

Scott
Box 71
Ridgefield, Conn.

August 19

General Walter Bidell Smith
CIA



Dear Bidell:

Congratulations, not so much to you, but to the rest of the country, on your new appointment. I don't think a better appointment, or a more important one, has been made for a long time.

In this connection, I am enclosing a memo on a matter I think important. I spoke to Admiral Hillenkoetter about this a couple of years ago, and I did not impress him. Perhaps, nevertheless, the matter is already receiving adequate attention. If so, just toss my memo in the waste basket.

We are living quietly here in Connecticut, Sasha is taking a course or two in NYU, and I am working on a book, and doing an occasional broadcast, or speech. Sasha joins me in wishing you well in Washington.

Cordially,


John Scott

Ridgefield, Conn
August 13, 1950

Memo.

To: Walter Piddell Smith, General, USA

From: John Scott

Subject: Political Warfare, directed against the USSR; speed
startlay a purge in the USSR.

As one who lived thru one purge - that of 1936-38 - the Soviet Union, I am convinced that its effects on that country were enormous. It cost the country several million lives, several billion man hours of labor; it caused losses of production in every branch of industry and agriculture; it weakened the armed forces; its discrediting and removal of more than half the Central Committee of the CPSU, and a third the Politburo weakened the government, and lowered morale throughout the country. The only organ strengthened by the purge was the NKVD. In short the purge was as destructive to the USSR as a major war is to most countries who have suffered them. It is certainly much more destructive than a major economic depression is to nations who have suffered them.

The purge was, in effect, a miscarried civil war. It grew out of the sharp disapproval of a large part of the population of the USSR of the policies of, and even the existence of the Soviet government.

The purge was detonated by the assassination of Seren on Dec. 1, 1934; the reaction sputtered along for about eight months, then blossomed fourth into a thoroughly self-sustaining process which ran its course for about two years, and was finally terminated with the removal of Nikolai Ivanovich Yezhov by in 1938.

Stalin realized the importance of preventing another Beria cleaned out the old apparatus, put in his own new people on high levels, and thousands of young, and supposedly unspoiled Komsonols into minor posts. Throughout World War II and thereafter the NKVD and its daughters, the MGB and MVD, under Merkulov and Abrikumov, were careful to minimize mass arrests, and prevent arrests on denunciations without substantiating evidence.

But the Soviet administrative machine is still vulnerable to purges. The MVD and particularly the MGB still function almost without controls; more important, the population of the country is more divided, and more critical of its government now than it was in 1934, while Stalin's advancing age has sharpened disagreements and personal friction among leading personnel in government and party. Unpleasant, fanatical men like Malenkov and Beria have climbed high up stairs slippery with the blood of their former comrades. Bred in an atmosphere of vigilance and suspicion, they will not hesitate to fight hard and ruthlessly against anyone they believed able to curtail their power. Under them are numerous highly placed

still wide with astonishment at what they saw in Europe during war, are restive and fearful. Further down still millions of convicts slave in outlying districts in hopeless torment.

The culminative weakness of the Soviet internal administrative system is its susceptibility to purges. It becomes our job, at this point, (though it would have been much easier three years ago to detonate and nurse a purge until it becomes self-sustaining) This should form the central theme of our political warfare activities and our propaganda - this is the great achilles heel and the crowning enigma of Communism, and we should bear it constantly in mind. (Just as they think always in terms of the weakness of the Capitalism - its periodic depressions, and get other activities to this effect)

How can a purge be detonated?

Suspicious and friction among Soviet leaders should be set up thru plants and provocations, culminated by a terrorist act or simulated terrorist act.

1. Material should be allowed to find its way into the hands of the Soviet authorities, thru several channels (foreign Communist parties, NKVD, MGB and Army intelligence, MID and MVD functionaries) incriminating other functions in other Soviet cities with subversive contacts with Western powers, against the Soviet government or some of its organs. Subjects like Vyshinsky and Andreyev deserve particular attention. Soviet emigres in Germany and Austria should be used extensively in this connection to determine promising subjects. (I met one in Hamburg, for instance, who was brother to a member of the Soviet general staff)

2. Radio broadcasts and leaflets dropped by plane should be used in black and grey propaganda geared to the discredit of individuals or groups.

3. One major operation should be arranged to jolt the Soviet leadership to the use of drastic measures. The easiest would probably be a surprise airborne descent of volunteer DPs in the neighborhood of the labor camps either in the Murmansk or the Kolymsk regions. Such an operation was planned out in detail by staff officers of the Vlassov army in Dabendorf in 1943 and 1944 but never put into operation, would be inexpensive, and even if partially successful would dislocate internal security in the USSR and provoke extraordinary measures leading in the direction of a purge.

4. NTS, ATSDNR leaders in Germany should be consulted on such plans, as should be people like Ludtke and others in British intelligence in Herford and elsewhere.

5. The whole thing should be geared in such a way as to lead up to a great burst of activity immediately after Stalin's death, at which moment the possibilities of starting not only a civil war but a civil war would be maximal.

This is, of course, very sketchy. Most important is, I suppose, that a group of competent people be studying this

29 August 1950

Mr. John Scott
Box 71
Ridgefield, Connecticut

Dear John:

Thanks sincerely for your note of congratulations on my appointment as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The new job promises to be a very rough assignment and, frankly, I am not delighted with the prospects. There is some comfort, however, in the knowledge I am taking over at a time when the nation is very much alive to the need for an effective intelligence organization.

I have only been able to scan your memorandum but will look it over carefully at the first opportunity. It looks good and I plan to take it with me to Washington where possibly some of your ideas can be put to good use.

Nory joins me in warmest personal regards to you and Masha.

Sincerely,

151 Bedell Smith