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9 April 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Subject: Panel on Human Relations  
and Morals

1. At the invitation of the Panel on Human Relations and Morals of the Committee on Human Resources (CHR), the Subcommittee for Special Studies and Evaluations met today with the Panel for a conference on research and development in psychological warfare. Attached is the agenda of the conference. The conference was chaired by Dr. William of the Carnegie Corporation, New York City, who immediately called upon Dr. Lanier to give a brief on the previous meeting of this group which was held last October.
2. Dr. Lanier mentioned that the previous conference was very informal and that the essence of the discussion was that the Committee on Human Relations and Morals should face the problem that there exists no systematic plan for research in the psychological warfare field. Among the critical problems outlined by the Human Resources Committee for the Committee on Human Relations and Morals was the following: "Strategic Services Including Methods of Collecting Intelligence." They felt that the problem was much broader than just military in nature. Dr. Lanier advised that the Research and Development Board just presented a yearly plan to the Secretary of Defense, and that the present plan, which is "Top Secret", includes the subject of Research in the Field of Psychological Warfare. He summarized his comments by stating that the basic question involved was whether it was feasible for the Service Departments, in conjunction with others, to make thorough research studies in this field of Human Relations and Morals. He said that a long-range study should be presented to the Board. If the undertaking is worth-while, then the Panel should be prepared to suggest the practical possibilities of launching such a program. Perhaps some millions of dollars should be set aside for the undertaking, and maybe it might assume proportions somewhat akin to the Manhattan Project.
3. The Chairman thanked Dr. Lanier and advised that the research in question involved methodology as well as content. He then called on Mr. Block for a statement. Mr. Block did an excellent job of shadow-boxing and concluded some broad observations with the comment that the

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field of our Subcommittee had not been completely defined. The Chairman then asked Mr. Block if the SARACC Subcommittee had undertaken a review of psychological warfare literature of World War II, or whether to his knowledge, any other agency in the Government had done this. Mr. Block answered both parts of this question in the negative.

4. The Chairman then called on Dr. Lilly to present to the Panel a summary of his present undertakings in this field. Dr. Lilly stated that his present task was mostly historical, bringing together what had been done and how it was done. For the time being, he is not evaluating the benefits or shortcomings of the various undertakings. For the future, he intends to enlist the aid of actual operators and, with their help, will develop an appendix of the shortcomings in procedures and content. The Chairman then called on Dr. Spier to present his views.

5. Dr. Spier stated that in his estimation there were many fundamental parts to the problem which must be segregated to clarify the thinking processes. To indicate what he had in mind, he posed several questions:

a. Is it the intent of the Panel to go into the intelligence phases first? This he felt was fundamental to ascertain what information must be gotten and how it must be collected.

b. Is it the intent of the Panel to face the administrative problems? Who does what?

c. The relationship between military warfare and psychological warfare must be clarified and recognized.

d. How much psychological warfare is desirable in times of peace when there is no shooting? He observed that much is being carried on in this field today, but what about an overall plan? He felt that there was a lack of awareness by operators on the part they were playing in the total picture. He then asked whether there was any overall objective in mind.

e. He felt that there should be a distribution between the defensive aspects of this problem to guard against weaknesses of morale on the home front, and the offensive phases to be used against the enemy abroad. This question takes in the degree of censorship and a host of other problems.

f. Dr. Spier concluded by stating that psychological warfare in World Wars I and II was of the "hit and miss" method to a great extent, and given mostly to the distribution of news. He agreed that this was a very important part of the total operation, but was not the core of the problem. He felt that there must be a study

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of the best way of coordinating the overall policy, that is, the national political objective with actual operations. He felt that we must get away from the "department of tricks" and "operation back-talk." Thus he emphasized that there must be a definition of goals, recognizing that in peace-time we strive for a just and lasting peace and that when the shooting war breaks out, all efforts are directed toward winning the war. He said it is either political warfare (waging war for the sympathy of people over a large part of the earth) or just "a bag of tricks" approach, a hit-and-miss uncoordinated activity.

6. The Chairman asked Mr. Block if the Agencies had agreed to the parts each should play in an overall plan. The answer was no.

7. The Chairman then asked whether the Agencies would welcome an analysis of what should be the method and the content for each in the total picture. Mr. Block answered in the affirmative, but said that the Agencies may not accept it. The Chairman then called on Dr. Lasswell of Yale.

8. Dr. Lasswell stated that in his estimation the fundamental issue was what are the objectives and how are they to be achieved. In our democracy national objectives within our framework of national policy are defined by our top legislators. Thus he felt that we should face the issue of attempting to suggest ways of phrasing our objectives which would make them acceptable to top military and civilian officials so that our total national policy will be stable. In such a presentation, it would be necessary to make assumptions of possible and probable happenings. Assumptions as to whether war will happen advertently or inadvertently will hold different concepts as to the type of national policy that will govern under different circumstances. Unless our goal is clear, all else is "by chance or by tricks."

9. The Chairman then called on Dr. Likert of the University of Michigan. Dr. Likert felt that the total question was divided into two parts -- one the intelligence, and the other the action. He felt that in the field of intelligence it was easier to achieve coordination, but he stressed the need for total integration. He said that through their going intelligence, the Panel should know what was going on in neutral, friendly and enemy countries, and what was happening to all elements of population in each one of these categories. He felt, however, that it was difficult to achieve coordination on the action side. He attributed this difficulty to the pride inherent in each operator that he is doing his job in the best way.

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10. The Chairman then asked Mr. Block whether he felt that there should be a Sub-panel on Psychological Warfare. Mr. Block said that he was not in a position to answer this question since the whole picture was in the process of evolution.

11. Dr. Likert then observed that one of the strongest methods of implementing PWP is in the field of psychological warfare. Again Dr. Likert stressed that the right hand must know what the left hand is doing. He said that OSS had much information obtained from the analysis of various types of letters and that G-2, in many instances, did not have this information.

12. The Chairman observed that the Panel, of course, must not be a pressure group, but must have as its objective assistance to operators. Dr. Likert said that his observations were made with this view in mind.

13. The conference adjourned with the Chairman thanking Mr. Block for attending with his full Sub-committee.



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Attachment - Agency (Panel on Human Relations and Morals) -  
9 April 1948

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