PROPAGANDA ANALYSIS, by Alexander L. George. (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Company. 1959. Pp. 287. $6[illegible].)

This scholarly and imaginative book by one of Rand Corporation's social scientists is of special significance because it evaluates propaganda analysis techniques actually used in an operational situation and has therefore had to consider the dynamics of politics, rather than the formal structures to which the usual scholarly study in political science is devoted. Mr. George's guinea pig is the analysis of German propaganda done by the FCC's Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service during World War II. He examines it in the light of information obtained later from German war documents and German officials, which provides a unique opportunity to validate the inferences drawn from propaganda bearing on intelligence problems and questions critical to Allied policy. Some 80 percent of the FCC inferences that could be scored proved to be accurate.

The reader who does not make a specialty of propaganda analysis will be most interested in Part III, "Methodology and Applications," in which 20 case studies are presented to illustrate the broad range of intelligence problems approached by the FCC. The analysts' reasoning is reconstructed and their inferences matched against the available historical record on such important problems as the question of a German offensive against Russia in 1943, the German expectations in 1942 of an Allied second front in North Africa, the German public's attitude toward the Nazi information

policy, and a predicted change in the propaganda presentation of military setbacks on the Russian front.

The first case study, on the German V-weapons propaganda, is cited as one in which the FCC analysts did not do as well as their British counterparts. The brilliant British analysis may be known to some readers. Based on the substantiated hypothesis that German propaganda would not deliberately mislead the German people about an increase of German power, it concluded that the Germans actually had some sort of new weapon and were not merely bluffing. It accurately described the German leaders' evaluation of the new weapon and made the tentative estimate, based on subtle shifts in the propaganda, that in November 1943 the Germans expected to have it ready between mid-January and mid-April 1944. This estimate proved amazingly accurate.

As Mr. George writes:

> The deduction concerning the German leaders' private estimate of the timing of the V-weapon was based upon ingenious use of a general observation about Nazi propaganda practice. The British analyst reasoned that Goebbels would be careful not to give the German public a promise of retaliation too far ahead of the date on which the promise could be fulfilled. ...Taking a number of factors into account, the British analyst reckoned that Goebbels would give himself about three months as the maximum period ...to propagandize forthcoming retaliation in advance.

One of the reasons advanced for the lower caliber of FCC analyses on this problem is that the FCC analysts, unlike the British, worked on their own and were not asked to coordinate their V-weapon research with that of other intelligence specialists. They assumed that other intelligence techniques more appropriate than propaganda analysis were being applied to the problem. This lack of coordination may also have damaged the quality of their analysis in another case study cited: they were not informed of TORCH or briefed to look for indications of Nazi concern over possible invasion of North Africa, and so continued to search for signs of the Nazi attitude toward a possible second front across the English Channel or in Northern Europe.

These two cases, in both of which the analysis was directed toward predicting a major action, are not regarded as exclusively typical. The author recognizes and discusses at some length the possibility that leaders may decide to forego any propaganda preparation which might reveal a planned action in advance. In either event, he points out,

> The value to the policy maker of inferences assessing the nature and objectives of the major action once it is taken should not be underrated; in many cases they overshadow in importance the usefulness of having predicted the action before it occurred.

Writing for scholars and experts, Mr. George has set himself a much subtler task than presenting these interesting case studies. He

has sought: (1) to identify general types of inference made about conditions which helped to determine the communication content (for example propaganda goals and techniques, "situational factors," and elite estimates, expectations, and policies); (2) to identify other possible determinants about which the FCC did not attempt to make inferences, and then to depict the relationship among all the various factors making up the system of behavior; and (3) to identify reasoning patterns in individual inferences and codify the more general methods, direct and indirect, that were used. Out of this thorough and painstaking study comes his cautious conclusion:

> It seems that propaganda analysis can become a reasonably objective diagnostic tool for making certain kinds of inferences and that its techniques are capable of refinement and improvement.

The book is not easy to read, in part because of both undefined and overrefined terminology. Apparently the author uses interchangeably the undefined terms "propaganda," "propaganda communications," "political communications," and "public communication," but propaganda is distinguished from "mass communication," also undefined. Readers may find quite confusing the relationships between propaganda analysis, communications analysis, content analysis, quantitative analysis and nonfrequency analysis. And many a reader may never get beyond a choker on page 79 of the introduction:

> 4. Dichotomous attributes (that is, meaning or nonmeaning characteristics which can be predicted only as belonging or not

belonging to a given unit of the communication material).4/

If he persists, however, footnote 4 on page 81 will refer him to page 96, where he can learn that a dichotomous attribute is merely "the presence or absence" of a designated symbol or theme.

Addressing an academic audience which historically has tended to make content analysis synonymous with counting, the author overstates his criticism of quantitative techniques in propaganda analysis. The casual reader may miss his references to the fact that quantitative techniques are important in the first elementary task of propaganda analysis, that is in describing its content, and his judgment that "another deficiency of FCC's procedure was its failure to make use of systematic quantitative procedures in evaluating certain aspects of Nazi V-Weapon propaganda." Debate over quantitative vs. qualitative techniques is actually beside the point. The real question is how best to combine these techniques in attacking each specific intelligence problem.

Despite these minor shortcomings, it is gratifying to find such an eminently qualified and objective expert as Mr. George reaching conclusions like the following:

> Provision must be made for examining all of the output of a propaganda system and for evaluating its over-all propaganda strategy. Any division of labor which divorces trend analysis on

individual subjects from cross-sectional analyses of the entirety of propaganda and propaganda strategy may result in incorrect or misleading interpretations of specific trends.

The propaganda analyst makes the basic assumption that propaganda is coordinated with elite policies, but he needs more concrete knowledge which he can obtain only from a set of empirically derived generalizations about an elite's operational propaganda theory. ...[He also] requires knowledge about technical expertise and skillfulness of propaganda systems under scrutiny and that of individual propagandists employed therein.

The investigator must have rather specific, detailed knowledge of the propaganda organization whose output he is analyzing in order to appraise the situational context -- who says it, to whom, and under what circumstances. ...Comparison of what is said to different audiences is generally of considerable value in making inferences.

In propaganda analysis, it is typical for the investigator to be concerned with establishing slight changes in propaganda lines or minute or subtle differences in the wording employed by different speakers or by the same speaker to different audiences.

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