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28 APR 1954

Chief of Station, Guatemala

Lincoln

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KUGOWN

Suggestions for Propaganda Techniques

1. The following are suggestions which you might pass on to the personnel whom you consider suitable. This is not a directive and you may feel free to adapt, expand or reduce these suggestions as your local situation and the qualifications of your personnel may require.

2. Dropping leaflets: a simple mechanism to scatter leaflets upon streets, into meeting halls and similar places without endangering the distributor can be rigged up in the following manner. Take a board of wood, cardboard or the like and put it on the edge of a house top, of the girder of a bridge, the balcony of a meeting hall or the like so that half of the board stands free. Put on the free half of the board a staple of leaflets, preferably in an open container such as a cardboard box. Put on the other half of the board (which rests on the house, bridge or the like) a container filled with water, heavy enough to keep the board in place. Bore a little hole into that container, near the bottom, so that the water will slowly leak out: after a while, the container with water will become lighter than the box with leaflets at the other end, the board will skip and the leaflets will scatter down. It is easy to regulate the leaking of the water so that it will give the man who sets it up sufficient time to escape - or that the leaflets will come down only at the desired moment, for instance in the midst of a parade, after the start of a meeting or the like.

3. Decentralized production of leaflets: if a group producing clandestine leaflets considers police surveillance likely, it may reduce the risk of the men who take the bulk of leaflets from the production place to the ultimate distributors in the following manner. Instead of running off, say, 5,000 leaflets on a mimeograph machine and of transporting them in bundles of 1,000 copies each to the further distributors, one can type instead five sets of stencils and send these stencils to five different mimeograph machines which might be located in different parts of a city or even in different cities. Stencils can be much more easily transported than packages of leaflets: they may be rolled into umbrellas, into the frame of bicycles, into rolls of sheet music and the police, alerted to

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look for people with bulky packages are unlikely to discover the bearers of mere stencils.

4. Putting up posters and stickers: wherever conditions permit, it will be useful to put up posters or stickers by teams of five men each. Number one goes 50 to a 100 yards ahead of the others: he makes sure that the neighborhood is "clean" and determines where the posters should be put up. Number two follows him at a safe distance, using a brush or a sponge to put water (if the posters are gummed on the back - which is always preferable) - or glue - on the places where posters should be put: the smoother the surface, the more difficult will it be to tear down or to deface the posters. Number three follows closely after number two: he carries the posters and puts them on the spots prepared by number two. Number four follows again closely: he carries a rag or soft brush with which he makes sure that the poster, especially its corners, lies flush with the wall - which makes it again more difficult to damage the poster. Number five follows in a long distance, perhaps 50 to a 100 yards after number four: he makes sure that nobody suspicious is approaching the group from behind and warns his colleagues in case of danger.

5. Hanging posters etc. in inaccessible spots: if there is danger that posters will be torn down by hostile elements quickly after they have been put up and if it is not possible to organize guards to protect them, it might be possible to place them into spots where the opposition will find it very difficult to remove them - or where their removal will cause considerable trouble and publicity. At night time, courageous groups of young men may climb on high bridges or towers, on rocks overlooking busy highways in order to put up posters, flags or paint suitable inscriptions. If the spot in question is rather high above the normal traffic level, only a simple, easy recognizable symbol can be used. A special trick is to hang a big placard, a flag or the like between two trees or wooden telegraph poles across a highway: after the placard has been put up, one cuts into the trees so that they remain standing but that it is no longer possible for anybody to climb up and to remove the placard (in some such cases, the Fire Department of the Army Engineers had to work for several hours to remove the obnoxious placard, thus attracting extraordinary public attention).

6. Changing the meaning of enemy posters or wall inscriptions: in places where enemy outdoor propaganda is very active, it may occasionally be decided to take appropriate countermeasures. Simple destruction of such posters is often less effective than a subtle change of their meaning. A poster may read for instance "Our Country Wants No War": by overpasting, overpainting or otherwise removing the two letters "No", the meaning can be easily turned into its opposite. Pictures too can change their meaning with a few strokes of the brush. In order to make such changes effective, a group should make a central decision as to what should be changed, how it should be changed and then carry out this decision on the broadest scale possible and at the same moment, at least during the same night.

7. Disturbing preparations for enemy meetings: one of the simplest ways to interfere with public meetings of a hostile group, provided these meetings are mainly announced by posters, consists in pasting across or under these posters a strip with the words "The Meeting Does Not Take Place" or "The Meeting Has Been Postponed Until a Later Date" or something similar. Such strips can be printed in advance on gummed paper and should be printed in a size and with letters corresponding to the usual posters employed by the target group. They should be put up only 24 hours before the meeting date so that the group has little chance to inform its friends and followers that this was a hoax.

8. Destruction of enemy posters: here is a comparatively safe and rather impressive means of destroying enemy posters without unduly endangering the personnel involved. One uses a mixture of phosphorus and water or some other liquid which might either be thrown at the poster in little glass vials or squirted from a rubber ball. After the water has evaporated, the phosphorus will burst into flame: depending upon the proportion of the mixture, we can regulate the time interval which may be necessary either to allow a safe escape or to set the burning for the most effective moment (for instance, when an enemy parade is passing the spot).

9. Use of balloons: while large balloons may occasionally be used as a last resort to carry propaganda across tightly closed borders, small balloons (toy balloons) may be effectively used locally. In most countries, it is possible to buy some for a fair or some similar pretext. One can either put (print, paint) a simple symbol on them which can be recognized from the ground or one can use them to carry a few leaflets or one can tie a number of them together and have them carry a flag, a placard or some similar conspicuous subject. Whenever balloons are used, one must make sure of the direction and speed of the prevailing wind and choose the launching place accordingly so that the balloons will arrive at the right time in the right place. One or several gas bottles and a few bicycle pumps are all the equipment required to inflate such toy balloons - and such an operation can therefore be carried out with a station wagon, a small delivery truck or the like.

10. We shall appreciate your comments as to whether and to what extent the above suggestions are applicable to your operations. We shall gladly contribute whatever additional advice we may be able to give. We believe that during the next few weeks there will be little time or opportunity to evolve complicated new techniques or to ship such special equipment in addition to the items already ordered. We hope, however, that suggestions of the type given in the present dispatch may be quickly passed on to the personnel involved, thus adding to the effectiveness of your effort.

JEROME C. LUMBAR

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27 April 1954