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SCAN-4407

WAR 311 574

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Chief, SE

PSYCH - OBOFUS

Request for Suggestions Re Disposal of Surplus  
Agricultural Commodities Abroad

REF: [ ]-3286, 5 April 1953; DIR-49852, 13 April 1953; [ ]-3399,  
18 April 1953

1. Last spring OBOFUS requested Headquarters for information concerning the most recent MSA offers of economic assistance to Albania and asked specifically whether there was a possibility of a renewed offer of economic assistance to "defectors of the Soviet bloc". As the subsequent correspondence indicated, the original request for information was not fully understood by Headquarters since to our knowledge there had been no such offer since the original Marshall Plan idea was turned down by the Soviet bloc in 1947. The matter apparently has been in abeyance for nearly a year, with the field exploiting the various official U.S. aid programs, without raising the question of a new offer of economic assistance to Albania.

2. As the field is undoubtedly aware, considerable attention is now being given at Cabinet level to the disposal of surplus agricultural commodities abroad in such a manner as not to interfere with usual marketing procedures, thereby giving rise to accusations of "dumping". ODLEK has established a special working panel whose function is to recommend various ways in which this can be accomplished and to see that these recommendations are carried out in the most effective manner. They have assumed that the extreme measures taken by Iron Curtain governments to isolate their peoples seriously limit or deny the opportunity to dispose of these surpluses in any Soviet bloc country. They assume further that these measures even limit or deny the opportunity to make Soviet Bloc peoples aware of the comparatively more adequate supplies which might be made available to neighboring non-Soviet Bloc countries through the distribution of surpluses. (In this connection, one of our PSYCH missions will be to exploit the program through our propaganda media once it gets under way, particularly in the Greek area. We are sure HUGHESBY will wish to use material on the subject and shall make an effort to get it to the field promptly for radio exploitation.)

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3. Among the various types of disposal programs now being considered in connection with a proposed total program to distribute a billion dollars of surplus commodities over a total period of three years, two seem of particular interest to the OBOPUS/PSICH effort: (a) supplemental feeding programs (presumably under consideration for refugee welfare activities), and (b) programs designed to implement national policy toward the Soviet bloc.

4. While these categories are expressed here in very general terms, we have already been asked by the RUMARK member of OBLEEK to recommend specific programs which would be of particular assistance to our operations. We have suggested greater aid should be given to refugees through established welfare centers, with the proviso that such a program remain commensurate with the standard of living of the native, non-refugee inhabitants of the region. We assume that such a program will be undertaken in Greece, which will be of direct benefit to our operations, and will make every effort to keep you advised on this matter.

5. At the time of the above OBLEEK request for suggestions, we recalled the referenced cables, as well as the original ROBERTSON program, both of which antedate the proposed program considerably. It occurred to Headquarters that the time may be appropriate for a new investigation of what OBOPUS/Athens would care to propose in the way of using these surpluses to support our objectives in Albania. We have inferred (perhaps incorrectly) from the field's original request for information that OBOPUS might have had some concrete suggestions in mind as to how a "renewed offer of economic assistance to defectors from the Soviet Bloc" might have been made, if Headquarters had only been able to confirm that such an offer would be made.

6. Although we have not as yet made any recommendations to OBLEEK concerning distribution in Albania, we are thinking of various possibilities, among which are, (1) - recommendation that the government officially offer surplus goods to the Albanian Government, an offer which would undoubtedly be turned down, but which would provide some propaganda material; (2) recommendation that the government offer to distribute surplus goods to the Albanian people through private or public international organizations, (i.e., the Red Cross, the United Nations, etc.); (3) recommendation that HTHESH apply to the government, either openly or covertly, for surplus goods which would be offered by HTHESH to the people, for distribution by means which we would develop.

7. We shall appreciate your comments on this subject and assure you of all possible support in presenting whatever suggestions you may have to OBLEEK.

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