

RUSSIA COMMITTEEREPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE.

set up to examine the problem of planning in relation to policy towards the Soviet Union and the Soviet Orbit.

By a decision taken on November 24th the Russia Committee set up a Sub-Committee to examine the possibilities of planning a counter-offensive against Soviet political warfare. The terms of reference are attached at Annex A. The Sub-Committee, having reviewed the whole field, makes the following recommendations:-

2. RECOMMENDATIONS.

I. The objectives of our counter-offensive, as laid down in the terms of reference, should be recast as follows -

- (a) Making the Soviet Orbit so disaffected that in the event of war it would become a dangerous area requiring large armies of occupation, and not a source of useful manpower for Russia.
- (b) Loosening the Soviet hold on the Orbit countries, and ultimately enabling them to regain their independence.
- (c) Seizing every opportunity of discrediting the Soviet régime or weakening its position within the frontiers of the Soviet Union.
- (d) Frustrating the Soviet effort to build up the economic war potential of the Soviet Union and the satellites.

II. We should seek to attain these objectives, in the order in which they are set out above, and (within the limits defined below) by all available means short of war.

III. A special planning body should be set up for this purpose. This body should remain an off-shoot of the Russia Committee, and should take its directives from, and report to the latter. It should be under the Chairmanship of a member of the Foreign Office with the rank of Under Secretary or Counsellor, and should consist of representatives of the Foreign Office and Chiefs of Staff and such other departments as might seem desirable (e.g. B.B.C. and C's organisation). As it would have to meet at very frequent intervals and undertake detailed planning work, it would require a small permanent Foreign Office staff (with a secretariat whose members would have to be free from all ordinary departmental work. It would derive its authority from decisions of the Foreign Secretary (or Cabinet) through the Russia Committee.

IV. As soon as the planning Sub-Committee has been formed, it should set to work to elaborate plans for action under the Objectives mentioned above, giving priority to Yugoslavia, the Soviet Zone of Germany and Albania, Consideration should also be given to China.

V. The Sub-Committee should consider the possibility of the use of economic measures to increase the effect of

the policy ultimately decided upon. It should initiate such proposals for transmission to other departments or interdepartmental organisations as might be necessary for this purpose.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

The Sub-Committee considers that we should aim, at any rate at the outset, at concentrating our efforts at certain selected points. The question of timing is important and we must take into account the necessity for planning and acting quickly if the Russians are not to continue to enjoy the initiative in the cold war. In the first place we consider that we must be guided by the J.I.C. forecast that the risk of war is likely to become serious after 1956. In the second place our main object is, not to plan in advance for operations once war has broken out, but to weaken the position of potential enemies and so to discourage them from committing acts of aggression. A further factor which we have had in mind is the limitation of our means. We have as yet made no calculation of the cost of the general operations which we recommend, since this can only be estimated after detailed planning. Apart from budgetary limitations, some of the methods discussed below will inevitably require some considerable time to organise, and we consider that this is a further argument in favour of concentrating our efforts.

4. Taking the whole field by geographical regions we do not consider that any immediate action inside the Soviet Union itself is practicable apart from such long term effects as we may be able to achieve by means of broadcasting and other forms of publicity already in use. The Soviet Orbit is, however, vulnerable to a greater or less degree according to the distance from the centre. It is, moreover, a prey to many of those "contradictions" (in the Marxist sense) which are so prevalent in half-fledged Communist States, and these contradictions (examples of which are given in Appendix B) offer an excellent means of taking disruptive measures of several different kinds.

5. Of the countries lying on the periphery of the Soviet orbit, Yugoslavia is by far the most important for our purpose. The first rift in the Orbit has already been created by Tito's quarrel with the Kremlin; and this has provided us with an opening which we should be able to exploit. If this opportunity is thus exploited, a sort of chain reaction among the satellites might be started. Since our policy in regard to Yugoslavia is already under constant study, it is not further examined in the present paper.

6. Next to Yugoslavia, the most promising fields for immediate and profitable action appear to be Albania and the Soviet Zone of Germany, and possibly China.

7. Albania is the most vulnerable and the most expendable of the satellites. It is easily reached from the West, and as long as Tito does not conform to the orders of the Kremlin, it is physically separated from the Soviet Bloc. If our information is correct, the Albanian Communists are at sixes and sevens, and the country is divided by many internal conflicts and "contradictions" (see Appendices B and C). Albania must already be a sore thumb for the Russians. It

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would be greatly to our advantage to eliminate Soviet influence altogether, for by doing so we should deprive Markos of the help he at present gets from that quarter, and Albanian oil would once more become available, e.g. for Yugoslavia. But it would be essential to conduct operations in such a way as to avoid driving Tito back into the Soviet camp.

8. The Soviet Zone of Germany is also comparatively accessible from the West. Our information is that the overwhelming majority of the population have become disaffected and that the Communists themselves are being purged. This purge has undoubtedly been accelerated by Tito's defection, and we now have an opportunity for encouraging this dissension, if we can act before the situation has time to solidify.

9. China, as a potential major satellite, is in a special position. The situation there is still very fluid, and as it is the subject of special studies, it is not further examined in the present paper.

10. Apart from these three areas, there is no doubt that possibilities exist of bringing about a state of tension or even disruption in other satellite countries, and thus of rendering the task of the Soviet and Communist security services more difficult, and encouraging the chain reaction of disaffection towards Russia which it should be one of our objects to set in motion. But at present, and with the resources likely to be available to us, it does not seem worth while embarking on any detailed plans for countries such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Roumania or the Soviet Union itself. We consider therefore that these possibilities should be re-examined at a later date.

11. If we were successful in detaching Yugoslavia and Albania from the Soviet Bloc and in creating in the Soviet Zone of Germany so much disaffection that the Russians could only hold their position there by force, the whole Orbit might be seriously shaken. To some extent at least the Orbit stands or falls as a whole. It is bound by an intricate network of political and commercial treaties, and is undoubtedly intended by the Russians to function as a well integrated reservoir of manpower and economic assets. We already know that the quasi revolt of one satellite country has had profound psychological effects in the rest. The collectivisation programme alone has become a matter of grave concern to the minority governments in power, especially in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Persistent rumours of annexation have worked contrary to the Soviet propaganda line that the service of the Kremlin is perfect freedom, and there is evidence that the Russians are becoming more and more suspicious in their dealings with the satellite governments, however, subservient these may appear to us to be.

12. Thus we conclude that it is by getting at individual satellite territories that we can with our present resources make a start at weakening the whole Soviet system. At the same time, any setback suffered by the Russians in their policy of progressive communisation of the Orbit enormously encourages the weaker elements in the European community to resist Communist threats, and thus does an important part of our work for us. The question of peace or war is determined in the last resort by the balance of forces throughout the world, but especially in Europe. The Russians have long

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proclaimed that the balance is slowly shifting in their favour, thanks largely to their success in organising "popular democracy" in Eastern Europe. Any weakening of the orbit consequently strikes at the root of this conception.

13. The consolidation of the Orbit is so important to the Russians that they must be expected to react vigorously to any attempt to disrupt it. If plans on the lines contemplated are put into operation, we must suppose that their existence will soon become known to the Russians, and when this happens the tension between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers must be expected to increase considerably. We feel, however, that this is a risk which we must accept. The Russians never hesitate to take action which increases international tension if it is in their interests to do so, but all available indications seem to show that the Russians do not want the tension to pass certain limits. We should be able to base our action on this assumption if the present situation continues.

14. In carrying out our recommendations, if they are approved, the following methods would be open to us, which may conveniently be grouped under three headings, viz. Economic, Political, and Operational.

15. Economic. A maximum effort to weaken the Soviet Union and the satellites by economic means would involve something on the scale of the economic warfare of the last two wars. If as we assume this possibility must be ruled out at the present time, there are more limited objectives which could be undertaken with advantage. These might include the denial of important commodities to individual countries, or to the orbit as a whole; pre-emptive purchases, e.g. of rubber; financial operations designed to interfere with satellite economy; the encouragement of defection amongst leading industrialists or technicians; the encouragement of dissident States such as Yugoslavia by the offer of economic facilities. Such measures could either be undertaken as contributing to an operation, for example in Albania, or in isolation. Many of them - the denial of rubber to the Soviet Union for instance - may have to be undertaken as defensive, not counter-offensive measures.

16. Since some measures of this nature might in the end harm the Russians less than Western Europe including ourselves, a special study of profitable measures would be required. In all questions of economic action American co-operation would be particularly important.

17. Political. This includes general publicity, broadcasting and covert propaganda, besides diplomatic action which is not discussed in the present paper.

- (a) General publicity outside the Orbit is reflected into the Orbit in a variety of indirect ways. It is a question primarily of inspiring ministerial statements, editorial comment, protests, demonstrations, etc. along lines already in use, but it could be pursued more energetically once the necessary policy decisions had been taken.
- (b) Overseas broadcasting has already the aim of gaining adherents to the British line of policy and the Western way of life. In Europe, its main effort is directed

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to achieving this aim in France, Germany and Italy, where the struggle against Communism is acute. It would be necessary to consider some additional effort toward the Orbit, though technical facilities will prevent any great quantitative increase of broadcasting time. It would be essential that the B.B.C. should be closely associated with any planning staff, but no change in the relations between H.M.G. and the B.B.C. would be necessary.

- (c) Covert propaganda could take the form of intimidatory propaganda against selected individuals; attempts to detach individuals from their loyalty to the Soviet Union; playing on irredentist or nationalist sentiment; increasing the strain on the security services of the Soviet régime by spreading disaffection among the satellite populations and perhaps eventually within the Soviet Union.

18. Operational. This includes the promotion of defection, sabotage, bribery or other persuasion of individuals, the establishment of courier lines and the encouragement of dissident groups.

19. The Committee considers that if any important operations are to be undertaken in the near future (i.e. within the next two years approximately) the use of emigré groups will be unavoidable. This has its disadvantages, since it must always be assumed that emigré groups will soon be penetrated, and they are difficult to supervise and divided among themselves. On the other hand a degree of encouragement on our part should tend to get better results from them than would be forthcoming at present.

20. We do not think it is worth while placing any reliance on getting operations going in the near future inside the Soviet Union itself, though the possibility should always be kept in mind. In the satellite States, however, it is safe to assume that the security services are less efficient and omnipresent than in Russia itself, and the chances of success are correspondingly greater.

21. At present, such activity as there is under this heading concentrates mainly on the collection of intelligence. If we were to turn over to more active schemes, it would be important not to sacrifice the collection of intelligence, which would remain of prime importance.

22. Hitherto the encouragement of defection has been limited to securing men likely to give valuable intelligence. If we are to embark on a counter offensive on the lines projected, it would be necessary to revise this policy. We should then welcome larger numbers of defectors for their propaganda value and for the repercussions which their defection is likely to have on the organisations to which they formerly belonged. This would present us with a considerable problem of organisation, but we cannot assess its magnitude at present.

23. The Sub-Committee discussed the question of co-operating or keeping in step with anything which the U.S. and Commonwealth authorities might undertake. Our conclusion was that while this would be essential at a later stage, we should not further discuss it at present, at least until our own plans were more clearly defined.

24. The Sub-Committee discussed the organisation which would be necessary to carry out a policy on the lines described. It was impressed by the variety of measures which might be employed and by the importance of assessing correctly the effect they would be likely to have in the area concerned. Many of these measures would involve co-ordination with outside bodies, and careful preparations and planning would be necessary before they could be taken. It would be difficult for Heads of Departments or Under-Secretaries in the Foreign Office at the present pressure of current work to devote adequate time and care to this work. The Sub-Committee has come to the conclusion that a special planning body could most profitably be set up as suggested in the conclusion at Recommendations (III) above. This planning body would have a permanent chairman appointed from the Foreign Office staff and members of other departments or bodies concerned (Chiefs of Staff, B.B.B., C'S organisation, etc.) would be appointed for purposes of liaison as might be necessary. As explained in the Recommendation already referred to, this planning body should remain an offshoot of the Russia Committee and should take its directives from and report to the latter.

Foreign Office,
14th December 1948.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

A. Czech-Soviet contradictions.

- a) Fear of incorporation into U.S.S.R.
- b) Fear of resurgent Germany.
 - rebuilding of Soviet Zone U.S.S.R.
 - pressure to take back German workers for heavy industry.
 - German re-occupation of Sudeten lands.
- c) Agriculture - collectivisation versus output.
- d) Security - Czech desire for guarantees against Germany and to form a full scale modern army for national defence versus Soviet conception of a national contingent in the Soviet army.
- e) Czech desire to build up a trade bloc with Poland which, with certain imports from the West will be virtually self-supporting versus Soviet plans for an autarchic orbit.
- f) Czech desire to preserve western standards of living versus Soviet assimilation.
- g. Czech requirements of raw materials from other satellite countries (e.g. oil from Roumania) versus Soviet monopoly and exploitation plans.
- h) Distortion of economy to suit Soviet requirements (switch over to heavy industry from light consumer goods).
- i) Worsening foreign exchange position, due to Soviet economic policy.

B. Inter-satellite contradictions.

- a) Czech-Polish - see Poland.
- b) Czech-Hungarian
 - fear of having to return territory
 - fear of concessions to Hungarians in Slovakia.

C. Internal contradictions.

Dissatisfied elements.

- a) Bureaucracy - Recent purges
Low Pay
Party nominees and interlopers.

- b) Rural population

- Estate owners who have been expropriated.
- Rich peasants whose farms have been "reformed".
- Middle and small peasants who are frightened of losing what they gained in the recent Land Reform in a policy of collectivisation.

- c) Industrial Working Class
 - Falling standards of living owing to government policy.
 - Longer hours and "voluntary" labour.
 - Emasculation of Trades Unions.
- d) Small Traders and Producers.
 - Inability to compete with Government monopolies and fear of dispossession.
- e) Professional classes.
 - Lawyers now formed into a co-operative.
 - State interference with Doctors.
 - Army officers, politically suspect and many dismissed.
 - Professors and University dons.
- f) Youth organisations.
 - Sokol purged and penetrated.
 - Scouts outlawed.
 - Students persecuted.
- g) The Church.

POLAND

- A Polish-Soviet contradictions.
 - a) Fear of incorporation into U.S.S.R.
 - b) Fear of resurgent Germany.
 - rebuilding of Soviet Zone by U.S.S.R.
 - return of German population into the Western Territories
 - rectification of the Geremo-Polish frontier in Germany's favour.
 - c) Agriculture - collectivisation versus output.
 - d) Security - Polish desire for a national army versus the Soviet plan for a Polish national contingent in the Soviet Army, probably for garrison duty outside Poland.
 - e) Polish desire for a trade bloc with Czechoslovaks which with limited relations with the West, will be virtually self-supporting versus the Soviet plans for an autarchic orbit.
 - f) Polish desire to preserve western standards of living versus Soviet aim of assimilation throughout the orbit.
 - g) Polish requirements of raw materials from other satellite countries (e.g. oil from Roumania) versus the Soviet monopoly and exploitation plans.
 - h) Loss of Lwow and Wilno.

policy.

i) Distortion of Polish economy, i.e. concentration of resources on the Silesian basin.

j) Polish aspirations for Königsberg.

B. Inter-satellite contradictions.

a) Czech-Polish

- Teschen

- Glatz

- Division of influence in the Silesian basin.

- Stettin.

b) Soviet Zone

- rectification of Western Frontier.

C. Internal contradictions.

a) Country versus town.

b) Technocrats versus politicians.

c) Workers versus Party bosses.

d) Dissatisfied elements (see Czechoslovakia)

e) Special Polish minorities.

- Ukrainians

- Former inhabitants of Lwow and Wilno

- Poles returned from the U.S.S.R.

- Poles returned from the West.

- former inhabitants of the German provinces of Poland who were once expelled and have since returned to Poland.

- Various: Kaszuys, Mazurs, and Slazacy.

ROUMANIA

a)

(i) traditional Roumanian fear of, and antipathy for Russians.

(ii) irredentism re Bessarabia and N. Bukovina.

(iii) disadvantageous terms, for the Roumanians, of all Soviet-Roumanian commercial and financial arrangements.

b) (i) With Hungary: irredentism minority in Transylvania.

(ii) With Yugoslavia: The Roumanians (and Hungarians) have led the anti-Tito campaign.

c) (i) Peasants
(ii) Catholics and
(iii) Jews.

- d) Hungarian minority in Transylvania. (They are favoured by the Roumanian Communists at the expense of the Roumanian inhabitants, with a view to their having a vested interest in Communism).

HUNGARY

- a) (i) Traditional Hungarian fear of, and antipathy for Russians.
(ii) Disadvantageous terms, for the Hungarians, of Russo-Hungarian commercial, etc. agreements.

- b) (i) With Czechoslovakia. Magyar minority in Slovakia (being repatriated under Czech-Hungarian agreement but has been the cause of recurrent squabbles, and has prevented signature so far of a Czech-Hungarian Treaty of material assistance on the Orbit pattern).

- (ii) With Yugoslavia:

- (1) Tito issue and Hungarian treatment of Yugoslav diplomats arising out of this. Relations between the two countries are near breaking point.

- (iii) With Roumania; See under Roumania.

- (iv) Irredentism re Vojvodina.

- c) (i) Catholics (important)

- (ii) Kulaks

- (iii) Jews.

- d) Yugoslav minority.

YUGOSLAVIA

- a) (i) The whole Tito-Cominform dispute.

- b) (i) With Albania.

- (a) Quarrel since Tito-Cominform dispute and maltreatment of Yugoslavs and cessation of Albanian oil deliveries.

- (b) The Kossovo minority question.

- (ii) With Hungary:

- (a) See under Hungary.

- (b) Slowing down of Hungarian reparation programme.

- (iii) With Czechoslovakia.

- (a) Tito dispute especially Yugoslav complaints about "debauching" of Yugoslav students, etc., and publication of the "Nova Borba", and anti-Tito exile organ.

- (iv) With Roumania: See under Roumania.

- (v) With Bulgaria:

- (a) Tito-Cominform dispute.

(b)/

(b) Macedonia (Perin) question: Yugoslav assumption of leadership of Macedonia, previously Bulgarian preserve; abortive Bled Agreement; failure to secure Pirot/Pirin exchange.

(c) Personal rivalry Tito and Dimitroff to lead South Slav Bloc.

c) (i) Peasants

(ii) Strong influence of Slovene clergy.

d) (i) Special position of Slovenia; most westernised and literate area providing majority of civil servants, Ministers, most Catholic, most near to western information centres of Trieste and Klagenfurt which must be developed.

(ii) Ancient Serb-Croat jealousy

(iii) Italians in Istria.

ALBANIA

a) Possible doubts about adequacy of Russian support.

Russia is very far away. The Russian experts in Albania, judging by previous performance will lack the local "expertise" of the Yugoslavs, and are bound to be bumptious. For purely geographical reasons their economic aid can never equal the flexibility or the immediacy of the Yugoslav aid. We might insinuate that economic chaos was due to Russian niggardliness. The Russians themselves in the field of propaganda, at least seem to be treating Albania a little unenthusiastically.

b) With Yugoslavia: (See Yugoslavia)

Hoxa has bitten the feeding hand of Yugoslavia. The Albanians, particularly the more warlike, have a certain respect for Tito and his stand against Russian intervention, but official Albania is heaping insult upon insult, and incident upon incident. The Corfu channel case at The Hague is only a superficial piece of Yugoslav-Albanian friendship. Tito will not be slow to aid any dissidents in Albania, with reservations possibly if it brought him directly face to face with Russian officials or service missions.

c) Dissident elements.

Hoxa's great weakness is the economic state of the country which has hit particularly hard the Yeoman and the small trader. In addition the "city slicker" Southerners and the Moslems which form the main part of the government are disliked by the Christian Northern tribes; Hoxa has pilloried a considerable part of his old Cabinet as Tito Trotskyites; the Yugoslavs report their arrest; their arrest or their absence will weaken his Government and there will be a period of administrative chaos as the chief dissidents all held important posts in the Ministry of the Interior. There are various rumours about risings north of the river Drin but they do not appear to amount to much. But the country is full of rumours of risings and the return of exiles. The Greek minority in the South could prove troublesome if given sufficient incentive.

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d) To sum up.

A successful anti-Hoxa movement should contain or be accompanied by the following factors.

- (1) Christian versus Moslem
- (2) Honest folk versus upstarts
- (3) North versus South
- (4) Yugoslav assistance
- (5) Popular indignation against economic state of the country
- (6) Economic blockade of Albania e.g. indefinite delay of return of gold to Albania.

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