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THE MOTION PICTURE AS A WEAPON OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

I. OBJECTIVE

To exploit the potentialities of the motion picture as a weapon of psychological warfare for the United States.

II. SURVEY OF THE SITUATION

A. Potentialities

1. The motion picture is one of the most powerful propaganda weapons at the disposal of the United States. It can serve many diversified functions.

a. Motion pictures are an unparalleled instructional medium - they can present new facts concerning important problems on which people are ignorant and on which they ought to be informed; they can clarify complicated problems on which people are confused.

b. Motion pictures are a potent force in attitude formation, and attitudes are the basis of action and morale.

c. Motion pictures can stimulate or inhibit action.

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d. Motion pictures can contribute to the building and maintenance of morale by:

(1) Dispelling doubt and uncertainty, and allaying anxiety.

(2) Providing a unique and valuable form of recreation.

e. Motion pictures can orient the individual to affairs beyond his personal experience by providing opportunities for vicarious participation. Newsreels, for example, are the best medium for giving the remote civilian the "feel" of front line combat.

2. There are many types of motion pictures through which these functions may be exercised: features, commercials, *animated*, educational, documentaries, travelogues, newsreels, cartoons.

3. Numerous and diverse organizations and agencies are concerned with motion pictures: private and public agencies; production, distribution, exhibition, and intelligence agencies; commercial theaters and various non-commercial cultural institutions; domestic and foreign.

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4. Motion pictures are important in all the major types of psychological warfare: directly, in general propaganda; indirectly, in connection with certain aspects of subversive, ~~and~~ economic, and diplomatic propaganda activities.

5. Motion pictures can be employed on most of the major psychological warfare "fronts":

a. They can be aimed at the civilians ^s and ^{the} armed forces of the United States - to inform and instruct, to create attitudes, to stimulate ^{or inhibit} ~~all~~ ⁱⁿ action, to build morale.

b. They can be aimed at the people of countries allied to the United States, of countries occupied by the United States or her allies, of countries neutral to ^{the} United States - to inform ^{and} to create attitudes favorable to ^{the} United States and unfavorable to the enemy.

c. They can be aimed at internees, prisoners of war, antagonistic groups in occupied or neutral countries - to inform and to convert to attitudes which favor the United

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States.

d. They can even be aimed at the peoples of enemy and enemy occupied countries. It will never be possible to control the exhibition of American motion pictures in such countries and only very rarely to show them at all. In Finland, Denmark, and Italy, ~~United States~~ films are apparently still tolerated. In Denmark, approximately 90% of the total showings are American pictures. These, however, are several years old, and those in Finland and Italy are even older.

6. Motion pictures produced abroad can serve as a valuable source of psychological foreign intelligence.

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B. Agencies

Functions directed toward

1. ~~Civilians~~ Civilians of the United States:

a. For the production, distribution, and

exhibition of domestic motion pictures: Hollywood companies,

OWI, American Film Center, others.

b. For the *collection, importation, distribution, and*

exhibition of foreign motion pictures: Hollywood companies, Museum
of Modern Art, Film Library, etc.

Functions directed toward

2. ~~U. S. armed forces~~ U. S. armed forces: the Motion Picture section

the Army Motion Picture Service of SSD,
of SSD, the Signal Corps, *the Pictorial Division of OSS, American*
Film Center, others.

3. For internees, prisoners of war: FBI, Justice,

State, War.

4. For civilians in allied countries: Overseas

Branch Service of OWI, private agencies.

5. For civilians in newly occupied areas: Signal

Corps, ?

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C. Indirect Potentialities

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1. Economic

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C. Indirect Potentialities

1. Economic

a. Activities

(1) Embargo on importation of enemy motion pictures.

(2) Blockade

(3) Black-listing

Manipulation of
(4) U.S. raw film exports to encourage production of motion pictures in friendly countries and to discourage their production in unfriendly countries.

b. Agencies: Treasury, BEW, WPB

2. Diplomatic

a. Activities

(1) The use of popular motion picture personalities as "good-will ambassadors" or entertainers, both at home and abroad, among civilians and armed forces.

(2) Private showings in Embassies and Consulates of feature or documentary films of psychological significance for the development of appropriate attitudes toward the United States.

b. Agencies: State Department, USO, CIAA, OCD.

3. Subversive

a. Activities

(1) The securing of copies of enemy films shown in neutral countries.

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(2) The suppression of motion pictures of enemy origin judged to have potentially subversive influence.

(3) Stimulation of audience demonstrations and boycotts.

(4) Surreptitious exhibition of motion pictures.

b. Agencies: FBI, OSS/SA, OSS/PR, OSS/Field Photographic Branch

D. Summary of the Situation

1. Strengths

a. An influential U. S. motion picture industry, the products of which have achieved a world-wide popularity.

b. An elaborate U.S. system of exporting and distributing agencies abroad, (notable South America); in other areas fragmentary representation available for rapid development.

c. A highly competent motion picture propaganda agency for the armed forces in the Special Services Division

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of the War Department.

d. *The Pictorial Records Division of the Office*

*of Strategic Services, an agency specifically organized for
to secure and review films as a source of
the securing of intelligence on foreign countries through the
foreign intelligence.
medium of motion pictures.*

e. In addition to the CIAA for South America,
an official motion picture exporting and distributing agency
Branch
in the Overseas *Service* of OWI.

f. Accumulated intelligence on the German (and
to a lesser extent the Japanese) use of motion pictures in
psychological warfare.

2. Weaknesses

a. Absence of *coordinated* systematic compilation of psycho-

logical motion picture intelligence, to guide United States
operations in motion picture psychological warfare.

- (1) Lack of systematic information concerning
(a) motion pictures produced and exported
by foreign countries. (b) the effects of such *films* *pictures*.

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(2) Lack of systematic information concerning

(a) motion pictures the United States

exports to specific foreign countries.

(b) the effects of such pictures.

(3) Lack of systematic information concerning

the motion picture preferences in foreign countries.

b. Absence of over-all formulation of motion picture psychological warfare strategy for various areas: in terms of local preferences, motion picture production and export policies of other nations, and United States psychological warfare objectives.

c. Lack of coordination of motion picture production, distribution, and exhibition, with over-all psychological warfare strategy, both at home and abroad.

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(Recently OWI took over all short-wave broadcasting stations;

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on the other hand eight private Hollywood companies still maintain offices abroad which export motion pictures to a considerable extent independently. The only exception is

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Latin America, where CIA aims to coordinate the activities of the various private companies.

III. Recommendations

1. An inventory should be taken of the organizations, governmental and private, which:

a. Produce, distribute, or control the exhibition of motion pictures in the United States or abroad. (e.g., Motion Picture Section of SSD, Hollywood companies)

b. Collect, review, analyze, or in any other way make use of motion pictures as a source of foreign intelligence. (e.g., Pictorial Records Division ^{OSS} section of ~~SSD~~)

c. Secure or analyze intelligence concerning the production, distribution, or exhibition of motion pictures abroad (e.g., State, Commerce)

2. The ~~existing~~ directive established by the JPWC should be implemented with regard to the motion picture by:

a. Attempting to secure the voluntary cooperation ^{not} of all motion picture agencies ~~in~~ under the direct control of the JCS, in order to:

(1) Coordinate the securing of motion picture intelligence abroad and insure its availability to appropriate psychological warfare planning and operational agencies.

(2) Coordinate the securing of foreign intelligence by means of motion picture materials and insure its availability to appropriate psychological warfare planning and operational agencies.

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(3) Coordinate the production, distribution, exhibition, and export of motion pictures with other psychological warfare activities under directives of the JPWC and in accord with the ~~psychological warfare~~ strategy adopted by the JPWC.

b. Establishing a motion picture sub-committee or panel to coordinate, in the interest of psychological warfare, motion picture intelligence and foreign intelligence derived from motion pictures; and to serve as liaison between the JPWC and motion picture operating units for purposes of advising and implementing over-all psychological warfare strategy in the field of motion pictures.

3. Implementation of cooperation with outside agencies would involve:

a. Requesting OWI, CIAA, and other civilian agencies to make available their motion picture intelligence or foreign intelligence derived from motion picture materials.

b. Directing OSS to make available similar intelligence.

c. Requesting OWI, CIAA, and other civilian agencies to submit to the JPWC their plans for the production, distribution, exhibition, and export of motion pictures.

d. Directing SSD to submit similar plans.