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A STRATEGIC CONCEPT FOR COLD WAR OPERATIONS
UNDER NSC 10/5

1. NSC 10/5, paragraph 1, approved "the intensification of covert operations designed in general order of emphasis to:

- a. Place the maximum strain on the Soviet structure of power, including the relationships between the USSR, its satellites and Communist China; and when and where appropriate in the light of U.S. and Soviet capabilities and the risk of war, contribute to the retraction and reduction of Soviet power and influence to limits which no longer constitute a threat to U.S. security.
- b. Strengthen the orientation toward the United States of the peoples and nations of the free world, and increase their capacity and will to resist Soviet domination.
- c. Develop underground resistance and facilitate covert and guerrilla operations in strategic areas to the maximum practicable extent consistent with 1-a above....."

2. NSC 10/5, paragraph 2, directed "the Psychological Strategy Board to assure that its strategic concept for a national psychological program includes provision for covert operations designed to achieve the objectives stated in paragraph 1 above." *This is interim or initial - not permanent -*

3. It is the object of this paper to outline a strategic concept for the operations called for by NSC 10/5.

4. The general objective of such operations can be subsumed under the general heading of contributing to the "retraction and reduction of Soviet power and influence" whether by operations designed to weaken Soviet power and influence in the Communist orbit or by operations designed to weaken Soviet power and influence by strengthening the free world.

5. Our national strategy, as defined in NSC 20/4, paragraph 20, is to "endeavor to achieve our general objectives

by methods

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by methods short of war." This national strategy calls for efforts to "encourage and promote the gradual retraction of undue Russian power and influence from the present perimeter areas around traditional Russian boundaries....; to eradicate the myth by which people remote from Soviet military influence are held in a position of subservience to Moscow....; (and) to create situations which will compel the Soviet government to recognize the practical undesirability of acting on the basis of its present concepts...."

6. This strategy, however, as is most explicitly stated in NSC 20/1, does not include efforts "to bring about the overthrow of the Soviet Government" and excludes the raising of issues "directly involving the dignity and the vital interests of the Soviet state as such" on the grounds that "it is idle to imagine" that the achievement of objectives involving such issues" could be brought about by means short of war."

7. The general strategy for cold war operations under 10/5 must therefore be designed to contribute to the retraction and reduction of Soviet power and influence by methods short of war and without the overthrow of the Soviet Government.

8. The limitations inherent in this strategy pose real obstacles to the development of a definitive strategic concept. It is well within the realm of possibility that Soviet power and influence will not in fact be reduced to "limits which no longer constitute a threat to U.S. security" without either war or revolution. Since both war and revolution are excluded as objectives by the terms of national strategy it is possible that a definitive strategy for operations under 10/5 may from the outset be impossible of construction.

9. Further

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9. Further difficulties are posed to the development of a definitive strategic concept for operations under 10/5 by the present level of our capabilities for covert operations. A covert mechanism can not be developed overnight and our relative national immaturity in this field of activity means that we must accept the necessity of the passage of a considerable period of time before we can hope to achieve impressive covert capabilities. In this period of time there may well be such variation in the international situation or in exploitable opportunities as to make the present construction of anything approaching a definitive strategic concept for operations in the covert field an unproductive effort.

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10. Within the limits imposed by the terms of our national strategy and the present level of our covert capabilities it is possible, however, to advance certain general criteria for operations under 10/5, to test certain general categories of possible covert action against these criteria, and from a combination of the two to approach what might be called an interim strategic concept for covert operations.

11. The general criteria which present operations under 10/5 should meet are those of effectiveness, feasibility, acceptable risk, flexibility, and phasing.

a. Effectiveness: The importance of the effects which successful operations may be calculated to have in reducing Soviet influence and power or in strengthening the free world against the exertion of Soviet influence and power must warrant the cost or risk of the operation.

b. Feasibility: Our capabilities in terms of trained manpower or material, and local or international support, must be adequate to give reasonable promise of success to the operation

to the operation in the face of such capabilities as the Communists may have to frustrate it.

c. Acceptable risk: The degree to which the undertaking or successful conclusion of the operations may be calculated to provoke military reaction from the Communists must be sufficiently limited as to be an acceptable risk in terms of our national strategy.

d. Flexibility: Operations should be of a type which lend themselves within reasonable limits to adaptation or modification to exploit such opportunities or undertake such objectives as may become possible or advisable subsequent to actual initiation of the operation.

e. Phasing: The operation should promise appreciable results within the next three years, or at least the establishment of a firm basis for expectation of results.

12. In the light of these criteria the following general categories of covert operations have been selected as being particularly worthy of study and effort at the present time. Exclusion from the following discussion of any existing project does not imply that it is not believed to be of utility. But it is believed the following general categories of operations merit special emphasis.

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The over-all strategic concept assumed for the purpose of formulating these provides for the following three major categories of proposed activity: (1) limited offensive operations against the Soviet orbit; (2) reduction of subversive Soviet influence in threatened areas of Western Europe, the Near East, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Japan; (3) the eventual neutralization or detachment of China from the Communist bloc. The programs provide for the integration, as appropriate, of all resources available to the government into a comprehensive plan of action. Both overt and covert activities in the political, economic, psychological, and military fields will be required in mutually supporting roles.

I. The principle offensive element of the first phase of the proposed strategy is a comprehensive program of political, psychological and economic activity designed to weaken Kreslin control over its internal assets, both manpower and material, and increasingly to occupy the Kreslin with problems at home.

a. The Soviet system of internal economic and political control is highly centralized and little or no action takes place without positive authority from above. In this respect the Soviet system is potentially more vulnerable to disruption than the economic and political systems of the free world. It is considered that a program of planned disruption of strategic magnitude is possible providing it is supported by a major program of specialized research.

- (1) The Soviet system requires an absolute monopoly over the dissemination of "information" within its orbit.

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TOP SECRETRECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the cumulative retraction of Soviet power and influence in accordance with our capabilities and subject to the limitations of NSC 20/1 and 20/4 be accepted as the interim strategic concept for a national psychological program, with emphasis on such of the foregoing categories as detailed study indicates to be practicable and desirable.

2. It is recommended that the responsible agencies give priority and desirability to determining the detailed practicability/of proceeding along the lines indicated under each category above, as those which are apt to be most effective in bringing about a retraction of Soviet power and influence with our present and immediately prospective capabilities. It is further recommended that where such studies indicate that the foregoing criteria will be met, the indicated actions be given priority in both national and agency programs proportionate to their probable effectiveness.

3. It is also recommended that our covert capabilities continue to be developed along all lines whose eventual employment may be expected to bring about more drastic reductions in Soviet power and influence, and that reappraisals of this interim strategic concept be made in the light of the existing situation annually and also as additional categories of action appear to meet the specified criteria.

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