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REVISED: 21 May 1951

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

CONCEPT OF THE ORGANIZATION TO PROVIDE  
DYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS  
IN THE COLD WAR

THE PROBLEM:

1. To analyze the scope and mission of the Psychological Strategy Board and the tasks of the Director and the Staff; and to derive therefrom the qualifications and approximate composition of the staff.

FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

2. The purpose of the Executive Directive of 4 April 1951, is <sup>the</sup> "to authorize and provide for/more effective planning, coordination and conduct, within the framework of approved national policies, of psychological operations"

3. The Psychological Strategy Board is responsible for the "formulation and promulgation, as guidance to the departments and agencies responsible for psychological operations, of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and for the coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort"

4. There is provided a Director, designated by the President, responsible under the Board for directing its activities. He is assisted by a staff, the organization, qualifications and size of which, within limits set by the Board, are established by him.

DISCUSSION

5. The Directive creates no new operating agency. It results from a general sense of need for harnessing the disparate resources of existing departments and agencies responsible for executing various psychological operations and intensifying the national effort. It includes under the term "psychological operations" a wide spectrum of overt and covert activities - from propagation of truthful foreign information to subversive operations of both a moral and a physical character.

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6. In face of the peculiar challenge of Bolshevist Russia, the primary objective of intensifying these unconventional national efforts is to win the cold war and prevent declared global war. Failing this, the secondary objective is to create conditions favorable to our orthodox forces in the event of war. If all our resources available for psychological operations were brought to bear consistently, progressively and cumulatively, the chances of keeping the peace or speedily winning the war would be immeasurably increased. If that is true, the establishment of an organization for exploiting these resources should be considered a major national project. It should not be undertaken with half measures.

7. Psychological operations are in no manner a substitute for sound political-diplomatic actions, strong armed forces or alert intelligence. Psychological operations reflect the strength of all these but will always be subsidiary or supplementary to orthodox governmental operations. Therefore, the functions of the Psychological Strategy Board are not in competition or conflict with normal operations of the departments and agencies. Instead, the Board coordinates and steers the resources of their psychological units into profitable channels toward national goals.

8. Soviet Russia and the satellites employ every instrumentality of government, orthodox and unorthodox, in fighting the cold war. Foreign offices back up their propaganda; ground, sea and air forces shift and maneuver in support of the psychological war. It is difficult to say whether orthodox forces supplement psychological operations or the contrary - which is dog and which is tail. All Soviet resources are deployed actively or potentially in support of war that is now being waged. As long as they have the initiative, our conventional planning for a future declared war is constantly thrown off balance and tends to be confused or unrealistic.

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9. Conventional concepts and plans based upon a D-Day which no man can predict lead us into the dilemma of two dangerous extremes. Either our state of preparedness will be inadequate on the critical day or over-mobilization long-drawn-out will be economically destructive. Particularly is this true because war plans are based upon the assumption that the cold war cannot be decisive. Planning would be more realistic if it were assumed that the cold war could be won and, if won, could be decisive. This assumption would occasion a modification of conventional war plans but not in such manner or degree as to alter significantly the state of our preparedness at any particular future date. The assumption would, however, greatly enhance the importance to be attached to current cold war operations, enlarge the concept of such operations and ensure the availability of both active and potential national facilities (orthodox as well as unorthodox) in its conduct.

10. This conceptual background of the Psychological Strategy Board, the importance of the stakes involved, and the scope and variety of operations to be coordinated - these all are indicators of the requisite qualifications of the director and his staff.

11. Although the Board does not perform psychological operations, its responsibility to give impetus to an intensified psychological effort implies considerable power of decision in the initiation and control of major projects. Likewise, while the psychological operating units within the departments and agencies cannot be directed by the Board to carry out its programs, the individual members of the Board ex-officio are of such prestige as to create the presumption that the executing agencies will consider guidance approved by the members as being in effect mandatory.

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12. Keeping in mind this implied authority, the Board, Director and Staff should exercise functions comparable to both command and staff even though their explicit authority limits the nature of "command" to guidance. Otherwise expressed, the Director and Staff are responsible for the management of the psychological aspects of the national cold war effort. Since no single individual could have the competence or time to manage the global campaign, it seems evident that under the supervision of the Director, this management must be in part delegated to staff assistants. A workable arrangement would be to employ for this purpose regional and functional specialists, each of whom would be responsible for assisting in the formulation of and directly charged with steering his part of a coordinated global program.

13. More precision can now be given to the role of the Board, to the qualifications of the Director and to the composition and functions of the Staff.

THE BOARD

14. In the specific field of psychological operations the Board functions begin where the functions of the National Security Council leave off. The Council promulgates broad national policies and principles but its reports are too general to constitute blue-prints for implementation. The Board on the other hand adopts specific and practicable objectives and initiates action to attain them. The Board approves lines of action and programs which assign workable and coordinated tasks to the operating agencies.

15. The members of the Board will be able to give only limited personal time to the details of management of national psychological operations. However, their decisions, when translated into dynamic action programs by the Director and his Staff and promulgated to the Departments and Agencies, can give national purpose, consistency and continuity hitherto impossible in this field.

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16. Within the powers of the Board, the Director should be allowed a high degree of initiative to act promptly and flexibly in those fast-moving situations inherent in psychological warfare. He should be supported against bureaucratic inertia or obstruction in bringing to bear, at favorable opportunities, all national psychological resources in order to maintain the offensive in the cold war.

THE DIRECTOR

17. The Director should be a nationally known figure and have a broad background in international affairs. Preferably he should have experience in more than one aspect of the broad spectrum of activities comprised in psychological operations as defined in the President's Directive. He should be more a man of action than an intellectual analyst. He should be capable of quick and bold decisions within his authority, but methodical in directing long-range planning by his staff. By judgment and tact he should be able to inspire teamwork in operating departments and agencies.

18. His task is of such national importance as to deserve unhesitating support from the Board and the President himself.

As prescribed by the President's Directive, he shall:

- a. Be responsible for having prepared the programs, policies, reports, and recommendations for the Board's consideration,
- b. Sit with the Board and be responsible to it for organizing its business and for expediting the reaching of decisions,
- c. Promulgate the decisions of the Board,
- d. Ascertain the manner in which agreed upon objectives, policies, and programs of the Board are being implemented and coordinated among the departments and agencies concerned,
- e. Report thereon and on his evaluation of the national psychological operations to the Board together with his recommendations,
- f. Perform such other duties necessary to carry out his responsibilities as the Board may direct.

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THE STAFF

19. The Staff should have responsibility under the Director for the performance of the following specific functions which cannot be delegated to operating agencies:

a. Within the framework of approved national policies, and as authorized by the Board, the formulation and promulgation in practical operating terms (not abstractions) of coordinated world-wide and regional

- (1) psychological policies,
- (2) psychological objectives,
- (3) psychological programs.

b. Giving impetus to the detailed planning and execution by the operating agencies,

c. Continuous evaluation of the results of operations, with a view to making prompt adjustments in the programs when necessary,

d. The preparation of required reports,

e. Its own secretariat-administrative duties.

20. The foregoing list inadequately reflects activities required to give vitality to the conduct of the cold war. It does, however, suggest the indispensability of dynamic personalities to give flesh and blood to the organization. If the Director and Staff give themselves up to pondering and planning, we shall have succeeded only in establishing another Ivory Tower. While they must plan systematically to the extent necessary to formulate sound strategic objectives and practical programs, the Director and his principal assistants should sense themselves as being full time "at the front" in the cold war as literally as commanders in orthodox war.

21. As principal aids the Director should have certain regional and functional chiefs (each with a few assistants) who should be outstanding experts in their respective geographic-political and functional areas. These principal subordinates represent in a sense the "commanders"

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of the regional operations. More accurately, as a group they might appropriately be called the:

Operational Coordination and Implementation Division

The specific regional Staff Sections suggested are:

- (a) Soviet Russia and European satellites,
- (b) China, South East Asia and South Asia,
- (c) Middle and Near East and Moslem North Africa,
- (d)
- (e) Latin America.

22. a. In intimate personal liaison with the corresponding regional heads of the operating agencies, the Chiefs of the foregoing staff sections exercise their steering-coordinating function within the terms of the approved policies objectives and programs formulated by the Strategy Group and the Plans and Programs Division. Also, in collaboration with the latter staff, they assist in all steps in the formulation of policies, objectives, and programs applicable to their respective regions. They follow the development of the operations, evaluate the results and keep the Director currently informed of modifications which may be required in the programs.

b. The regional chiefs should be empowered to furnish the authorized interpretation to operating agencies of approved policies, objectives and programs.

c. There should also be provisions for functional specialization as appropriate.

23. The other major responsibility of the staff is that of planning on the national level, that is, the formulation of policies, objectives and programs as guidance to the operating agencies. These major divisions of the staff might be called the Strategy Group and the Plans and Programs Division. These staff divisions, should be responsible for the formulation and communication to the operating departments and agencies of all types of formal guidance required to initiate the projects and purposes of the Board.

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24. This group sits at the call of the Director and is chaired by him. Its permanent membership should consist of the Director, the Board Designees and a small group of professionally skilled full-time consultants. In addition, Regional and Functional Implementers from the Operational Coordination and Implementation Division, as well as consultants from operating departments and agencies should sit with this group, when the subject of discussion requires.

25. In addition to routine business of the Staff, the Strategy Group considers policies, objectives and projects originated by the Board as well as those self-originated. When approved by the Board, they are passed to the Plans and Programs Division for formulation into coordinated guidances, plans or programs for promulgation to the operating agencies.

26. It is from the Strategy Group perhaps that the most imaginative and consecutive thinking should emerge. It is here that the global psychological aspects of the cold war are considered as a whole. The long-range objectives having been formulated, intermediate objectives are adopted and strategic moves to attain them are continuously studied. The initiative in the cold war is seized at each favorable opportunity. The broad terms of the action required are decided. The Plans and Programs Division then works out coordinated guidance or programs required by the operating agencies to initiate planning or immediate action, depending upon the nature and urgency of the operation.

Plans and Programs Division

27. This is the planning unit of the Staff which performs the mechanics of program planning. Its functions are to incorporate into coordinated guidances, plans or programs the strategic decisions and courses of action approved by the Board and to promulgate them to the operating agencies. In their final form these guidances, plans and programs, while of broad national scope and in a global framework,

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should constitute basic blueprints for action on the part of one or more of the operating agencies. They should not be permitted to degenerate into abstractions or generalities, but should be formulated only in terms of practicable tangible objectives.

28. A key nucleus of the Plans and Programs Division should be recruited from the only area of government where systematic and coordinated planning is really understood and practiced, namely, the armed services. These key planners could establish a pattern and instruct specialists, drawn from psychological operating agencies, in the essential mechanics of programming. Plans and programs should be kept realistic by intimate collaboration on an ad hoc or task basis of regional and functional specialists from the operating departments and agencies and from the Operational Coordination and Implementation Division.

#### SUMMARY OF CONCEPT

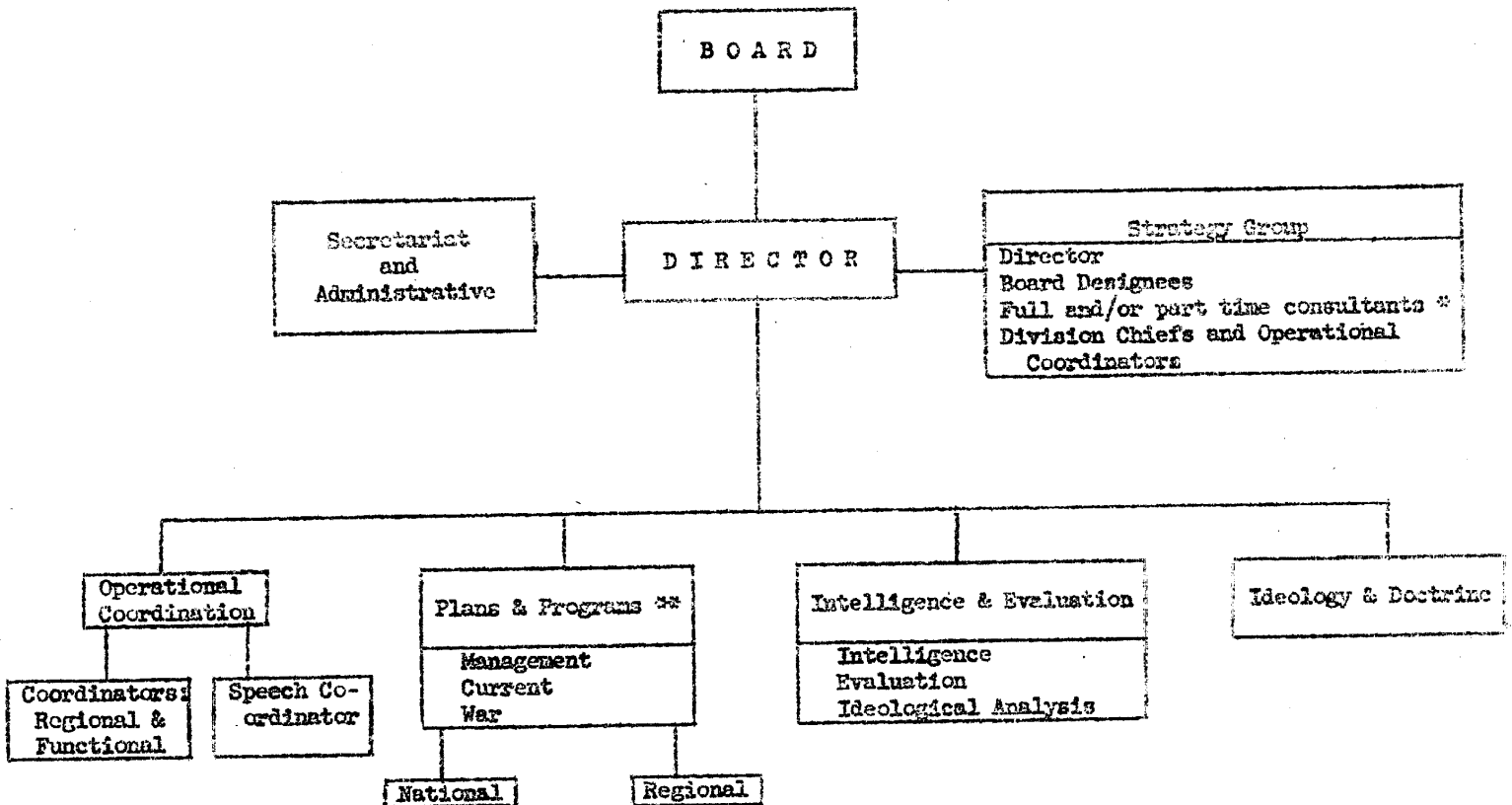
29. Planning and operational coordination should be based on the assumption that the cold war can be won. As a secondary responsibility only, should the Board permit the energies of the Staff to be diverted to planning wartime programs as distinct from current operations. A small nucleus of planners might appropriately be set apart for programming national plans for psychological warfare in wartime, but major consideration should be given to the current operations of the global conflict.

30. Remembering the D-Day for the cold war occurred several years ago, the plans and programs with which the Board will be primarily concerned are for a campaign being fought now. The Board and its Staff should conceive itself to function as the command and staff of an army in combat rather than as a department of defense preparing for a war to come.

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POSSIBLE ORGANIZATION - PHASE III



\* From the Government or private life.  
\*\* Maximum use to be made of regional and functional specialists available in the operating departments and agencies.

COMMENTS OF MR. HOWLAND SARGEANT ON  
"CONCEPT OF THE ORGANIZATION TO PROVIDE DYNAMIC  
PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS IN THE COLD WAR"

The subject paper is a personal expression of General Magruder designed to be helpful in the establishment of the new Psychological Strategy Board. While most of the concepts in the paper are ones with which I would heartily agree, there are a few points to which I would take exception. These differences are mainly matters of degree rather than of kind, but it may be useful to try and express them.

The following principles seem to me to be basic to the successful operation of the Board:

1. Our psychological program will succeed only as personnel and offices responsible for detailed planning and implementation perform their functions with greater and greater efficiency. To impose a large super-structure on top of them and to remove many of their functions in whole or in part would, I believe, introduce new requirements for coordination and liaison activities, deal a serious blow to the morale of persons now engaged in psychological operations, and in the end result in diminishing rather than increasing the efficiency of their work. Activities of the new PSB staff can result either in stifling the initiative of lower echelons or in inspiring them to greater efficiency. Every effort should be made to see that the latter result is achieved.

2. With respect to psychological programming, the principal need which the new Board and its staff can fill is that of formulating very broad government-wide policies, especially such policies as are presently beyond the competence of any single department or agency. The application of these policies to concrete operating situations should be entrusted to the individual agencies. It should be noted that the tendency in many administrative structures is to secure the services of competent experts and then to overload them with details to such a degree that they are unable to devote more than a very few minutes of their time to the larger picture. This is especially true in the field of psychological operations. To over-simplify the matter, it might be said that more exhaustive attention is often given comparatively minor matters of detail than to broad questions of major importance. Consequently, it is of utmost importance that the staff of the new Board and the Director himself should not be overloaded with detailed matters of administration or implementation. This is one of the principal reasons for keeping the staff small and whenever possible arranging for the delegation of functions to existing agencies.

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3. The number of individuals in the United States who are competent to serve on the staff of the new Board is very small indeed. A few might be obtained from outside the government, but the majority of them are already occupied in existing agencies. If we strip these agencies of their most highly-qualified policy personnel, we will have lost more than we have gained since, as noted in one above, the ultimate success or failure of our psychological operations will depend most of all upon the efficiency of the individual agencies.

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There are several points at which General Magruder's paper may conflict with these principles, although it is possible that the apparent conflict rests in the manner in which certain passages are interpreted. The following comments are offered by way of example:

In paragraph 19 on page 6 it is stated that the staff should be responsible under the Director for the formulation and promulgation in practical operating terms of coordinated world-wide and regional psychological policies, objectives and programs. It is further stated that this function cannot be delegated to operating agencies. It is my feeling that the staff should in fact delegate most of the preliminary work in this connection to operating agencies and should itself be responsible only for the final formulation and promulgation. Furthermore, this formulation should not attempt to be in "operating" terms if this means that the needs of each medium must be spelled out, nor should it be in "regional" terms if this means that detailed consideration should be given to the differing requirements of each country. The implementation of policy by various communications media and the requirements of specific regions could more efficiently be spelled out in detail by experts in the existing agencies.

In paragraph 19c, also on page 6, it is said that the staff should make a continuous evaluation of the results of operations with a view to making prompt adjustments in the programs when necessary. My objection may be merely a matter of wording, but I feel that the words "make a prompt adjustment" implies a degree of involvement in operations which was not contemplated by the Presidential directive. Perhaps it would be adequate to say merely that the staff should recommend such adjustments to the operating agencies.

Paragraph 20 on page 6 expresses the fear that if the Director and staff give themselves up to pondering and planning, we would have succeeded only in establishing another Ivory Tower. Herein,

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I believe, there is a difference only in emphasis, but I believe that this wording might obscure the fact that at the present time our detailed planning is often far in advance of our long-term planning. Would it not be better to encourage the Director and staff to "ponder and plan" as long as this cerebration is harnessed to the realities of operations. As stated above, we have not given our most qualified thinkers an opportunity to think. Let us insure that some of them at least have an opportunity to do so in the staff of PSB.

Paragraph 21 on page 6 suggests that the staff should include certain regional and functional chiefs who are outstanding experts in their respective geographical and functional areas. Certainly it is to be hoped that personnel can be found for PSB who will have certain regional or functional qualifications, but PSB should not try to compete with the operating agencies when it comes to regional or functional experts. Instead, PSB policy experts should plan to rely principally on the regional and functional specialists in the various agencies.

Paragraphs 23 and 24 suggest the creation of a "strategy group." It is my feeling that the entire senior staff of the PSB should be considered such a strategy group and that to create a special organization so entitled within the PSB staff would imply that the rest of the PSB staff would be concerned with details which might more appropriately be left to the operating agencies.

In general, my feeling is that the PSB should strive to conduct its business with as small a staff as possible and should attempt to perform only such substantive tasks as are in addition to those now being performed in the operating departments and agencies. It may be that this conception is not far removed from that expressed in General Magruder's paper, but that paper may also be interpreted as advocating a large staff which would to a large extent duplicate or supplant certain functions of existing agencies. These comments, therefore, are intended only to highlight the differing interpretations which are possible and to assist in their resolution.

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