all such operations seek to reduce the enemy's will to fight or resist our policies. Never-the-less, the specific use of modern psycho-analytical concepts of emotional adjustment and maladjustment in formulating specialized PW programs may be considered a separate field within psychological warfare. However, a more thorough and professional definition of techniques must be established. In order to arrive at such a definition, the services of a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist, a cultural anthropologist, and a psychological warfare operator must be employed in a combined effort. To be effective, any psychiatric warfare operation would have to take into account the following: 1) the nature of human emotional adjustment with special emphasis on the dynamics of mental mechanisms and the causes and effects of abnormal behavior, 2) the cultural behavior, norms, and tension points of the target audience, and 3) the ultimate goals to be achieved by the operation.

3. From Lt. Geiger's paper, it appears that psychiatric warfare would be useful with enemy audiences mainly, since this type of warfare is primarily intended as a means of undermining collective emotional stability. However, it could also be used against hostile minorities in friendly and neutral countries. Perhaps also, the concept could be extended to include a theory of counter-psychiatric warfare aimed at offsetting enemy attempts to undermine the stability of friendly nations and groups. In my opinion, the general concept of psychiatric warfare is worthy of the time, money, and effort it would take to develop it into a sound and operable theory.



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Operations Coordination Branch  
Psychological Staff Division

NSA Review Completed

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