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Office Memorandum

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

2003

TO : Chief, WH Division

DATE: 17 January 1954

FROM : Asst. Director for Communications

SUBJECT: Considerations Involved in Selection of Site for SHERWOOD Program.

1. As originally planned, the SHERWOOD program consisted of three parts, -- propaganda broadcasts, the use of "ghost voice" technique against target city radio stations, and the taking over of the target area listening audience on "D" Day.
2. Technically, all phases of SHERWOOD can be accomplished from a suitable ship. Such a ship must be of sufficient size to accommodate the antenna and equipment installation. In addition, the ship must be of sufficient sea-worthiness to maintain station for a period of 2 - 3 weeks. It is believed that a ship length of 165 feet is required, however, the exact length of ship will be determined by factors of ship design. Final decision on type of ship to be used would be made by the Navy based on exact requirements furnished by communications engineers.
3. To maintain the SHERWOOD program for an operational period of 2 - 6 months, it is necessary to have two ships assigned to the project. Two installations of equipment would be necessary but all equipment would be recoverable. The assignment of two ships allowing for necessary ships replenishment, upkeep and repair, and crews leave and relaxation would provide uninterrupted program coverage.
4. The security problems inherent in the use of two Navy crews are many. It may be remembered that the AEC had security leaks following recent atomic tests even though efforts were made to indoctrinate the Navy crews in the necessity for security.
5. It is believed that by use of properly equipped aircraft there is a possibility of pinpointing the broadcast and locating the broadcast ship. If the ship flies the U. S. flag the broadcast would be of known U. S. sponsorship. However, while U. S. sponsorship would be known, it would be very difficult to document a case that would stand up in the United Nations.
6. Careful consideration of the problem of the selection of a site for SHERWOOD indicates that there are four possible choices:

a. Nicaragua -- Dependent upon re-selling Somoza on basing SHERWOOD in his country. Drawback, Somoza has complete control over program and can terminate at any time.

b. Shipboard - Requires assignment two ships.

c. Nicaragua with backup shipboard. If Somoza resold on program, go ahead in Nicaragua. As contingency planning, have one ship assigned and make necessary equipment installation. Ship to standby to take over program if forced out of Nicaragua. In addition, the ship can be used to give simultaneous additional coverage if the Nicaragua broadcast remains tenable.

d. Other Central and South American Countries - By eliminating all but the propaganda broadcasts from SHERWOOD program, base program in any other politically tenable country.

Approval and sponsorship of SHERWOOD would be required of the selected country.

The number of daily hours that could be used for broadcasting would depend on the country selected. Depending upon the distance from the target area, this coverage could vary from full desired coverage to two to three hours daily coverage.

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