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NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL DEPUTIES

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THE CONFLICT OF IDEAS

Report by the Ad Hoc Working Group.

1. The Working Group have limited themselves to the activities of member Governments in the NAT Area. It was the hope of the Working Party that discussion by the Deputies might serve to bring out:

- (a) the basic problems to be met.
- (b) what is now being done.
- (c) what needs to be done by member Governments and the North Atlantic Treaty Information Service to make such information activities more effective.

The Working Group suggests that the Deputies might consider the subject under two main divisions.

A. Public Information

B. Conflict of Ideas

A. Public Information

2. The Working Party suggests three themes toward which the information activities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Information Service and of member Governments might be directed.

- (i) The Nature, Aims Structure and Activities of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Work in this field has been initiated by the North Atlantic Treaty Information Service but success will depend on effective utilization of this work.

- (ii) The superior resources of North Atlantic Treaty countries as compared with those of any possible aggressor.

For this purpose, information will be required as to the resources of the North Atlantic Treaty countries and of the Soviet bloc.

The Deputies may wish to discuss

(a) from where information on North Atlantic Treaty countries' resources should be drawn (e.g. Organisation of European Economic Cooperation and Economic Commission for Europe reports, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation statistical service)

(b) whether account should also be taken of the resources of other free nations

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(c) whether it would be profitable to exchange information among the members of North Atlantic Treaty on the economic strength of the Soviet bloc, and if so how, with special reference to security implications.

(III) The Military effectiveness of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Defence.

The Deputies may wish to consider

(a) whether the Standing Group and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe should be invited to make available for publication whenever possible material which can be released with due regard to military security.

(b) whether the Standing Group might be invited to furnish material on which would be based answers to queries on such points as the apparent disproportion of strength between the armed forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and those of the Soviet bloc.

(c) whether Governments should be invited to make available to other North Atlantic Treaty Governments, possibly through the North Atlantic Treaty Information Service, parts about their defence effort suitable for publication.

B. Conflict of Ideas.

3. The Working Group considered that the Deputies might wish to have a short exchange of views on the following topics:

(1) The defensive nature of the NAT and the deterrent effect of its existence on possible aggressors. This should be compared with the aggressive intentions of the Soviet bloc. It should be emphasised that the participation of Germany in the defence of the West has no aggressive intention.

(2) What are the NAT nations combating - is it communist ideology or Soviet imperialism?

(3) The proper emphasis to be maintained in NATO publicity as between national defence efforts and national standards of life.

(4) The building up and maintenance of confidence in the collective strength of the North Atlantic alliance.

It is considered that some or all of the above topics might be of use in connexion with the proposed Information Meeting.

4. The Working Group also felt that the Deputies might wish to give preliminary consideration to the methods to be used in the conflict of ideas although it was thought that they would not wish to concern themselves with the details of technique. There would appear to be two distinct aspects to this problem:

(a) What can be done by the NAT Information Service.

(b) What can be done by member nations.

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(I) NAT Information Service.

The Deputies might wish to discuss:

(i) What arrangements can be made for improving liaison and co-operation between the national information services and between those services and the NATO Information Service.

(ii) Whether individual governments should be invited to make available to the Information Service material on conditions within the Soviet Orbit and on Soviet propaganda which would serve as a pool on which other member governments can draw?

(II) The role of Member Nations.

(i) How the material made available under I(ii) above can best be used.

(ii) The possibility of making co-ordinated arrangements for speeches by prominent leaders in the various NAT countries. In this connection the Working Group wishes to draw attention to a proposal by the Information Service (attached as Appendix A). The Working Group did not consider themselves competent to express a view on the merits of this proposal.

(iii) How, in addition to the day to day countering of Soviet propaganda, the long term objective of building up moral resistance to Soviet propaganda can best be achieved.

(Note:: A memorandum by the Director of the NAT Information Service on the Conflict of Ideas, which was circulated to the Working Group, is attached for information - Appendix B.)

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Appendix A

From Director of NATO Information

Draft Proposal for Speech Series

1. Soviet propaganda, whether from Russia, from Cominform countries, or from Communist followers throughout the world, is centrally planned and directed. Its chosen themes are driven home by reiteration, and these themes are so devised and so timed as to give the maximum leverage on public opinion for the immediate as well as the long-term objectives of Soviet policy.

2. The member governments of NATO are neither individually nor collectively organised to operate such a system or such monolithic methods in competition with or as a counter to Soviet propaganda. Considerable results could however be achieved by a simple arrangement whereby leading ministers of member governments would make speeches or broadcasts in successive weeks dealing with an agreed topic (though of course not necessarily confined to this topic only).

3. Method. It is suggested that a suitable arrangement would be as follows:-

- (a) U.S.A.: U.K.: France - in successive weeks; beginning again in the fourth week.
- (b) Italy; Belgium; Canada; Holland - in successive weeks concurrently with series (a), beginning again in the fifth week.
- (c) Other member governments to reinforce the (a) and (b) series whenever they feel able to do so.
- (d) Speeches to be made preferably on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays so as to obtain the maximum radio and newspaper coverage.
- (e) Speeches to be made preferably by Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers or Defence Ministers, but the choice of spokesman in each case resting with the member government.
- (f) The Council Deputies to act as the channel whereby the choice, the timing and the variation of the agreed themes

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are cleared with member governments, and to report on arrangements made in this connexion by their governments.

- (g) The NATO Information Service, basing itself on a continuing study of Soviet propaganda, to supply proposals from time to time to the Council Deputies for suitable speech themes.
- (h) The arrangement here outlined to come into operation in week (beginning Sunday February, 1951) with speeches by Ministers of the Governments of U.S.A. and Italy. (For convenience of reference it is suggested that serial weeks be numbered from 1 to 52 in the calendar of the current year i.e. week 1 began 31st December, 1950 and ended 6th January, 1951).

4. Proposal for Initial Theme.

As a first common theme for use in the proposed series of speeches it is suggested that they should in each case contain a passage

- (a) giving the key facts of the scale of Soviet armament and military preparations
- (b) accompany each statement of fact with an ironic contrast with Soviet "peace" pretensions.

The objective is therefore not merely to have these facts widely known, which can only be done by repeating them over a period of time, but also to put on the defensive the Soviet "peace" campaigns which have been so effective a form of pressure against the West.

This emphasis must be correctly placed, because otherwise, in publicizing the facts about Soviet militarism there is a danger of increasing the already acute fears of Soviet strength and aggression. The point of doing so is to keep contrasting these facts with Soviet "peace" pretensions, and not for example to contrast these figures with the as yet relatively modest forces of NATO countries.

It is suggested that "The Men of Moscow" should be pegged as the source of the threat to peace rather than "Communism" etc. In this way one avoids suggesting that the Russian people, or the "captive"

"captive" countries, favour war, and similarly avoids confusing the central issue with considerations about Communist or pacifist ideals, or the position of Tito, Mao and others.

Because Soviet propaganda is especially focussed against any rearming of Germans, it is suggested that special emphasis be given to the scale and nature of the East German "police" force with its armaments, and also to the number of Germans, Czechs and others forced to labour in uranium mines in Germany and Czechoslovakia.

The main points, which can be varied in emphasis, but which depend for their effect on being repeated sufficiently to become common knowledge, are as follows:-

- (a) The Men of Moscow love peace so much that they keep 2,800,00 men under arms, with 25,000 tanks and 20,000 aircraft;
- (b) The Men of Moscow love peace so much that they enforce three years conscription on their people so that they can mobilize 6,000,000 men at short notice;
- (c) The Men of Moscow are so enamoured of peace that they have built up Russian directed armies in Poland, Roumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Albania amounting to about 1½ millions;
- (d) The Men of Moscow are so averse to arming Germans that they have built up in East Germany an army of so-called "policemen" armed with tanks and artillery amounting to thousands;
- (e) The Men of Moscow are so horrified at the idea of atom warfare that they force X thousands of Germans, Czechs and others to slave in uranium mines to supply the Russian war machine.

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APPENDIX B

15 February, 1951

From: Director of NATO Information Service

Headings for "War of Ideas" Discussion

I think two or at most three of these:-

1. WHO THREATENS PEACE?

Current Soviet propoganda repeats insisently the theme of an "arms race" by NATO governments. How far will increased publicity about our stepped-up military programmes, even if emphasized as defensive and not aggressive, play into their hands and increase fears of war? What is the proper NATO publicity policy in these circumstances, and does it include publicity about Soviet military power as the real threat to peace and the reason for increased taxation, shortages etc. in Western countries which must look to their security?

2. WHAT STANDS FOR PEACE?

What common information policy measures could help to rally behind the concept of "confident collective security" those elements of opinion which in their abhorrence of war are easy dupes of Soviet peace propoganda and of "neutralism"? Should we concentrate on exposing Soviet motives as well as emphasizing that NATO stands for peace and unites twelve nations for this purpose?

3. ROLE OF MINISTERS

Can the Deputies agree on the principle of some arrangement for "serial-speeches"? Vide my previous proposal which was made concrete (and therefore looks too rigid) in order not to be too vague.

4. HOPES OF WELFARE

What can information policies do to inspire confidence in Western methods as the best hope of improved social welfare and standards of life, as compared with Soviet claims to be the one hope of betterment? Should we concentrate on exposing their claims and on emphasizing that Western security is a prerequisite for Western social and economic security? Can we emphasize the favourable economic aspects of rearmament on employment in certain countries?

5. LABOUR

What national and co-operative measures can be taken to expose the extent and nature of Communist inspiration, tactics and motives in stirring up labour disputes?

6. FIFTH COLUMN

What active information policies should be planned to guard against fifth column activities by Communist spies and agents in an emergency?

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7. DIVISIVE RUMOURS

As SHAPE forces are progressively assembled, what precautions should be taken to counter rumour-mongering and divisive tactics aimed at the various national contingents and the civilian populations?

8. GERMANY?

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