

**British anti-communist propaganda and cooperation
with the United States, 1945-1951.**

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFRS	American Forces Radio Service
BBC	British Broadcastign Corporation
BIS	British Information Service
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (USA)
CIPC	Colonial Information Policy Committee (UK)
COI	Central Office of Information (UK)
Cominform	Communist Information Bureau
COS	Chiefs of Staff (UK)
CRD	Cultural Relations Department (UK)
DBPO	<u>Documents on British Policy Overseas</u>
DWS	Diplomatic Wireless Service
FAOH	Foreign Affairs Oral History Program
FBIS	Foreign Broadcast Information Service (US)
FRUS	<u>Foreign Relations of the United States</u>
ILO	Information Liaison Officer (UK & US)
IPD	Information Policy Department (UK)
IRD	Information Research Department (UK)
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee (UK)
JIPC	Joint Information Policy Committee (UK)
LCS	London Controlling Section (UK)
MI5	Security Service (UK)
MI6	Secret Intelligence Service see SIS (UK)
NARA	National Archives and Record Administration (US)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCFE	National Committee for a Free Europe
NSC	National Security Council (US)
OIC	Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs (US)
OPC	Office of Policy Coordination (US)
OSS	Office of Strategic Services (US)
PRO	Public Record Office (UK)
PSB	Psychological Strategy Board (US)
PUSC	Permanent Under Secretary's Committee (UK)
PUSD	Permanent Under Secretary's Department (UK)
PWE	Political Warfare Executive (UK)
RFE	Radio Free Europe
RIAS	Radio in the American Sector
RIO	Regional Information Office (UK)
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service, see MI6 (UK)
SOE	Special Operations Executive (UK)
SSU	Strategic Services Unit (US)
TUC	Trades Union Congress (UK)
USIS	United States Information Service
VOA	Voice of America
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions

ABSTRACT

British anti-communist propaganda and cooperation with the United States, 1945-1951.

This thesis will argue that from early in the Cold War Britain developed a propaganda apparatus designed to fight the Cold War on an ideological front, and that in the period from 1945 to 1951 the role of propaganda grew from being an adjunct to foreign policy to become an integral part of British Cold War strategy. Britain was the first country to formulate a coordinated response to communist propaganda. In January 1948, the Government launched a new propaganda policy designed to 'oppose the inroads of Communism, by taking the offensive against it.' The development of this anti-communist propaganda policy will be the main focus of this thesis. It will also be shown that from the earliest stages in the development of Britain's response to communist propaganda, the degree to which such activities could be coordinated with United States Government was a primary consideration. It will be shown that cooperation and eventually coordination of propaganda activities with the United States Government became a defining feature of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy. This was particularly the case following the launch of the American 'Campaign of Truth' in 1950. Faced with a formidable and highly organised communist propaganda machine officials in both Britain and America came to realise the value of a unified response. As both nations developed their own policies for offensive anti-communist propaganda, cooperation became an increasingly important element, as Britain and America sought to 'shoot at the same target from different angles.' The thesis is comprised of an introduction and conclusion and four chapters covering: the origins of British and American anti-communist propaganda policies, 1945-1947; launching Britain's new propaganda policy, 1948; building a concerted counter-offensive, cooperation with other powers, 1948-1950; 'Close and continuous liaison.' British and American cooperation, 1950-1951.

Introduction

Introduction

Writing in 1989, Britain's leading historian of Government propaganda, Philip M. Taylor, described the Cold War as 'the apogee of the twentieth century struggle for hearts and minds... by its very nature a global propaganda conflict, the alternative to real war.'¹ In the absence of military conflict, propaganda was one of the principal means by which protagonists on both sides of the Iron Curtain sought to project their power, and undermine their enemies. Propaganda was also a vital tool for the creation of domestic support for policies of military expansion which were costly, and with the development of atomic weapons, not without considerable risk to the population. Yet, as Taylor later observed, the role of propaganda as an instrument of national and foreign policy is often neglected in the mainstream historiography of the Cold War.² This is particularly true in the case of the Western allies. In an important recent essay, W. Scott Lucas claims that the use of ideology as a driving force behind American Cold War strategy has been ignored, largely because ideology was always associated with the expansionist policies of the communist powers. Lucas suggests that, 'if an eager student devoured the work of American historians on the Cold War' he would have to be remarkably perceptive to obtain from them any examination of a US ideological campaign.³ Any student hoping to feast on the role of propaganda in British Cold War history, will find their diet similarly unsatisfying.

It is a central contention of this thesis that from early in the Cold War Britain developed a propaganda apparatus designed to fight the Cold War on an ideological front, and that in the period from 1945 to 1951 the role of propaganda grew from being an adjunct to foreign policy to become an integral part of British Cold War strategy. Britain was the first country to formulate a coordinated response to communist propaganda. In January 1948, the Government launched a new propaganda policy designed to 'oppose the inroads of Communism, by taking the offensive against it.'⁴ It also established a new Foreign Office department, the Information Research Department (IRD), to

coordinate Britain's Cold War propaganda. The development of this anti-communist propaganda policy, and the organisation and methods of the IRD, will be the main focus of this study. The second contention of this thesis is that from the earliest stages in the development of Britain's response to communist propaganda, the degree to which such activities could be coordinated with the United States Government was a primary consideration. Although the new propaganda policy stated explicitly that it was up to Britain 'as Europeans and as a Social Democratic Government' and 'not the Americans' to give a lead to the forces of anti-communism,⁵ it will be shown that cooperation and eventually coordination of propaganda activities with the United States became a defining feature of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy. This was particularly the case following the launch of the American 'Campaign of Truth' in 1950. Faced with a formidable and highly organised communist propaganda machine officials in both Britain and the United States came to realise the value of a unified response. As both nations developed their own policies for offensive anti-communist propaganda, cooperation became an increasingly important element, as Britain and America sought to 'shoot at the same target from different angles.'⁶

The absence of any detailed examination of the role of propaganda in British Cold War history can be at least partly explained by the fact that, as with the British intelligence and security services, successive British governments were at pains to conceal the fact that they maintained a Cold War propaganda apparatus, or even had a policy for responding to communist propaganda. Although the IRD grew to become one of the largest departments in the Foreign Office, its functions remained strictly confidential.⁷ The IRD did not feature in the published versions of any of the major enquiries into Britain's post-war information activities,⁸ and official statements as to its function, were to say the least ambiguous. Although the IRD was listed in the annual Diplomatic List, and even featured in Lord Strang's account of the Foreign Office, the description of its functions was brief and ambiguous:

Responsibility for the compilation of information reports for His Majesty's Missions abroad.⁹

The IRD's dissolution in 1977 did see a significant expansion on this statement with the admission that copies of these reports `were also sent to a number of interested people in the United Kingdom, including journalists and broadcasters.'¹⁰ However, the refusal of successive Government's to release the bulk of IRD papers to the Public Record Office served to discourage many serious historians from embarking on a study of this aspect of British Cold War history. This veil of secrecy was finally lifted when the 1993 White Paper on Open Government initiated a systematic review of previously retained papers, under the so-called Waldegrave Initiative.¹¹ In the wake of the Waldegrave Initiative, historians, with the support of interested individuals such as Lord Mayhew, pressed for the early release of the IRD archive.¹² In February 1994, the Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd agreed that these `interesting papers' should be reviewed for release, and the first batch of IRD records were transferred to the Public Record Office in August 1995.¹³ This archival windfall has provided the principal source for this thesis.

The first accounts of the IRD were written by investigative journalists shortly after the department was dissolved in 1977. Given that the IRD's work was directed largely at the media, it is perhaps not surprising that the department has been the object of indignant press fascination. Under lurid headlines such as, `Death of the department that never was' and `How the FO waged secret propaganda war in Britain,' they described how the resources and propaganda techniques developed in World War II were redirected to fight the Cold War.¹⁴ The main criticism in most of these first accounts was that the IRD's propaganda was directed primarily at a domestic audience. In the most hostile examination, David Leigh claimed that, rather than countering Soviet propaganda, the IRD became `an instrument of news management' that `poisoned the wells of journalism,' and deceived, `people who read books and newspapers (and sometimes even those who actually wrote for them) about what is going on in the world.' Uncooperative journalists, Leigh claimed, were blacklisted and the BBC was `dragooned into functioning as an arm

of government' and 'required to accept batches of undercover IRD material.'¹⁵ The central argument in most of these accounts is that, by only presenting negative information about the Soviet Union, the Government deliberately suppressed a balanced analysis of Soviet actions. This, argued Richard Fletcher, was, 'a serious subversion of the democratic process,' and may even have prolonged the Cold War.¹⁶

Another characteristic of the first accounts of the IRD, which was to re-emerge when the IRD papers were released, was the identification of prominent figures or 'celebrities' who cooperated in the Government's propaganda campaign. In an article in 1978, the left-wing magazine The Leveller, named thirty one journalists whom they claimed received IRD material including media stalwarts such as Peter Snow, John Tusa and Peregrine Worsthorne.¹⁷ Investigative journalist Paul Lashmar later suggested that the reputation of prominent academics such as Robert Conquest were built upon work derived from material provided by the IRD.¹⁸ Similarly, Duncan Campbell and Andy Thomas, drawing on a document found at the Public Record Office attempted to show 'how Whitehall schemed to inveigle Michael Foot, Bertrand Russell and a host of prominent intellectuals into the official propaganda machine.' Campbell and Thomas conceded that the Foreign Office rejected this particular proposal, but concluded that 'the nastiest and most embarrassing material... never makes it to the Public Record Office.'¹⁹

Herein lies the justification for much of this early sensational writing on IRD. The intelligence historian Richard J. Aldrich has observed, it is axiomatic that the lengthy closure of government files has provided 'an invitation to entrepreneurial writers to speculate in an over-imaginative way on the nature of the "dirty secrets" that such archives supposedly contain.'²⁰ The IRD has been no exception. Early reports claimed that all IRD files had been destroyed to save the government's embarrassment, whilst others suggested that the retention of the IRD files was illegal.²¹ The overall result was that the IRD was implicated in a whole range of devious plots, from undermining the Wilson government to human rights

abuses in Northern Ireland.²² As late as 1995 when IRD papers were finally being reviewed for release, one journalist speculated that:

IRD still sounds like the place where the most political skeletons are buried.²³

When the release of IRD papers began in 1995 there was a fresh burst of media interest in the department's activities. Once again the media concentrated on the high profile 'celebrities' named in the documents, including Denis Healey, Bertrand Russell, Stephen Spender and most notably, George Orwell.²⁴ Concerns about the IRD's domestic operations were also repeated. The documents, it was claimed, proved that the BBC was 'conscripted' into the Foreign Office campaign and provided further evidence of an establishment conspiracy to manipulate the Labour Government.²⁵ The Times columnist Simon Jenkins described the Foreign Office as 'obsessed' with deceiving the Labour Party, and in The Guardian Stephen Dorril claimed that Attlee's government was 'hoodwinked' into creating a black propaganda unit by hardliners in the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence who were 'fascinated by the clandestine.'²⁶ Many of these stories were recycled in the first popular history of the IRD which followed shortly after the first release of IRD papers. Remarkably, Britain's Secret Propaganda War, 1948-1977 by the investigative journalists Paul Lashmar and James Oliver, made only scant use of the newly released material. Instead Lashmar and Oliver drew heavily on the emerging scholarship on British Cold War propaganda to trace IRD involvement in Korea, Malaya and Suez, and with the aid of interview material, provided some new information on the IRD's role in the 'confrontation' in Indonesia in the 1960s, in Northern Ireland, and most remarkably the campaign for British entry to the EEC in the 1970s.²⁷

Although Lashmar and Oliver repeated the criticisms of the IRD expressed by journalists in the 1970s and 1980s, the reports which followed the declassification of the IRD papers were generally less hostile towards the intentions of Britain's Cold War propagandists.²⁸ This more balanced view may be explained by the prevailing intellectual climate. It seems apparent that those journalists writing in the 1970s were influenced by the

revisionist interpretation of the Cold War, popular at the time. Part of this interpretation was that the people of Western democracies were tricked by cynical leaders into supporting an aggressive policy of economic imperialism through the propagation of the myth that monolithic communism threatened the survival of the nation. In contrast, those articles which appeared in the 1990s may have been influenced more by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Revisionism is no longer in vogue and new evidence from the Soviet archives has suggested to some historians that Western leaders, and indeed propaganda, may have underestimated the Soviet threat.²⁹

The popular history of IRD has benefitted considerably from the emergence of a body of scholarship on British cold war propaganda. The IRD's origins and *modus operandi* were examined in detail in an article by Lyn Smith published in the LSE journal Millennium in 1980.³⁰ Smith sought to fill in some of the gaps in the earlier press reports and show in particular that as well as influencing opinion at home propaganda was also used as 'part of the government's mechanism for conducting relations with other states.' Smith's article was based largely upon a series of documents covering the period 1947 to 1949, provided confidentially by Christopher Mayhew.³¹ As Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office in the late 1940s, Mayhew had been instrumental in formulating Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy. Given the origins of the article it is not surprising that Smith placed considerable emphasis on Mayhew's role in launching the new propaganda policy. Nevertheless, Smith also uncovered a great deal of information about the IRD's operations and contacts throughout its existence. The department, she revealed produced two categories of material. The first consisted of secret and confidential studies designed for high-level consumption by heads of state. The second was less highly classified and suitable for dissemination by British missions to local contacts to be used on an unattributable basis. In the production of this material the IRD drew on secret service sources as well as information gathered openly by diplomats in British missions. It consisted of carefully selected factual

material dealing with deficiencies of the Soviet system and the advantages of Western social democracy.

All of this was energetically reproduced and distributed to a great variety of recipients. These included: British Ministers, MPs and trade unionists, the International Department of the Labour Party and UN delegates, British media and opinion formers including the BBC World Service, selected journalists and writers. It was also directed at the media all over the non-Communist world, information officers in British Embassies of the Third World and Communist countries, and the foreign offices of Western European countries.³²

Smith, however, found no evidence to suggest that any of these recipients were deceived about the origins of the material they received, and those that passed the material on unattributably did so willingly and confident of its veracity. Mayhew pointed out that IRD material was not forced on MPs, rather "if some anti-Stalinist MP wanted information or briefing on some subject, then we were only too happy to send him the facts." Smith also spoke to many journalists who received IRD material. They were, she wrote, aware that the material "was produced by the FO back-room boys" and selected the facts required for their particular needs. Most significantly, Smith's interviews with representatives of the BBC Overseas Services refuted the idea that the BBC was in any way deceived or forced into using IRD material. Sir Hugh Greene, Head of the BBC Eastern European Services in 1949 and 1950, did not find the IRD intrusive in any way. It was, he told Smith, "just another source of factual information... The BBC always had complete editorial authority - the freedom to take or leave IRD material, and that's what we did." Similarly, Smith has reviewed a great many of the books which IRD covertly sponsored by authors as diverse as Susan Strange, Robert Conquest, Bertrand Russell and Leonard Schapiro, yet she found, "no evidence that writers' views were trimmed to particular political lines... rather it was the case that if their independent opinions fitted in with IRD requirements then their output would be used." Nevertheless, in conclusion, Smith conceded that the IRD's influence may not have been entirely positive. It was certainly a major hidden influence on opinion at home and abroad, and, she speculated, the

process of selecting material on communism may have resulted in a distorted picture of the Soviet bloc.³³

Smith's pathbreaking article set out the organisation and methods of British Cold War propaganda. Since then historians have sought to integrate these activities into a broader historical context. Scholars have generally approached the study of IRD from two distinct fields of historical enquiry: intelligence studies, and media history. Those historians from what D.C.Watt has termed the 'British school of intelligence studies' have generally adopted a wide definition of the term 'intelligence' which encompasses a whole range of covert activity including the collection and interpretation of information, special operations, covert propaganda and internal security. These historians have according to D.C.Watt, 'come to consider positive clandestine action to influence the policy and opinion of other states an important part of the whole intelligence/covert action range.'³⁴ A small group of historians, led by Philip M. Taylor have sought to integrate the IRD into wider studies of British propaganda in the twentieth century, and in particular the use of propaganda in a series of conflicts in the postwar years, most notably, Malaya, Korea and Suez.³⁵ Recent attempts by these two separate but not unrelated groups of historians to integrate the activities of the intelligence services, and the media into scholarship on international relations has led directly to the development of a body of scholarly literature on British anti-communist propaganda. This has created a curious paradox whereby IRD is given equal weight in studies of the most open aspect of diplomacy - government publicity, and in studies of its most secret aspect - intelligence.³⁶

Historians of intelligence and the Cold War have sought to place the IRD within the context of an expanding postwar intelligence community in which many of the clandestine techniques developed during World War II were resurrected to deal with the new threat from communism. In 1987, the intelligence historian Wesley K. Wark, wrote that the IRD was 'a true child of the high-tension atmosphere of international politics into

which it was born.' In the early years of the Cold War faced with a concerted Soviet offensive, of which propaganda was just one part, Bevin, who was initially sceptical of the value of anti-communist propaganda, authorised a response designed to mirror the Soviets own offensive campaign. The nature of Britain's response, Wark claimed, was defined by the experience of two world wars which had served to 'foster an enthusiasm for unorthodox methods of political warfare.'³⁷ Raymond Smith has shown that this enthusiasm was most prevalent among senior officials in the Foreign Office who from 1946 began to advocate a defensive/offensive response to Soviet propaganda modelled on wartime methods of propaganda and subversion. Despite Bevin's reservations, Smith argued, officials proved adept at developing British Soviet policy along their own lines. In an interpretation which highlights Bevin's administrative weakness, Smith concluded that through proposals for more targeted anti-communist propaganda activities, most notably in Iran, officials 'chipped away' at Bevin's resistance and moved the Foreign Secretary towards a more offensive strategy which culminated in the creation of the IRD in January 1948.³⁸

The suggestion that senior officials were responsible for British policy towards the Soviet Union has led revisionist historians, such as Peter Weiler, to argue that the IRD was part of a concerted campaign to manufacture consensus in the Labour movement in Britain. In a critical assessment of British Labour and the Cold War, Weiler argued that the first years of the postwar Labour government saw the rejection of the communist and non-communist left in the Labour Party and Trade Unions, and the incorporation of the Labour movement into the hegemonic values and ideology of the state. Foreign Office propaganda, Weiler suggested, was central to this process. British labour's growing hostility towards the Soviet Union, Weiler argued, may have owed as much to the manipulation of opinion by elites in the Foreign Office as to Soviet actions.³⁹

Although Weiler provided important evidence of the Foreign Office's domestic anti-communist activities, several historians have contested his assertion that the domestic consensus

regarding Soviet intentions was manufactured by the Foreign Office. Anthony Carew has argued that in promoting anti-communism in the TUC, the Government was effectively pushing against an open door. Moreover, Carew has shown that the Government's involvement with the TUC was not motivated by domestic concerns, but the desire to counter communism in the international trade union movement.⁴⁰ Similarly, in The Secret State, a study of British internal security in the twentieth century, Richard Thurlow argued that Weiler overstated his case by suggesting that Labourism was hijacked by establishment elites. Thurlow noted that far from being led by the nose, democratic socialists had long recognised the horrors of Stalinism. When these socialists formed the government in 1945, Thurlow wrote, they established a 'symbiotic and dialectical relationship' with the establishment in which both recognised the need to guard against the communist threat. The creation of the IRD, Thurlow argued, was the result of a convergence between the policies of the Labour Government and the interests of the Whitehall administration, 'rather than the effects of anti-communist propaganda or a semi-conspiratorial incorporation of the Labour movement bureaucracy into the structure of the Capitalist state'⁴¹

The convergence of Labour policies and Foreign Office thinking has been examined in the most detailed study of the origins of Britain's anti-communist propaganda by W.Scott Lucas and C.J.Morris, which appeared in Aldrich's edited volume British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945-51, in 1992.⁴² Aldrich opened the volume with an essay on the postwar reorganisation of the British intelligence community, which placed the IRD within the context of a Whitehall administration struggling to cope with a Cold War conducted 'by all means short of war.'⁴³ Lucas and Morris set the Foreign Office's proposals for a response against the background of Bevin's need to accommodate the left-wing of the Labour Party. The new propaganda policy, they argued, emerged when the Foreign Office plan was wedded to a new tenet of British foreign policy, the positive projection of a British-led 'Third Force' linked to the

Empire and Commonwealth and independent of the United States and the Soviet Union. They suggested, however, that the 'Third Force,' may have been merely, 'a device to win ministerial support' for the Foreign Office strategy. Within a year, they claimed, the 'positive' element had disappeared from Britain's propaganda, and the offensive element was modified and expanded. Lucas and Morris claimed that the IRD shifted quickly from 'Third Force propaganda' to 'political warfare' which went beyond what was originally described as a 'defensive/offensive' to include support for subversive operations being carried out by the intelligence services, and eventually operations in support of British interests outside the communist bloc. They argue that because the Government failed to establish effective control, the IRD became 'a service department, "on call" to support the latest projects of other departments and agencies.' As a result, they concluded, the IRD evolved from anti-communist to 'anti-anti-British.'⁴⁴

Many facets of the IRD's operations, at home and abroad, behind the Iron Curtain, and in the colonies, have been drawn together in Richard J. Aldrich's recent and vast history of British and American Cold War secret intelligence, The Hidden Hand.⁴⁵ In one of the first works to take advantage of the declassified IRD papers, Aldrich focuses on the operational aspect of the Government's anti-communist propaganda policy in an effort to shed some light on how the Cold War was fought.

Cold War fighting, and a growing conviction that the Cold War could be won through special operations or covert action, was critical in determining the character of this struggle. By the early 1950s, operations to influence the world by unseen methods - the hidden hand - became ubiquitous and seemed to transform even everyday aspects of society into an extension of this battleground.⁴⁶

In Britain, Aldrich argues, clandestine operations to counter communist influence began as early as 1945. By the time the IRD was created in 1948 'it was playing catch-up with obscure sections of Whitehall that were ahead in authorising counter-measures against the Soviets.'⁴⁷ Not least amongst these was the Cultural Relations Department of the Foreign Office, which since late 1945 had mounted an orchestrated campaign to counter

communist influence in international youth organisations.⁴⁸ Responsibility for such activities was soon passed to the IRD. Aldrich is careful, however, not to describe a simple continuum between wartime and Cold War clandestine operations. The IRD, he asserts, was different from the diverse bodies dealing with wartime propaganda in that it was entirely under Foreign Office control.⁴⁹ Moreover, Aldrich paints a vivid picture of Bevin successfully resisting sustained pressure from the Chiefs of Staff for more aggressive propaganda and special operations aimed at the liberation of Eastern Europe.⁵⁰

The detailed research of historians such as Wark, Lucas and Morris, and Aldrich has shed considerable light on the Cold War origins of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy. A second group of historians have placed the policy in a much broader context. These historians, led by Philip M. Taylor, have explained the origins of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy as part of an historical trend towards the acceptance by governments that propaganda 'a major requisite of modern warfare,' is 'no less essential to the maintenance of peace, power and prestige.'⁵¹ This, Taylor claimed, was no less true for British governments than it was for the totalitarian regimes of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Taylor has shown that, despite a traditional antipathy towards propaganda, by the 1950s British Governments accepted that machinery for the effective employment of propaganda had become an essential weapon in the national arsenal, 'part of the normal apparatus of diplomacy of a Great Power.' This view was not only based on the experiences of two World Wars but also the ravages of the inter-war years. In the 1920s and 1930s successive Governments gradually and reluctantly came to recognise the importance of projecting Britain abroad, firstly as an aid to trade, and later as a response to anti-British totalitarian propaganda. This experience, Taylor argued was soon adapted to the harsh realities of the postwar world.⁵²

Taylor has also identified several distinctive features of British overseas propaganda. These were established at the time of the British Government's first foray into propaganda

activities during the First World War, and were confirmed by experience of British propagandists in future conflicts. The most important was that effective propaganda was based upon the truth. In marked contrast to totalitarian governments' advocacy of the 'Big Lie,' British Governments have found the selective presentation of the facts a more effective, and more palatable, employment of propaganda. Despite this, British Governments have also been keen to hide their propaganda activities. British governments, it was claimed, did not engage in 'propaganda,' they told the truth. Consequently, agencies responsible for directing propaganda overseas have usually operated in secret. The Foreign Office, in particular, has favoured an indirect approach to the dissemination of propaganda. The reason for this, was outlined by Sir Robert Cecil in 1916, 'official propaganda known to be such was "almost useless".'⁵³ Unlike the totalitarian governments, the British eschewed direct appeals to mass opinion and targeted their propaganda at elite opinion formers. As Taylor, has also shown, for the Foreign Office in particular, mass public opinion was almost incomprehensible and only to be influenced indirectly. 'Foreign Office-inspired propaganda was directed towards the opinion-makers, such as journalists, publicists and politicians, rather than to the mass of foreign peoples.' The principle being that it was better to influence those who can influence others than to attempt a direct appeal to the mass of the population.⁵⁴ These principles were to influence Foreign Office thinking in the production of propaganda during the Cold War, and were the source of some friction when the Labour Government proposed a new propaganda policy based upon an appeal to the masses.

Taylor's work has inspired a series of detailed case studies of British propaganda. Studies of propaganda during the Korean War, the Suez crisis, and colonial insurgencies in Malaya, Kenya and Cyprus have served to illustrate British governments' growing appreciation of the importance of propaganda and the media.⁵⁵ These studies have also illustrated that during the Cold War the communist threat came to dominate all of Britain's overseas propaganda. In 1995, Susan Carruthers revealed that the IRD was

closely involved in Britain's response to colonial insurgency. As a result, Carruthers observed, whether or not communism was a principal factor in the unrest, 'the IRD's very *raison d'etre* meant it was almost bound to exaggerate the communist threat.'⁵⁶ Although the IRD's involvement supported the claims of Lucas and Morris that the IRD moved from anti-communist to anti-anti-British propaganda, Carruthers suggests a more subtle thesis. In its engagement in colonial campaigns, she concluded, the IRD's principal concern remained anti-communism. 'If it was anti-anti-British, it was so precisely because it was anti-communist.'⁵⁷ Tony Shaw and Gary Rawnsley reached similar conclusions in their respective examinations of propaganda during the Suez crisis. Both have also suggested that the IRD was far more at home in dealing with Cold War crises such as the Hungarian uprising and the war in Korea.⁵⁸ In contrast to the crude attempts to shoehorn the communist threat into the presentation of colonial unrest, the campaign in Korea, Shaw concluded, 'bore out the value to the British government of a propaganda department whose priority was anti-communism.'

The IRD's ability to devise and disseminate material demonizing the monolithic Soviet bloc in various forms to suit different audiences showed subtlety and imagination. (It also contrasted with the communists' overly crude and ultimately counter-productive tendencies.) The non-attributable (or 'grey') nature of its output added to the public's impression that politicians were reflecting opinion rather than seeking to lead it... The department's true research skills in tracking and countering communist propaganda helped the UN to keep a step ahead of its rivals in general throughout the conflict.⁵⁹

The literature suggests there were two influences on the generation of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy. The first was the threat from Soviet propaganda and subversion and the need to formulate a response using means 'short of war.' In order to do so the British Government it is claimed, fell back on the lessons of the recent past and resurrected a series of covert wartime agencies. Others have sought to place these developments within the context of a world in which the advent of a mass media, and conflicts which increasingly affected the whole of the population, led governments to embrace propaganda

as a tool of diplomacy. British propaganda in the Cold War, it is argued, did not merely represent a resurrection of wartime agencies, but was the application of principles developed in the Foreign Office since the First World War. The most accurate assessment, of course, lies in a synthesis of these views.

There is little consensus as to how Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy developed after 1948. Although the work of Carruthers, Rawnsley and Shaw has addressed British propaganda in a series of conflicts in the 1950s and 1960s, there has been little examination of the role of propaganda in building a concerted counter-offensive to the Soviets in the early Cold War. In particular, the 'Third Force' aspect of Britain's propaganda policy has been inadequately explored. It is generally assumed that the positive aspect of the new propaganda policy was never implemented, and the IRD in particular has been criticised for neglecting this aspect. It is also unclear as to what was the principal target for British anti-communist propaganda. Revisionists have stressed the domestic element. Others, such as Lucas and Morris, suggest that British propaganda quickly developed an offensive element directed at subversion in Eastern Europe. Lucas later suggested, that by the mid 1950s, the IRD was turning its attention to lesser opponents in the Middle East and Africa, leaving anti-communist work primarily to the United States.⁶⁰

In the literature there is in particular, a certain myopia with regard to the relationship between British and American anti-communist propaganda. Most of the work from Lyn Smith onwards has highlighted some degree of cooperation between British and American propagandists. Those who have employed American sources, such as Smith, Fletcher and Wark, have indicated that American information staff in the field were kept informed of the IRD's activities. Moreover, at a series of meetings in London in 1950, it has been shown that Britain and America exchanged details of their respective propaganda programmes and agreed to 'close and continuous liaison' on all aspects of anti-communist propaganda.⁶¹ However, this relationship has not been examined in detail. In general it is

argued that although Britain led the field by providing a coordinated response to communist propaganda as early as 1948, Britain's modest propaganda activities were soon swamped by the superior resources of the United States.⁶² The release of the IRD papers has done little to change this perception. In 1995, Scott Lucas wrote, that by the 1950s the IRD was a pale shadow of the CIA propaganda machine, 'it would be the US, with its own propaganda means and ends, that would define the image of the Free World.'⁶³ In 1998 Hugh Wilford reviewed the first two batches of IRD papers to be released. Wilford detected in the files 'a growing tendency towards Anglo-American cooperation in the publicity crusade against communism, both between headquarters and between representatives in the field.' Yet with only a small amount of material to review, it is unfortunate that Wilford fell back on the easy assumption made in much of the secondary literature that the British campaign was soon eclipsed, 'as leadership of the anti-communist crusade passed to the Americans.' The Foreign Office's most powerful motive for cooperating, Wilford suggested, was to take advantage of the 'superb resources' of the United States.⁶⁴ It is remarkable, and perhaps a little surprising that Britain's contribution to Anglo-American anti-communist propaganda has been so denigrated, when studies of other aspects of Anglo-American cooperation, most notably intelligence, have found ample evidence of the value of Britain's contribution of expertise and experience in a field dominated by American resources.⁶⁵

The declassification of material under the Waldegrave Initiative has clearly opened the field for serious historical enquiry into British propaganda during the Cold War. Although historians have already begun to mine this rich seam the body of literature on British Cold War propaganda can not compare with the vast literature on the use of propaganda in the two world wars. Moreover, most of the emerging studies of British propaganda during the Cold War years have tended to reflect this interest in the role of propaganda in wartime. Moreover, some fields of propaganda activity, notably broadcasting, have attracted considerable attention,⁶⁶ whilst others such as the

press and publishing have received little attention.⁶⁷ Only a few historians, most notably Aldrich, have used the declassification of material under the Waldegrave Initiative to return to the development of British policy towards the Soviet Union in the early Cold War years, and examine the role of propaganda in peacetime.⁶⁸

This thesis has benefitted from access to a large volume of material released under the Waldegrave Initiative.⁶⁹ Most significantly, since 1995, almost all the policy files of the Foreign Office Information Research Department from the period 1948 to 1951 have been transferred to the Public Record Office. The content of this extensive archive has shed considerable new light on British anti-communist propaganda policy, and provides the main source for this study.⁷⁰ The Waldegrave Initiative has also seen the release of a large number of files relating to anti-communist propaganda in the records of other Foreign Office and Government departments, and the return of previously retained material to collections of private papers of British public servants.⁷¹ This material has also been used.

There is a methodological bonus in researching the work of organisations responsible for propaganda, even a secret department such as the IRD. That is, that such organisations depend upon the widespread dissemination of their product. Even when their methods are secret, their output is not. Thus propaganda material generated by the IRD was distributed widely across Whitehall, and beyond. Even before the recent release of IRD files, enough material relating to British Cold War propaganda had slipped past the 'weederers' in the records of other government departments to allow a number of authoritative accounts of the IRD's work. This has been augmented by the release of further material under the Waldegrave Initiative. In researching this thesis documents pertaining to the IRD's activities have been found in the records of Government departments as diverse as the Central Office of Information, the Colonial Office, and the Ministry of Labour, and a host of other Foreign Office regional and information departments.

The nature of the IRD's work was such that evidence of the

department's work has survived in collections outside the Public Record Office, some of which have been consulted for this study. Although the IRD's methods were clandestine, unlike the intelligence and security services its product was also designed for widespread distribution outside of Whitehall. The International Department of the Labour Party under the direction of Denis Healey was an early and avid consumer of IRD material. A large number of IRD briefing papers and some correspondence may be found in the Labour Party Archives.⁷² The BBC also received IRD reports and recommendations and those working on western broadcasting during the Cold War have found much evidence of the IRD's work in the BBC archives.⁷³ A review of the IRD files at the Public Record Office reveals a host of other organisations in receipt of IRD material, including, the Church of England, The TUC, the National Council for Social Services, the National Union of Students, and the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Some historians have already begun to sift the archives of these organisations for examples of Foreign Office propaganda.⁷⁴ Many prominent individuals, journalists and academics worked with the IRD and some of this material survives in collections of private papers.⁷⁵ The IRD also distributed material to a large number of foreign governments. Although it is beyond the resources of this study, examples of IRD's output must reside in the archives of the foreign ministries of a large number of nations across Europe and Asia.⁷⁶

The wealth of material now available, does not, however, provide a complete picture of British efforts to counter communist propaganda. Significant numbers of files remain classified and may well remain closed for some considerable time. British clandestine activities in peacetime remain a more sensitive subject than similar operations during war. Most of the files of the wartime Political Warfare Executive were declassified under the thirty year rule, whilst records of its peacetime equivalent, the IRD, have only recently been released. Even following the Waldegrave Initiative, the release of a great volume of files relating to intelligence and special operations in World War II, has not been matched by the release of files

from the early postwar years. It is also apparent that files from the post-1945 period are subject to a much more careful review, and their release has therefore been somewhat slower and more erratic.⁷⁷ The files of the IRD have certainly been carefully weeded. Some files have been retained in their entirety. In more cases, sensitive material has been removed from files or the policy of blanking out sensitive sections has been employed. Some extant material relates to the IRD's relations with the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), (remarkably, numerous reports from MI5 can be found in the IRD files.⁷⁸) Information on the coordination of clandestine activities with other powers, such as the United States, is perhaps the most sensitive. Particularly when it relates to covert activities in other friendly countries, such as British and American efforts to counter communism in France and Italy.

In addition to the continued classification of material, perhaps a more serious problem facing historians researching British Cold War propaganda is the destruction of records. Of course not all official documents are selected for permanent preservation, nor should they be. Nevertheless, policies for the preservation of material of historical interest have not been applied consistently across Whitehall. Concern has been expressed in particular about security and intelligence agencies applying their own criteria for the selection of material.⁷⁹ The Foreign Office, along with the Cabinet Office, preserves the largest proportion of papers, more than 80% of the political papers are judged to be of historical interest, of which over 95% are released.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, there is a substantial gap in the documentary record of British Cold War propaganda. Although the policy files of the IRD have been preserved, much of the department's output, the propaganda itself, has not. In 1982 the Lord Chancellor's Department stated that apart from a handful of papers on general themes:

The items distributed by IRD to other FO departments and journalists were in the main ephemeral and not considered to be of sufficient historical importance to be selected for permanent preservation.⁸¹

Although this statement caused several commentators at the

time to fear that the whole of the IRD archive had been pulped,⁸² it referred only to the IRD's output. An, admittedly vast, number of briefing papers, on a whole range of issues, produced by the IRD on a weekly or monthly basis throughout its existence. Some of the IRD's output may be found in the department's policy files, and selected examples survive in files of other Government departments.⁸³ However, only two whole series of the IRD's briefing papers were selected for permanent preservation, as examples of the IRD's product.⁸⁴ This is undoubtedly only a tiny fraction of the IRD's output and the series chosen only represent the IRD's early concern with countering communism in Europe and the Far East. It is remarkable that other series of briefing papers produced to deal with particular situations, such as the Suez crisis, were not considered worthy of preservation.⁸⁵

Faced with British official secrecy, early studies of the IRD suggested that much information regarding British anti-communist propaganda could be gleaned from American sources.⁸⁶ As Aldrich has observed, the United States Archives are often represented as some kind of 'Wonderland' where classified British documents may be found in abundance.⁸⁷ This is, of course, only partly true. Aldrich refers to an agreement between the State Department and the British government detailing the categories of material that London requests be withdrawn from American files.⁸⁸ In the declassification of CIA documents the 'third agency rule' has also meant that few documents relating to cooperation with allies in covert activities have been released.⁸⁹

Nevertheless, in America, as in Britain, the end of the Cold War has prompted a new policy of openness regarding the declassification of government documents and this study has made extensive use of material from the National Archives of the United States. In addition published collections of American documents such as those in the State Department series, Foreign Relations of the United States, and the volumes of CIA Cold War records published by the CIA History staff, have shed new light on American anti-communist propaganda activities in the early

Cold War. Material in the American archives also casts a sidelight on British policy. This study has uncovered many examples of cooperation between British and American information officers in Washington and in the field, in the records of the State Department. In marked contrast to Britain, American archives also provide a wealth of oral testimony and the series of interviews with US Information Agency staff by the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program at Georgetown University is a particularly valuable source.⁹⁰

When the documentary record is incomplete supplementary information is often found in the recollections of those involved in clandestine activities. This study has benefitted from the memoirs, correspondence and interviews with those involved in British anti-communist propaganda. Memoirs provide a predictably patchy insight into British anti-communist propaganda. In the memoirs of some of the most senior officials involved in British overseas information activities, Sir Robert Marrett, Ivone Kirkpatrick, and Paul Gore-Booth, the IRD is notable by its absence.⁹¹ As these were all written before the IRD's dissolution, and Marrett's book in particular is otherwise so comprehensive, the omission can only be explained by considerations of official secrecy. Although the publicity surrounding the release of the IRD papers prompted a number of former officials to speak out in support of the department's work, some remain reluctant to refer to their work for fear of breaching official secrecy.⁹²

The utility of memoirs is also reduced by the nature of service in the Foreign Office. In many cases a tenure in the IRD was only a small part of a long Foreign Office career. For example, Cecil Parrott, who joined the IRD in its first and formative year, referred only to, 'a preliminary run of a year in one of the Information Departments of the Foreign Office,' after which he was transferred to the United Nations Political Department.⁹³ Even those who recall their work in more detail, often provide little substantive information about propaganda policy or operations. As one of the largest departments in the Foreign Office the IRD employed a great many people, however,

most of the IRD's work it seems was rather mundane, comprised mainly of detailed research, foreign press reading and the production of briefing papers. The dissemination of this information in the field, was often no more interesting. Dame Stella Rimington, the former Director-General of MI5 worked in the IRD's Delhi office in the late 1960s:

Nobody ever told me what was going on there. I was merely told to carry out the rather basic task of stuffing envelopes with all sorts of printed material, which was sent out from London, and posting them off to a whole series of addresses. It was very important, I was told, to get the right stuff in the right envelopes - not everyone got everything - and the whole operation, and in particular the names and addresses were very secret... Whether any of it had any effect I was not in a position to judge, though I did notice from time to time articles in the newspapers which seemed to have drawn on the stuff I had put in the envelopes.⁹⁴

Of course, Rimington adds, she now knows that the IRD was responsible for influencing public opinion by planting stories hostile to our enemies and favouring the British position. It is often the recipients of this material who have provided the most detailed accounts of the IRD's methods. Journalists and writers such as Brian Crozier, Richard Beeston, and Peregrine Worsthorne, who received confidential briefings from the Foreign Office or were employed as temporary contract staff by the IRD, have less to fear from the guardians of official secrecy and have been more candid in accounts of their dealings with the Foreign Office.⁹⁵ Similarly, politicians have traditionally had less regard for official secrecy than officials worried about their pension, even former heads of the Security Service. Thus, the most detailed, and some of the earliest, accounts of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy came from those, who as Foreign Office ministers were responsible for its formulation. Christopher Mayhew, who was instrumental in creating the IRD, revealed the existence of the British government's anti-communist propaganda policy as early as 1969.⁹⁶ He has since produced two detailed accounts of his role in British anti-communist propaganda policy.⁹⁷ Denis Healey and David Owen, who as Foreign Secretary presided over the department's demise, have

also provided information on the IRD's methods.⁹⁸

There is now almost an embarrassment of riches for anyone wishing to research the work of this once secret department, and this study can only make a modest contribution to this field. This thesis does not aim to provide a comprehensive assessment of British propaganda from 1945 to 1951. The 1945 to 1951 Labour Governments presided over perhaps the greatest expansion of the British Government's propaganda apparatus until the election of the Labour Government in 1997. Propaganda was used widely by the Labour Governments: to explain their policies at home, and abroad; to reassure Britain's allies, most notably the United States about Labour's socialist policies; to promote trade; to counter colonial insurgency; to promote good relations with the newly independent colonies; and to undermine Britain's enemies. This study will focus on just one, very important, aspect of this, the use of propaganda to counter communism.

Furthermore, this study will be limited to an examination of anti-communist propaganda *policy*. It will show how that policy expanded to become an integral part of Britain's strategy for dealing with the Soviet threat, but it does not seek to present a detailed account of the implementation of that policy. Although the organisation and methods of the Information Research Department will be assessed, details of specific propaganda campaigns or operations will be included only insofar as they illustrate the overall direction of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy. In the period under consideration the IRD launched two large propaganda campaigns: to publicise the use of forced labour in the Soviet Union, and to counter the Soviet peace campaign. In addition the department was involved in psychological warfare campaigns in the Malayan emergency and the Korean War. Each one of these campaigns could be the subject of a more detailed examination, as some have been.⁹⁹ They will only be considered in the course of this thesis within the context of Britain's overall strategy for combatting communist propaganda.

This thesis will also concentrate on one specific aspect of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy, cooperation with the

United States. This is not, however, a comparative study of British and American anti-communist propaganda. It does not aim to provide a detailed assessment of America's response to communist propaganda, this has been extensively covered elsewhere.¹⁰⁰ It is a study of British anti-communist propaganda policy, and the extent to which that policy was coordinated with Britain's principal Cold War ally, the United States. The study is comparative only in that British cooperation with the United States, will be compared with British cooperation with other powers in the field of anti-communist propaganda. This will serve to illustrate two fundamental points. Firstly, that cooperation with like minded governments in the field of anti-communist propaganda was an important part of Britain's propaganda policy. Secondly, that the degree of cooperation with the United States went some way beyond that with any other power. As such, this study serves not only to enhance our understanding of British policy towards the Soviet Union, but also Anglo-American relations in the Cold War.

Finally, it is not the intention of this study to examine the effectiveness of British propaganda in the Cold War. It is notoriously difficult to assess the impact of propaganda, particularly if it is directed at a foreign audience. One may identify propaganda policies, and assess the output of propaganda agencies, but it very difficult to gauge how the propaganda is received. This is as much a problem for the propagandist as it is for the historian. A review of the IRD's operations in 1951 observed that it was becoming, 'increasingly difficult to assess precisely the results directly due to Information Research Department.'¹⁰¹ Some assessment can be made through the records kept by the IRD of all known uses of its material, although these are far from complete. Even where such records are available, as they are for some of the IRD's major campaigns, accounting the column inches devoted to a particular propaganda line in the press, provides no indication of how many people read a particular article or whether they were receptive to the information it contained. What is clear is that the resources devoted to the anti-communist propaganda policy suggest that

successive British governments were convinced of the importance of such work and presumably its impact.

Chapter 1 will examine the origins of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy in the period between the end of the war and the drafting of the new propaganda policy at the end of 1947. This chapter will examine the disposition of the British and American propaganda apparatus at the end of the war, and the development of a propaganda machine to fight the Cold War. Existing studies of the origins of Britain's cold war propaganda will be augmented by an examination of the degree of British and American cooperation in this formative period.

In January 1948, Britain launched a new propaganda policy to provide a response to communist propaganda. This policy will be examined in detail in Chapter 2. The debates surrounding the shape of the new policy will be considered. In particular it will be argued that Bevin successfully resisted pressure from within the Foreign Office, the Cabinet and the military for a return to wartime methods of political warfare. This chapter will also set out the organisational arrangements for implementing the new propaganda policy, focusing principally on the creation and methods of the IRD.

Chapter 3 will examine the development of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy between 1948 and 1950 focusing in particular on cooperation with allies in an effort to build a 'concerted counter-offensive' to the communist propaganda machine. The chapter will examine the tensions surrounding the policy for 'Third Force' propaganda, and compare the various levels of cooperation with Britain's allies in Europe, the Commonwealth and the United States.

In 1950, the United States launched their own anti-communist campaign under the banner the 'Campaign of Truth.' Chapter 4 will examine the impact of this campaign on British and American cooperation. This period saw a substantial increase in British and American cooperation, and the increasing coordination of propaganda activities. It will also be argued that the period between the launch of the Campaign of Truth and the end of 1951 saw the elevation of propaganda in the foreign policies of both

nations to the level of a wide-ranging strategy of `political warfare.'

In conclusion this thesis aims to expand our understanding of the early development of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy, and the extent to which this policy involved cooperation with the United States. In drawing these themes together it will be shown that Britain and America developed similar perceptions of the threat from communist propaganda and subversion, but different approaches in responding to that threat. Nevertheless, it will be argued that these, often markedly different approaches, in practice closely complemented one another and did indeed allow Britain and America to `shoot at the same target from different angles.'

Chapter 1

The Origins of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy 1945-1947

CHAPTER 1

The origins of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy, 1945-1947

In January 1948, Britain launched a new propaganda policy designed to 'oppose the inroads of communism by taking the offensive against it.' Britain's 'future foreign publicity policy' was outlined in a paper presented to the Cabinet at its first meeting of 1948. It stated that since the end of the war, Soviet propaganda, had carried on 'a vicious attack against the British Commonwealth and against Western democracy.' The time had come to 'pass over to the offensive and not leave the initiative to the enemy, but make them defend themselves.' It also claimed that it was up to Britain, as a European social democratic government, and not the Americans to take the lead in uniting the forces of anti-communism.¹

Although the United States had also begun to respond to communist propaganda, in January 1948 Britain led the way by developing a policy and an organisational machinery to provide a coordinated global response to hostile communist propaganda. This chapter will examine the formulation of this new propaganda policy. It will identify the factors which, between the end of the war and the drafting of the Cabinet paper at the end of 1947, influenced Britain's decision to go over to the offensive. It will also argue that from the earliest stages Britain's response to communist propaganda was paralleled by, and even complemented, the propaganda policy and machinery of the United States.

The development of British and American propaganda policies during the first year of peace will be examined, from the dissolution of wartime propaganda agencies to the development of new policies for national projection and the creation of new government propaganda agencies to implement these policies. This is followed by an assessment of British and American perceptions of the Soviet threat. It will be shown that in the period from 1945 to 1947 British and American policymakers developed complementary perceptions of the Soviet threat. Although the Soviet Union posed a considerable military threat the principal fear was communist subversion of democracy through the use of

techniques short of war such as propaganda. Britain's initial response to communist propaganda was a propaganda policy based on the positive projection of Britain's national achievements. As this policy proved increasingly inadequate as a counter to hostile foreign propaganda Britain and the United States developed complementary propaganda policies designed to supplement passive national projection with various defensive and offensive measures. In the case of Britain a series of *ad hoc* offensive measures led eventually to the adoption of a coordinated global response to communist propaganda by January 1948.

British and American Propaganda 1945-1946

The British and American governments emerged from World War II convinced of the value of a permanent peacetime propaganda machinery. During the war all the major powers had employed propaganda on an unprecedented scale both at home and abroad. Britain and America had developed a complex bureaucratic machinery for the dissemination of government propaganda and the coordination of allied psychological warfare. Before the end of the war, an official committee set up to consider the machinery of government in postwar Britain noted the potential for peacetime employment of propaganda for 'securing publicity and goodwill for Britain abroad and the Government's policies at home.'² At the end of the war, British and American leaders expressed their conviction that propaganda was an important tool of policy. In December 1945, the British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee expressed himself satisfied that the information services 'have an important and permanent part in the machinery of government under modern conditions.' He described the services as 'essential' to keep the public informed about government policy and to ensure that, 'a true and adequate picture of British policy, British institutions and the British way of life should be presented overseas.'³ In the United States earlier the same year, President Harry S. Truman had observed that, 'the nature of present day foreign relations makes it essential for the United States to maintain information activities abroad as an integral part of our conduct of foreign affairs.'⁴ However,

initially Truman and Attlee did not envisage peacetime propaganda as a defence against hostile foreign powers. They reverted to concepts of government propaganda which owed more to ideas of national projection and advertising developed in the inter-war years than the lessons of World War II. Propaganda was not to be employed in dishonourable and deceitful pursuits as exemplified by the totalitarian dictatorships. In the immediate aftermath of the war Britain and America developed government propaganda as a positive aid to diplomacy. By explaining their position more clearly to foreign powers, they hoped to promote international understanding and more particularly, to improve the prospects for international trade.

Before a peacetime propaganda machinery could be established, both governments had to overcome a widespread antipathy towards the use of propaganda. Although the use of propaganda could be excused as expedient in wartime, many British and American politicians and officials held deep seated reservations about the employment of government propaganda in peacetime. The maintenance of government agencies for the manipulation of opinion was viewed by many as the preserve of totalitarian dictatorships, and many wartime propaganda agencies were hastily dismantled.⁵ In Britain there was a general feeling that Government departments generated by wartime necessity should be dissolved. Those agencies responsible for covert propaganda, the Political Warfare Executive and the Special Operations Executive, were dismantled early in 1946. Attlee noted brusquely that 'he had no wish to preside over a British Comintern.'⁶ The Ministry of Information was also abolished, and overall responsibility for overseas propaganda was shifted to the Foreign Office, where enthusiasm for such activity was by no means universal. As late as 1952 one senior Foreign Office official wrote sardonically to Sir Robert Fraser, Director of the Central Office of Information, that 'no normal diplomatist, I suspect, can be a real enthusiast about publicity and propaganda.'⁷

In the United States popular support for the dissolution of wartime agencies was if anything more pronounced. Congress and

the public had a distaste for the application of wartime methods to the problems of peace and any wartime agency which was not clearly demonstrable as necessary to the government's peacetime policy was rapidly dismantled. The Office of War Information was dissolved in 1945, and responsibility for overseas propaganda was foisted on an unwelcoming State Department. A handful of officials argued the case for peacetime propaganda but the State Department information programme suffered drastic cuts between 1946 and 1948.⁸ America's covert propaganda apparatus fared little better. Sensational press articles predicting the creation of a 'super Gestapo agency' stifled early plans for a postwar intelligence agency.⁹ The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was praised for its wartime achievements and promptly abolished.¹⁰ Although elements of OSS were transferred to other departments there was little apparent concern to preserve its propaganda apparatus. State Department officials considered that maintaining such a capability would be 'contrary to the fundamental premises of our own Governmental system and would be honouring the totalitarians by imitating them.'¹¹

Britain was the first to overcome such reservations. Faced with a worsening economy and a declining position as a world and imperial power, the Labour Government placed considerable faith in the projection of British power and achievements through propaganda. The social and economic policies of the Labour Government marked a radical departure from Conservative precedents, and Labour was aware of the need to explain its policies to a wide domestic and foreign audience. At home, propaganda was employed on an unprecedented scale to explain the benefits of Labour's economic policies to managers, workers and the public at large.¹² Competition in the world markets and Britain's increasing dependence on the United States economy made it essential that Britain's case should not be allowed to go unexplained overseas. In the United States in particular, British propaganda was widely employed to explain to sceptical Congressmen that British socialism was not a step on the road to communism.¹³

Beyond the explanation of Labour's socialist policy, this

new commitment to national projection served other less tractable ends. The postwar expansion of Britain's overseas propaganda also reflected an awareness of diminished power and the need to convince the world that traditional prestige and skills could compensate for economic and military decline.¹⁴ As the historian Philip M. Taylor has observed:

Propaganda may indeed fail *ultimately* to disguise weakness or the realities of decline but it can provide an illusion of strength and confidence that does serve to aid foreign policy objectives in effective short term ways.¹⁵

In pursuing these ends, British postwar foreign propaganda reflected a concept of positive national projection developed in the inter-war years. This concept was most famously developed by Sir Stephen Tallents who coined the phrase 'The Projection of England' in a pamphlet published in 1932. Tallents argued that because Britain no longer enjoyed that position of supremacy which had generated its own prestige and had enabled her to remain aloof for long periods in the past, she must forego her traditional insularity and make Britain more widely known and understood in the world. By 'projecting' a balanced interpretation of British civilisation and personality, the Government would thereby ensure that its views and policies were clearly understood and appreciated abroad.¹⁶

In the postwar years, Britain's straitened financial situation invested this theme with new value. One of the first directives sent to British information officers by the Foreign Office Information Policy Department (IPD) was entitled 'The Projection of Britain.' The paper was designed to explain British policy and aid 'the spread of British ideas and British standards' abroad. The principal themes were to be industrial welfare and the new social legislation of the Labour Government.¹⁷ Initially at least, the overriding objective of the 'Projection of Britain' was to foster the nation's economic well-being. When Bevin wrote to information officers announcing the continuation of information activities he suggested that one of the most important objectives for the postwar years would be the 'promotion of British exports, and the explanation of British

trading policy.'¹⁸ Bevin also believed that propaganda could be used overseas as a suitable tool for the projection of British social democracy. The Labour Party's election manifesto had stated that Britain 'must play the part of brave and constructive leaders in international affairs,' promoting worldwide prosperity through their own example of high production and a steady improvement in living standards.¹⁹ 'The Projection of Britain' was likewise designed to depict Britain as a leading exponent of social democracy and the leading power in the development of progressive welfare legislation.²⁰ This was overseas propaganda at its most positive. The Government was clearly proud of its achievements and Bevin in particular was 'anxious that our light should not remain under a bushel.'²¹

Projecting British achievements had traditionally been the job of the BBC and the British Council. In the postwar years, implementing this national projection on an unprecedented scale was facilitated by the retention of significant elements of Britain's wartime information apparatus. The ease and speed with which postwar propaganda was instituted and expanded suggests that the dissolution of wartime information agencies was largely superficial. The Ministry of Information's functions were divided between various government departments that, in many cases, expanded their information activities accordingly. In 1945 the Foreign Office had only two departments responsible for overseas propaganda, by 1947 it had nine.²² Although the Ministry of Information was abolished, under a new system government information activities were coordinated by a high level committee under the chairmanship of the Lord President of the Council, Herbert Morrison. The retention of a Minister of Information was considered 'politically dangerous,' but Morrison effectively became minister responsible for the information services.²³ In a candid discussion with American officials in 1945 Britain's last Minister of Information, Edward S. Williams, noted that the disappearance of the formal Ministry would not result in the termination of 'most of the present functions of the Ministry.'²⁴ Britain's covert propaganda agencies also continued to operate after their official dissolution. Problems

related to the occupation in Europe, the Mediterranean and Asia ensured that the Political Warfare Executive (PWE) continued to function,²⁵ and that institutional ties between British and American propagandists continued. The vast Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) which had operated in all theatres became a much reduced Allied Information Service, operating in the former Axis states. Its principal function was political re-education concentrating on 'public information, "consolidation" propaganda, counter-propaganda and much political intelligence.'²⁶

Not surprisingly, whilst the Labour Government was keen to advertise its achievements, it was less eager to reveal the manner in which these achievements were publicised. In response to several enquiries from information officers regarding what to tell foreign governments about the reorganisation of British information services, the IPD produced a directive outlining the need for discretion. Requests for information about British organisations were not to be discouraged, but the IPD noted, 'it is important not to give the impression that it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to build up a powerful publicity machine abroad.' It was suggested that requests for information should be used as an opportunity to publicise Britain by describing the output of these services rather than the organisation. It was they claimed, 'more useful to tell other clients what we can provide than how we do it.'²⁷

The one notable exception to this rule on discretion was the United States. In 1945 the Foreign Office and the State Department exchanged detailed information regarding their plans for peacetime propaganda. These informal discussions were carried out by officials on both sides of the Atlantic. In the United States representatives of the British Information Services met with State Department officials.²⁸ In London, Embassy staff discussed developments directly with the Minister of Information.²⁹ These meetings were not confined to areas of mutual interest but covered the whole range of British information apparatus. The extent to which these relations differed from those with other powers is indicated by the fact that although British information officers had been instructed

to be particularly careful not to reveal the scale of information activity to representatives of foreign powers, in 1946, the Foreign Office and the State Department exchanged lengthy and precise details regarding the budgets and personnel involved in overseas propaganda.³⁰

These discussions revealed that American plans for peacetime propaganda were considerably less ambitious than Britain's. The State Department described its information activities as, 'facilitative and supplemental.' The State Department merely sought to keep channels of information open so that interested parties might learn about American life, if they wished. The British thought this approach 'too limited and negative,' preferring 'an active program of presenting British life, virtues and policy to the world through all available media.'³¹ Although America's first postwar propaganda did seek to present a balanced interpretation of America's national attributes, there was no active programme of explanation or persuasion. It was believed that the facts of American life were exemplary, and sufficient to influence world opinion without the employment of any techniques of persuasion. In a secret history of American psychological operations written in 1951, Dr Edward P. Lilly described the American position in 1945 as follows:

If the world were given straight facts about American objectives and desires, men would necessarily recognise the cooperative position of the United States... The unadulterated facts speak for themselves and are more acceptable to the common man than government opinion influencing efforts. America had no selfish post-war policies, and therefore we needed only channels to insure that all peoples knew the American policy.³²

Like the British, the American government was concerned that this programme of national projection should not be seen as propaganda. In a speech in January 1946, William B. Benton, the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, called for a dignified 'information' programme, as distinguished from 'propaganda' with its unfavourable connotations. He made it clear that he intended to present a 'full and fair picture' of the United States. 'The State Department does not intend to engage in so-called propaganda,' he announced.³³ Benton's

statement was perhaps closer to the truth than he intended. Despite his efforts, America's information programme virtually disappeared in the immediate post-war years. State Department officials were largely disinterested or hostile to the propaganda activities that they had inherited. Congressional hostility was even more pronounced and appropriations for overseas information were reduced by more than half between 1946 and 1948.³⁴ The American government's most well established information agency, the Voice of America (VOA), almost collapsed under the combined assault of Congressional budget cuts, and the hostility of private news agencies no longer prepared to service a government propaganda agency.³⁵

Despite such pressures, with the support of Truman and the efforts of individuals such as Benton, elements of America's wartime information apparatus were retained to support peacetime policy. Following the liquidation of the Office of War Information, ten new divisions were established in the State Department under a new Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs (OIC).³⁶ Further continuity was provided in the War Department, who viewed the employment of propaganda somewhat more favourably than their colleagues in the State Department. The American Forces Radio Service (AFRS), directed at GIs in the occupied territories, fulfilled an important propaganda function. Its activities were supplemented by stations such as Radio in the American Sector (RIAS) and Radio Red-White-Red which targeted the home audience in occupied Germany and Austria.³⁷ More significantly, the War Department provided a hospitable environment in which America's offensive propaganda developed. On the same day President Truman signed the Executive Order abolishing the OSS, he also wrote to Secretary of State Byrnes asking him to formulate plans for a comprehensive and coordinated intelligence programme.³⁸ In the ensuing reorganisation, the operational assets of OSS, including its covert propaganda capability, were absorbed in the War Department's new Strategic Services Unit (SSU). Whereas the State Department rejected covert propaganda as incompatible with a peacetime information programme, the SSU were keen to retain

the propaganda assets of OSS.³⁹ Moreover, in the debate over the development of a peacetime intelligence agency, Truman's directive that the agency should perform 'such other functions and duties' related to national security, was generally interpreted to encompass a wide range of activities including propaganda.⁴⁰

As the above evidence indicates, in the first year of peace the British and American governments displayed an ambivalent attitude to the continued operation of government information services. Public statements by leaders and officials suggested that propaganda was now an established feature of government activity. However, the public dissolution of wartime information agencies gave the impression that such activity was largely curtailed. In these reorganisations the British information services fared somewhat better than their American counterparts. Although the British government were keen to disguise the scale of their propaganda activities, there was no suggestion that such activity should not continue merely that it should be more discreet. Indeed, it seems apparent that after the initial demobilisation the Foreign Office, in particular, quickly stepped up its propaganda activity. In the United States, in contrast, there was a strong feeling that government propaganda should be stopped altogether. Appropriations were dramatically reduced and a handful of advocates were forced to fight for the survival of an overseas propaganda programme within the State Department. There was, however, one important area of continuity. Elements of America's covert propaganda apparatus were retained in the War Department and it was from within the burgeoning intelligence community that a new plan for offensive propaganda would emerge. However, initially at least, the propaganda policies of both nations remained focused on the positive presentation of national achievements. American confidence led many to believe that positive policies spoke for themselves. Other nations would naturally be interested in American democracy and all that was required was a facilitative programme to distribute factual information where it was wanted. In contrast, Britain's

declining status as a world power, coupled with a growing dependence on international trade, led her to place considerable faith in the ability of propaganda to disguise national weakness and elicit international economic support. Although both nations retained elements of their wartime propaganda apparatus neither yet had a policy for responding to hostile foreign propaganda.

British and American Perceptions of the Soviet Threat

As the war drew to a close policymakers in Britain and America were unsure of Soviet intentions, and were forced to make assumptions about Soviet aims and objectives based on Soviet behaviour and ambivalent statements by the Soviet leadership. The Soviets had been courageous and formidable allies. The Red Army drove the Nazis out of the USSR, across Eastern Europe and back into Germany. It was the overwhelming power on the Eurasian land mass, and occupied much of continental Europe. The communists in Europe had also gained considerable political strength. Communist party membership had soared during the war, particularly in Eastern Europe, but also in France, Italy and Finland where the communist vote comprised 20% of the electorate in 1945. Meanwhile, Germany, Japan and Italy were defeated, France was humiliated, and Britain weakened.⁴¹ In the view of Western policymakers, the Soviets were quick to capitalise on their advantages. Early in 1945, under Soviet pressure, communist controlled governments were formed in Roumania, Bulgaria, and Poland. In March 1945, the Soviet Union denounced the Turco-Soviet non-aggression pact and began to put pressure on Turkey over control of the Dardanelles, a threatening stance compounded by the ongoing communist insurrection in Greece. In Iran, the Soviets sought to strengthen their position by promoting aspirations for autonomy of non-Iranian groups in the Soviet occupied north. In February 1946, in his first major postwar address, Stalin dismissed any prospect of coexistence between capitalist and communist powers. He described the war as an inevitable crisis of the 'last stage of capitalism,' in which 'our victory means, in the first place, our Soviet system has won.' He called for a fundamental redistribution of raw

materials and markets among countries according to their economic weight, something which he stated could not be achieved under present capitalist conditions.⁴² According to the former Soviet foreign minister, Maxim Litvinov, 'there has been a return in Russia to the outmoded concept of security in terms of territory - the more you've got the safer you are.'⁴³

From 1945 until mid-1946, British and American policymakers developed an, often complementary, perception of the Soviet threat. As the war drew to a close, British and American military planners viewed Soviet military potential with alarm. In the aftermath of the war, the postponement of elections in Eastern Europe, the presence of Soviet troops in Iran, and Soviet pressure on Greece and Turkey served to further undermine faith in Soviet goodwill. Concerns regarding Soviet intentions in Eastern Europe and the Middle East were supported by numerous reports from British and American missions which highlighted the growth in hostile Soviet propaganda. Such reports provided the basis for a perception of the Soviet threat based upon political and not military fears. British and American policymakers and officials did not believe that the Soviet Union was ready to embark upon an imminent war. They did, however, fear the spread of Soviet influence through communist subversion. Western observers were concerned that the Soviet Union retained the potential to influence events beyond its borders through a well organised network of communist parties and agents. Once they had established control in Eastern Europe, it was feared that the Soviets would attempt to weaken and subvert Western democracies by a series of clandestine and overt methods short of military confrontation. Soviet actions in the immediate aftermath of the war did little to dispel these fears.

During the war, British and American leaders had divergent views regarding the prospects for continued three power cooperation after the defeat of Nazi Germany. Churchill regarded cooperation with the Soviet Union merely as an alliance of convenience. Relations between Britain and the Soviet Union had been characterised by ideological and geopolitical hostility since 1917 and Churchill was under no illusion that hostile

relations would resume after the war. On his way to the Teheran conference in 1943 Churchill told Macmillan, 'Germany is finished ... Russia is the real problem now.'⁴⁴ In contrast Roosevelt was determined to maintain cooperation with the Soviet Union as the key to world peace. Elusive as Roosevelt's views are there is little evidence to suggest that he shared Churchill's view of the Soviet threat. It is apparent that in Roosevelt's vision Russia and the United States would manage world affairs through the United Nations.⁴⁵

It is tempting to ascribe the shifts in British and American policy towards the Soviet Union in 1945 to the changes of administration brought about by the death of Roosevelt and the British general election. However, Soviet actions called into question whether Roosevelt's concept of a postwar order could ever be realised. Truman assumed office promising to continue Roosevelt's policies. Like Roosevelt he was concerned to avoid the appearance of Anglo-American collaboration against the Soviet Union. Throughout 1945, with Secretary of State James Byrnes, Truman sought accommodation with the Soviet Union. Faced with Soviet manoeuvres in eastern Europe and the intransigent negotiating position of Soviet delegates at the peace conferences, by early 1946 Truman resolved to follow a tougher policy towards the Soviet Union. According to Melvyn Leffler, Truman regarded Soviet actions in Eastern Europe as 'opportunistic, arbitrary and outrageous.'⁴⁶ He characterised Soviet behaviour as a continuation of Tsarist Russia's expansionist past. Moreover, recent lessons indicated that if totalitarian nations were allowed to gather strength they could threaten the United States. At the end of 1945, on reading a report on the conduct of elections in Eastern Europe, Truman famously expressed himself, 'tired of babying the Soviets.' He wanted the Roumanian and Bulgarian Governments radically changed, Soviet actions in Iran condemned and Soviet designs on Turkey checked. By the beginning of 1946, Truman resolved that, 'unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making.'⁴⁷ Shortly afterwards, Truman shared a platform with Churchill in Fulton Missouri, as the former Prime

Minister gave his famous Iron Curtain speech.

In Britain, however, the new Labour Government had fought the general election campaign on the assertion that a socialist government would naturally enjoy closer relations with the Soviet Government than their Conservative predecessors. There was considerable sympathy for the Soviet position among Labour Party activists, and much pro-Soviet sentiment was expressed by the 1945 intake of MPs in their first months in Parliament. In marked contrast to the party rank and file, those in the Labour leadership with first hand experience of dealing with the Soviets were inclined to be less conciliatory.⁴⁸ During the election campaign, Attlee had accompanied Churchill to the Potsdam Conference. When he returned to Potsdam as Prime Minister, faced with Stalin's geniality, Attlee was under no illusions about the Soviet's attitude, 'I knew from experience that the Communists had always fought us more vigorously than the Tories because they thought we offered a viable alternative to Communism.'⁴⁹ On returning from the San Francisco conference in June 1945, Attlee pronounced the Russians to be 'perfectly bloody to deal with; they tell us nothing yet are setting up puppet governments all over Europe and as far west as they can.'⁵⁰ Attlee's choice of Bevin as Foreign Secretary was, according to his press secretary and biographer Francis Williams, predicated on the fact that, 'Soviet Russia would become tough, aggressive and uncooperative' and Bevin was the most suited, 'by temperament and experience to meet such a situation.'⁵¹ Bevin's anti-communist credentials were undoubted. Although he was committed to a new internationalist, and if possible socialist, world order, he was not prepared to make concessions to the Soviets to achieve it.⁵² At Potsdam, Bevin claimed that, Churchill had gone 'too far in throwing baubles to the Soviets.'⁵³ Unlike Churchill, Bevin would not acquiesce in Soviet attempts to extend their sphere of influence in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. By the spring of 1946, following the first frustrating Council of Foreign Ministers meetings, and Stalin's February speech, Bevin told Attlee that the Russians 'have decided upon an aggressive policy based upon militant Communism and Russian chauvinism and seem

determined to stick at nothing, short of war, to obtain their objectives.¹⁵⁴

Western leaders' perceptions of the Soviet threat were not, of course, based simply on their experiences of dealing with the Soviets at the peace conferences. Towards the end of the war, military and intelligence agencies in Britain and America turned their attention to the potential threat from the Soviet Union's vast military capability. In Britain, the Post Hostilities Planning Staff (PHPS) began preparing studies early in 1944 based on the assumption that the Soviet Union was the next potential enemy.⁵⁵ In the United States, the Joint Chiefs of Staff stressed the importance of deterring Soviet aggrandizement in Europe and Asia.⁵⁶ By the autumn of 1945, military planners on both sides of the Atlantic were worried that Soviet control of much of Eastern Europe would aid the Soviet Union's economic recovery, enhance its warmaking capacity and deny resources to Western Europe.

British and American intelligence agencies produced their first postwar assessments of Soviet intentions early in 1946. In the light of US possession of the atomic bomb, these assessments stressed that the immediate threat was not Soviet military strength but communist subversion. The principal fear was that following the establishment of Soviet control in eastern Europe the Soviets would attempt to weaken and subvert western democracies by a combination of clandestine and overt methods short of military intervention. In March 1946, the British Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) concluded that although the Soviet Union would avoid any course of action likely to provoke a war, she would respond 'using all weapons, short of war' to any attempt to undermine her position in the satellite states. In addition to securing her frontiers the Soviet Union would adopt a 'policy of opportunism to extend her influence wherever possible without provoking a major war.' According to the JIC, at most risk were those areas where they were least likely 'to come up against firm combined resistance from the United States and Great Britain,' such as the Mediterranean, Turkey and Iran. The JIC identified several methods by which the Soviets would

seek to extend their influence: Communist parties abroad would play a central role, both in consolidating power in the Soviet orbit and weakening non-communist states; the Soviets would also make use of their position in the United Nations, and various other international organisations such as the World Federation of Trade Unions and the World Youth Organisation; finally, propaganda would be used to the full, in particular to stir up trouble among colonial peoples.⁵⁷

The first estimate of Soviet intentions and capabilities produced by the American Central Intelligence Group's Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE), also concluded that the Soviet Union would seek to avoid military conflict. Like the JIC, it acknowledged that the Soviet Union would insist upon dominating Eastern Europe. Elsewhere Stalin would pursue an 'opportunistic and grasping' policy. The main targets for Soviet attention would be Greece, Turkey and Iran. The Soviets would also seek to be the predominant influence in the whole of Germany and Austria, and enjoy an influence at least equal to the United States in Japan, China, and Korea. In line with the British, this American assessment also stressed that the Soviets believed the success of their policies were dependent upon ensuring that Britain and America did not combine as part of a powerful western bloc. The report identified subversion as the principal method the Soviets would employ to undermine the unity and strength of foreign states. Through local communist parties and propaganda the Soviets would seek to: foment domestic discord, discredit the leadership, promote domestic agitation conducive to a reduction of their target's military and economic strength and to the adoption of foreign policies favourable to Soviet purposes, and incite colonial unrest.⁵⁸

These intelligence assessments were supported by reports throughout 1946 from British and American representatives abroad at the sharp end of Soviet propaganda attacks. These reports suggested a developing propaganda campaign directed at Britain and the US, and an increase in Soviet propaganda in vulnerable areas. From early in 1946 British and American missions began to report a new and increasingly hostile communist propaganda

campaign. According to the US Ambassador in Moscow, the Soviet propaganda campaign combined 'violent attacks on "British imperialism"' with 'grotesque and slightly sinister' depictions of the American way of life.⁵⁹ The British Embassy reported that a delegation of Labour MPs to Moscow had been shocked by the 'extent and virulence' of Soviet anti-British propaganda.⁶⁰ Reports also suggested that communist propagandists were active in at least some of those areas identified as at most risk from Soviet subversion. A US weekly intelligence summary from August 1946 observed that Soviet propaganda was increasingly aimed at splitting the 'Anglo-America bloc' by playing up Anglo-American differences in the Middle East, and highlighting the competition for markets in India and the Far East.⁶¹ In July 1946, a Parliamentary Delegation to Iran was dismayed by the level of anti-British propaganda by the communist Tudeh Party. On their return they recommended that 'a strong British propaganda drive should be launched' in Iran.⁶² British information officers implored the Foreign Office to allow them to respond on a broader scale,⁶³ and the American Ambassador in Moscow called for a 'vigorous and intelligent American information program.'⁶⁴

Perhaps the most influential assessments of Soviet policy came from British and American representatives in Moscow. From their position near the centre of Soviet power, and often at the forefront of communist propaganda attacks, they dramatically illustrated the dangers of communist subversion. Most famously in February 1946 George Kennan, charge d'affaires at the American Embassy in Moscow, sought to define Soviet policy in his "long telegram" to the State Department. Kennan concluded that Soviet policy was guided by the belief that 'with US there can be no permanent modus vivendi.' Stalin believed that 'peaceful coexistence' was impossible, and that the world revolved around socialist and capitalist 'centers' engaged in a constant battle for command of the world economy. Although Soviet foreign policy was not adventuristic they would seek to expand the limits of Soviet power 'wherever it was considered timely and promising.' This policy, Kennan wrote, would be pursued on an official and a 'subterranean' plane, in which the actions of Soviet officials

would be supported by a series of measures undertaken 'by agencies for which Soviet Government does not admit responsibility.' According to Kennan the Soviet Union had at its disposal:

... an elaborate and far flung apparatus for exertion of its influence in other countries, an apparatus of amazing flexibility and versatility, managed by people whose experience and skill in underground methods are presumably without parallel in history.⁶⁵

Kennan's views were echoed in a series of telegrams from the British charge d'affaires, Frank Roberts.⁶⁶ Roberts concurred with Kennan that the Soviet Union would seek to avoid a major war, but he too found little cause for optimism in this analysis. Instead, Roberts warned that 'increasing attention was devoted to the renewed Marxist-Leninist ideological campaign.' He also emphasised the particular anti-British tone of this campaign. Kennan had noted that of all their perceived enemies the Soviets would wage a relentless battle against the so-called 'false friends of the people', namely moderate socialist or social democratic leaders. Roberts' experience confirmed Kennan's observation. He wrote that, in the new ideological offensive, Britain, 'as the home of capitalism, imperialism and now of social democracy, is a main target.' Moreover, he expanded, such propaganda was not confined to the Soviet Union. All across Europe 'communist propaganda is constantly directed against us.'⁶⁷

Kennan and Roberts' reports illustrate the degree of convergence between British and American official perceptions of the Soviet threat. They also indicate a marked degree of agreement in their proposed response to Soviet actions. Both suggested a response based on the projection of an image of a healthy and vigorous society to rival the appeal of Soviet communism. The 'self-confidence, discipline, morale and community spirit of our own people', was, according to Kennan, 'a victory ... worth a thousand diplomatic notes and joint communiques.' Only through presenting 'a more positive and constructive picture of the sort of world we would like to see' could America hope to guide the rest of the world away from communism. Similarly, Roberts stressed that Britain 'should act

as champions of a dynamic faith and way of life with an appeal to the world at least as great as that of the Communist system.' Kennan and Roberts also recognised that an appeal to international opinion would only succeed if coupled with a campaign to disillusion domestic public opinion about Soviet intentions. Both emphasised the need for a campaign to 'educate' the British and American public about the realities of Soviet communism. In conclusion, Kennan and Roberts believed that countering the Soviet threat would involve the coordination of political and military strategy, domestic and foreign policy in a manner comparable with wartime.⁶⁸

Kennan and Roberts were both influential in defining the Soviet threat. Kennan's telegram was widely circulated within the US Government. The Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal thought it so inspired he had it despatched to 'hundreds if not thousands' of senior officers in the armed services. Kennan's 'long telegram' has been widely credited with defining the US policy of 'containment' of the Soviet threat for the next forty years. Kennan returned to Washington shortly afterwards from where he continued to provide detailed assessments of the Soviet threat as head the new Policy Planning Staff tasked with 'formulating and developing... long term programs for the achievement of US foreign policy objectives.'⁶⁹ Although the impact of Roberts' analysis was less sensational it also struck a resonant chord in the Foreign Office, and was widely read in Government. The Head of the Northern Department, Christopher Warner, described his despatches as 'magnificent' and Bevin instructed that the whole of Roberts' analysis be circulated to the Cabinet.⁷⁰

Roberts' analysis supported a growing consensus within the Foreign Office regarding the hostile nature of Soviet intentions and the need to adopt a more vigorous response. In 1946 senior officials in the Foreign Office began to reassess Soviet intentions. Prompted by the JIC and Roberts' reports from Moscow, they reached rather gloomy conclusions about the limits of Stalin's intentions and advocated a new 'defensive/offensive' strategy to respond to the Soviet threat.⁷¹ The forum in which

this response was developed was the Foreign Office Russia Committee. Roberts had recommended the creation of a new body within the Foreign Office to provide analysis of Soviet policy and formulate Britain's global response. The Russia Committee was established in April 1946 and is evidence of the growing awareness of the Soviet threat and the need to provide a coordinated response. The Russia Committee was designed to provide a weekly review of 'all aspects of Soviet policy and propaganda', and consider what response was required, with particular reference to the 'probable degree of support to be looked for from the United States of America, and to a lesser degree from France and others.'⁷²

At its first meeting, the committee considered a paper drawn up by Christopher Warner which outlined, 'The Soviet Campaign Against This Country and Our Response To It.' Warner echoed Frank Roberts' telegrams by stressing that the Soviets had returned to a 'pure doctrine of Marx-Lenin-Stalinism' which was naturally antagonistic to British social democracy. In pursuing this doctrinal policy the Soviets would, according to Warner, 'play an aggressive political role, while making an intensive drive to increase its own military and industrial strength.' Warner's analysis reveals the degree to which recent experience influenced Foreign Office perceptions of the Soviet threat. Highlighting the proselytising nature of communism, Warner noted that, 'we should be very unwise not to take the Russians at their word, just as we should have been wise to take Mein Kampf at its face value.' Warner stressed that as Hitler had occupied half of Europe by means short of war there should be no mistake about Soviet intentions.⁷³ Aggressive Soviet actions were evident around the world: in Eastern Europe, Germany, Iran, Manchuria, Korea and in the United Nations. British interests worldwide were threatened, in particular by aggressive Soviet propaganda. 'The Soviet Government,' he wrote, 'are carrying on an intensive campaign to weaken, deprecate and harry this country in every possible way.' Wherever they have the opportunity the Soviets would, according to Warner seek to 'stir up trouble for His Majesty's Government or to weaken their influence.' The threats

to Britain were manifold: the establishment of communist governments in countries where hostile influence threatened Britain's national interest; the weakening of friendly elements in such countries; the creation of troubled conditions in the colonies; disruption of recovery outside the Soviet orbit; attempts to divide Britain from their allies; and attempts to discredit Britain as weak and reactionary. Faced with such threats, Warner argued, 'concessions and appeasement' would merely serve to weaken Britain's position while the Soviets built up their industrial and economic strength. Britain, he concluded must launch a vigorous defence. Taking his lead from the JIC, Warner asserted that if the Soviets were to employ means short of war, such methods should also be Britain's defence:

The Soviet Government makes coordinated use of military, economic, propaganda and political weapons and also of the communist 'religion'. It is submitted, therefore, that we must at once organise and coordinate our defences against all these and that we should not stop short of a defensive-offensive.⁷⁴

Warner's paper was endorsed by Bevin and Attlee.⁷⁵ The general acceptance of the Foreign Office's reassessment of Soviet policy, and in the United States the embracing of Kennan's analysis, indicates that on both sides of the Atlantic policymakers' views of the Soviet threat had crystallised by early 1946. However, public perceptions of the Soviet threat did not necessarily correspond with those of politicians and officials, and this remained an obstacle to a more robust response to the Soviet threat. In September 1946, US intelligence observed that Soviet propaganda which had sought to 'keep alive in the US and UK any active opposition to any firm policy towards the USSR' had met with considerable success. It concluded that many moderate and liberal groups 'have been so divided over the issue of policy toward the USSR that their potentialities for opposing Soviet tactics have been at least neutralised.'⁷⁶ If the British and American Governments were going to pursue a tougher policy with the Soviet Union they would also need to address public opinion at home.

The Soviet attempt to promote a more generous policy towards themselves in Britain and the US was largely pushing against an

open door. In Britain there remained among the general public a widespread feeling of gratitude for the Soviet contribution to the war effort. Throughout the war, the British public had displayed a marked admiration for the achievements of the Red Army, and by extension, the Soviet regime. As early as 1941, Churchill remarked on the 'tendency of the British public to forget the dangers of communism in their enthusiasm over the resistance of Russia.'⁷⁷ By March 1945, the Foreign Office suggested that it was necessary to encourage franker criticism in Britain of Soviet policy and to stop the 'gush of propaganda' eulogising the Russian war effort and their system of government.⁷⁸ When, in September 1945, a Gallup public opinion poll asked the British public if their feelings towards Russia were more or less friendly than a year ago, 16% said they felt more friendly, 54% felt the same, and 19% less friendly. When asked the same question about the United States, only 9% felt more friendly, and 35% less friendly.⁷⁹ When questioned again about attitudes towards the Soviet Union in September 1946, 41% now pronounced themselves less friendly, but 41% recorded no change in attitude and 8% still expressed increased friendliness.⁸⁰ Moreover, when asked the reasons for the disappearance of allied cooperation, general mistrust and 'each country out for itself' came significantly higher than Russian imperialism and unwillingness to cooperate.⁸¹ Remarkably, when Gallup compiled a list of people most admired by the British public in November 1946 Stalin came seventh, one place above the King and Queen!⁸²

Remarkably in the United States, where throughout the war Roosevelt had openly pursued a more accommodating policy towards the Soviet Union, the public was less pro-Soviet than in Britain. Polls carried out by the American Institute of Public Opinion indicate a consistent level of distrust of Soviet policies throughout the war and into peacetime.⁸³ Nevertheless, they also indicate that public concern about the nation's security was not entirely due to anti-Soviet sentiment. When pollsters asked in February 1946 which countries they distrusted, although the Soviet Union led the list with 52%, Britain came in a close

second with 41%.⁸⁴ Moreover, suspicion of Soviet intentions did not transform into support for a new policy towards the Soviet Union. Following Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech at Fulton the British Ambassador Halifax concluded that although the majority of 'articulate comment' paid homage to the speaker, it disagreed, 'either with his diagnosis or his cure, or both.' Halifax noted:

Profound as the uneasiness is about Soviet policies, there is still a reluctance to face the full implications of the facts and a timidity about the consequences of language as forthright as Mr Churchill's.⁸⁵

Halifax's conclusions are supported by opinion polls which indicate that the majority of those polled who knew of Churchill's speech disapproved of his suggestions.⁸⁶ This reluctance to respond to Soviet policies reflected a wider feeling in both the United States and Britain, that foreign policy issues were not a major concern as the world recovered from the war. In October 1945, only 7% of Americans polled rated world peace as the number one problem facing the country. Jobs and labour unrest were, perhaps predictably, their foremost concerns.⁸⁷ In Britain, foreign policy was not included in pollsters' questions regarding the most pressing problems facing the country until 1947. When it was, in July 1947, only 5% considered foreign policy to be the most important problem, far below the food situation at 27% and housing at 13%.⁸⁸

By mid 1946, British and American leaders and officials had reached similar views of the Soviet threat. In responding to this threat, policymakers faced several problems. Firstly, diplomats and information officers in certain strategic areas, principally Iran, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, urgently sought permission to answer specific communist propaganda charges in their respective countries. In addition to the immediate problem of this ongoing communist propaganda campaign, observers feared the potential of communist subversion on a much wider scale. Those such as Kennan and Roberts, who took in the whole vista of Soviet behaviour recognised that the communist propaganda apparatus was widespread and highly organised. Their analyses suggested a piecemeal response to individual Soviet attacks would not do. They recommended the global presentation

of Western values as a coherent doctrine to rival that of communism. Such an approach would necessitate a propaganda campaign comparable in scale and organisation to that of the Soviet Union. Finally, British and American policymakers faced the problem of mobilising domestic opinion. British and American representatives abroad who witnessed hostile communist propaganda first hand were quick to advocate a vigorous response. The mass of the population of Britain and America was not, however, subject to such exposure. For some at least, the Soviet Union was a valiant ally which had suffered incredible losses and was not surprisingly concerned for its future security. A far larger majority cared little for foreign policy issues. They had survived a dreadful war and were more concerned with the immediate problems of domestic regeneration. If policymakers were to develop a coherent and effective response to Soviet propaganda they would need to employ government propaganda both at home and abroad at a level unprecedented in peacetime.

The Development of Anti-Communist Propaganda 1946-1947

Britain took the initiative in responding to communist propaganda. It was, however, an initiative taken with reluctance and caution. Faced with warnings from the JIC and calls from his most senior diplomats to allow them to react to communist propaganda, Bevin continued to place great faith in 'The Projection of Britain.' His response to anti-British communist propaganda was to propose an ever more forceful presentation of British achievements. In January 1946, Bevin told the Cabinet, 'The best means of preventing the countries of Southeastern Europe from being absorbed into an exclusive Soviet sphere of influence was to provide a steady stream of information about British life and culture.'⁸⁹ By emphasising Britain's industrial welfare, Bevin hoped to 'expose the myth current in many quarters that Soviet Russia is the only country in which attention is given to the welfare of workers.'⁹⁰ Although many of those posted abroad considered this response to be somewhat inadequate, the Foreign Office replied to their requests for permission to answer Soviet charges with Bevin's edict that 'no

active steps should be taken in the way of counter-attack.'⁹¹ At a joint Central Office of Information and Foreign Office Conference on overseas information, Ivone Kirkpatrick stressed that it was the Foreign Secretary's wish that:

... the steady political and publicity attack being made by Russia should not be met by anti-communist propaganda. The policy was that publicity should project the British social system, aspects of industrial welfare etc. being in fact educative.⁹²

There is evidence to suggest that this educative approach was paying off. Reports from British missions in Eastern Europe emphasised the 'pathetic and encouraging' appetite of the general populace for British cultural material.⁹³ Similarly, in Italy, an area considered to be a principal target for communist propaganda, the British Labour Attache wrote that, 'it would be more profitable to adopt a positive line of pro-British propaganda than the negative line of answering other people's propaganda.'⁹⁴ In June 1947, Kirkpatrick informed a production conference on overseas propaganda, that the Foreign Secretary 'considered the tide of communism in Europe had receded, largely owing to the way in which the Russians had conducted affairs, and the way in which they [the British] had presented themselves to the world.'⁹⁵

Bevin's confidence in 'The Projection of Britain' was not, however, shared by all his colleagues in the Foreign Office. From early in 1946, officials in the Foreign Office urged Bevin to adopt a more vigorous response to communist propaganda. Often couched in language reminiscent of World War II, this response went beyond the educative approach favoured by Bevin and included elements of offence as well as defence. It was a response which Bevin resisted through 1946 and 1947, yet one which ultimately prevailed. Faced with offensive communist propaganda, officials suggested that British overseas propaganda should concentrate less on projecting national achievements and focus greater attention on countering communist charges. As Ivone Kirkpatrick told the Central Office of Information in July 1946, 'the stage of winning admirers and friends for Great Britain had now passed ... the time had come to persuade each country to take action.'⁹⁶

In his paper on the Soviet campaign against Britain, Christopher Warner had begun to outline a new line for responding to offensive communist propaganda. Far from winning friends through the projection of national achievements, Warner stressed that British propaganda should be directed against communism which should be exposed as totalitarianism. British propaganda should attack and expose the myths the Soviet Government was using to justify its policy, such as: the supposed encirclement of Russia by capitalist powers; the myth that Germany was to be built up against Russia; that Russia gave disinterested support to subject races in contrast to colonial enslavement by capitalist powers; the fallacious distinction between the idea of a 'western bloc' and the reality of the Russian eastern bloc; the Russian mis-interpretations of 'democracy,' 'cordon sanitaire' and 'collaboration'; and the Soviet habit of calling all non-communists reactionaries and anti-democratic. In addition to this new line in British propaganda, Warner suggested that Britain should offer 'all moral and material support as was possible without endangering their lives' to progressive forces in any country fighting against communism.⁹⁷

Prompted by Warner's paper, Kirkpatrick drafted a detailed proposal for British counter-propaganda. Kirkpatrick was a veteran of wartime propaganda and his proposal contained much to recommend it to Bevin. He outlined several premises for an effective propaganda campaign, including: the cooperation of Government Ministers; the support of the BBC and the domestic media; and the closest coordination of domestic and foreign propaganda. He also cautioned against expectations of dramatic results. The essence of the campaign was to be education and would therefore proceed 'at a steady drip rather than a sudden gush.' However, Kirkpatrick somewhat undermined the impact of his paper by linking his proposals for counter-propaganda with a more hazardous plan for subversion. By drawing on his wartime experience Kirkpatrick crossed a line between advocating actions short of war and the kind of direct intervention which could provoke one. In a much quoted passage, he concluded:

We have a good analogy in our very successful campaign during the war directed towards stimulating resistance

movements in Europe. The V sign was blazoned all over the world, but at the same time we acted. We parachuted men, money and arms into occupied territory ... Propaganda on the largest possible scale was coordinated with our policy.⁹⁸

Despite support from senior officials, Kirkpatrick's dramatic plan never received any degree of Ministerial approval. Bevin strongly opposed the scheme and minuted tersely underneath, 'The more I study this the less I like it. I am quite sure that the putting over of positive results of British attitudes will be a better corrective.'⁹⁹ Far from sponsoring subversion, Bevin recommended greater publicity for the new Insurance and National Health Bills.¹⁰⁰ Although Kirkpatrick's paper was discussed on several further occasions, on each occasion it was decided that anti-communist propaganda and subversion should be treated separately.¹⁰¹ In contrast, Warner's paper had been distributed to selected Cabinet Ministers, and received the approval of both Bevin and Attlee.¹⁰² It seems likely that Warner's appeal to unite the forces of social democracy was somewhat more palatable to Bevin than Kirkpatrick's reversion to wartime tactics. Although Bevin resisted the adoption of a defensive-offensive policy on a global scale, he did authorise such a campaign in several key areas, most notably Iran.¹⁰³

The Middle East was essential to Britain's emerging Cold War strategy. Foreign Office concerns about communist propaganda in the area coincided with military plans to use the Middle East as a base from which to attack the Soviet Union in the event of war. The United Kingdom was out of range of many important strategic targets, and the Chiefs of Staff considered bases in the Middle East vital to bring the industrial and oil producing areas of Southern Russia within long range air attack.¹⁰⁴ In 1945 the Joint Intelligence Committee had identified the Middle East as an area in which Britain was particularly vulnerable to hostile Soviet propaganda. In June 1946 it reported that the aim of Soviet policy was to 'weaken the British position in that area.'¹⁰⁵ The Foreign Office had already decided to 'go all out for the defence of our interests in the areas which the Chiefs of Staff eventually declared to be of vital importance.'¹⁰⁶ Thus when the British mission in Teheran began to express concern

at the influence of the communist Tudeh Party, the Foreign Office urged Bevin to make an exception to his rule and sanction a general counter-offensive in Iran.¹⁰⁷

In October 1946, Kirkpatrick drafted a directive for propaganda in the Middle East, and with reservations, Bevin approved it. Kirkpatrick proposed a two pronged counter-offensive designed to present Britain as the nation to which Middle East countries should look for guidance, whilst dealing factually with the Russian campaign of misrepresentations. Bevin's only concern was that the campaign should be predominantly positive and not make the mistake of rousing 'communist enthusiasm by excessive attacks on communism.' As Bevin wished, Kirkpatrick's directive was designed to project positive themes and avoid futile controversy. Britain's progressive social policy was emphasised as was Britain's willingness to extend this commitment overseas in the form of technical and humanitarian assistance. It was, Kirkpatrick claimed, important to 'ram home' to the peoples of the Middle East Britain's interest in the 'independence, security and prosperity' of the region, whilst also publicising British attempts to influence governments in the area to introduce social reforms and raise standards of living. The anti-communist aspect of the campaign sought to answer Soviet misrepresentations, depict the true state of affairs in Russia, and stress the failure of Russian diplomacy. Aware of Soviet experience in propaganda, Kirkpatrick noted that communist charges should be answered with discretion. It was important to avoid being drawn into debates on subjects chosen by the Soviets and always appear to be on the defensive. The positive work of 'building the new Britain' was to be at the forefront of British propaganda.¹⁰⁸

These themes were projected on the widest possible scale. In addition to the British Government's information apparatus, the BBC, British companies in the Middle East, and the TUC were all mobilised. Sir Ian Jacob, Controller of the BBC's European Services, had approached the Foreign Office earlier in 1946 to suggest that Britain was being too indulgent in its attitude to Soviet propaganda and that broadcasts might carry more anti-

communist material. Jacob was promptly invited to attend meetings of the Russia committee as the only non-Foreign Office member.¹⁰⁹ When the campaign in Iran began in October 1946, Kirkpatrick recommended that Sir William Haley, the Director-General of the BBC, be asked to place the Middle East services under Jacob's control.¹¹⁰ Although Jacob insisted that the BBC's impartiality should be preserved he urged the Russia Committee to provide more background information on the USSR, methods of the Soviet Government and British policy in the Middle East.¹¹¹ British oil companies were also asked to publicise their efforts to raise the standard of living in Iran.¹¹² In an effort to ensure their assistance, it was suggested that officials stress the danger of communist disruption of the labour force and that British oil companies, 'can only hope to hold their positions if they order their affairs according to the best Western standards.' One company which did much to promote Britain's positive approach to labour welfare was the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). In return for its cooperation Bevin asked the Minister of Supply, the President of the Board of Trade and the Minister of Labour to deal 'rapidly and favourably' with all requests from the AIOC for facilities for their development programme.¹¹³ Kirkpatrick recommended a similar approach to the Imperial Bank in Iran. The TUC was also asked to provide literature on 'a considerable scale.'¹¹⁴ Finally, in the tradition of successful wartime propaganda, overt propaganda was supported by a certain degree of covert activity. SIS was brought in to enquire into certain aspects of Persian opinion and carry out any investigation the Ambassador might request. Colonel Wheeler, the newly appointed information officer in Teheran, also suggested that Persian agents from India might be introduced for the oral dissemination of 'black' propaganda.¹¹⁵

The propaganda campaign in Iran was only the first tentative step towards a global response to communist propaganda. It was nevertheless a significant step. It was the first example of the more active offensive-defensive strategy for responding to Soviet propaganda, involving the coordination of overt and covert propaganda and the close support of the BBC and private

organisations. Bevin, however, balked at requests to expand the campaign to cover the whole of the Middle East.¹¹⁶ When Sargent suggested that Kirkpatrick's original proposals be reconsidered in the light of the new campaign, Bevin stood firm, 'I am not going to commit myself to the whole of Kirkpatrick's scheme in order to tackle Persia.'¹¹⁷ The Foreign Office was nonetheless reluctant to allow Bevin's doubts to impede the general progress of the anti-communist campaign. As Raymond Smith has observed, there was a substantial measure of confidence that Bevin's objections could be 'chipped away' as long as the momentum was maintained. Bevin's approval of the campaign in Iran alongside his general approval of Warner's paper proved to be 'the hammer and chisel' by which this was to be done.¹¹⁸ Officials followed a dual strategy whereby preparations were made so that a more vigorous campaign might be instituted the moment Ministerial approval was forthcoming. At the same time, they sought approval for a propaganda counter-offensive in various specific cases, in Germany, France and Italy, and at home in Britain.

In preparation for the expected change in policy, Warner's memorandum was circulated to heads of Foreign Office departments and 30 diplomatic posts.¹¹⁹ The Russia Committee suggested that British representatives abroad 'should be furnished with the necessary background for any action which *might* be required', and it should be made clear that 'a departure from the normal practice of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries *will* be involved.'¹²⁰ It was also agreed that, Britain's publicity machine should be maintained 'at full efficiency, in order that it might be able to *meet the possibility* of Ministers approving an all-out anti-communist campaign.'¹²¹ In July 1946, the Russia Committee established a publicity subcommittee to provide more detailed consideration of propaganda measures.¹²²

Throughout 1946 the Russia Committee also considered action in response to specific requests from British missions in Italy, France and Finland. In these cases, Ministerial approval was apparently not sought although the measures discussed clearly went beyond Bevin's instructions. In Italy the British

Ambassador noted that efforts to prevent the country embracing communism were woefully inadequate. Anti-British propaganda was widespread and the Ambassador recommended the creation of an organisation like the Political Warfare Executive to carry out offensive propaganda.¹²³ In response the Russia Committee recommended that propaganda should compare the low cost of British occupation to Soviet calls for reparations, and suggested further publicity be given to misdeeds in countries under Soviet occupation. They also considered what opportunities might arise for 'influencing elections in favour of our friends.'¹²⁴ Concern that communists might take power through the ballot box was also evident in France. The question of influencing French elections was first discussed in March 1946, and by the end of April it was noted that Kirkpatrick and the French Department were 'doing all that was possible to combat Communist propaganda in the French elections.'¹²⁵ When discussing such intervention the question of Ministerial approval was rarely mentioned although the Committee was apparently aware of the limitations imposed by Bevin. Its willingness to bypass Bevin's authority was clearly illustrated when the British representative in Finland asked for permission to expose communist myths through a programme of oral propaganda. The Russia Committee noted that such measures went 'somewhat beyond what we are already authorised to do.' Nonetheless they approved the suggestions, and agreed to furnish the Embassy with all possible support, 'provided they are carried out discreetly.'¹²⁶

Ministerial approval was secured in September 1946 for additional anti-communist measures in Germany, and more generally to publicise Soviet breaches of the Potsdam Agreement.¹²⁷ In Germany British propaganda activities had continued since 1945 under the guise of 're-education,' in what Kirkpatrick later termed the 'battle for the German mind'.¹²⁸ The new campaign stepped up these activities and drew attention to Soviet misrepresentations of British policy. Authority was given for 'a campaign of enlightenment' regarding Soviet failure to carry out the Potsdam agreement.¹²⁹ Publicity was given to the production of war material in the Soviet zones of Germany and

Austria. Kirkpatrick also arranged for Soviet troop numbers in South Eastern Europe to be publicised by the BBC.¹³⁰ In Germany, as in Iran, the Foreign Office sought to avoid 'a slanging match were we are on the defensive and engaged in breathlessly countering Soviet charges.' Officials noted perceptively that, 'the latest Soviet lie will always have greater news value than the latest British denial.' The main task was to explain British policy fully and where possible implicitly debunk Soviet propaganda about it. In addition, there was to be a certain amount of factual reporting of conditions in the Soviet zone, with particular emphasis on the Soviet desire for reparations.¹³¹

The adoption of a more combative response to communist propaganda in Germany is indicative of a general shift in Bevin's attitude at the end of 1946. Prompted by the creation of communist Governments in Bulgaria, Roumania and Poland in late 1946, Bevin moved towards a tougher line in responding to communist propaganda. In September 1946 Oliver Harvey informed the Russia Committee that they now had 'general authority ... to defend ourselves against Russian propaganda attacks.'¹³² In January 1947, the propaganda campaign already underway in Germany was extended to cover the whole of eastern Europe. Bevin told a meeting of British ambassadors from eastern Europe that following the elections they were 'finally faced with totalitarian, Moscow-controlled governments' in Bulgaria, Roumania and Poland, as well as Yugoslavia and Albania. Consequently the campaign to secure 'free and unfettered elections' in eastern Europe would come to an end. Instead, British diplomats were authorised to do everything possible to promote the western way of life and counteract misrepresentations and anti-British propaganda spread by the communists. The objective was 'to hold the position against the spread of communism in order that Western concepts of social democracy may, if possible, in the course of time be adopted in as many Eastern European countries as possible.' It was also felt that if Britain were to relax the pressure on the Soviets in Eastern Europe, 'we should have to expect increased pressure from the

Russians in Western Europe and the Middle East.'¹³³ In July 1947, Britain's response to communist propaganda attacks in the Middle East were also stepped up when Kirkpatrick's directive for propaganda in Iran was extended to cover the whole of the Middle East.¹³⁴

Britain's initiation of measures to counter communist propaganda coincided with a gradual stiffening of American resolve in its dealings with the Soviet Union, and a widening perspective in regard to America's global responsibilities. In early 1946 Warner had recommended that the United States be approached to see if they would take part in a general worldwide anti-communist campaign.¹³⁵ However, Foreign Office officials were by no means confident about the degree of support they could expect from the United States. In 1946 there was considerable concern that the United States was not taking a 'realistic' view of the Soviet threat. It was also evident that the American government were keen to avoid any indication that Britain and America were uniting against their former ally.¹³⁶ Consequently, the Foreign Office advocated a gradual policy of eliciting American support in certain key areas, whilst avoiding a general policy of cooperation. The policy was summarised by Christopher Warner:

... American dislike of "ganging up" with us being still so strong, we should probably be well advised to make no general approach to the State Department regarding an anti-communist campaign, but to consult them in each specific case, while seeking as at present to encourage the cooperation of the British and American representatives in the various countries, so that they may whenever possible, send their governments similar appreciations and recommendations.¹³⁷

By 1947 the mood in America was changing. Almost half the members of Congress travelled abroad in 1946 and 1947 and their exposure to the privations of post-war Europe and organised communist propaganda, led to the passage of significant legislation in 1947.¹³⁸ Truman's annunciation of his doctrine in March paved the way for the massive programme of aid for Europe proposed by Secretary of State George C. Marshall three months later. In addition the National Security Act creating a

permanent intelligence apparatus was presented to Congress in February, and the Smith-Mundt Bill establishing America's first permanent peacetime propaganda programme was introduced in May. In both cases Congressional debate centred on the need to respond to external threats.¹³⁹ In July, George Kennan's long telegram was transformed into an anonymous article in the journal Foreign Affairs, following which the Russia Committee expressed their satisfaction that American officials and the American public were now under no illusions regarding Soviet intentions.¹⁴⁰ The previous month Sir Maurice Peterson, British Ambassador in Moscow, informed the Foreign Office that his American counterpart Walter Bedell Smith had stated that a 'policy of toughness was now the order of the day.' Smith believed that the Soviets had returned to the tactics of the Comintern and the only method of combatting them 'is to return blow for blow and to embark on open political warfare against communism.'¹⁴¹

The first step away from the State Department's factual information programme towards the revival of offensive propaganda was taken late in 1946 by a subcommittee of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee. The Committee noted the Soviet Union's intensive anti-American propaganda campaign and recommended the establishment of a permanent subcommittee on psychological warfare to develop policies, plans and studies for its use 'in time of war or threat of war.'¹⁴² The development of plans for overt and covert propaganda were taken up by the National Security Council in November 1947. The NSC drafted two reports, NSC 4 on the coordination of overt 'foreign information measures', and NSC 4-A on covert 'psychological operations'. The former highlighted the USSR's 'intensive propaganda campaign' aimed at damaging the prestige of the US and undermining the non-communist elements in all countries. It proposed the strengthening and coordination of all 'foreign information measures' under the direction of the State Department. In the annex NSC 4-A the CIA was given authority to conduct 'covert psychological operations' to counteract Soviet and Soviet inspired activities.¹⁴³ On the 1st of December 1947, almost eighteen months after Warner's paper had been circulated to

British embassies, the State Department issued a new directive on American information policy. It proposed that in addition to the `factual, truthful, and forceful presentation of U.S. foreign policy and American ways of living ... we should take the offensive in dealing with Soviet policies and anti-American propaganda, as well as those of local communist parties.'¹⁴⁴

Although America's new policy did not immediately result in close cooperation with British attempts to counter communism in Europe, it did result in a certain degree of indirect support for British objectives. Long-established intelligence cooperation yielded information for British propoganda regarding Soviet breaches of the Potsdam agreement.¹⁴⁵ The assignment of foreign broadcast monitoring to the CIA led to a new agreement with the BBC facilitating greater exchange of monitoring reports. The CIA also considered the establishment of new radio stations in US zones of occupation through the transfer of equipment under British control.¹⁴⁶ In several cases America's adoption of a dynamic policy of containing Soviet communism closely resembled the response pursued by the British Foreign Office since 1946. If this policy was not coordinated with those British activities already in progress it certainly supported similar objectives. In Germany, where Britain had begun to answer communist charges in October 1946, General Lucius Clay Commander of the American occupation forces announced in October 1947 that the American military government were to launch a campaign against communism in the US zone.¹⁴⁷ In November American representatives in Austria informed the State Department that they had begun to publicise communist involvement in strikes, demonstrations and various illegal activities.¹⁴⁸ British propoganda in occupied Europe was also supported by the work of the combined Allied Information Service which conducted `concentrated and continuous counter-propaganda to communism.'¹⁴⁹ As early as October 1946 American officials in Germany had urged an increased budget for AIS operations noting that the British side was `strengthening its personnel and increasing its contributions of money and equipment.'¹⁵⁰

Like their British counterparts, American officials were

also concerned at the prospect of communist electoral victories in France and Italy. The Marshall Plan was widely recognised as a bold attempt to undermine the standing of communists in Western Europe. In October 1947, Averell Harriman, the senior Marshall Plan representative in Europe, called for a psychological offensive to counter communist propaganda in France and Italy.¹⁵¹ The following month George Kennan's Policy Planning Staff concluded that the Soviet Union was 'very likely' to order the communist parties in France and Italy to 'resort to virtual civil war' as soon as US occupation forces left Italy.¹⁵² In response the CIA, under the direction of NSC 4-A, provided funds that helped defeat the communists in the French elections of 1947, and subsidised non-communist elements in French trade unions. They also began a programme of aid for anti-communist forces in Italy in preparation for the elections of 1948.¹⁵³

The Foreign Office was clearly pleased at the increasing alignment of British and American thinking on the Soviet threat. Bevin, however, maintained his resistance to a global campaign against communist propaganda. In July 1947 the Russia Committee decided it would not be politic to request an extension of the propaganda line in the Middle East to the rest of the world. Warner informed the Committee that the Foreign Secretary would not sanction any policy based on open despair of reaching agreement with the Russians until after the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in November.¹⁵⁴ Although the Russia Committee understood Bevin's position and were satisfied with the developments in responding to communist propaganda abroad, officials were growing increasingly concerned about the state of domestic opinion. The Foreign Office found itself in the position of promoting a foreign propaganda campaign which was increasingly inconsistent with domestic policy. It is axiomatic that effective foreign propaganda must be supported by a corresponding domestic campaign, yet by 1947 British foreign and domestic propaganda were clearly operating at different levels. As Frank Roberts noted in March 1947 despite the progress in persuading the Foreign Secretary to advocate anti-communist measures abroad, the British public remained unenlightened:

It is surely ridiculous to be enlightening the Arabs and the Persians and other peoples about the true nature of the Soviet State and of Soviet propaganda while leaving our own people in complete abysmal ignorance.¹⁵⁵

Substantial elements of the British public and more particularly the left-wing of Bevin's own party still believed that Britain could maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union. In late 1946 Christopher Warner noted that the BBC Home Service and the most of the daily papers were 'studiously uncritical' of the Soviet Union and communist regimes in Eastern Europe. In general it was felt that not enough publicity was given to Soviet anti-British propaganda, and the activities of Soviet-sponsored communist parties in eastern Europe. In particular Warner had confidential information that at The Daily Telegraph there was a general instruction not to print news critical of the Soviet Union unless it was authoritatively sponsored or emanated from Government sources. The same was thought to be true of the Beaverbrook press.¹⁵⁶ The Labour Party was also a major cause for concern. In May 1946 the Russia Committee expressed alarm that some Ministers, 'took the line that it would be wrong to consider Russia to be hostile to this country'¹⁵⁷, and as late as August 1947 Warner reminded them that 'in view of the risk of a split in the Labour Party' they could expect no overall directives or public statements on Soviet policy.¹⁵⁸ Left-wing criticism of Bevin's foreign policy had been mounting throughout 1946. In the Autumn New Statesman published a series of articles on British foreign policy arguing that Britain should reassert its independence from America. In November over 100 Labour MPs abstained in a vote on a Commons amendment criticising the Government's foreign policy. At the beginning of 1947 a small group of Labour MPs began to meet and form an organised campaign for a return to socialism in Labour's foreign and domestic policy. Although this Keep Left group pressed for a more amenable policy to the Soviet Union, its foreign policy recommendations were also profoundly anti-American.¹⁵⁹ In 1946 Warner had highlighted the restrictions on Anglo-American cooperation due to America's wish to avoid the appearance of 'ganging up' with Britain. In February 1947, in

a remarkable reversal of transatlantic concerns, US intelligence reported that due to domestic pressures the British Government had in recent months 'displayed a nominally independent attitude in foreign relations in contrast to its previous close collaboration with the US.' Although this was not to be interpreted as a trend towards closer collaboration with the USSR it was noted that it would curtail joint Anglo-American actions with regard to the Soviet Union.¹⁶⁰

In an effort to disillusion the public about Soviet intentions the Russia Committee proposed a number of measures to influence domestic opinion. It was felt that the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary could exert a great deal of personal influence in matters of domestic publicity. In March 1946, Bevin had asked the editor of The Times to put a stop to 'the jellyfish attitude of The Times on all important matters of foreign affairs', particularly E.H.Carr's pro-Soviet articles.¹⁶¹ In September Warner suggested that the Foreign Secretary or the Prime Minister might 'have a word' with some of the editors and proprietors of the daily press to let them know that more publicity for Soviet actions would be helpful to the government. The Foreign Office also increased its own 'off the record' briefings with the press. With regard to the BBC, Warner apparently felt they could apply a little more direct pressure. It was suggested that the Director General should be asked to 'modify' the policy of the Home Service with regard to the Soviet Union. More particularly it was proposed that the Home Service put on a weekly talk summarising the attitude of the Soviet media on the chief international topics of the week.¹⁶² Other *ad hoc* projects included the distribution of the report of the Canadian Royal Commission into Soviet espionage, and a proposal to purchase the English rights to the autobiography of Soviet defector Victor Kravchenko, I Chose Freedom.¹⁶³

The campaign to influence Labour Party opinion was more coordinated and intensive. It was also a campaign in which the Foreign Office could rely on a considerable degree of support from within the Party itself. Several Labour MPs cooperated with the Foreign Office to ensure that information about Soviet

intentions was distributed to the Parliamentary Labour Party. It was decided in 1946 that the Foreign Office weekly review of the Soviet Press, and monthly review of omissions and peculiarities in the Soviet Press, would be made available to the House of Commons library through Parliamentary Secretary Kenneth Younger.¹⁶⁴ It was also suggested that the Labour Party's series of 'Speakers Notes' would be 'an excellent system for the dissemination of useful information on foreign affairs.' Under Secretary Christopher Mayhew acted as a channel between the Foreign Office and Labour Party, through the Party's International Secretary Denis Healey. Mayhew provided Healey with information on foreign affairs, in return Healey provided information on the state of party and public opinion.¹⁶⁵ More significantly, in 1947 Assistant Under Secretary Gladwyn Jebb drew up a paper outlining Foreign Office views on British foreign policy. Bevin suggested that Jebb's arguments against the Keep Left approach might be embodied in a Labour Party pamphlet. He suggested that Jebb should get together with Denis Healey making sure to keep cooperation 'very dark.'¹⁶⁶ At the 1947 Labour Party conference Healey's pamphlet Cards on the Table was distributed to all delegates. The pamphlet was a defence of Labour's foreign policy, designed to persuade Labour supporters of the Soviet Union's 'sustained and violent offensive' against Britain. It also emphasised the importance of British social democracy as an ideological alternative to Russian communism and American capitalism. Although it described an exclusive line-up with the United States as 'dangerous and undesirable', it argued that given Britain's straitened financial situation, the importance of international trade, and the needs of national security, it was unrealistic to believe Britain could pursue a completely independent foreign policy.¹⁶⁷ Dalton endorsed the pamphlet, and Bevin, pleased to have his case put by someone else in the party reiterated its conclusions in his conference speech.¹⁶⁸

However, it was not through the efforts of the Russia Committee or individuals such as Healey that British public opinion finally aligned with official perceptions of the Soviet

threat. In September 1947, the Soviet Union with eight other European communist parties, including the French and Italian parties, established the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform). With the founding of the Cominform, the Soviet Union officially reverted to the orthodox Bolshevik line that those who were not avowed communists were avowed enemies. It was the final rejection of any prospect of cooperation with the non-communist left in Europe. With this action the Soviets themselves did more to undermine left-wing sympathies in Europe than any of the measures implemented by the British and American governments. The CIA predicted that the immediate effect would be to reduce the voting strength of the communist parties in Europe and, were it not for the threat of economic crisis, substantially strengthen the position of the moderate non-communist parties in Western Europe.¹⁶⁹ In Britain the Russia Committee with some relief noted that the news had 'at last drawn the United Kingdom public's attention to the Russian campaign against this country, which hitherto had gone largely unnoticed.'¹⁷⁰ Bevin informed the Cabinet in November that if no progress were made at the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers, he would have to 'ask the Cabinet to consider a fresh approach to the main problems of our foreign policy.'¹⁷¹

Bevin's frustration with the Soviets had been building throughout 1947. In May negotiations for a new Anglo-Soviet treaty collapsed, in July the Soviets withdrew from the Marshall Plan discussions, at successive Council of Foreign Ministers meetings Bevin strove against Soviet intransigence in the hope of some degree of accommodation. Even following the creation of the Cominform in September, Bevin pressed on in the hope of agreement at the December Council of Foreign Ministers in London. In his frustration following the collapse of these discussions, Bevin finally agreed to consider a global response to communist propaganda. The catalyst for Bevin's acceptance of a new propaganda policy did not come from the Russia Committee but from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary Christopher Mayhew. Mayhew was part of the British delegation to the UN, and like Bevin, was becoming increasingly disillusioned with the activities of his

Soviet counterparts. In late 1947 Mayhew wrote home from the UN:

My general view is that we should try to discourage the Slavs from using the UN for blackguarding us and the Americans by occasionally pulling a skeleton out of *their* cupboard for a change. True, we fight at a disadvantage, since, unlike the Bolsheviks, we are likely to be cross-examined about our propoganda when we get home; but nobody except an undiluted Christian can listen to Mr Vishinsky for long without answering back once in a while.¹⁷²

In December, while returning to London on the *Queen Elizabeth*, Mayhew drafted a proposal for answering communist propoganda with a campaign of 'Third Force propoganda.' Bevin read the paper and asked Mayhew to prepare a Cabinet paper outlining his recommendations.¹⁷³

The timing of Mayhew's paper was obviously crucial. It arrived at an opportune moment when Bevin, frustrated by Soviet intransigence, was grasping for new ideas. There is another reason why Mayhew's paper may have held more appeal than previous proposals from the Russia Committee. Mayhew's idea for an effective counter to Soviet propoganda reflected Bevin's own developing interest in a British led 'Western Union.' Historians have shown that Bevin had a genuine interest in close links with the Continent which, alongside the African colonies and the Middle East, could form a 'third force' in world affairs.¹⁷⁴ At the 1947 Party conference, Bevin effectively stole the thunder of the left with his own plans for a Western Union. Although the Western Union concept eventually proved untenable the period from December 1947 to January 1948 marked the peak of enthusiasm for the idea.¹⁷⁵ This was also the period in which Britain's new propoganda policy was prepared and launched. Mayhew entitled his paper 'Third Force Propoganda'. In it he linked the need to answer Soviet propoganda with the hope that Britain could take a leading role in international affairs. He suggested opposing the inroads of communism with a 'Third Force' comprising, 'all democratic elements which are anti-communist and, at the same time, genuinely progressive and reformist, believing in freedom, planning and social justice.' Communism was to be exposed by comparison with 'the broad principles of Social Democracy which in fact has its basis in the value of civil liberty and human

rights.' To this Mayhew added there should be a 'positive appeal to Democratic and Christian principles ... We must put forward a positive rival ideology.'¹⁷⁶

It has been suggested that the 'Third Force' concept may have been merely a 'device to win ministerial support'.¹⁷⁷ This does not appear to have been the case. Mayhew did suggest employing a device to make the new propaganda policy more palatable to the Labour Party, but that device was anti-capitalism. In a memo accompanying his paper Mayhew suggested to Bevin that the new propaganda policy should 'balance anti-communist with anti-capitalist arguments so as to reassure the Parliamentary Labour Party.'¹⁷⁸ Mayhew included in his paper a recommendation that they attack in equal measure the 'principles and practices of communism' and 'the inefficiency, social injustice and moral weakness of unrestrained capitalism.'¹⁷⁹ However, anti-capitalism and the 'Third Force' concept were two different propositions. Anti-capitalism was a negative concept tagged onto Mayhew's paper in an unabashed attempt to sell it to the Labour Party. In contrast the idea of Britain leading a 'Third Force' was integral to the paper as a whole. It involved the positive projection of social democracy and reflected Bevin's own interest in a British led 'Western Union'. It had its roots in the 1945 General Election manifesto which presented Britain as 'brave and constructive leaders in world affairs,' and built upon existing ideas about postwar propaganda as embodied in 'The Projection of Britain.'

Mayhew discussed his paper with senior officials, including Kirkpatrick and Warner, on 30 December 1947. There was clearly a consensus regarding the need to launch a counteroffensive against communist propaganda.¹⁸⁰ Although Mayhew was not a member of the Russia Committee and later claimed to have been unaware of the earlier papers by Warner and Kirkpatrick,¹⁸¹ his paper encapsulated many of the proposals for countering communist propaganda developed by the Russia Committee since 1946. The idea of projecting a positive rival ideology was a common theme in Foreign Office thinking since at least as far back as Roberts telegrams from Moscow in March 1946. Similarly, the idea of

Britain providing a lead to all the democratic forces opposing communism in Europe had been a prominent theme in Warner's memorandum on the Soviet campaign against this country. More generally, the combination of positive national projection with a vigorous response to Soviet propaganda was the framework for propaganda campaigns already in progress in the Middle East, Germany and eastern Europe. The Foreign Office officials were not, however, entirely happy with the anti-capitalist and 'Third Force' aspects of Mayhew's paper. It was felt that the paper might give the impression that the British government advocated 'unfavourable reflections on the American way of life.'¹⁸² It was also thought that the term 'Third Force' was inappropriate for the forces of anti-communism to which Britain hoped to give a lead. The term had too many other meanings, including a very specific connotation in French politics, and could not be 'taken over by us and given a different connotation.'¹⁸³ Despite these reservations it was decided to link Mayhew's proposal for 'Third Force' propaganda with Bevin's scheme for a spiritual union of the West which was also being drafted as a Cabinet paper. It was suggested that the principal common element in the two ideas was that Britain should provide leadership to other nations with a similar point of view and that 'by emphasising this we could avoid the political difficulties connected with the advocacy of unfavourable reflections on the American way of life.'¹⁸⁴ The idea of anti-capitalist propaganda also had a political value which outweighed obvious practical concerns. Moreover, the Cabinet paper would make clear that in practice this policy should not result in attacks on the United States. With these qualifications Mayhew's paper was drafted by Warner into a Cabinet paper on Britain's 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy,' to be placed before the Cabinet at its first meeting of 1948.¹⁸⁵

Conclusion

The new propaganda policy presented to the Cabinet in January 1948 was a combination of views advocated by the Russia Committee since early in 1946, and the response of Bevin's Parliamentary colleague Christopher Mayhew to a series of more immediate problems. Although the Russia Committee had been

advocating an offensive against communist propaganda for some time, Mayhew's timely paper was clearly influential. Mayhew offered Bevin an important compromise in the crucial months at the end of 1947 when Bevin finally accepted the need for a fundamental shift in Britain's policy towards the Soviet Union. Following the formation of the Cominform few in the Labour Party would argue with Mayhew's proposal for a propaganda counter-offensive. However, although the Keep Lefters in the Party and the Cabinet were shaken by the formation of the Cominform they were not stirred from their commitment to a policy of independence from the United States. Mayhew's emphasis on Britain leading a Third Force propaganda campaign, reflected the hopes of the Labour Party and more importantly the Foreign Secretary that a change in Britain's policy towards the Soviet Union need not necessarily lead to a partnership with the dominant United States.

If Mayhew's paper was the catalyst for a new propaganda policy the composition of that policy had been tried and tested by the Russia Committee in a series of experiments since 1946. By the time Bevin agreed to propose a coordinated global response to communist propaganda British diplomats were already making a concerted effort to answer communist charges in several areas, most notably, Persia, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, and eastern Europe. The BBC Middle East services were pursuing a general policy of highlighting communist shortcomings, and in October 1947 Jacob concluded that the time had come for the BBC Russian and eastern European services to make a more forceful presentation of British policy. At home the Foreign Office and the Labour Party were working closely to influence domestic political opinion. The activities of the Russia Committee meant that the new propaganda policy presented to Cabinet in January 1948 did not mark a major departure from existing policy. It is evident, however, that there was a certain degree of tension between Mayhew's and the Russia Committee's conceptions of an anti-communist campaign. Despite the avoidance of Anglo-American cooperation in Mayhew's recommendations, in practice by the end of 1947 Britain and America had developed remarkably similar

responses to the threat from communist propaganda. Although institutionalised cooperation was limited, Britain and America were responding to communist propaganda in a similar manner, in the same geographic areas. In the years that followed the propaganda machinery and policies of both nations expanded considerably and the *ad hoc* measures of the pre-1948 period became institutionalised as a global, coordinated and often unified campaign.

Chapter 2

Launching the new propaganda policy, 1948.

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In March 1946, Ivone Kirkpatrick, the Foreign Office Under Secretary responsible for information activities, claimed that counter-propaganda would be easy to arrange if the Government decided to attack communism.¹ Kirkpatrick's claim was finally put to the test almost two years later, when the Foreign Secretary conceded the need for a coordinated global response to communist propaganda and launched Britain's new propaganda policy. In the early months of 1948, Britain moved from an *ad hoc* piecemeal response to hostile Soviet propaganda to a coordinated and wide-ranging propaganda policy in which the positive 'Projection of Britain' was combined with offensive propaganda designed to oppose the inroads of Communism and 'give a moral lead to the forces of anti-communism in Europe and Asia.'² The new propaganda policy, which Kirkpatrick had played no small part in formulating, was placed before the Cabinet at its first meeting of 1948. In the months which followed, the short Cabinet paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy' was developed into a detailed propaganda policy in consultation between Bevin, the Cabinet, the Chiefs of Staff, the Foreign Office Russia Committee, and a new Ministerial Committee on anti-communist propaganda. Britain's existing propaganda apparatus was redirected to follow the new policy, and arrangements were made to provide new instruments with which to coordinate and implement the new propaganda policy. The change in direction in Britain's propaganda policy was conducted with some urgency against the backdrop of increasing evidence of hostile Soviet intentions in Europe, most notably in the communist-backed coup in Czechoslovakia.

This chapter will examine how Britain's new propaganda policy was developed and organised in the early months of 1948. In these formative months the guiding principles for Britain's Cold War propaganda policy were established, and the British Government's principal Cold War propaganda instrument, the Foreign Office Information Research Department (IRD), was created. This chapter will trace the launch of Britain's anti-

communist propaganda campaign through a detailed examination of the new propaganda policy, the organisation of the propaganda instrument, and the channels through which the new anti-communist propaganda was to be disseminated.

The 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy'

The Cabinet discussed the new propaganda policy on the 8th January 1948. At this meeting Bevin placed a raft of papers before the Cabinet. Alongside the memorandum on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy', there were memoranda on 'The First Aim of British Foreign Policy', 'Policy in Germany', 'Review of Soviet Policy', and 'Extinction of Human Rights in Eastern Europe.'³ The broad sweep of these papers effectively set out the Soviet position and Britain's long-term response to that threat. In 'The First Aim of British Foreign Policy' Bevin warned that 'from behind secure entrenchments', the Russians were 'exerting a constantly increasing pressure which threatens the whole fabric of the West.' In response Bevin proposed a 'Western Union' backed by the Americans and the Dominions and comprising Scandinavia, the Low Countries, France, Portugal, Italy and Greece and, as soon as circumstances permitted, Spain and Germany. But Bevin was not proposing a simple defensive pact, it was not enough to reinforce 'the physical barriers which reinforce our Western civilisation':

We must also organise and consolidate the ethical and spiritual forces inherent in this Western civilisation of which we are the chief protagonists. This in my view can only be done by creating some form of union in Western Europe, whether of formal or informal character, backed by the Americans and the Dominions.⁴

The means for mobilising this spiritual union were set out in the paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy.' It stated that Soviet propaganda had been carrying out a 'vicious attack against the British Commonwealth and against Western democracy.' It was up to Britain 'as Europeans and as a Social Democratic Government,' to take the lead in responding to that threat:

We should adopt a new line in our foreign publicity designed to oppose the inroads of Communism, by taking the offensive against it, basing ourselves on the standpoint of the position and vital ideas of British Social Democracy and Western civilisation, and to give

a lead to our friends abroad and help them in the anti-communist struggle.⁵

The new publicity policy was to be implemented by a small section in the Foreign Office that would collect and disseminate information on communist policy and tactics. In addition to the existing Government information services, experience had shown that the fullest cooperation of the BBC would be 'desirable.' The paper suggested other channels which reflected the Labour Party's own anti-communist efforts. Anti-communist material would be made available to Ministers for use in their public speeches, and information was to be sent to Labour Party and Trades Union officials and through them to trade unionists abroad. Foreign trade-unionists and non-Communists from abroad were to be given the opportunity of studying British life and institutions. London, it was hoped, would become 'the Mecca for Social Democrats in Europe.'⁶

The paper set out in some detail the guiding principles for the new publicity policy. These combined an offensive element designed to 'attack and expose Communism', and a positive presentation of 'something far better.' Britain, the paper stated, 'must provide a positive rival ideology' based on Democratic and Christian principles. Despite the reservations of the Foreign Office the anti-capitalist aspect of Mayhew's original paper remained. In contrast to 'totalitarian Communism and laissez-faire capitalism' it stated Britain should offer 'the vital and progressive ideas of British Social Democracy and Western Civilisation.' The new propaganda policy should 'advertise our principles as offering the best and most efficient way of life.' The principles and practices of communism were to be denigrated by comparison, as was the 'inefficiency, social injustice and moral weakness of unrestrained capitalism.' The main target for Britain's propaganda was to be the broad masses of workers and peasants in Europe and the Middle East, and the main arguments used were designed to appeal to this group. Thus considerable emphasis was to be placed on the standard of living of 'ordinary people' in the Soviet bloc and the comparative benefits of life in the West. The aim of the new propaganda

policy was to expose the Soviet 'workers' paradise' as 'a gigantic hoax.' Britain's new propaganda should also stress the civil liberties issue and the many analogies between Nazi and Communist systems. The foreign policy of communist states was also to be targeted. Soviet foreign policy was to be portrayed as the 'stalking horse of Russian imperialism' and the satellites represented as 'Russia's new colonial empire.' Finally, it stated, the time had come to answer Soviet misrepresentations about Britain. British representatives abroad who had for so long urged the adoption of a more offensive line in Britain's response to Soviet propaganda were now to be provided with the 'ammunition' to reply.'

The Cabinet was generally supportive of the proposed moves to consolidate the forces of Western Europe. There was also qualified support for the new line in British propaganda. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, it was noted, had already sought to promote democratic principles in the colonies through the press, films, broadcasting, promotion of trade union movements and guidance to students from the colonies studying in the UK. With regard to publicity in Europe the possibility of establishing a Western European broadcasting station was mentioned. However, concerns were expressed about the anti-Soviet aspect of the new propaganda policy. It was feared that too much emphasis on the anti-Soviet aspect might alienate the socialist forces in Western Europe and those Eastern European countries which, 'though dominated politically by communists, still had a Western outlook.' Bevin replied that it would be impossible for him to give an effective lead without being critical of Soviet policy. But, he stressed, it was his intention 'mainly to concentrate on the positive and constructive side of his proposals.' With these reservations and assurances the Cabinet approved the new propaganda policy.⁸

In fact the new propaganda policy had in effect already been launched by the Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, in a party political broadcast on 3rd January, several days before the new line was discussed by the Cabinet. Attlee had seen drafts of the papers which were to be presented to the Cabinet on the 8th

January and had invited Christopher Mayhew to Chequers during the Christmas recess to discuss his paper on Third Force Propaganda.⁹ Attlee's subsequent speech paraphrased large sections of the Cabinet papers on foreign policy and future publicity policy. It had two main themes: the deterioration in the international situation brought about by the Soviet Union, and the leading role Britain should play as a 'third force' in the world between communist totalitarianism and American capitalism. In recognition of his hosts Attlee began by highlighting the freedom of political debate in the West epitomised by the BBC which provided a platform 'for free and unfettered controversy' unrestricted by the Government or private interests. He compared this to the situation in Russia and the satellites where, 'the voice of criticism is silenced' and 'only one view is allowed.' He went on to attack the pretence by which the Soviet Union would limit freedom and suppress opposition whilst masquerading 'as upholders of democracy.' Far from being a workers' paradise, he characterised the Soviet Union as a place of growing inequality where the lack of political freedom had a direct impact on standards of living:

Where there is no political freedom, privilege and injustice creep back. In Communist Russia "privilege of the few" is a growing phenomenon, and the gap between the highest and lowest incomes is constantly widening.¹⁰

Attlee went on to explain how Soviet communism was endangering world peace with a 'new kind of imperialism - ideological, economic and strategic' which threatened the welfare and way of life of the other nations of Europe. At the other end of the scale from Soviet suppression, Attlee set the United States with its commitment to individual liberty and human rights. But Attlee also criticised American capitalism which was, he said, characterised by extreme inequality of wealth. It was, he claimed, up to Britain, situated geographically, economically and politically between these 'two great continental states,' to 'work out a system of a new and challenging kind, which combines individual freedom with a planned economy, democracy and social justice.'¹¹

Attlee's speech was widely covered in the press where the new tone did not go unnoticed. Most newspapers gave particular prominence to the harsh anti-communist aspect of the speech and in general welcomed it.¹² Those in the Foreign Office who had been responsible for devising the new propaganda policy also welcomed Attlee's robust speech. Mayhew wrote in his diary at the time that the speech was 'ruder to the USA than even I think wise' but later praised the criticism of the Soviet Union which although 'mild by later standards' was, 'a useful send-off to our propaganda campaign.'¹³ In the Russia Committee Sir Ian Jacob, Controller of the BBC's European Services, stressed that if the new policy was to be successful the Prime Minister's broadcast should be followed by other Ministerial speeches on which the BBC could base their publicity.¹⁴

The anti-communist message was reinforced by the Deputy Prime Minister, Herbert Morrison, in a speech to Labour Party members on the 11th January. Morrison began by expressing his sorrow at the rift in Anglo-Soviet relations since 1945. He blamed this rift on increasingly hostile Soviet propaganda. Although the Government had sought active cooperation with the Soviet Union they had been frustrated by 'untruthful and malicious attacks... by the reckless propaganda machines of the Russian communists.' In the face of such attacks, Morrison said, Britain could no longer be expected to lie down. Moreover, he said, Britain could not be happy when 'country after country in eastern and south-eastern Europe find themselves subject to undemocratic and unrepresentative Communist Governments.' Morrison responded, like Attlee, with an attack on the imperialist Soviet foreign policy. He did not pull his punches, the communist parties of the world he said, were merely, 'the servile automatic outposts of the Soviet Foreign Office.' The communist takeovers in Eastern Europe were characterised by suppression of other parties, curtailment of press freedom, 'wholesale witch-hunting', and unjudicial execution of non-communist leaders. Morrison contrasted Soviet imperialism with British colonialism. Whereas Soviet action in eastern Europe was exploitative, the aim of British colonialism, he claimed, was

'development' based on 'the cooperation and goodwill of the colonial peoples themselves.' Soviet actions in Eastern Europe were more akin to the totalitarian rule of Nazi Germany. Like Attlee, Morrison expressed indignation that Soviet actions in eastern Europe were cloaked in the language of freedom, democracy and anti-Fascism when it was increasingly clear that the Communists were displaying all the characteristics of the extreme Right. 'I have never admitted that the Communists are on the Left' he stated baldly, 'they are on the Right.' Finally, he concluded, by pursuing these provocative policies the Communists 'are not only running the risk of war at some time, but... are impeding the economic progress of mankind[.]'¹⁵

Attlee and Morrison's speeches clearly served to launch the new propaganda policy, but the most effective announcement of the new line in British foreign policy was provided by the Foreign Secretary himself in his formidable contribution to the foreign affairs debate in the Commons on 22nd January. In this speech Bevin unveiled his ideas for a Western Union defence against Soviet aggression. As Attlee and Morrison had done earlier that month, Bevin began with a bitter attack on Soviet attitudes which had led to the breakdown in East-West relations since 1945. He related his own attempts to work with the Soviets at successive Council of Foreign Ministers meetings and revealed how weary he was of the consistently hostile attitude of Soviet delegations. Britain had, he claimed, always tried to cooperate with the peoples of Eastern Europe but 'the activities of the Cominform, like those of its predecessor the Comintern, afford the greatest hindrance to mutual confidence and understanding.' He described the 'ruthless' progression of communism in Eastern Europe, and like Morrison compared the communists' creation of 'police states' in Europe with those of Hitler and Mussolini. In response Bevin called for a moral rearmament of the West. Although Bevin was more careful than Attlee not to advocate a breach with the United States, the time had come, he said, for the nations of Western Europe to think of themselves as a unit. To draw more closely together and mobilise 'such a moral and material force as will create confidence and energy in the West

and inspire respect elsewhere.' :

How much these countries have in common. Our sacrifices in the war, our hatred of injustice and oppression, our Parliamentary democracy, our striving for economic rights and our conception and love of liberty are common among us all. Our British approach, of which my rt. hon. friend the Prime Minister spoke recently, is based on principles which also appeal deeply to the overwhelming mass of the peoples of Western Europe. I believe the time is ripe for a consolidation of Western Europe.¹⁶

As with the Attlee, Bevin's speech was broadly welcomed and reaction indicated the emergence of a broad consensus among the Government, the Opposition, officials and the press regarding Soviet intentions and the need for a robust response.¹⁷ It won the support of the Conservative Opposition. Eden replied that Western Union should be pursued with 'the greatest possible vigour,'¹⁸ and one Conservative MP recorded the relief on the Opposition benches that Bevin 'did not intend to allow the Bolshies to run Europe if we could help it.'¹⁹ On his own side of the House Bevin won the support of most of the left-wing who embraced the idea of Britain, independent of the United States, leading a predominantly socialist Europe. The press, who had largely missed the third force aspect in Attlee's speech, were enthusiastic about Bevin's idea. *The Times*, for example, noted that although much of Bevin's vision remained to be worked out they welcomed his call for 'an association of friendly nations' in Europe and the colonies, 'wide enough to win strength and independence together,' and acclaimed this as 'a challenge and a call to action.'²⁰

This speech by Bevin, following those of Attlee and Morrison, marked a clear and very public shift in Britain's policy towards the Soviet Union. It was a public statement that the Government, and Bevin in particular, had finally moved to a position, long held in the Foreign Office, that any kind of compromise with Moscow was doomed to failure. Relations had irrevocably broken down and the time had come for Britain to respond to Soviet hostility. Although the central feature of Bevin's speech was a rallying cry for a European Third Force, in the language and tone with which Bevin, Attlee and Morrison

described the breakdown of East-West relations, and Soviet action in Eastern Europe, these three speeches also served to launch Britain's new propaganda policy. None of the speakers referred explicitly to a British propaganda campaign, indeed one feature of the speeches was an indignant condemnation of hostile Soviet propaganda since 1945. 'Propaganda', Bevin told the Commons 'is not a contribution to the settlement of international problems.'²¹ Yet these speeches, especially when taken together, were themselves part of the new intensive and coordinated anti-communist propaganda campaign. They clearly followed the guiding principles set out in the Cabinet paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy', and laid out the themes to be pursued in Britain's anti-communist propaganda. Each explained their more strident tone by reference to the increasingly hostile tone of Soviet propaganda. This was followed in each case with a forthright attempt to 'expose the myths of the Soviet paradise,' in many cases in comparison with the benefits of Western social democracy. Thus Soviet moves in Eastern Europe were branded the new imperialism and compared unfavourably, by Morrison, with paternal British colonialism. Each compared the economic and political freedoms of the West with the suppression of civil liberties in Soviet occupied territory, and followed the line that Soviet Communism was a form of totalitarianism analogous to Nazi Germany. Moreover, Soviet actions like those of Nazi Germany were clearly represented as a threat to world peace. Finally, both Attlee and Bevin advertised an alternative to Soviet Communism which in the evocative yet vague language of the Third Force projected a positive aim to balance the offensive/defensive tone of the anti-communist aspect of the new propaganda policy. That these themes were drawn out in major foreign policy statements by three of the most senior Government Ministers is indicative of the importance of this new line in British propaganda, and of at least some degree of Cabinet consensus regarding the anti-Soviet aspect of the new propaganda policy.

Following this prominent launch the Cabinet paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy' was passed to the Russia Committee for

consideration of how the new propaganda policy was to be implemented on a broader front. Christopher Warner, who in January 1948 took over from Kirkpatrick as Assistant Under-Secretary responsible for information activities, told the Committee that Britain's new propaganda would draw out two main themes: that the West provided higher standards of living than the Soviet system; and that a communist regime involved the suppression of political liberties. The positive side of the new propaganda policy was less clear but would be based on the policy outlined in the paper 'The First Aim of British Foreign Policy,' and unveiled by the Foreign Secretary in his Commons speech. It would seek to create 'some form of union in Western Europe... backed by the Americans and the Dominions.' Propaganda material would be prepared for use abroad and designed to appeal not only to intellectuals but also the workers and peasants. At home, material would be available to Ministers and the Labour Party, visits would be encouraged from foreign Trade Unionists, and courses would be developed for representatives of foreign anti-communist parties.²²

The discussion in the Russia Committee was significantly different from the Cabinet's consideration of the new policy. Whereas the Cabinet minutes reveal concern regarding the strength of the anti-communist aspect of the new policy, several members of the Russia Committee raised concerns about the policy of attacking 'unrestrained capitalism,' an issue apparently not discussed by the Cabinet.²³ In particular they stressed the risk of attacking the United States and other democratic parties of the Right. Warner drew attention to the qualification in the Cabinet paper which said that they should not attack or appear to attack any member of the Commonwealth or the United States, and Ivone Kirkpatrick replied somewhat obliquely that the phrase was 'of general application and expressed the view that no difficulties would arise over the practical interpretation of it in preparing publicity material.'²⁴ It was suggested that rather than attacking the right as such, taking the lead from Attlee's speech, the line should be that communism was a form of totalitarianism. Rather than attacking capitalism and communism

in equal measure, the policy would be to attack totalitarianism of the Right and Left. This was not quite the same interpretation of the paper as that of the Cabinet. Indeed far from attacking American capitalism the Committee discussed whether Britain should coordinate anti-communist propaganda with the United States and other friendly countries. At this stage though, any suggestion of Anglo-American cooperation was treated with caution. Warner stated that the right general policy would be to exchange information on propaganda with the United States whenever appropriate, but that Britain should not have a general agreement to consult with them and to take the same line.²⁵

The Committee discussed the implementation of the new policy in different regions. Sir Ian Jacob, Head of the BBC European Services, enquired whether the propaganda would go so far as to encourage opponents of Communism in Europe. Kirkpatrick replied that whilst this was an aim in Western Europe, as regards the satellites, the intention was 'to attack the suppression of freedom' but not to incite opponents of the existing regimes. It was suggested that a special directive would be required for Eastern Europe. The Committee also identified problems in implementing the new policy in the Middle East, given that the new policy was to be directed at 'the mass of workers and peasants.' Although publicity channels existed among such groups in Europe, British propaganda in the Middle East had traditionally been directed at the educated elite. Given these problems it is evident that initially at least the focus for the new policy would be Western Europe. In Germany, where Britain's propaganda was already taking a more aggressive line, the new policy could take immediate effect. Moreover, it was suggested, this should be done with some urgency given recent evidence of planned communist disturbances in the Ruhr.²⁶ Similarly, Gladwyn Jebb and Robin Hankey drew attention to reports of plans for communist direct action in France and Italy in March. Jebb concluded the discussion by suggesting that Warner 'should make his plans on the assumption that some major Communist offensive might take place in the early spring and that all possible publicity ammunition would be required in repelling it.'²⁷

In fact it was events in Eastern Europe which injected a sense of urgency into the new propaganda policy. The Soviet backed coup in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 galvanised anti-communist sentiment in Britain, within the Labour Party in particular, and led to calls for Britain to adopt a more offensive propaganda policy. In the Foreign Office, according to Gladwyn Jebb, the effect of the coup in Prague was, 'electrical.' 'If the Russians could do this to one European democracy nearly three years after the end of the war, what was to prevent them doing it to other European countries, and notably in Western Europe?'²⁸ The impact on opinion in the Labour Party was even more marked. Bill Jones, historian of Labour's relations with the Soviet Union, describes the Party's response to the coup as the culmination of a process of reinterpretation of Soviet foreign policy towards a new 'almost hostile, image of the Soviet Union.'²⁹ *Tribune* reported events under the unequivocal headline 'Murder in Prague,' whilst in the *Daily Herald* Michael Foot lamented the most 'tragic week since the end of the war.' On 3 March the Labour Party's National Executive Committee issued a fierce condemnation of Soviet actions stating that Czechoslovakia had 'fallen victim to aggression from without aided by treachery from within.'³⁰ Two days later Bevin submitted a memorandum to the Cabinet on 'The Threat to Western Civilisation.' In it he outlined the fast growing threat of Soviet expansion and the steps Britain should take to frustrate them. It was now clear, Bevin stated, that Soviet policy aimed for nothing less than world domination:

The immensity of the aim should not betray us into believing in its impracticability. Indeed, unless positive and vigorous steps were shortly taken by those other states in a position to take them, it may well be that within the next few months - or even weeks - the Soviet Union would gain political and strategic advantages which would set the great communist machine in action, leading either to the establishment of a world dictatorship or more probably to the collapse of organised society over immense stretches of the globe.³¹

The Cabinet's response to Bevin's stark warning reveals a marked shift in opinion since Bevin placed his previous review

of Soviet policy before them in January. The Cabinet continued to support Bevin's plans for Western Union defence, but also recommended a significant expansion of Britain's anti-communist propaganda. In contrast to their cautious acceptance of the new propaganda policy two months earlier in which they stressed that 'too much emphasis should not be placed on its anti-Soviet aspect,'³² the Cabinet now accepted that 'the weapon of propaganda must be used to the full.'³³ It was even suggested that 'some organisation on the lines of the wartime Political Warfare Executive' could be established. The discussion which followed ranged across the kind of measures which could be used in a new campaign of political warfare. There were certain directions it was suggested, in which the Labour Party, not the Government, might be the most effective instrument for conducting propaganda, particularly among the social democratic parties in Western Europe. It was also suggested that the Christian Churches might be allied to the defence of Western civilisation. The International Council of Christian Churches might be persuaded to work with the Government, and it was noted, there had been growing sympathy with social democracy in the Catholic church. The campaign could also extend to economic warfare in which more generous terms or 'more aggressive methods' could be adopted in trade with Eastern European states. It was also recommended that a special effort should be made to concentrate propaganda on the Eastern European countries which were nearest to Western Europe. The aim of this proposed campaign of political warfare was 'to provide the people of Europe with the leadership in Western Europe which governments have so far failed to provide, but its scope should be worldwide.'³⁴

This call for a return to political warfare was echoed elsewhere in Whitehall. In March the Chiefs of Staff expressed disquiet at what they perceived to be the defensive nature of Bevin's recent proposals for responding to the Soviet threat. They were surprised that the new policy was designed to defend Britain rather than taking the offensive against Soviet propaganda, and they disapproved of the allocation of anti-communist propaganda to a 'small section' in the Foreign Office.

The 'cold war' they claimed could not be waged as an adjunct of diplomacy. The Chiefs of Staff advocated a propaganda policy more closely integrated with defence and coordinated by a resurrected Political Warfare Executive. The Defence Minister told Bevin that the Chiefs of Staff felt they had an important stake in this matter. They wanted an integrated Cold War strategy combining political warfare, economic warfare, and special operations. Through this policy they hoped to take the offensive against Soviet internal organisation or to disrupt the military or industrial connections between the Soviet Union and the satellites.³⁵

Bevin, however, was reluctant to sanction such an offensive strategy and restrained calls for a return to political warfare of the kind employed during the war. Bevin responded to events in Prague by consolidating his plans for a Western Union defence of Europe. The most immediate result was the signature, on 17th March 1948, of a mutual defence pact between Britain, France and the Benelux countries. At the same time, instead of planning subversion in Eastern Europe, more detailed plans were formulated to counter the spread of communism in the free world. The Chiefs of Staff were asked to formulate defence plans to support Bevin's Western Union policy.³⁶ In response to the Cabinet's new found enthusiasm for propaganda, a Ministerial Committee on anti-communist propaganda was convened to consider the general application of the new propaganda policy.³⁷

However, before the first meeting of the Ministerial committee, the question of political warfare was decided at an informal meeting between the Foreign Secretary, the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Minister of Defence. Bevin was concerned that discussions which were likely to cover covert activities by the intelligence services should not be disclosed to Ministers generally and future discussions of political warfare were to be confined to this small informal group. At this meeting it was decided that the phrase 'political warfare' was not to be used in any description of Britain's publicity policy, and that there was no reason to recreate a body like the wartime Political Warfare Executive.³⁸ The reasons for

this policy of restraint were set out in a memorandum by the Cabinet Secretary, Norman Brook. The comparison with wartime political warfare Brook wrote was inappropriate, impracticable and indeed 'dangerous.' Although conditions behind the Iron Curtain were comparable with wartime conditions in enemy occupied Europe, Britain was not responding to those conditions with the same wide range of activities both overt and covert as had been employed during the war. Indeed consideration had not been given as to what methods of black propaganda might be employed under the new policy. Moreover, it was far from clear that the application of wartime methods of political warfare would be practicable in combatting the westward spread of Soviet influence in peacetime. Thus Britain was not at that time employing methods of political warfare, nor was it clear whether such methods would be desirable in the future. There were also no practical reasons for reconstituting a Political Warfare Executive to direct such activities. The PWE had been necessary because Ministerial responsibility for such activities had been divided between the Foreign Secretary and the Ministers of Information and Economic Warfare. In 1948 all overseas information activities, including black propaganda, were the sole responsibility of the Foreign Secretary, and Bevin was not about to relinquish this control.³⁹ Although Bevin conceded that some machinery was necessary to enable the Chiefs of Staff to make their contribution, Bevin would continue to exercise sole Ministerial responsibility for overseas propaganda policy, and in particular decide the extent to which black propaganda methods were to be applied in particular countries.⁴⁰

Bevin began the first meeting of the Cabinet Committee on anti-communist propaganda by reiterating the reasons for his refusal to countenance a return to political warfare. In spite of the views of at least some of the Cabinet and the Chiefs of Staff, Bevin stated clearly 'it is my considered view that we should not incite the peoples of the Iron Curtain countries to subversive activities.' Although he did not object in principle to the use of 'black' propaganda, for 'severely practical reasons' he felt it was of limited use in present circumstances.

Drawing on the comparison with political warfare in World War II Bevin pointed out that 'we discouraged resistance movements from activity until our arms were at hand.' It was useless to stir up resistance to existing regimes unless there was a practical prospect of their being overthrown and in present circumstance Bevin stated 'we should be doing ourselves and our friends in those countries [behind the Iron Curtain] a great disservice if our publicity now urged them to active resistance.' Propaganda in countries behind the Iron Curtain was to be limited to official statements carried by the BBC, and open promotion of 'the virtues and achievements of Western methods, and that to a limited extent.'⁴¹ There were also financial limitations on the implementation of political warfare. The amount of money available for all kinds of propaganda was limited and in peacetime conditions Bevin felt open propaganda paid a better dividend than subversive activities. In peacetime Bevin concluded overt propaganda was, more important than covert propaganda, and usually much cheaper.⁴²

Bevin then presented the Committee with an expanded version of the January Cabinet paper on future foreign publicity which outlined the work that was underway in the Foreign Office to implement the new policy. Focusing on overt media, Bevin outlined three main channels for the dissemination of material under the new propaganda policy. Firstly, the reproduction in the press abroad of Ministerial speeches, official and semi-official statements by Government spokesmen, and articles from the press in this country. In order for this to be effective it was important for all official, and especially Ministerial statements to be 'framed with the new publicity policy in mind.' In an effort to ensure consistency within the Labour Party Bevin said officials were constantly studying Party publicity on foreign affairs with the assistance of the Party's General Secretary Morgan Phillips and International Secretary Denis Healey. Arrangements were also in hand for liaison between the Foreign Office and the Chiefs of Staff to ensure that Service statements were framed with consideration to their effect abroad. The second major channel for disseminating propaganda abroad was

the BBC and the official London Press Service. Bevin stated that the BBC's Sir Ian Jacob, was fully apprised of the new policy and programmes were generally planned in line with the Government's publicity policy. However, Bevin rejected suggestions that the Government's relationship with the BBC should be altered to allow official direction on the content of overseas broadcasts. 'It would raise very serious issues here and might well diminish the influence and reputation in foreign countries of the BBC's broadcasts.' The third main channel for disseminating propaganda abroad was through the staff of Britain's Embassies, Legations and Consulates. In addition to the work of specialist information staff, it was, Bevin said, up to the whole of the diplomatic staff abroad to help with publicity work, 'each in their own sphere and with their own contacts.'⁴³ As with official statements at home the new policy was to be applied broadly and consistently.

With regard to the themes to be pursued, Bevin reiterated the importance of combining offensive anti-communist material with a positive projection of British values, and now the Western Union. He concluded with an important statement of his priorities for the new propaganda policy:

This is only the beginnings of what is to be done, but I think it is on the right lines. I would only add that while anti-Communist publicity is important, I attach greater importance to publicising positive achievements in the field of Western Union, economic recovery and social improvement. Moreover, I am certain that we must be careful not to increase the fear of war and of the Russian and Communist strength.⁴⁴

Although Bevin's proposals were somewhat removed from the dramatic suggestions for a return to political warfare discussed by the Cabinet, in its scope Bevin's plan was no less ambitious. Rather than seeking a return to wartime propaganda methods, Bevin grasped that opportunities for essentially overt propaganda in peacetime were much greater. Certainly outside the Iron Curtain countries Britain gained 'by being able to use in peacetime all the various types of overt publicity which could not be used in occupied countries during the war.' What was far more important than the development of covert channels of influence was a

propaganda campaign that was closely coordinated, intensive and above all consistent. The defining feature of Bevin's proposals was that the new propaganda policy depended on consistent application from the highest level to the most mundane. From Minister's speeches, to personal contacts between British officials and representatives of foreign governments, the media and the public.

Organising the New Propaganda Policy

The Cabinet paper on future foreign publicity policy recommended that the only new machinery necessary to implement the new propaganda policy would be a 'small section in the Foreign Office to collect information concerning Communist policy, tactics and propaganda and to provide material for our anti-Communist publicity through our Missions and Information Services abroad.'⁴⁵ Christopher Warner as Assistant Under-Secretary concerned with information activities was tasked with establishing the new machinery. Warner informed the Russia Committee that for administrative purposes the new propaganda policy would be organised around three key functions:

- i) an offensive branch attacking and exposing communist methods and policy and contrasting them with 'Western' democratic and British methods and policy.
- ii) a defensive branch which would be concerned with replying to Soviet and communist attacks and hostile propaganda.
- iii) a positive branch which would deal with the 'build-up' of the Western Union conception.⁴⁶

From the outset it was decided to separate the positive aspect of the new policy from the defensive and offensive aspects. Consideration of positive publicity was assigned to a new working party in the Foreign Office.⁴⁷ This working party on the 'spiritual aspects of Western Union' was chaired by Warner and comprised senior Foreign Office officials including Gladwyn Jebb, P.M. Crosthwaite head of the Western Department, Paul Gore-Booth incoming head of the European Recovery Department, heads of Foreign Office information departments and the renowned Director-General of the wartime PWE Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart. The working party was tasked with the not inconsiderable feat of putting meat onto the bones of the Western Union concept outlined

by Bevin in the Commons. Its terms of reference were to 'examine the common factors to the Western Union countries, other than the political, strategic and economic which can contribute to building up the Western Union conception.' It was to recommend measures to build up the Western Union through publicity and cultural agreements. To consider which countries should be included in the Western Union for the purpose of such work, and consider which could be brought into consultation over information work and how.⁴⁸

The more substantial, and specifically anti-communist, offensive and defensive aspects of the new policy were to be handled by the new Foreign Office information department. A circular telegram to missions outlining the new propaganda policy set out the terms of reference for the new department:

... to collate information concerning Communist policy, activities and propaganda, to prepare the material of our long-term anti-Communist publicity for dissemination through His Majesty's Missions and the Information Services abroad, to prepare quick replies to Communist propaganda attacks and to brief Government spokesmen at home and at conferences abroad on the Communist propaganda lines and replies thereto.⁴⁹

After some discussion the new department was given the innocuous title Information Research Department (IRD). According to the Foreign Office Order Book, 'the name of this department is intended as a disguise for the true nature of its work, which must remain strictly confidential.'⁵⁰ There were several reasons for this secrecy. Initially the primary concern was that the Soviet Union should not be alerted and launch a propaganda counter-offensive before the new propaganda policy was properly organised. Warner cautioned the Russia Committee that if Britain launched an anti-communist propaganda offensive before being fully equipped they ran the risk of provoking a 'violent reaction on the part of the Russians and unless we could reply to such a reaction fully and effectively, we should be left at a disadvantage.'⁵¹ Thus, it was decided that, initially, the existence of the new policy would be kept secret.

It has been suggested that the Soviets knew about the new propaganda policy from the start through Guy Burgess, the Soviet

agent in the Foreign Office. Christopher Mayhew has recalled how he appointed Burgess to a position in the IRD early in 1948. He showed, Mayhew recalled, 'a dazzling insight into communist methods of subversion and propaganda, and I readily took him on.' Burgess lasted only a few months before he was sacked by Mayhew for being 'dirty, drunk and idle.'⁵² Nevertheless, it has been suggested that in this time Burgess made a tour of British missions to brief officials about the IRD, and was able to 'pass on a full account of IRD's operations to Moscow.'⁵³

Nothing has been found in the IRD files about Burgess or his position in the department. Nevertheless, it is apparent that at this time, Burgess was passing a large amount of Government documents to his Soviet controllers.⁵⁴ Moreover, a report in a Polish newspaper in April 1948, suggested that the new propaganda policy had been compromised, most probably by Burgess. This article, repeated in the Soviet Monitor in Britain, referred to recent instructions to British missions regarding an intensified anti-communist campaign, 'including propaganda and the dissemination of false rumours.'⁵⁵ It may also be significant that in September 1951, shortly after the defection of Burgess and Maclean to Moscow, a meeting of British information officers from Western Europe was informed that, 'the communists themselves were aware of what we were doing.'⁵⁶

However, given that Burgess was only in the IRD for 'a few months' at the beginning of 1948,⁵⁷ it is unlikely that he could have passed on a vast amount of information regarding the IRD's operations. It seems highly unlikely that Burgess was entrusted with touring British missions to inform them of the IRD's work. All British missions were informed of the new policy in a circular telegram in January 1948.⁵⁸ In the extensive replies there is no reference to a personal visit from anyone from the new department. Although it seems likely that Burgess passed on a copy of this circular, more specific directives regarding propaganda in different regions were not drafted until the summer of 1948 when Burgess had almost certainly left the IRD. Similarly, he would have been unable to give the Soviets advance warning of the IRD's first setpiece campaign regarding Soviet

forced labour, launched in the United Nations in October 1948.⁵⁹ It is also unlikely that the Soviets were surprised that the British Government had decided to launch an offensive against communist propaganda, and one might question what they could do about it. The Soviet counter-offensive that the Foreign Office feared certainly did not materialise. By December 1949, it was decided that it was no longer necessary to conceal the fact that Britain was conducting anti-communist propaganda abroad through official channels.⁶⁰

Nevertheless, the unofficial channels used by the IRD remained concealed. The existence of the IRD, and its methods were to remain secret. The IRD's output was effectively 'grey' propaganda, that is propaganda emanating from an unidentifiable source. Those who received propaganda material from IRD, such as information staff, Ministers, journalists and the BBC, were aware of its origin but were expected to pass this material on without revealing its source. 'Non-attributability' according to Foreign Office historians was a 'central and distinguishing feature of IRD material.'⁶¹ This had several important advantages: it allowed the widest possible circulation for the IRD's output, whilst protecting the existence of an officially-inspired anti-Communist propaganda campaign. It was believed that anti-communist propaganda would have greater impact on the recipient if it were not seen to emanate from official sources.⁶² Secrecy also allowed the IRD to enlist prominent individuals to the anti-communist cause who might otherwise be reluctant to lend their name to material with an official imprimatur. As the IRD head wrote in May 1948: 'it would embarrass a number of persons who are prepared to lend us valuable support if they were open to the charge of receiving anti-communist briefs from some sinister body in the Foreign Office, engaged in the fabrication of propaganda directed against the Soviet Union'⁶³

Initially the IRD had a fairly modest establishment. The original staff requirements were for 10 members including 4 clerical staff. In common with most Foreign Office Departments desks were established for geographical areas, with the addition

of an intelligence sections. Sections were later added to cover the United Nations, economic affairs, international organisations, NATO and war planning.⁶⁴ From the beginning, however, the general profile of the staff was somewhat different to the standard Foreign Office recruitment. Recruits were drawn from the existing information departments, but also from individuals with experience in publicity outside the Foreign Office, including wartime propagandists and journalists. Ralph Murray, a veteran of the PWE and the current head of the Foreign Office's Far East Information Department, was recruited to head the department. He was provided with three assistants to cover the coordination of intelligence, preparation of material and cooperation with the BBC, the Central Office of Information and British posts abroad. Russian expertise was provided by J.H.Brimmell, recently returned from the Russian Secretariat in the Moscow Embassy, and Robert Conquest.⁶⁵ The department also relied increasingly on 'contract' staff: emigres from Eastern Europe and freelance journalists. In one example, in the late 1940s, H.H.Tucker the chief foreign sub-editor for The Daily Telegraph, worked for IRD on a freelance basis providing 'a professional touch to some of the briefs and background papers.' Tucker joined the Foreign Office in 1951 and eventually rose to the post of assistant to the Head of IRD.⁶⁶ For another early recruit IRD provided a somewhat unexpected and, not entirely happy, introduction to Foreign Office life:

I came with a First in History from Cambridge and was surprised and bemused to be lodged in such a way-out department. It lived in a rabbit warren in Carlton House Terrace ... There were a lot of temporaries, a good many of them from the journalistic world. The atmosphere was hard working and somewhat frenzied! ... not what I had expected from the F.O. and within eight months or so I was happily transferred to one of the traditional departments.⁶⁷

The starting budget reflected the Department's modest establishment. The IRD was established with £7,500 generated by economies in the other information departments. In addition the Treasury agreed a lump sum of £150,000 as a starting budget. Despite these modest beginnings it is clear that ambitious plans were already anticipated. In approaching the Treasury for

funding, Harold Caccia suggested that, in addition to the costs of establishment, the Treasury might wish to consider the possibility of additional operational expenditure. This extra expense, 'probably substantial, but at present incalculable,' Caccia said, would be necessary to expand IRD's activities at home and abroad, including increased BBC broadcasts, possibly involving extra wavelengths.⁶⁸ Others suggested that the expenditure might rise to between one quarter to a million pounds.⁶⁹ It may be that Caccia deliberately pitched his proposal high in order to ensure that at least the minimum requirement was forthcoming. However, Warner was disturbed that suggestions for expansion were being made before the department had actually begun work. He reassured the Treasury that they were, 'going quite cautiously about the new policy' and any further plans would be, 'examined ruthlessly from the point of view of the most rigid economy.'⁷⁰

From the outset it was intended that funding for the new department should be discreet. In putting its proposals to the Treasury the Foreign Office noted that it was 'undesirable that undue public attention should be drawn to this new activity.' They were particularly anxious that the lump sum should not be listed as an additional item in the published estimates for information expenditure. As a result the Foreign Office devised a plan whereby the additional £150,000 was disguised under other items of publicity in the estimates. Thus, an extra £30,000 was added to the proposed estimate for publicity in the press; £80,000 to films, and photography; £20,000 to broadcasting; and £20,000 to miscellaneous expenses.⁷¹ This was the only occasion on which such a method was used. When Murray proposed further expenses of £100,000 in September 1948 it was agreed that funding for IRD would now be provided under the secret vote,⁷² where it remained until 1973. Secret funding served a number of purposes: it hid IRD from unwanted public attention, it also allowed the department freedom to recruit staff unrestricted by the limitations of civil service pay and conditions. This became particularly important as the department's specialist requirements led to the recruitment of journalists and emigres

from outside the normal ranks of civil service appointments. Such specialists were not paid according to civil service rates, and 'in some cases the recipients led double lives, and could not let it be known that they received a salary from IRD.'⁷³

IRD's modest establishment reflected the intention that the department would play a supplemental role in implementing the new propaganda policy. IRD arrived rather late in the postwar development of Britain's propaganda apparatus and it seems apparent that initially its role was to supplement the work of Britain's already substantial information apparatus. As IRD's terms of reference indicated although the department was to coordinate the anti-communist aspect of the new propaganda policy, it was only to play a supporting role in the collection and dissemination of anti-communist material. The paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy' had suggested the creation of a 'small Section in the Foreign Office' which would 'collate' information on communism, and disseminate this material through the 'usual channels.'⁷⁴ IRD was to provide a central collection point for material on communist activities and this material would be disseminated through the Government's existing information apparatus.

The new department collated information on communist policy and practices from across Whitehall. Foreign Office departments were asked to forward IRD all papers on Soviet and communist policy, organisation, tactics and propaganda in the Soviet Union, Europe, the Middle and Far East. Items on conditions in territories under communist rule were particularly valuable, especially material the exposure of which would be likely to diminish communism's hold over adherents or its appeal to neutrals.⁷⁵ It was felt that the detailed papers of the Foreign Office Research Department (FORD) and the press reading facilities of the Russian Secretariat at the Moscow Embassy would be particularly valuable. Detailed intelligence requirements were submitted to the intelligence authorities at home and those in exceptional positions in the field such as the Intelligence Division in Hereford, and the Intelligence Organisation in Vienna.⁷⁶ Most importantly British representatives abroad were

asked to provide 'any material' likely to be of value for anti-communist propaganda. They were to forward material, which if widely known would 'expose, damage and help defeat the Communists and... encourage anti-communists by illustrating the frauds, deficiencies and drawbacks of communism and the superiority of the policies and way of life of those who share our beliefs.' Missions in Eastern Europe in particular were expected to provide 'much useful material for anti-Communist publicity.'"⁷⁷

IRD's intelligence requirements were broad and somewhat unusual but clearly reflected the themes which were to be pursued in the new propaganda policy. Not surprisingly the rather general request for any material likely to damage the communists met with a muted response from British missions. Although they were quick to recommend the kind of material they could use locally, Information Officers were less helpful in providing IRD with material on which it could base its propaganda. It is apparent that British representatives abroad had little understanding of the kind of material which could be used in the new propaganda policy. For example, the British Embassy in Prague felt unable to help because it believed that any information it could provide would not be 'sufficiently dramatic or instructive' to be of use in other countries. Others simply ignored the request.⁷⁸ Consequently, in March 1948, the IRD issued more specific intelligence requirements, asking missions to provide details of the hierarchy, personalities, finance, propaganda, strategy and tactics of communist organisations in their territories.⁷⁹ Missions behind the Iron Curtain were informed that although their despatches provided a great deal of political information, IRD was also interested in the details of everyday life under communist rule. To assist this, IRD provided a generic list of individuals - the worker, the peasant, the public servant, the professional, the trader, the student and the parent - about whom they required information.⁸⁰ By the end of 1949 the department had established long and detailed requirements for intelligence from communist-dominated countries, under the headings: labour conditions, social conditions, political conditions, cultural conditions and religious

conditions. These included requests for specific information on such topics as: wages, housing conditions, medical standards, the cost of commodities, organisation of secret police and individuals involved, and support or suppression of local customs and laws.⁸¹ This emphasis on the details of everyday life under communist rule became the staple of IRD's intelligence requirements. It was clearly novel to British information staff abroad and was, according to Murray, an 'eye opener' for the intelligence authorities at home.⁸²

Within the IRD this material was drafted into briefing papers designed to provide information staff abroad with anti-communist background material for use in discussions with local contacts or for unofficial local distribution. These 'basic papers' comprised the bulk of IRD's output. In their subject matter the papers followed the guiding principles set out in the new propaganda policy. In keeping with the new policy's aim to disillusion the people of Europe and the Middle East about Russia's pretence to be a 'Worker's Paradise' the first papers focused heavily on life under communist rule. The first basic paper was entitled 'The real conditions in Soviet Russia' and was followed by papers including 'Conditions in the new Soviet colonies', 'Labour and trade unions in the Soviet Union', 'Peasant collectivisation in areas under Soviet control' and 'Daily life in a communist state.'⁸³ These papers provided basic information on everyday life behind the Iron Curtain, the kind of public interest details which might be taken up by the popular press. 'The real conditions in Soviet Russia' for example described the common man's living conditions in the Soviet Union: low wages; the high cost of basic foodstuffs; consumer goods which were prohibitively expensive; overcrowded housing; poor working conditions; and an education system which was 'far behind Western standards.'⁸⁴ Other basic papers focused on the threat to world peace from communist foreign policy. The first paper considered mature enough for printing was the 'Essence of Soviet foreign policy', it was followed by papers on 'Communist conquest of the Baltic states' and 'The facts of Soviet expansionism.'⁸⁵ Finally some papers offered

more sophisticated analyses of the 'principles and practices of communism.' These included a lengthy paper on 'The Foundations of Stalinism' by the Northern Department's Soviet expert Thomas Brimelow. Brimelow's paper was based on Stalin's statements as head of the Communist Party. It was followed by a companion piece entitled 'The Practice of Stalinism,' by W. Barker of the Russian Secretariat in the Moscow Embassy.⁸⁶ These detailed papers were clearly designed for consumption within Government or distribution to foreign politicians and opinion formers. Both papers were given widespread distribution within Whitehall. Initially up to 700 copies of Brimelow's paper were printed, 55 of which went to the Foreign Office News Department compared with 130 copies for the Joint Intelligence Committee.⁸⁷

In July 1948 in response to requests from some missions for shorter more pointed material the basic papers were supplemented by a weekly 'Digest' of news stories regarding Soviet and international communism. The Digest was divided into two sections. The first part consisted of a detailed treatment of one topical event. The second part comprised recent information on communist activities under a number of broad headings including labour affairs, agrarian affairs, the Islamic world, human rights and international movements.⁸⁸ The Digest was intended to provide quotable material on events which were not necessarily common knowledge. The information was presented in a form easily used by information officers who were expected to pass selected items to their contacts rather than hand over whole issues of the Digest. In order to make the material more useful to editors, where possible stories were attributed to a named source.⁸⁹ The IRD also made use of the Foreign Office system of guidance telegrams or Intels which were designed to provide Embassies with quick answers to incorrect information about British policy. Murray however found the Foreign Office telegraphic system somewhat unsuited to the exigencies of effective rebuttal. 'They take too long to draft and clear, they go saving and arrive too late,' he complained.⁹⁰

Although the tone of IRD's output was certainly anti-communist the papers they produced were not intended to present

an inaccurate picture of Soviet communism. The Foreign Office stuck to the long-held view that the most effective propaganda was straight news and facts. Indeed, some of the basic papers, such as those by Brimelow and Barker were thoughtful and well balanced assessments of Soviet policy. Moreover, for propaganda purposes, conditions in Soviet controlled territory were such that it was felt that exaggeration was not necessary. In order to 'expose the myths of the Soviet paradise' it was felt sufficient merely to present the harsh realities of life under Soviet rule. The impact of the basic papers about life behind the Iron Curtain was predicated on the fact that conditions behind the Iron Curtain were poor and that such information was not widely available in the West. Although the Foreign Office Minister Hector McNeill felt the papers were a little overstated for a British audience,⁹¹ Christopher Warner thought the first papers were perhaps 'too dully written' and in need of 'pepping up' :

But when I say pepping up I do not mean exaggerating the facts; for the papers are strictly factual and it would be very difficult and, I am sure, a mistake for us to water down the facts. Our whole object is to enlighten those who have no idea how unpleasant the conditions in Communist controlled countries are.⁹²

The only deception involved the dissemination of this material. The material in the digests was meant for unofficial distribution and was designed to be used unattributably. The basic papers and digests were printed 'white' with no indication of authorship, sometimes undated, and most importantly no indication of their origin in the British Foreign Office. Distribution outside of official circles was to be on a strictly unattributable basis. A detachable cover sheet attached to each basic paper outlined how the material was to be used:

The attached material is for the use of His Majesty's Missions and Information Officers in particular. The information contained in this paper is, as far as it is possible to ascertain, factual and objective. The paper may, therefore, be used freely as a reference paper, but neither copies of it nor the material contained in it should be distributed officially without the sanction of the Head of Mission. It and/or the material in the paper, however, may be distributed unofficially in whatever

quarters seem useful so long as it can be assured that there will be no public attribution of material or of the paper to an official British source. This note must be detached from any copy of the material before it passes beyond official use.⁹³

Although the preparation of 'grey' anti-communist propaganda was IRD's principal role, the new propaganda policy required a change in the policy of other agencies with responsibility for Britain's overseas information activity, from 'white' to 'black' propaganda. The policy of Britain's overt propaganda agency, the Central Office of Information, was changed to reflect the new anti-communist line, and arrangements were made to more closely coordinate covert propaganda with the new propaganda policy. In addition to the preparation of anti-communist propaganda, the IRD sat at the centre of the machinery for coordinating the new propaganda policy across Whitehall. Through a network of liaison committees and informal contacts, the department collated information on communism, generated anti-communist propaganda for dissemination abroad, and oversaw the implementation of the anti-communist propaganda policy by Britain's other propaganda agencies. On the one hand this was a matter of budgetary restraint. For example, rather than establish its own production facilities, the IRD was instructed to employ the technical expertise of Britain's existing information apparatus, most notably the Central Office of Information. On the other hand, as Bevin had directed, it located overall control of the new propaganda policy firmly within the Foreign Office. Assigning anti-communist propaganda to a dedicated Foreign Office department was meant to ensure effective control and the coordinated implementation of the new propaganda policy. It also gave the IRD influence over Britain's instruments of overseas propaganda out of proportion to the department's own size and resources.

Information activities in Britain's colonial possessions were the responsibility of the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Colonial Office, but concerns about communist attacks on the Western colonial exploitation coupled with the rise of communist movements in some British colonies meant that the new propaganda

policy being developed in the Foreign Office was also applicable in the colonies.⁹⁴ In July 1948, the Cabinet Committee on anti-communist propaganda established the Colonial Information Policy Committee (CIPC) to coordinate the propaganda activities of the Foreign Office, the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Colonial Office. The CIPC was chaired by Christopher Mayhew and comprised Parliamentary Under-Secretaries and officials from the three Departments along with Robert Fraser, Director General of the Central Office of Information, and Jacob of the BBC.⁹⁵ The CIPC terms of reference were 'to coordinate the collection and presentation of publicity material regarding British colonial policy and administration.'⁹⁶ Although initially the three departments were to remain wholly independent in the conduct of this propaganda, the dominant role of the Foreign Office in directing anti-communist propaganda was soon evident. In November 1948 the CIPC terms of reference were expanded 'to stimulate and concert the dissemination of publicity designed to counter Communist propaganda in countries overseas, especially in the self-governing and Colonial countries of the Commonwealth and neighbouring territories.'⁹⁷ Moreover, although the Colonial and Commonwealth Relations offices prepared publicity material projecting the British way of life and the benefits of colonial administration, material for combatting communist propaganda in the colonies was usually supplied by the Foreign Office.⁹⁸

Machinery was also established for liaison on anti-communist propaganda between the Foreign Office and the Chiefs of Staff. The ostensible purpose of this liaison was to ensure the supply of military intelligence that could be of use for propaganda purposes. Informal committees were established in each of the Service Departments, comprising the Director of Plans, the Director of Intelligence, and the Public Relations Officer. These informal committees would collate information from the Services at home, and British military attaches abroad, and pass any relevant information through the Secretary of the Chiefs of Staff Committee to the head of IRD. The aims of this liaison were threefold: to ensure that military intelligence about the

strength and weakness of the enemy was made available to the Foreign Office; to ensure that intelligence about Britain's military strength and that of Britain's allies was available to the Foreign Office; and to ensure that routine announcements made by the Service Departments were framed in line with the new propaganda policy.⁹⁹ In the light of their frustration at the slow pace of Britain's planning for political warfare, it is apparent that the Chiefs of Staff hoped this channel of communication would also afford them some influence over the direction of Britain's cold war propaganda:

Once this channel of communication is established we contemplate that information and advice would flow through it in both directions. It would enable the Chiefs of Staff and the Service Departments to make their contribution towards the conduct of anti-Communist propaganda. It would also enable the Foreign Office to keep the Services informed of the propaganda measures which they were taking.¹⁰⁰

Significantly, on the Services' recommendation, this liaison organisation had been modelled on that which served the needs of the wartime Political Warfare Executive, and 'would form a working nucleus which could be rapidly expanded in case of need.'¹⁰¹ Faced with such pressure from the Service Departments the Foreign Office asserted their authority over the application of the new propaganda policy. It was later agreed that although the Service Committees would not be debarred from making practical suggestions for activities in the field, 'it rested with the Foreign Office whether any such suggestions were acted on or not in the light of political considerations.'¹⁰²

Whilst IRD handled the distribution of unattributable briefing material it also oversaw the application of the new policy by Britain's overt propaganda agency the Central Office of Information (COI). The COI was not a policy department and only rarely originated propaganda campaigns in its own right. Since its establishment in 1946 the COI's function was to supply Government departments with technical publicity advice and provide a number of common distributive services. Although the COI maintained no staff overseas it provided British embassies abroad with books, pamphlets, posters, and photographs. It also

ran the London Press Service (LPS). This telegraphic service provided British missions with a daily bulletin on diplomatic, industrial, social and economic affairs. It was not a current news service but was designed to provide commentary on the assumption that the 'hard news' had already reached foreign posts through the news agencies and the BBC. It was a free, attributable service unrestricted by secrecy and copyright and was designed for diplomats, information officers and the local press to use in whatever manner they saw fit.¹⁰³

Since 1946 the COI's overseas services had been geared towards the 'Projection of Britain.' Following the approval of the new propaganda policy in January 1948 the COI was provided with a new directive in which they were required to 'take every suitable opportunity that offers for drawing the comparison between the merits of our own methods in Britain, the Commonwealth and the Empire, and the vices and dangers of Communist methods.' Although they were encouraged to exercise 'tact and discretion' COI's output was to be 'forthright and effective in our comparison, and on occasion in our denunciation of Communist methods.'¹⁰⁴ In February 1948 the IRD head Ralph Murray outlined a detailed plan for the employment of COI services. He suggested that the LPS should increase its emphasis on labour affairs in Europe, and might even carry a regular commentary on Soviet affairs which would enable them to include a great deal of IRD material. In order to facilitate the new policy Murray suggested that LPS should establish direct and daily contact with IRD. He proposed that the directive for COI photoprint editors should be altered to include subjects to emphasise the contrast between conditions in the West and behind the Iron Curtain. In particular they might be asked to prepare feature sets illustrating 'What Liberty Means', with pictures of 'guardians of civil liberties in the democracies' and contrasting illustrations of the Secret Police in communist dominated areas.¹⁰⁵ Murray was particularly keen to use COI contacts to develop a series of signed feature articles from well known commentators. Signed articles it was felt had a much greater impact, particularly on foreign audiences, than official

statements and were frequently requested by Information Officers.¹⁰⁶ Murray proposed that articles should be commissioned from writers, 'out of the ordinary run' of COI contributors.¹⁰⁷ Like the IRD basic papers articles were to focus on comparative standards of living between the Western democracies and the Soviet 'paradise' and stress civil liberties. Although 'tactically' Murray said, they should probably be angled as part of the 'Projection of Britain' 'each article should be equipped with a powerful sting in its tail.'¹⁰⁸ IRD could provide the writers with material to help in their research but 'for reasons of discretion' it was suggested that COI should commission the papers.¹⁰⁹ In October 1948 IRD presented the COI with a detailed list of topics for feature articles. These included, communist penetration of the Middle East; Soviet secret police action; a comparison of Soviet and Nazi aggression in action; Soviet disregard for human rights; and a series of signed articles on 'Impressions of the USSR' and 'The Russian Economic Grip on the Iron Curtain Countries.'¹¹⁰

The Central Office of Information was not entirely happy with its involvement in the new propaganda policy. Robert Fraser, Director General of the COI, thought it unwise for the COI to produce anti-communist material as part of its general service for the Foreign Office. It was not, he believed, in the interests of the COI to 'get mixed up with secret or semi-secret work.'¹¹¹ When reviewing IRD's progress in August 1948, Murray described efforts to mobilise the COI as 'quite fruitless.' He bemoaned 'interminable negotiations' over improved London Press Service output, the production of a bulletin on Labour affairs, and anti-communist feature output, and 'equally fruitless' negotiations over films, photographs, strip cartoons and books.¹¹² Nevertheless, cooperation between the Foreign Office and the COI did bear some fruit. The COI secured a number of impressive commissions for feature articles, including a series on conditions in the Soviet Union from Edward Crankshaw, articles on Soviet and Fascist methods and on Soviet sabotage of atomic energy from Malcolm Muggeridge, and on Soviet penetration of the Middle East from Elizabeth Monroe.¹¹³ The IRD and COI also

established close and effective cooperation in the development of anti-communist themes in LPS services. LPS maintained a daily contact with IRD. By March 1949 IRD was pleased that suggestions for the emphasis of LPS bulletins met with absolute cooperation, and the use of IRD themes was 'very satisfactory in quantity... and far from bad in quality.' The only regrets arose from the natural limitations of the LPS service, material needed to reach LPS by 10am, it did not carry news, and it could not carry signed articles.¹¹⁴

Arrangements were also made to coordinate IRD's anti-communist propaganda with the activities of Britain's covert propaganda agencies. Although Bevin had given his Cabinet colleagues the impression that any covert propaganda was impracticable in the present circumstances, at least one Minister was informed confidentially that '"black" activities were in fact going on to a limited extent' early in 1948.¹¹⁵ Responsibility for black propaganda was, however, somewhat disjointed. Covert propaganda was divided between MI6 who handled black propaganda, and a body in the Ministry of Defence responsible for deception planning, the London Controlling Section (LCS). The LCS, which was established during the war to prepare strategic deception plans, had been preserved within the Ministry of Defence as a reservoir of specialist skills and knowledge.¹¹⁶ An examination of the organisation of black propaganda and deception in early 1948, concluded there was very little coordination between the agencies responsible. The Cabinet Secretary Norman Brook wrote that he could not 'see any clear dividing line between black propaganda and deception.' 'Deception', he observed, 'is only one aspect of 'black propaganda.' Yet the activities were divided between two Departments who did not appear to have any arrangements for cooperation.¹¹⁷ Moreover, it is apparent that SIS was ill prepared for black propaganda activities. In January 1948 Air Chief Marshall Sir John Slessor had expressed dismay at SIS's inadequate plans for covert propaganda.¹¹⁸ Norman Brook also found SIS was not properly equipped to handle 'black' propaganda. 'Functionally' he wrote, 'it is an intelligence collecting organisation' which handled propaganda due to the

circumstances that it inherited the remnants of SOE, and it controlled the channels through which black propaganda was disseminated. However, in a remarkable admission, Brook commented, 'I don't believe that C himself knows anything about propaganda; and I have not been able to get any assurances that he has on his staff anyone who does.'¹¹⁹

The organisation of the new propaganda policy attempted to provide improved coordination of black propaganda, by making arrangements to allow the Foreign Office an overview of such activities. Coordination with SIS was established through Sir Stewart Menzies, Director General of SIS who maintained contact with Christopher Warner in the Foreign Office, and the Director of Plans in the Service Departments.¹²⁰ A separate informal contact was established between Warner and a representative of the LCS.¹²¹ Through this machinery IRD was able to coordinate black activities with the rest of the Government's overseas propaganda activities. It also went some way towards providing closer coordination of the two agencies responsible for covert propaganda. As there was little apparent appetite for closer coordination from the secret agencies themselves, this effectively left the Foreign Office as the only agency with an overall view of Britain's black propaganda activities, and more importantly the coordination of these activities with the new propaganda policy. As Brook observed, the liaison machinery left the problem of coordination in the hands of the Foreign Office on the basis that, 'the Foreign Office are responsible for policy on both sides and must be left to see that the executive agencies of propaganda, "black" and "white" carry out that single policy.'¹²²

Clearly the organisation of the new propaganda policy placed the new Foreign Office department in an influential position. In addition to the job of collating and disseminating anti-communist material the IRD oversaw all of Britain's anti-communist propaganda activities overseas. This central coordinating role for the Foreign Office may have been exactly what Bevin intended. There was to be no return to the wartime organisation for political warfare with an executive agency

outside the Foreign Office responsible for the preparation and application of offensive and defensive propaganda. In the Cold War the Foreign Office was to retain overall control. In the IRD the Foreign Office established the primary agency for the preparation of Britain's anti-communist propaganda, and the central coordinating authority for the application of the new propaganda policy across Whitehall.

Moreover, in the months following its creation the IRD's role expanded rapidly. It soon became clear that the original intention that IRD would merely act as a central collection point for anti-communist material for distribution through existing channels was unworkable. By August 1948, although the IRD had grown to 16, Murray found it impossible to increase 'this slow laboured trickle of output' without an enlarged establishment. He needed competent editorial staff, reference section assistants and specialist readers of the Russian and Iron Curtain press 'for our purposes.'¹²³ The reluctance of some Government departments to become involved in the new propaganda policy coupled with the specialist nature of IRD's anti-communist campaign led IRD to develop its own capabilities. The COI's reluctance to produce material without an official imprimatur led IRD to develop their own production facilities, and commission their own anti-communist feature articles.¹²⁴ Similar circumstances led the department to develop its own substantial research and intelligence sections. Members of the Foreign Office Research Department (FORD), whose role mostly closely resembled that of IRD, resisted a proposed merger with IRD on the grounds that, 'they are not and do not wish to be propagandists.'¹²⁵ IRD officials also had reservations about the suitability of such departments for propaganda work. Although FORD's detailed papers were admired in Whitehall it was felt that a 'short readable document' was more effective for propaganda purposes.¹²⁶ Murray noted that 'pure FORD research minds are not necessarily what I need' and Warner observed that 'persons selected for research in FORD are averse to and totally unsuited for anything in the nature of propaganda.'¹²⁷ Similarly, in 1949 when Foreign Office inspectors recommended the creation of a separate Russian

and Satellite intelligence department to service the needs of all Foreign Office departments¹²⁸ IRD resisted the dilution of their intelligence cadre. Warner argued it was impracticable for the same people to do intelligence work for different purposes, namely political, economic and propaganda. Without an intimate knowledge of Soviet propaganda and also of the particular themes and campaigns IRD were running it would be impossible for the intelligence analyst to pick up useful items.¹²⁹ By mid 1949 IRD had expanded to 52, which was according to Murray, approximately the strength he had envisaged at the stage of its construction. The intelligence section alone numbered 21 and as a result of the COI's disappointing supply of feature articles Murray next proposed to expand the department's output capability.¹³⁰ Although the IRD continued to use the facilities of the Government's existing research and propaganda agencies the development of its own capabilities meant the 'small section' created in 1948 to coordinate Britain's anti-communist propaganda continued to expand almost throughout the department's existence.¹³¹

Implementing the new propaganda policy

Dissemination: Methods and Media

Once the machinery for coordinating the new propaganda policy had been established, the IRD set about organising channels through which anti-communist propaganda could be disseminated. The Cabinet paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy' stated that the new department would 'provide material for our anti-communist publicity through our Missions and Information Services abroad.' It also suggested that anti-communist material should be made available to Ministers, and on an informal basis to Labour Party and Trade Union officials.¹³² In a circular telegram to British missions outlining the new policy, diplomats were instructed that preparations would take some time and they should not therefore, 'initiate any general change to the new policy in local publicity pending further instructions.' They were merely required to make 'observations and suggestions' regarding the methods and media to be adopted, the character of material required and the probable effect of the

new policy on the work of their information staff.¹³³

British missions were at the forefront of communist propaganda attacks and the IRD was heavily dependent on Foreign Office representatives abroad to provide information on communist propaganda for use in Britain's response, and to implement the new propaganda line. In the early months of 1948, in the phoney-propaganda war before IRD began work, the themes to be pursued in the new propaganda policy, and the channels through which that propaganda was to be disseminated were delimited in a series of telegrams between the IRD and British missions abroad. A circular to all British Missions on 23 January outlined the broad framework of the policy defined by the Cabinet paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy.' It listed five broad themes. The new policy should: advertise British principles as the best way of life compared with the communism and unrestrained capitalism; stress the civil liberties issue, pointing to the many analogies between fascist and communist systems; highlight the destructiveness of communist foreign policy; answer Soviet misrepresentations about Britain; but in all this take care to emphasise the weaknesses and deficiencies of communism, not its strength.¹³⁴

Missions were told that the target audience for the new policy was to be the 'broad masses of workers and peasants.' The principal target area was to be Western Europe where it was stated that the new policy was designed to give a lead and support to democratic elements resisting the inroads of communism. It was stated that the new policy would also require 'special application' in the Middle East and certain Far Eastern countries such as India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Indonesia and Indo-China. An additional circular was sent to Middle East missions who were informed that they should for the time being continue to implement the anti-communist measures set out in the directive 'Russia in the Middle East' of October 1946.¹³⁵ British Embassies in Eastern Europe and in Russia were also given specific instructions. It was accepted that these missions would not be able to carry out anti-communist measures locally, but hoped the positive side of the new policy could be

implemented. Such anti-communist activity as was possible was to be limited to repeating suitable material from Ministerial and official statements covered by the BBC. They were to avoid 'any incitement to subversive activity.' These missions were however vitally important in providing material on conditions behind the iron curtain for use in Britain's anti-communist propaganda.¹³⁶

The reaction of British missions to the new propaganda policy was somewhat mixed. Although it was broadly welcomed, some aspects of the new policy were questioned and it was obvious that the policy as it stood was not applicable in all regions. Several missions questioned the wisdom of attacking 'unrestrained capitalism.' In the Middle East, it was pointed out, capitalism was generally associated with the ruling class and big foreign oil companies, 'who already have enough trouble on their hands without the aid of our official policy.'¹³⁷ Similarly, in some countries, for example in Latin America, communists were already attacking 'American imperialism' and an attack on capitalism would naturally be assumed to be directed against the United States.¹³⁸ The proposed appeal to democratic Christian principles was another feature of the new policy which was not of universal application. In Catholic Latin America Britain did not appear an appropriate champion of Christian values, and in the Middle East an emphasis on Christian principles was hardly likely to be profitable.¹³⁹ The British Middle East Office in Cairo concluded, not without some truth, that the new policy seemed to have been designed with Europe in mind. With regard to countering communist influence further East it was effectively a step back from the 1946 publicity directive 'Russia and the Middle East' which sought to defend Britain and America against Soviet charges of aggressive imperialism and reply to Soviet misrepresentations 'with all the means at our disposal.'¹⁴⁰

Missions were asked to comment in particular on the methods and media of dissemination likely to be most fruitful in implementing the new policy in their region. Their replies suggested that five broad channels would be used for the dissemination of Britain's new anti-communist propaganda: the press; broadcast media, principally the BBC; books; visual media

such as film and posters; and personal contacts. The extent to which each of these channels could be employed varied considerably depending on local circumstances. In Eastern Europe information officers were clearly aware of their vulnerable position and stressed the need for discretion. Belgrade and Prague, for example, both cautioned that they could not take the offensive through their existing overt information programmes, such as reading rooms, for fear of giving the authorities an excuse to shut down their information departments.¹⁴¹ It was widely felt in Eastern Europe that the BBC was the 'safest and most useful method' for the dissemination of information.¹⁴² Nevertheless, there was scope for implementing the new policy more discreetly through the development of personal contacts. According to the Helsinki Embassy, such a policy should aim for 'maximum influence; minimum display.'¹⁴³ The Embassy in Prague stated boldly that 'active anti-communist propaganda' in Czechoslovakia was by no means impossible, although such activity would need to be indirect. Material could reach the Czech public through personal contacts with anti-communist politicians, non-communist newspaper and magazine editors, and reliable leading Czechs from other walks of life who could disseminate material amongst their own political or professional circles.¹⁴⁴

In Western Europe, where information departments in British Embassies operated with greater freedom, a more varied range of media was suggested. The Embassy in Madrid, for example, offered a long and diverse list of methods for disseminating anti-communist material including the BBC Spanish Service, Embassy bulletins, films, photographs for the press and window displays, posters, lectures and verbal propaganda by means of 'calls.'¹⁴⁵ In some countries in Western Europe a more discreet approach to anti-communist propaganda was still recommended. In France and Italy, on the frontline of the struggle against communism in Western Europe, it was suggested that, although propaganda could openly project British achievements and espouse the virtues of Western Democracy, the dissemination of anti-communist propaganda should be more indirect. In Rome, the Ambassador, Sir Victor Mallett, said that the Embassy and Consulates should not be used

for the direct dissemination of anti-communist material for two reasons. Firstly, feelings were running so high between the communist and non-communist parties, that the sacking of Party publicity offices was a growing pastime and British information offices would do well to stay out of the arena. Secondly, the strength of anti-communist feeling in the majority of the Italian press was such that there was little need to disseminate such material officially from the Embassy. Instead, Mallett recommended, anti-communist material should be disseminated discreetly through personal contacts with sympathetic sections of the press and non-communist political parties.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, in France the Ambassador said that British officials should avoid any overt anti-communist statements, but would seek to 'personally inspire public men, editors, publishers and writers with material for their own activities in this field.' He even suggested that a confidential arrangement could be made with small press agencies in France to include IRD material in their services.¹⁴⁷

Outside of Europe, as the Russia Committee had predicted, there were problems with the proposal to direct the new policy at the 'broad masses of workers and peasants.' In the Middle East the existing propaganda policy targeted the educated elite. In response to the new policy the British Middle East Office in Cairo argued in favour of maintaining existing policy. Students and graduates, they suggested, would be a more appropriate target than uneducated workers and peasants: 'the semi-educated townee is the most dangerous class in the Middle East... It is they who usually start the trouble.'¹⁴⁸ A detailed programme of anti-communist measures from the Embassy in Baghdad identified three groups in the Middle East to whom anti-communist propaganda could be directed. The small professional and English-speaking class had the most to lose from communism and therefore was largely opposed to communism already. Propaganda directed at this class would be preaching to the converted. The student class was the most susceptible to the blandishments of communism. However, their grasp of English was often rudimentary and an approach to them, it was felt, was best made in Arabic. Finally, the

remaining masses were largely illiterate and must be approached by 'visual methods, the radio and a whispering campaign.'¹⁴⁹

Reaching these groups required different methods than those employed in Europe, with a greater emphasis on visual and oral media, and a need for more material in local languages. The educated classes, Baghdad suggested, should be influenced through anti-communist material placed in the local press. This could be done both locally and through London. It was noted that every overseas newspaper subscribed to some syndicated service in the United Kingdom for its feature articles. Editors of services in Britain should be encouraged to increase the production of anti-communist material. It was even suggested a feature service might be set up in London to feed articles to the Arab world. Local information officers would also ensure that articles were translated, placed in the local press, and the producing newspaper distributed to all posts. Thus articles placed in just one local newspaper would, according to Baghdad, be repeated throughout the region, thereby obscuring their origin and impressing upon the reader the seriousness with which communism was regarded in many countries.¹⁵⁰ The Ambassador in Cairo reported that various local newspapers were already following an anti-communist line and would welcome such material.¹⁵¹ Baghdad also suggested that the semi-educated should be targeted with 'cheap literature that can be placed in the many hole-in-the-wall bookshops.'¹⁵² The idea of producing cheap books for sale or distribution to reading rooms and libraries was suggested by a number of Posts. In the Far East the British representative in Burma recommended 'a special campaign of cheap simple literature for popular bookshops or for presentation to schools and associations.' Similarly, the information staff in Batavia called for cheap books by British non-official writers focusing on the Soviet Union and its international behaviour but 'preferably free from polemic.'¹⁵³

To target the illiterate masses Baghdad suggested an ambitious programme of visual propaganda. This included a poster campaign showing the consequences of forced labour and collectivisation; a feature film with a Middle East setting

depicting the progressive infiltration of communism into a country; and newsreels. There was concern, however, that newsreels would need to become more hard-hitting. Current newsreels, according to Baghdad, tended to present British achievements 'rather effete.' 'Such subjects as the Chelsea Arts Ball, bathing beauties and sports are not calculated to inspire confidence in us.' Other posts also stressed the value of visual media for targeting a mass audience.¹⁵⁴ Short films in local languages were recommended in the Far East, and Cairo suggested the return of cinema vans which had been used widely to bring newsreel to isolated areas during the war.¹⁵⁵ Finally, the most important medium for reaching the illiterate masses was oral propaganda. This ranged from the most powerful medium of broadcasting to small scale whispering campaigns. As in Europe the BBC was the most important overt medium for the new policy and could openly carry the Government line, in the form of Ministerial statements, to the largest audience. There were also a number of local services. Some army stations like Radio SEAC were directed at British troops abroad but had built up large local audience. Other services broadcast in local languages under British direction, most notably Sharq al-Adna.¹⁵⁶ Covert oral propaganda was also considered. The Foreign Office and SIS had begun to organise the covert oral dissemination of anti-communist propaganda through agents in Persia early in 1947. A more widespread programme was now advocated. One notable channel was the Brotherhood of Freedom a secret anti-Nazi society established in Cairo by the British Ministry of Information in World War II. Modelled on the Muslim Brotherhood which stressed religious plurality and a secular democratic political system the Brotherhood of Freedom had spread across the region and had over 40000 members by the end of the war. In the post war years the Brotherhood had continued to operate promoting social reform, counteracting false ideas about the advantages of communism and stressing the need for mutual cooperation under the UN.¹⁵⁷ Although the Brotherhood's origins were widely known it was highly regarded and its experience, local organisation and contacts could, it was felt, once again serve the interests of

Britain's propaganda policy.¹⁵⁸

Although IRD's principal role was the provision of anti-communist material to British Information Officers abroad, the department was also given the task of briefing Government spokesmen at home 'on Communist propaganda lines and replies thereto.' The new propaganda policy had of course been launched in a series of Ministerial speeches and Bevin was keen that all official statements were to be 'framed with the new propaganda policy in mind.'¹⁵⁹ In addition to the material prepared within IRD, information officers abroad were instructed to make use of anti-communist statements reaching them through the normal diplomatic channels or repeated in the media. In particular they were to draw attention to statements by prominent members of the Government, the Labour Party and the TUC. Christopher Mayhew observed that speeches by Government Ministers which were 'automatically sent all over the world by the news agencies, foreign correspondents and the BBC, can put over in a few hours His Majesty's Government's attitude on an essential theme in a way that explanations by Heads of Missions and the work of our Information Officers in the field can seldom, if ever, achieve.'¹⁶⁰ But as Mayhew indicated, if official statements were to play an important part in Britain's propaganda abroad, it was important to maintain a consistent line at home. Consequently, IRD material was distributed 'on a strictly personal and confidential basis' to Percy Cudlipp of the Cooperative Movement, Herbert Tracey publicity Director for the TUC and the Labour Party, and Denis Healey head of the Labour Party's International Department.¹⁶¹ Mayhew also suggested that IRD material should be regularly sent to all Cabinet Ministers, and that the Foreign Office should circulate anti-communist speakers notes or talking points to all Ministers and selected MPs. In a revealing insight into the remaining Cabinet divisions regarding the Soviet threat, the Minister of State, Hector McNeill, rejected Mayhew's suggestion for a general circulation, 'by all means let them have the stuff on a personal basis, but a general circulation would be highly dangerous.' Instead, IRD drafted a stock of personal letters from Mayhew to selected

senior Ministers enclosing a selection of IRD's output, and urging its use in forthcoming speeches.¹⁶² The first batch went to Attlee, Herbert Morrison and the Minister of Defence A.V.Alexander. Attlee was of course, 'glad to lend all the assistance in my power to our overseas anti-Communist propaganda campaign.'¹⁶³

On 27 March 1948 British missions were informed that IRD had begun work and that information staff abroad were free to begin implementing the new propaganda policy. In response to concerns expressed by several posts regarding the application of the new policy in their regions, they were cautioned that the new policy should be implemented 'with due regard to local political and general conditions' and that they should keep the Foreign Office informed of any activities, proposals, and requirements. Those organising the propaganda policy in the Foreign Office and the IRD remained aware that the Soviet propaganda machine was well established and highly organised and they were careful not to become involved in a full-scale propaganda war before British defences were established. Shortly before the IRD began work the IRD head Ralph Murray warned that 'we must have an efficient intelligence machine, and an efficient output machine before it is any good taking a leaf out of the Soviet book.'¹⁶⁴ Given the diversity and ambitious nature of some of the suggestions received from British missions abroad it is apparent that initially at least the IRD wished to keep a close rein on the application of the new policy. By exercising such control the IRD was able to ensure consistency in British propaganda, while at the same time discouraging any action likely to provoke an unwanted reaction from the Soviets:

You will appreciate... that it is most important that in our general presentation of Soviet policy, institutions, doctrine and practices the lines taken by different posts should be consistent. You should therefore be cautious as regards local interpretation of general issues and rely as far as possible on the output of material from here which though meagre to begin with will, it is hoped, be more satisfactory in the near future.¹⁶⁵

Posts were told that they would shortly be receiving propaganda material in support of the new policy from three

sources. They would receive a supply of basic papers from IRD on various aspects of conditions in the Soviet Union and of events in Iron Curtain countries, designed to meet the requirements expressed in their comments on the new policy. In addition their attention was drawn to the fact that due to recent events in Czechoslovakia attitudes towards communist organisations had crystallised in the Labour Party and TUC and that there had been clear Ministerial statements to this effect. Such information would reach them through the normal official and unofficial channels and should be given due prominence in their information work. Thirdly, they were informed arrangements were being made with the Central Office of Information for the London Press Service and their other services, both written and visual, to take account of the new policy in their official publicity material.¹⁶⁶

Conclusion

By comparison with the *ad hoc* response to Soviet propaganda since the end of the war, the new propaganda policy adopted in January 1948 was designed to be highly organised, coordinated and global in scale. It was in several respects a return to the policy and methods of a wartime propaganda counter-offensive. Certainly, the new propaganda policy and the proposed methods for its implementation derived a great deal from Foreign Office experience of overseas propaganda in the two world wars. A defining characteristic of the new policy was that Britain's response to communist propaganda should be based on the truth. In the projection of British principles, and the description of life behind the Iron Curtain, it was felt that exaggeration was counterproductive and largely unnecessary. Similarly, and perhaps somewhat contradictory, the defining feature of the new Information Research Department's output was that its source should not be revealed, and the very existence of the new propaganda campaign should remain secret. It was felt that information emanating from unofficial, but otherwise authoritative sources, would have greater impact than an official response to communist propaganda and the methods for countering communist propaganda should therefore be indirect. The ideas

that the most effective propaganda was based on the truth and that propaganda recognised as emanating from an official source was 'almost useless' had been guiding principles of the Foreign Office approach to propaganda since the First World War.¹⁶⁷

There were other parallels with propaganda during wartime. Some, although by no means all, of IRD's early recruits came with experience of working in propaganda during the Second World War. Also, not surprisingly, many of the suggestions from British information staff abroad for channels and methods to be employed in the new propaganda policy were based on wartime experiences. The views of many information staff regarding the central role of the BBC in the new propaganda policy reflected a long held assumption about the importance of accurate news as the backbone of British propaganda. A view encapsulated by the founding father of the BBC Lord Reith in the aphorism, 'news is the shocktroops of propaganda.'¹⁶⁸ More specific suggestions such as the employment of cinema vans, covert whispering campaigns and the use of the Brotherhood of Freedom in the Middle East all owed a great deal to activities of the wartime Ministry of Information and the Political Warfare Executive.

However, the new propaganda policy did not mark a return to offensive wartime methods and the Information Research Department was not a resurrected Political Warfare Executive.¹⁶⁹ Bevin firmly resisted calls from Cabinet colleagues and the Chiefs of Staff for a return to wartime methods of political warfare. The phrase 'political warfare' was not to be used even in the closest government circles to describe the new propaganda policy. Moreover, in the administrative arrangements for control of overseas propaganda the wartime models of an executive agency or even an interdepartmental planning staff were eschewed in favour of assigning responsibility for the implementation and coordination of the new propaganda policy to a dedicated Foreign Office department with ultimate responsibility for all overseas propaganda in the hands of the Foreign Secretary alone. Furthermore, the new propaganda policy was not directed at occupied Europe. It was not an offensive strategy designed to undermine communist rule in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Its primary purpose was the consolidation of democracy in those free countries threatened by communism, principally in Western Europe and the Middle East. This was markedly different from the psychological warfare directed at enemy forces and occupied peoples during wartime, and clearly had implications for the methods employed and the tone of the propaganda. The new propaganda policy also had several distinct features which owed more to the Labour Government's perception of the Cold War than the Foreign Office's approach to propaganda in previous conflicts. Most notably the new propaganda policy was to be directed at 'the broad masses of workers and peasants' a quite different audience from the educated elite usually targeted by Foreign Office information staff, as several officials noted with scepticism. Bevin's strategy for a Western Union defence was also central to the new line in British propaganda. Consequently rather than promoting strictly British values the new propaganda policy was based on the 'vital ideas of British Social Democracy and Western civilisation.'¹⁷⁰ This lent a distinctly progressive internationalist hue to the traditional concept of the 'Projection of Britain.' Moreover, in the years which followed, the policy's aim 'to give a lead to our friends abroad and help them in the anti-communist struggle' and the necessities of collective defence, would involve British propagandists increasingly in the moral support of our allies firstly as part of a 'Third Force' based on the Brussels Treaty Organisation and later an Atlantic alliance with the United States.

Chapter 3

Building a concerted counter-offensive: Cooperation with other powers, 1948-1950

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I feel that the major danger is not that we might have our hands tied too much by working in cooperation, but that, by working in isolation, we should fail to make our influence sufficiently felt in building up a concerted counter-offensive. Other countries need our moral encouragement in the feeble efforts most of them put up to defend themselves against communist political warfare.

Christopher Mayhew, May 1949.¹

Cooperation with like-minded people to provide a coordinated response to communist propaganda was a primary objective of Britain's new propaganda policy. Although the policy was conceived as a distinctly British social democratic response to communist propaganda it was not solely concerned with the defence of Britain and the colonies against communist propaganda and subversion. The threat of communist subversion in Europe and the Middle East, coupled with Bevin's strategy for Western Union defence, meant that in addition to responding to communist propaganda attacks on Britain, the new propaganda policy also sought to consolidate the forces of anti-communism in the free world. Moreover, as Mayhew suggested, in seeking to build a concerted counter-offensive British policymakers had little faith in the ability of the rest of the free world to provide an effective response to communist propaganda. It was, therefore, up to Britain to 'give a moral lead to the forces of anti-communism in Europe and Asia.'² In addition to defending Britain against communist propaganda, the Cabinet paper which set out Britain's 'Future foreign publicity policy,' stated that Britain should provide an arsenal of anti-communist propaganda for its allies:

[W]e must see to it that our friends in Europe and elsewhere are armed with the facts and the answers to Russian propaganda. If we do not provide this ammunition they will not get it from any other source.³

Once the new Foreign Office Information Research Department (IRD) was established, its head, Ralph Murray, turned his attention to these wider aspects of the new propaganda policy.

In reviewing the progress of the new propaganda policy in August 1948, Murray observed:

We should be more active in our contacts with the Americans... And surely we should be approaching the Dominion Governments soon, tricky though they may be. And we should surely be exploring the potentialities of cooperation with our co-signatories of the 5-Power Treaty, which presumably must come some day. I cannot tackle these issues as if they are weary side-issues, which they are not.'

The liaison envisaged by Murray would involve Britain in cooperation at various levels with the 'forces of anti-communism' abroad. Sharing the product of Britain's anti-communist effort at an inter-governmental level with allied Governments under the Brussels Treaty and later the North Atlantic Treaty became an important part of IRD's work, as did liaison with the Dominion Governments. There were also attempts to persuade other nations to follow Britain's example in responding to communist propaganda. However, although the product of Britain's anti-communist effort was freely shared with allied governments, the degree to which they were taken into Britain's confidence about the existence of a coordinated anti-communist campaign, and the organisation of the IRD in particular, varied from country to country. At the same time as cautious approaches were made to friendly governments, the IRD continued to carry out anti-communist activities in those states through unofficial contacts with the 'forces of anti-communism' within them. Arrangements were made for cooperation with individuals, trade unions, political parties, journalists and publishers abroad which in many respects went beyond the degree of cooperation afforded to individual Governments. Only the United States was exempt as a target for British anti-communist propaganda. Britain's principal Cold War ally was the only country to which the new propaganda policy was revealed in its entirety, and with whom Britain actively sought to coordinate propaganda policies.

This chapter will examine the development of British cooperation with other powers in the field of anti-communist propaganda. It will focus in particular on cooperation with: the United States; Britain's partners in the colonies; and allies in

Europe as part of the Brussels Treaty and North Atlantic Treaty organisations. It will be argued that in spite of Britain's commitment to a policy of 'Third Force propaganda' independent of the United States, and reservations about American propaganda, the new propaganda policy was, from the start, developed in close cooperation with the United States. The development of this close and unique level of cooperation, will be contrasted with Britain's slow and cautious approach to cooperation with other powers in Europe and the colonies. Nevertheless, it will be argued that Britain's attempt to cooperate with other powers was part of a genuine attempt to give a lead to the forces of anti-communism in Europe and Asia. Yet such attempts also illustrated that the United States was the only other power with a propaganda machinery and policy capable of providing an effective response to communist propaganda.

'Shooting at the same target from different angles.'

The new propaganda policy and cooperation
with the United States.

In conception at least the new propaganda policy appeared to reject cooperation with the United States. The Cabinet paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy' stated that it was up to the British 'as Europeans and as a Social Democratic Government, and not the Americans, to give the lead in spiritual, moral and political sphere' to the forces of democracy in Europe. British Social Democracy was to be the rallying point for the new policy. The inroads of communism were to be opposed by a 'Third Force' comprising 'all the democratic elements... which are anti-Communist and, at the same time, genuinely progressive and reformist, believing in freedom, planning and social justice.' The paper also stated that in the interest of balance, as well as decrying totalitarian communism, the new policy would attack the 'inefficiency, the social injustice and moral weakness of unrestrained capitalism.' Although it cautioned that in practice this should not involve attacking or appearing to attack the Commonwealth countries or the United States, the principles of British social democracy were to be held up as 'offering the best and most efficient way of life.'

There were also pragmatic concerns regarding the effectiveness of American propaganda, and the intentions of American propagandists. The Cabinet paper on 'Future foreign publicity policy' criticised American propaganda for emphasising the strength of international communism as this tended to 'scare and unbalance the anti-communists while heartening fellow travellers and encouraging the communists to bluff more extravagantly.'⁶ Christopher Warner was more forthright in a letter to Sir John Balfour the British Ambassador in Washington. 'On the whole,' he wrote, 'the Americans seem to be very ham-handed in their anti-Communist and anti-Soviet publicity.'⁷ Warner was particularly worried that America might employ propaganda to provoke subversive action in the Soviet satellites, something which was expressly forbidden under Britain's new propaganda policy.⁸ Warner also doubted the reliability of the intelligence on which the Americans based their propaganda. It is axiomatic that effective propaganda is dependent on a steady flow of reliable intelligence. Although the United States had access to a large volume of intelligence Warner felt that an agreement to exchange information was liable to 'open the floodgates' and let through a volume of information 'the reliability of which might sometimes be in doubt, and which would in any event be too great for us to cope with at the present stage.' It was, Warner felt, better to develop Britain's own sources of information.⁹ At a meeting of the Russia Committee, Warner suggested that the right general policy 'would be to exchange information on publicity with the Americas wherever appropriate.' But he stated 'it would be wrong to have a general agreement to consult them and to take the same line. We must keep our hands free.'¹⁰ At the same time Warner felt Britain could use its influence to encourage the Americans to be more subtle in their propaganda.¹¹

Despite these reservations the United States Government was provided with details of the new propaganda policy at the earliest opportunity. In February 1948, W.P.N. Edwards, head of the British Information Service (BIS) in the United States, discussed Britain's new propaganda policy with Bill Stone, the

outgoing head of the State Department information programme. Meanwhile, the incoming head of the State Department's overseas information programme, George Allen, stopped in London to discuss British and American propaganda policies, on his way back to Washington to take up his new post. In these discussions it was not, however, intended to reveal the new propaganda policy to the Americans in its entirety. The Foreign Office was unsure about how the United States government might react to the new direction in British foreign policy, in particular Bevin's plans for a British led Western Union. Significantly when a copy of the Cabinet paper entitled the 'First Aim of British Foreign Policy' was sent to the Americans in mid-January, the section on the Third Force was omitted.¹² Similarly, when officials in Washington were asked to discuss the new propaganda policy with the State Department, they were warned that, given the proposed attack on capitalism, care was required when outlining the details of the new propaganda policy to American officials. Warner noted that certain expressions and phrases in the Cabinet paper on 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy' and subsequent circular telegram had been included for 'rather special reasons' and would require 'rather special explanation to our United States friends.' It was felt therefore that the Americans should not be shown a verbatim copy of the telegram.¹³

However, as a result of confusion between the Washington Embassy and the Foreign Office, the Americans were shown rather more of the detail of the new propaganda policy than was originally intended. Early in February, Warner met with Information Officers, Gallman and Charles, from the American Embassy in London. They informed Warner that in Washington, Edwards had shown Stone a document outlining Britain's new propaganda policy. In return Gallman and Charles gave Warner a copy of a new American directive detailing their response to communist propaganda. Warner mistakenly believed that Edwards had shown Stone the circular telegram in its entirety. He was somewhat taken aback by this, but believing that the damage had already been done, and feeling somewhat obligated by the Americans' candour, he gave them a copy of the Foreign Office

circular telegram detailing the new propaganda policy in full.¹⁴ In fact, Edwards had not shown Stone the whole of this telegram. In a letter which was not received in London until after Warner had entertained Gallman and Charles, Edwards wrote that he had taken care to omit 'any controversial aspect' from the document given to Stone.¹⁵ By this time it was too late, in the bureaucratic confusion Britain's new propaganda policy had been revealed in full to representatives of the United States Government, only one month after it was presented to the British Cabinet.

To Warner's surprise and relief, the Americans were remarkably unconcerned by the anti-capitalist aspect of the new policy. In fact American officials enthused about Britain's plans and felt that the distinctive approach could compliment their own attempts to counter communist propaganda. George Allen told Warner that there would be 'considerable advantages if [Britain's] shots came from a different angle from the American, so long as they both landed in the same target.'¹⁶ In Washington, Edwards was surprised by a similar lack of concern from Stone. It was, Stone felt, only natural that Britain should preach concepts of social democracy in which the majority of Britons believed, just as the State Department must extol those capitalist virtues which the majority of Americans favoured.¹⁷

The independent approach in Britain's new propaganda policy did not dissuade US officials from proposing cooperation. Stone informed Edwards that he was anxious to develop 'the maximum cooperation between us in working out and implementing the new policy.'¹⁸ In both London and Washington these first meetings following the launch of the new propaganda policy, concluded with suggestions from the American representatives that senior officials from each country's information programme should meet again soon to exchange views with regard to future cooperation. In the meantime any formal cooperation was eschewed in favour of a general exchange of information between officials in London and Washington and if appropriate information officers in the field. The shape of the policy was agreed by Warner and Allen and was to follow the lines of existing cooperation on political matters:

[T]hat we should exchange information and ideas where desirable without any obligation on either side only to act after consultation had resulted in agreement. This exchange of information would take place, no doubt, both between Foreign Office and State Department and between their representatives in the field.¹⁹

The Foreign Office sent a circular telegram to British missions informing them of this arrangement. The telegram made clear that cooperation in the field was to be on a strictly *ad hoc* basis. The guiding principle was encapsulated in the phrase that Britain and American should aim to 'shoot at the same target from different angles.' The telegram did make one further suggestion that set an important precedent for Britain's anti-communist propaganda. It gave British information officers discretion in cases where there was a risk of British and American propaganda overlapping to make 'temporary arrangements' to avoid this. It was made clear that this should not result in Britain abandoning any field of activity or geographic area in favour of American propaganda. It did, however, establish a precedent for a division of labour in propaganda activities and raise the possibility of conceding certain responsibilities to the United States.²⁰

The first example of British and American cooperation in the field was in Italy, where the IRD began its anti-communist campaign. The British and American governments had been concerned for some time about the prospect of a communist victory in the elections in Italy in April 1948. At the end of February 1948, Warner wrote to the British Embassy in Rome that the first priority for the new Information Research Department was to 'have some influence on the course of events in Italy between now and the elections in April.' The first IRD basic papers which focused on conditions behind the Iron Curtain were produced with an eye on the requirements in Italy. Warner instructed the Ambassador in Rome, Sir Victor Mallet, to distribute the unattributable papers to 'key men in Rome and the provinces who are carrying on an anti-communist campaign' including 'party organisers, writers in anti-communist papers and anti-communist Parliamentary candidates.'²¹ Mallet welcomed the new propaganda policy and agreed to the discreet dissemination of material to

sympathetic sections of the press and other personal contacts. The Embassy had, he said, already been asked for anti-communist material by the Christian Democrat party.²² As the elections approached a small committee chaired by the Ambassador was formed in the Rome Embassy to coordinate Britain's anti-communist propaganda.²³

In early March, the Russia Committee considered what action might be taken in consultation with the Americans to prevent the communists gaining power in Italy.²⁴ The Embassy in Rome was asked for its comments on US policy in Italy and replied that the US Embassy placed its main hope in the publicity associated with the open political support and great economic help the United States was giving to Italy. They were also told in strict confidence that the US Embassy had for some time been feeding the Italian anti-communist press with material 'very much on the lines now proposed for our information services.' Given the similarities of the two campaigns the Embassy asked for permission to 'coordinate our arrangements with [the US Embassy] to avoid overlapping, waste of effort and possible risk of contradiction between our respective lines.'²⁵ The Foreign Office replied that subject to the avoidance of arrangements which might tie Britain's hands, they could exchange information with the US Embassy and make ad hoc arrangements to avoid overlapping and hampering each others' efforts.²⁶ The cooperation in Italy was reinforced by contacts in Washington where the State Department provided Balfour with a copy of its special guidance for US Information Officers on the elections in Italy. The Foreign Office reciprocated by providing the State Department with copies of the first seven IRD basic papers which had been produced specifically for use in Italy, and a brief outline of British propaganda activities in Italy.²⁷

Although it is difficult to determine exactly what impact British and American propaganda efforts had on the outcome of the Italian elections on the 18 April, the desired Christian Democrat victory was achieved.²⁸ The propaganda campaign in Italy was an important test for Britain's new propaganda policy. It was the first campaign undertaken by the IRD, and it was organised in

great haste before the department was fully established. It was also a test for cooperation with the United States. Shortly after British information staff began distributing IRD material in Italy it became apparent that British efforts mirrored a propaganda campaign by the US Government which was already underway. British officials in Rome, London and Washington quickly established an exchange of information with their American counterparts which enabled them to coordinate their propaganda policies and output.

However, it was not Britain, 'as Europeans and a social democratic government,' who gave a lead to the forces of anti-communism in Italy. Although the elections in Italy were effectively a battle between communism and the non-communist centre left, American support, both overt and covert, was more decisive than the IRD's campaign. The propaganda campaign undertaken by the US Government in Italy was an ambitious operation involving considerable overt support backed by the psychological effects of the Marshall Plan, and the first significant covert political operation of the CIA.²⁹ Moreover, although it is significant that Britain and America cooperated so closely in such a formative operation for both powers, it is not clear just how much the two sides revealed to each other about the more covert aspects of their activities in Italy. Certainly the State Department directive on information activities in Italy given to the Foreign Office, made no mention of the covert support for the Christian Democrats being organised by the CIA.³⁰ Similarly, when Warner discussed IRD's activities in Italy with the American Information Officer in London, he was careful not to mention that the Christian Democrat Party had asked the British Embassy for anti-communist material.³¹ This raises the tantalising possibility that Britain and America were both providing material support to the Christian Democrats without informing each other. What is clear is that although the propaganda campaign in Italy was by no means a joint effort, Britain played an important role in supplementing the American support of the non-communist left in Italy. This kind of independent pursuit of common objectives was to become

characteristic of British and American cooperation in the field.

By mid 1948, senior Foreign Office officials began to consider the question of expanding cooperation with the United States. In August, Ralph Murray noted that, 'we should be more active in our contacts with the Americans.'³² Aside from the exchange of information in Rome, in most areas liaison in the field had failed to develop. This was due not least to the fact that US missions had not received instructions from the State Department regarding the exchange of propaganda material with the British.³³ Warner was particularly frustrated at the lack of progress. Although Britain had provided the Americans with details of IRD's plans and productions, he complained to the Washington Embassy, 'we are much more in the dark about what they are doing.'³⁴ Warner proposed to visit Washington in the Autumn of 1948 to discuss propaganda activities with the State Department.³⁵ It is apparent that he had begun to consider a closer degree of cooperation than he had suggested in January 1948. In advance of his visit, Warner wrote to the British Embassy in Washington that 'there should be plenty of room for cooperation in fighting the cold war - exchange of ideas and of material - and perhaps for some division of labour in the field.' Warner had previously counselled against the joint production of propaganda and especially the use of US intelligence. He now suggested that the agenda for his visit to the US might include consideration of 'concerting material' and cooperating in the collection of intelligence for use in propaganda.³⁶

Warner's visit to Washington in October 1948 placed British and American cooperation in anti-communist propaganda on a formal footing. However, in several respects the visit was also something of a disappointment to Warner. It served to illustrate the degree to which Britain's response to communist propaganda was more advanced than that of the United States. The US information programme had suffered drastic budgetary cuts since the end of the war and was only just beginning to recover. In the same period the State Department's information apparatus had undergone four major reorganisations. The most recent of these had taken place since the appointment of the new Assistant

Secretary of State, George Allen, in February 1948. Consequently the information apparatus Warner came to view was strained and barely operational. Since the passage of the Smith-Mundt Act early in 1948 the information programme had received increased appropriations. But Warner discovered, the State Department were only now sending out information officers to many posts and he suspected the American propaganda machine abroad was only just being established. Warner noted that, although State Department officials were as enthusiastic as ever to cooperate in anti-communist propaganda, they were considerably less active than Britain. The State Department's Office of International Information was not producing anything comparable to the IRD's basic papers and was not providing its officers in the field with the kind of detailed information on Soviet affairs that the IRD regularly sent to British missions. There was little effort to insert articles in the local press or distribute 'officially or semi-officially' material which attacked or exposed communism. As far as Warner could establish, American activities consisted almost entirely of reproducing anti-communist material published in the USA.'"

Although the limited output of the Office of International Information meant there was little prospect of a fruitful exchange of material with the IRD, Warner discovered that material comparable to IRD's briefs was being generated by the State Department's Office of Intelligence Research (OIR).'" In particular the OIR produced a series of papers entitled 'Soviet Affairs Notes' which in subject matter closely resembled the IRD's series of basic papers. The OIR's 'Soviet Affairs Notes' series had been running for several years and covered similar topics to the IRD briefs. The papers aimed to provide 'reliable information to counteract misrepresentations in regard to Soviet developments and policies.' Although the lack of an organised propaganda campaign meant that the papers almost certainly had not enjoyed the large audience of the IRD's briefs they were distributed under similar conditions. Like the IRD briefs the only indication of origin was on a detachable cover-sheet. This sheet stated in bold letters that:

In disseminating the material outside of the US Government, the cover sheet must be detached and neither the Department of State nor the US Government may be cited as a source."

It was agreed that the OIR papers would form the basis for an exchange of propaganda material with Washington. The first batch of 'Soviet Affairs Notes' was despatched to the IRD in October 1948. In return copies of IRD basic papers and digests were distributed to the Office of International Information and the Division of Eastern European Affairs in the State Department and the Policy Planning Staff.⁴⁰

This exchange of basic propaganda material was apparently profitable. The subject matter of IRD and OIR papers was often the same and this exchange provides one example of how cooperation allowed Britain and America to develop their propaganda along similar lines and attack the same targets, albeit from different angles. For example, one of the first 'Soviet Affairs Notes' received by the IRD was a paper entitled, 'The inadequacy of Soviet economic statistics.' This paper described how the Soviet Government rarely published economic data and, 'even when published the information is not only meagre, but much too often ambiguous and incomplete, serving the purpose of equivocation or concealment rather than enlightenment.'⁴¹ Shortly afterwards the IRD produced their own paper entitled 'Soviet statistics: a study in secrecy.' This paper described the 'obscurantist process' by which the Soviet Government through 'strict censorship... enforces a statistical blackout which affects a great variety of subjects, ranging from production and consumption to unemployment and cost of living. The result is to render impossible any sound comparisons between the Soviet Union and other countries.'⁴²

Warner's visit established the first formal agreement for the exchange of anti-communist propaganda material between the British and American Governments. It was agreed that the State Department and the IRD would exchange basic research papers including IRD's basic papers and Digests, and the State Department's Soviet Affairs Notes, information directives, and intelligence on conditions behind the Iron Curtain. The locus for this exchange was to be Washington, where a British Embassy

official, Denis Allen, would liaise with the Political Division of the State Department. It was also decided that any proposals for joint Anglo-American propaganda would pass through the same channel. In order to prevent confusion and duplication it was decided not to establish a similar liaison through the American Embassy in London.⁴³

Warner also discussed the possibility of cooperation in the field of broadcasting, with Charles Thayer, the newly appointed director of the Voice of America (VOA). The State Department had taken control of all VOA broadcasts to foreign countries on 1st October 1948. State Department officials told Warner that they now considered the VOA to be their 'principal weapon in dealing with communism.'⁴⁴ There had, however, been concern in London about the strident tone of VOA broadcasts. Warner informed Thayer that there had been criticism from some British posts which regarded VOA broadcasts as 'overdone and antagonising to many listeners,' although the most vigorous anti-communists preferred them to the BBC. There was, Warner concluded, 'probably advantage in employing both types of broadcast - the vigorous American and the balanced British.' Thayer suggested the arrangement of a 'quick "tie-up"' with the BBC on certain occasions so that BBC and VOA broadcasts might support each other. Warner advised that the VOA should approach the BBC directly, although he agreed to raise the matter with Jacob in London. It was also agreed that copies of the State Department's directives to the VOA would be passed to the IRD through Allen in Washington, and Thayer provided a detailed overview of the resources used by the VOA to which the IRD might want access. These included State Department research papers, telegrams from US missions, Russian emigre literature and a card index of quick responses to communist propaganda attacks.⁴⁵

Some officials in London, however, remained reluctant to promote closer ties between the BBC and the VOA. Mrs Ruthven-Murray of the IPD wrote a strongly worded minute advising against the suggestions made in Washington. 'The VOA,' she wrote, 'is not only inaccurate in substance but also tactless and hectoring in tone.' There was she observed a large gap between the BBC's

policy of 'reflecting the policies and views of HMG', and actually undertaking anti-communist propaganda.

With all its faults... the BBC continues to maintain a high reputation for telling the truth and in the long run is believed. The VOA may impress those elements who are longing for the day of salvation from the West, but even those elements can never be quite sure that what they have heard is true.⁴⁶

The IRD, however, was in favour of cooperation at least between the Foreign Office and the VOA. Adam Watson asserted, there was little harm in the Foreign Office exchanging material with the VOA and the State Department. Far from following the same line as the VOA, Watson observed, such an exchange would save time and prevent duplication. As a result an exchange was allowed to develop on the basis that, 'if they say it, we needn't.'⁴⁷

The success of this cooperation between the Foreign Office and the VOA, was illustrated when Charles Thayer visited London in February 1949. In addition to meetings at the BBC, Thayer met with Warner, Murray and Watson. He informed them that the VOA was one of the largest consumers of their material in Washington. In fact it appears that the IRD's anti-communist material was more suited to the VOA broadcasts than the BBC. Warner and Murray complained that they were not having much success in pressing their material on the BBC. The BBC's policy of accepting only 'friendly advice' was making for 'strained relations' and delays. Nevertheless, Thayer reassured them, as a result of his meetings with the BBC, he felt the BBC and the VOA was successfully dividing the field. It would, he said, be a mistake, 'if the BBC and ourselves got into a contest for calling the Russians names.'⁴⁸

Perhaps the most important result of Warner's visit was an agreement that there should be 'constant contact and cooperating between our information offices in the field.' That British and American information officers should have the authority 'to show and discuss with their opposite numbers any directives or guidance instructions which they received, and discuss, where appropriate, action upon them.' Warner also ensured that, on this occasion, the State Department and the Foreign Office would

both issue circulars to their overseas posts, outlining the policy for cooperation.⁴⁹ Both telegrams stressed that nothing should be done that gave the impression that Britain and America were pursuing any kind of joint propaganda policy. In the words of the Foreign Office telegram, Britain and America would 'continue to attack the same objectives from different angles.' However, when it came to describing the basis upon which cooperation was to be undertaken the formulation of the telegrams revealed a subtle difference. The Foreign Office suggested that cooperation might take the form of division of research and 'sometimes coordination of attack', but otherwise gave its representatives relative freedom stating that 'the details of cooperation should be left to each post to work out on its merit.'⁵⁰ In contrast the State Department advocated an 'amicable exchange of views' but stressed that information officers must retain 'complete independence of action and operation.' Moreover it suggested, the basis for any exchange should be a carefully calculated *quid pro quo*:

The Department perceives no objection to the exchange of views with corresponding British officers relative to our general policy inasmuch as it is to the Department's advantage to receive corresponding information concerning British plans and policy.⁵¹

Only a few American missions reacted to the State Department's cautious tone. The American Ambassador in Iceland, who had been informed of the contents of the Foreign Office telegram, noted that the Foreign Office instructions were 'couched in mandatory terms, which stand out in contrast to the permissive terms of the Department's instructions.' In particular he was concerned that the Foreign Office did not seem to caution against joint action. In his view the Foreign Office and State Department instructions were 'so much at variance in tone and intention' that he would not sanction any cooperation.⁵² Similarly, the US Public Affairs Officer in Bolivia, where the British and American information services had worked closely in the past, interpreted the telegram as urging more restraint in the future. He confidently reassured the State Department that they had recently restricted such cooperation and would in the future make no further arrangements!⁵³

Nevertheless, most American missions welcomed the State Department's sanction for cooperation. Many were only too pleased that they now had official approval to respond to the approaches made by the British six months earlier. Although the vast majority of posts reported 'close and informal contacts' between their respective information staff, cooperation did of course vary from country to country. The closest cooperation was often in countries where communist propaganda was most hostile. British and American Embassies behind the Iron Curtain reported that their enforced isolation often prompted close and friendly relations, a degree of contact which facilitated cooperation.⁵⁴ The form of cooperation also varied greatly. Some posts merely informed each other about their plans for propaganda and reported back to their governments. Several exchanged propaganda material, principally the IRD's Digest and OIR's Soviet Affairs Notes. The US representative in Stockholm also provided a useful 'Handbook of Quotations about the Soviet Union.'⁵⁵ In Embassies with a more advanced propaganda apparatus equipment was exchanged. In Karachi, United States Information Service (USIS) films were shown by the British Information Service film van.⁵⁶ In other cases, the British and American Embassies shared translation work. In a few cases there was also a certain degree of operational cooperation. For example, in Korea and Bangkok, US information staff agreed to distribute unattributable British propaganda material along with their own.⁵⁷ Similarly, in Manila the British representative reported wholehearted American cooperation, in which 'we have arranged to "plant" some of their stuff and vice versa.'⁵⁸ Nevertheless, even in those posts where cooperation extended this far, British and American information staff were careful to maintain the appearance of independent action. Information officers in the field were perhaps more aware than anyone of the importance of independent propaganda programmes. As the American representative in Warsaw observed, informal cooperation allowed Britain and America to 'shoot at the same target from different angles', conversely the maintenance of separate programmes gave communist propagandists two targets to shoot at rather than one.⁵⁹

Third Force Propaganda:

The Brussels Treaty Organisation and the Colonies

In early 1948, the developing cooperation between Britain and America led a number of British posts to question whether they could reveal the existence of Britain's new propaganda policy to other friendly governments.⁶⁰ If there was a defining feature of Bevin's plans for a British led Western Union it was his call to 'organise and consolidate the ethical and spiritual forces inherent in this Western civilisation.'⁶¹ Central to this was the extension of the new propaganda policy to involve cooperation with Britain's allies in Europe and the Commonwealth. The Cabinet paper on future foreign publicity policy, stated that Britain would 'give the lead in spiritual, moral and political sphere to all the democratic elements in Western Europe.' Similarly, it warned communism would make headway in the Middle East, India, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Indonesia and Indo-China, 'unless a strong spiritual and moral lead... is given against it, and we are in a good position to give such a lead.'⁶²

However, the Foreign Office informed missions that, initially at least, there was to be no exchange of information with Britain's other allies, comparable to that with the United States. Although Information Officers were free to pass IRD material, subject to the usual restrictions on attribution, to politicians and officials in friendly governments, the existence of IRD and its methods were to be kept secret. In April 1948, the Embassy in Holland was instructed that:

The facts that a definite decision to carry out a planned anti-communist publicity campaign has been taken, that special machinery for this purpose has been set up, are, as you will appreciate, highly confidential here, and the only foreign government to which we have disclosed this decision and the lines of the campaign is the United States.⁶³

The Foreign Office did not begin consideration of European cooperation on anti-communist measures until after the signature of the Brussels Treaty between Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, on 17 March 1948. The question of coordinating propaganda measures by the Brussels powers was then

considered by the Foreign Office Working Party on the spiritual aspects of the Western Union. In April 1948, Murray presented the Working Party with a proposal for a joint information executive to be established by the Brussels Pact Consultative Council. Murray's proposal was based on article III of the Brussels Treaty which stated that:

The High Contracting Parties will make every effort in common to lead their peoples towards a better understanding of the principles which form the basis of their common civilisation and to promote cultural exchanges by conventions between themselves or by other means.⁶⁴

Murray proposed that rather than simply employing this article to promote cultural exchanges, 'we should seek to make active use of the Treaty.' The aim, Murray said, should be 'to get general and practical cooperation in our pro-Western Union and anti-communist propaganda drive without detracting in any way from our own independent efforts.' Through the Brussels Treaty, Murray suggested, the path could be smoothed for Britain's own propaganda efforts, while they could also aim to achieve internationally what could not be done nationally. For example, Murray suggested the establishment of an international newspaper, international feature and photoprint services, and international 'indoctrination courses or courses of instruction and inspiration in the anti-communist fight.' In order to facilitate this effort, Murray suggested the creation of a joint information executive to arrange the exchange of information, make recommendations for possible cooperation, distribute information material and run courses of instruction in anti-communism.⁶⁵

The Working Party was not in favour of Murray's proposal. It was observed that a joint information executive would face difficulties arising from conflicting policies of the powers in, for example, the Middle East. The meeting was also reminded that Bevin had been against the growth of large information services under the United Nations. There were too many organs of propaganda already and what was needed were fewer and better ones. The proposal ultimately foundered on the fact that, in contrast with the United States, none of Britain's co-signatories to the Brussels Treaty had a substantial propaganda machine of

their own. Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick was afraid that joint machinery might interfere with the efficiency of Britain's own propaganda effort whilst offering little in return.⁶⁶ It was decided that it would be a mistake to set up a five-power committee to plan joint propaganda work as Britain was the only country with 'an elaborate Information Services machinery' and a worldwide broadcasting system. Consequently, any proposals for five-power propaganda would almost certainly result in practice in Britain receiving 'all sorts of requests to use our machine for publicity on behalf of the other countries.' It was decided, therefore, not to inform the Brussels Powers about the British organisation for countering communist propaganda, and not to seek cooperation. The Working Party agreed only that periodic discussions between officials to exchange ideas and consider specific proposals 'might well have advantages.'⁶⁷

The question of cooperation with the European allies was allowed to languish until October 1948 when Bevin himself raised the issue at a meeting with the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schumann, and the US Secretary of State, George Marshall. Bevin thought that the West was at a disadvantage on the propaganda front as 'the Russians spoke with one voice and we tended to show divergent and contradictory views.' The time had come he said to discuss the coordination of propaganda in the same way they discussed the coordination of intelligence and other such matters. He did not propose a formal coordinated programme but 'a general exchange of information and ideas.' In a revealing insight into the shift in Bevin's thinking on the response to Soviet propaganda, he concluded, 'we had after all been very good at psychological warfare during the war.'⁶⁸

Later that month, at the Brussels Pact Consultative Council, Bevin once again called for exchange of ideas on countering communist propaganda and a general pooling of propaganda material. Significantly at this meeting Bevin also revealed the existence of the British organisation for countering communist propaganda. The Belgian Foreign Minister Spaak praised the volume of information on conditions behind the Iron Curtain used by British representatives at the UN. Bevin replied that a small

body had been set up in Foreign Office which produced regular reports which might be of use to the other Brussels Powers. It was agreed that although no attempt should be made to coordinate the propaganda of the five powers, each would make available to the other Governments 'information which might be useful in dealing with the problem of the ideological aspect of defence.'⁶⁹

Following the discussions in the Consultative Council Embassies in the Western Union capitals were instructed to exchange propaganda material, including IRD papers, with their host Governments.⁷⁰ Murray also made a tour of the European capitals to explain IRD's work and discuss arrangements for exchanging propaganda material.⁷¹ This exchange of propaganda material did yield some results. Although the Belgians appeared to view the provision of IRD material as obviating their own need to produce anti-communist propaganda material⁷², the French expressed an interest in developing their own organisation on the lines of IRD.⁷³ The French Government had also passed one of IRD's papers to a French writer who had published a series of articles based on it.⁷⁴ There was also some success in Holland, where the Dutch Government undertook to disseminate IRD material to the Dutch trade unions.⁷⁵ Despite these achievements the Foreign Office remained concerned about the disproportionate effort Britain was exerting in the propaganda field. The exchange of propaganda material with the Brussels Powers was largely a one-way street. By mid-1949, IRD had distributed 28 basic papers to the Brussels Powers, and received only 'one or two fairly interesting papers in return' from the French Government.⁷⁶

Cooperation with the Brussels Powers remained on a different level to that with the United States. Firstly, the exchange of propaganda material with the Brussels powers was only conducted at an inter-governmental level through contacts in the relevant European capitals. Concerns regarding potential conflicts of interest between the Brussels powers in regions such as the Middle East and South East Asia meant there was to be no cooperation in the field. The exchange was also limited to

propaganda material. There was to be no consultation on propaganda policies or coordination of propaganda activities". In March 1949, Bevin instructed British Embassies in South East Asia that there had been no agreement to do joint propaganda, or even to coordinate the main lines of it. 'We have no confidence in any attempt to conduct publicity by means of an international committee.'

In the case of the Americans, however, cooperation is more intimate and reciprocal, and is extended to the field, whereas in the case of the Brussels Powers it is intended that the exchange of information should in general be confined to the capitals.⁷⁸

There were also concerns about the security implications of cooperation with the Brussels Pact governments, particularly the French. The new propaganda policy had been revealed in full to representatives of the US government, yet in developing cooperation with the Brussels powers, as late as October 1948 the IRD was suggesting that, 'a lot could be done by... communicating the results of research without actually notifying to the Government in question that we were engaged in anti-communist activities.'⁷⁹ In particular, Murray was concerned that foreign governments should not be aware of the extent of IRD's existing contacts in their countries, 'apart from any political rumpus that might ensue, we should forfeit a certain amount of press cooperation and confidence which at the moment we enjoy.'⁸⁰

Consequently, when the decision was taken to circulate material to the Brussels Powers governments the IRD began to develop two categories of material. Category A consisted of 'secret and confidential objective studies of Soviet policies and machinations which are designed for high-level consumption by heads of states, Cabinet members etc.' Category B, was less highly classified information suitable for careful dissemination by staff of British missions to suitable contacts who could use it unattributably as factual background material.⁸¹ Whilst Category A material was exchanged with the governments of the Brussels powers, IRD continued to disseminate category B material directly to contacts in the Western Union countries. It was decided not to inform the host governments about these arrangements, to the obvious discomfort of some of the diplomatic

staff concerned. The reason was twofold, to protect the confidential nature of IRD's work, and also out of concern that in some countries communist sympathizers in the government might seek to curb IRD's activities.⁸²

This two tier approach to cooperation with the Brussels powers set a precedent for intergovernmental cooperation with the colonies. As with the Brussels Powers anti-communist propaganda work began in the colonial territories some time before the host governments were informed of Britain's anti-communist campaign. British High Commissioners were provided with copies of all IRD material and instructions on its dissemination to local contacts. As early as February 1948, British information staff in India began to distribute anti-communist material to informal contacts in the local press.⁸³ In August 1948, the IRD issued a directive regarding counter-propaganda on colonial issues. It sought to counter 'misrepresentations of our colonial policies and the state of affairs in our colonies,' whilst at the same time drawing attention to 'Soviet behaviour in and towards the backward areas of the former Tsarist empire, and towards other areas on which she has laid her hands.' Information staff were instructed to extract information from the directive, and where the opportunity arose, 'endeavour to find publicity for it.'⁸⁴

Cooperation with Commonwealth governments was not considered until November 1948 when the Colonial Information Policy Committee (CIPC) considered the question of whether the governments of India, Pakistan and Ceylon would be ready to exchange anti-communist propaganda material.⁸⁵ The slow start to intergovernmental cooperation with the Commonwealth was not least due to the attitude of the Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO), whose support for IRD's campaign was less than wholehearted. In October 1948, Foreign Office representatives on the CIPC expressed concern that the Commonwealth Relations Office were not doing 'everything that might be done... in the field of anti-communist propaganda.' They were particularly concerned that the CRO proposed to leave India, Pakistan and Ceylon out of the distribution of IRD material, presumably because the governments in these territories were not directly

threatened by the communists. The Foreign Office were inclined to view the communist threat in the colonies, particularly in India and Pakistan, somewhat more seriously than the CRO. IRD was not simply concerned with the internal communist threat but the implications of communist propaganda for regional or global security. 'The growth of communism in India and Pakistan,' Ralph Murray observed, 'is intimately related to the growth of it in the foreign territories of S.E.Asia and also in Malaya. We therefore have a strong, if indirect, interest in successful publicity measures being undertaken in India and Pakistan.' By way of example Murray pointed to 'the dangerous tendency in the Indian provincial press, and to some extent in the metropolitan press as well, to swallow Soviet colonial propaganda, particularly concerning Malaya, hook, line and sinker.'⁸⁶

In December 1948, when the Commonwealth Relations Office finally agreed to approach Commonwealth governments, cooperation was modelled on the exchange of propaganda material with the Brussels powers.⁸⁷ As with the Brussels powers, IRD was concerned that cooperation should not jeopardise the security of their activities. In a letter to the Commonwealth Secretary, Patrick Gordon Walker, Christopher Mayhew noted that, 'we shall have to be satisfied that there would not be undue risk of leakage either to the public or to the communists that the British government were supplying such material.' The governments of some of the Dominions, Mayhew observed would have a number of inexperienced officials working in their departments, 'which I suppose are most probably penetrated by the communists.'⁸⁸ Thus the Governments of India, Pakistan and Ceylon were offered IRD's category A 'research material' on Russia and the orbit, 'much as we do the Brussels powers,'⁸⁹ but were not informed about arrangements for the dissemination of IRD's category B material in their countries. The US embassy in London reported:

Foreign Office and CRO are agreed that dissemination category B material... in India, Pakistan and Ceylon on exactly same lines as used in non-Commonwealth countries without embarrassing GOI [Government of India] or GOP [Government of Pakistan] by asking their permission. IRD has had no 'kick-back' from other

countries where category B program working and is prepared assert if question raised that dissemination factual category B material is normal function British missions present world situation. Exceptionally, instructions British High Command Colombo gave him discretion to mention category B material to Ceylon Government.⁹⁰

The objectives of cooperation with the Commonwealth governments were not, however, entirely the same as those with the Brussels Powers. The IRD's principal complaint about the exchange of anti-communist material with the Brussels powers was that they received little in return. In exchanging material with Commonwealth governments it is apparent that the Foreign Office expected little in return. This was because the primary objective of cooperation with governments in the colonies appears to have been to disabuse the governments themselves of any misperceptions about the dangers of communism. In contrast to cooperation with the Brussels powers rather than supplying colonial governments with material for use in their own propaganda, the purpose was to educate senior politicians about the communist threat. Mayhew suggested that even if security from leaks could not be assured the Dominions governments could be provided with material of 'a safe nature' in the form of studies of certain questions. If the colonial governments did not make use of this material for publicity, he concluded, 'it would serve the purpose of educating them.' Similarly, Sir Archibald Nye, the British High Commissioner in Delhi, warned that although the Indian Government recognised the Soviet threat, Nehru was not inclined to view the threat as a regional one, and continued to think in terms of internal action against communism. Nye discussed with Nehru the possibility of an exchange of information on communism and received 'a friendly response,' although Nehru felt India would be able to offer little in return. Nye recommended that the Foreign Office adopt 'an oblique teaching' approach, making available to the Indian Government the IRD's category A research material, which made clear communist views and what they had done elsewhere. The Foreign Office were not concerned that the Indians could offer little material in return. The Counsellor of the British Embassy

in New Delhi told officials in the US Embassy, 'the proposed exchange would probably be almost exclusively a one-way street.' In relating this information to the State Department, the US Embassy observed, Sir Archibald Nye was, 'more interested in the gradual change in Nehru's attitude towards communism than in the substance of information which may be exchanged.'⁹¹

It is clear then that in developing intergovernmental cooperation with the colonies, the Commonwealth governments themselves were as much a target for Britain's anti-communist propaganda as they were potential partners in any anti-communist campaign in their region. In both Western Europe and the Commonwealth, cooperation at the intergovernmental level was clearly designed to alert friendly governments to the communist threat and at best stimulate them into launching their own anti-communist propaganda campaigns. However, it is apparent that cooperation with governments in Europe and the Commonwealth was not the primary means by which the Foreign Office sought to counter communism in those regions. Before any approach was made at an intergovernmental level, the IRD began to influence opinion in Europe and the colonies directly through the cultivation of contacts in the press, trade unions, and political parties in those regions, with some success. Consequently when the IRD began to establish machinery for cooperation with European and Commonwealth governments, it was at least in part, designed to shield IRD's direct attempts to influence opinion in those regions, from the governments involved.

The contrast with the degree of cooperation with United States government could not have been more marked. Whilst the United States government was informed of the new propaganda policy less than one month after the British Cabinet, Britain's plans for third force propaganda were not revealed to friendly governments in Europe until October 1948 and to Commonwealth governments until almost a year after the new policy was launched. Moreover, the degree to which the Foreign Office was prepared to cooperate with Britain's allies in Europe and the Commonwealth, fell some way short of the level of cooperation enjoyed by British and American information officers in London

and Washington, and in the field.

The principal difference was that western Europe and the colonies were regions threatened by communism, and as such were primary targets for Britain's anti-communist propaganda. The United States was not. Of course as the IRD was strictly forbidden from carrying out propaganda activities within the United States itself, there was less need to conceal IRD's activities from the United States government.⁹² However, it is also clear that Britain's attempts to develop intergovernmental cooperation with other powers merely served to illustrate that the United States was the only state with a propaganda machine and a policy for countering communist propaganda comparable to that of the United Kingdom. In so much as any third force developed in the field of anti-communist propaganda through 1948 and 1949 it was limited to the dissemination of the product of Britain's new propaganda policy to a growing number of governments in Europe and the colonies.

The Decline of Third Force Propaganda:

Anti-Communist Propaganda and NATO

A series of events beginning with the Soviet blockade of Berlin in June 1948 and culminating with the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty in April 1949, signalled the demise of Bevin's Western Union concept, and with it the Third Force aspect of Britain's anti-communist propaganda. British difficulties in stimulating anti-communist activities by the co-signatories of the Brussels Pact reflected wider concerns about the viability of Western Union defence which emerged in British official circles towards the end of 1948. Britain had neither the military might to make a firm commitment to continental defence, or the necessary economic strength to support a Western European bloc. These problems were thrown into relief from mid 1948 by the Berlin blockade. By the end of the year Bevin's hopes for a Third Force independent of the United States appeared increasingly untenable. In early 1949 the new Permanent Under-Secretaries Committee, created in the Foreign Office to consider long-term planning, presented its first paper, entitled, 'A Third World Power or Western Consolidation?' It concluded:

A weak, neutral Western Europe is undesirable and a strong independent Western Europe is impracticable at present and could only come about, if at all, at the cost of the remilitarisation of Germany. The best hope of security for Western Europe lies in a consolidation of the West on the lines indicated by the Atlantic Pact.⁹³

In the spring of 1949, Britain's commitment to the Atlantic alliance heralded the end of Bevin's plans for a British led Third Force independent of the United States. The creation of the Atlantic alliance also forced a reevaluation of Britain's third force response to communist propaganda, and the policies for coordinating anti-communist propaganda activities with allies in Europe and the United States.

This was a relief for those officials in the Foreign Office, who had been somewhat sceptical about the 'Third Force' aspect of the new propaganda policy. As early as April 1948, in a British propaganda directive for Germany, Warner had questioned whether 'positive' projection of the 'British way of life' should be replaced by the projection of 'Western... principles and practices.'⁹⁴ Following the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty the overall tone of Britain's overseas propaganda was shifted to project 'Western' values. A new directive for British Information Officers indicated that Britain's positive publicity would no longer be based upon 'the vital and progressive ideas of British Social Democracy and Western European civilisation' but a more inclusive 'belief in the virtues, practices and values of Western democracy.' In place of the problematic presentation of British Social Democracy as the best alternative to totalitarian communism and unrestrained capitalism, Information Officers were told to stress that, 'the Western democratic way of life has more to offer and is more worthwhile than Soviet communism.'⁹⁵

Embracing the Atlantic alliance did not, however, mean the abandonment of the idea that Britain should give a lead to the forces of anti-communism in Europe. As Britain prepared to sign the Treaty, Christopher Mayhew submitted a proposal to Bevin in which he stressed that Britain should continue to 'take a strong lead in encouraging western democracies in combatting communist

propaganda in their own countries.' Mayhew suggested that some machinery be established within the alliance to allow members to 'help each other in the task of counter-propaganda' and exchange propaganda material with a view to formulating a unified anti-communist publicity directive.

We have already achieved some success in this... Discussions have been held with the Brussels Treaty powers and our anti-communist publicity material has now a very wide circulation throughout the world. But there is a definite need to continue giving moral encouragement and material assistance to weaker governments in the anti-communist field, and I hope very much that the signature of the Atlantic Pact will lead to close cooperation between the signatories on this subject.⁹⁶

Following the ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty, Gladwyn Jebb drafted a more detailed proposal for the creation of a NATO subcommittee to promote anti-communist propaganda. In this cautious proposal, Jebb warned that care would be required, to ensure that a NATO subcommittee would not hinder Britain in developing its on anti-communist offensive, and that it would not commit Britain to 'undesirable co-ordination of propaganda policy with the other signatories.' Nevertheless, he felt it would be useful to exchange of information and ideas in the field of 'ideological defence.' It would also provide an opportunity for 'stimulating the laggards and imparting the benefit of our experience and techniques and that of the Americans.'⁹⁷

The experience of exchanging information with the Brussels Treaty powers meant that some in the Foreign Office were cautious about pursuing further arrangements for coordinating anti-communist propaganda with Britain's European allies. Bevin minuted that he was 'not enthusiastic for more machinery.'⁹⁸ In considering Jebb's proposal the Foreign Office mantra was repeated, that 'you cannot actually do publicity by means of an international committee.'⁹⁹ As with the Brussels Treaty Organisation, the principal sticking point was that none of the European partners had a propaganda machinery comparable to Britain's. Only the United States had a similar capability and there was concern that Britain's efforts should not be diluted by the lack of impetus from the other members of NATO. Jebb's

proposal received a qualified approval, but the Foreign Office position was clear. The terms of reference of a NATO subcommittee should be limited to the development of positive ideals with which to promote the North Atlantic Treaty and counter communist propaganda attacks. The importance of maintaining Britain's freedom of action was paramount. Finally, it was asserted, Britain and America would need to take a leading role in any NATO propaganda organisation.¹⁰⁰

Although the predominant view in the Foreign Office was sceptical of the coordination of anti-communist propaganda with anyone other than the US Government, Mayhew's and Jebb's proposals for a NATO directive on anti-communist propaganda were prescient. Across the Atlantic, US officials had also begun to examine the potential for a Western response to communist propaganda based on the Atlantic alliance. In 1949, the United States Government began to reassess their plans for responding to communist propaganda, and the question of liaison with other countries in this field came under scrutiny. In December 1949, the State Department produced a paper on the status of cooperation with Britain in combatting communist propaganda which sought to assess firstly, whether cooperation with Britain should be expanded, and secondly whether cooperation should be offered to other selected governments, in particular the French.¹⁰¹ The State Department felt that cooperation with other powers would become necessary as part of American involvement in international agreements such as the North Atlantic Treaty. In early 1950, a State Department paper entitled 'Capturing Initiative in Psychological Field' stated there was an urgent need for 'a ringing pronouncement setting forth the common objectives of the free world.' In order to achieve this it proposed that the United States should:

...promote cooperation with the information services of other governments to the end that, while they speak with many voices, they promote a clearer understanding of their identity of interest in the struggle to preserve freedom and coordinate their efforts to penetrate the Iron Curtain with generally agreed propaganda themes.¹⁰²

Significantly, it was decided that the views of the British Foreign Office were to be obtained before a direct approach was

made to any other government.¹⁰³ At the Foreign Ministers Conference in London in 1950 the American delegation suggested to the British that as the US and the UK had special skills in this field they should 'lend a helping hand' to other nations such as France.¹⁰⁴ The British, chastened by their attempts to stimulate the Brussels Treaty powers, displayed little enthusiasm for the US suggestion and prior to the joint meetings British and American officials agreed that 'cold war' problems, including anti-communist propaganda, should be discussed bilaterally. According to the British representative Shuckburgh, 'our own cold warriors will probably not be ready to share their methods and secrets with representatives of the other eleven countries, and any general Atlantic cold war efforts would therefore be much more formal than real.'¹⁰⁵

Consequently, the question of a NATO propaganda programme was confined to a bilateral meeting between Christopher Warner and Edward Barrett, the newly appointed Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. Warner and Barrett reached an informal agreement on the broad functions to be carried out by the new NATO propaganda machinery. In their discussions it is apparent that the British view prevailed. As a result of the British experience with the Brussels Treaty Organisation, and their subsequent opposition to any attempt to organise propaganda through an intergovernmental committee, it was decided the NATO information staff should not issue its own publicity but should coordinate information and stimulate propaganda through the existing information programmes of the individual governments. It was recommended that the information functions should be entrusted to a highly-qualified British or American expert, working directly under the Chairman of the Council of Deputies and the proposed information machinery in many respects reflected the position of the embryonic IRD within the Foreign Office. It would provide a central collection point for information suitable for propaganda purposes and disseminate this information to member governments to use as they saw fit. There would be no joint propaganda directives and there was no suggestion that NATO would become involved in anti-communist propaganda. Information

staff would simply make suggestions as to how the information programmes of member countries 'might improve their contribution to the common goal of making the North Atlantic Treaty better understood.'¹⁰⁶

Despite British misgivings the US Government did pursue liaison with the information services of other powers, and continued to press for more coordinated propaganda efforts through NATO. In February 1950, prompted by increasingly hostile communist propaganda attacks on NATO and the Mutual Defence Assistance Pact in France, the US Embassy in Paris established a Franco-American consultative committee on NAT-MDAP publicity. This informal committee brought together US officials and representatives of the French Ministries of National Defence and Information. It provided the French with information and made suggestions for propaganda designed to create a sense of confidence in the French public and counteract communist propaganda.¹⁰⁷ However, in attempting to organise a coordinated propaganda campaign through NATO the United States were increasingly frustrated. Following his visit to London in May 1950, Barrett called at Paris, Rome and Florence to discuss information matters with French and Italian Ministers. Although the French were clearly flattered to be consulted, Barrett found that neither they nor the Italians had any arrangements for important foreign or domestic information work. Barrett did not wish to establish any exchange of material with the French or Italians, but he did set up procedures for 'exchange of ideas' to 'offset any feeling that we were playing ball exclusively with the British.'¹⁰⁸ At the Foreign Ministers Conference in Washington in August 1950, prompted by 'the good psychological reaction to Korea,' the US delegation once again stressed the need for coordinating the propaganda activities of the NATO countries. 'NATO information activities should be initiated serving as a central point for the stimulation of independent national activities. No "Deminform" is intended but general propaganda increase is desirable.'¹⁰⁹ However, the European allies remained reluctant to commit to a more coordinated propaganda programme. To the undoubted exasperation of the US

delegation the French replied that they had no specific ideas to put forth, and the British stressed that `coordination should not mean combination.'¹¹⁰ Later, when pressed by the Americans for their views on a NATO propaganda programme, the French Government stressed that each country must tailor their propaganda to national problems, and the implementation of a propaganda programme was a national responsibility. A view echoed by the Italians and the Danes.¹¹¹

When the NATO International Information Service (NIIS) was established in November 1950, its terms of reference attempted to reconcile the European view that propaganda was a national responsibility with the American desire for a more coordinated international propaganda programme. The service was headed by a Canadian, Theodore F.M. Newton, and the information staff were loaned from the member countries. It was in effect an information committee, with no general or operational budget, designed to operate through existing agencies and outlets of the member governments. The terms of reference were broadly along the lines of those proposed by Warner and Barrett, with one notable addition. Alongside the promotion of the positive ideals of the North Atlantic Treaty, NATO information staff would actively seek to counter communist propaganda. Following a recommendation from the French, it was agreed that the NATO governments would each nominate an official to sift information from all sources on the USSR and particularly on living conditions under Soviet rule, and pass it to NIIS for dissemination to member countries.¹¹²

Despite this apparent change of heart on the part of the French, the creation of the NATO information machinery remained an uneasy compromise between those who advocated a vigorous NATO propaganda programme, and those who believed such activities were best left to the member states. Predictably it failed to win wholehearted approval from the two nations with the greatest interest in the Western propaganda offensive, Britain and the United States. Although the terms of reference had been expanded, the US State Department had hoped for a more vigorous and aggressive NATO information programme. They were unhappy

that the NIIS was so small, appointed and paid for by member governments, and forced to work through the information services of member states. Under the present arrangements they observed, the NIIS would not be able to fulfil its potential, 'because of the inadequacies of national information services, their lack of interest in its suggested projects and programs, and in some cases outright opposition.' The State Department envisaged an international information service appointed by and operating through NATO itself. Rather than being subject to the varied propaganda capabilities of the member states, such a service could provide material support as well as stimulating and encouraging the domestic programmes of the member states. The work of the NIIS, in the view of the State Department, should have been more offensive, 'whatever is merely defensive in the work of NIIS should be relegated to a distinctly secondary place.' The fact that the West was not prepared to take the offensive in a military sense, 'need not mean the role of the free world must be a negative or passive one.' However, the State Department concluded pessimistically, concern over the state of the NATO information service came mainly from the Americans, 'the Europeans, by and large, appear to like it the way it is.'¹¹³

The British, however, were also unhappy at the shape of the NATO information programme, although for quite different reasons. The IRD were surprised and dismayed that counter propaganda had been added to the terms of reference of the NIIS. IRD had two concerns. Firstly, they might find it difficult to place their own propaganda material if similar material was emanating from a NATO agency. Secondly, with a NATO agency doing anti-communist propaganda, member governments might ask IRD to discontinue their activities in Europe. Within the IRD, J.H. Peck observed, 'this does not matter in the least provided that the NATO channel produces results better than or as good as our present efforts,' but he clearly felt it would not.¹¹⁴ Murray feared that 'all that will result will be additional work for us and others to no effect.' He believed that the major task of a NATO information office should be positive rather than counter-propaganda. He

suggested the addition of a preamble to the NIIS terms of reference stating that NATO 'cannot intervene with anti-communist propaganda in the internal responsibilities of member governments and that such intervention might indeed do more harm than good.'¹¹⁵

In December 1950, the IRD tried to head-off NATO plans for counter-propaganda in a hastily convened meeting between Newton, the head of the NIIS, and J.H. Peck of the IRD. Newton informed Peck that the NATO Deputies were divided into two groups. One headed by the French, and to a certain extent the Americans, appeared to visualise the NATO information office growing into a sort of counter-Cominform. The other, headed by the UK and Canada, regarded it more as a clearing house for information which would take great care not to interfere with the existing machinery of member Governments. Newton had no clear idea about how to reconcile the conflicting opinions, but he reassured Peck that he strongly supported the second view, and was 'determined not to duplicate or obstruct any work which we might be doing.'¹¹⁶

This meeting also allowed Peck to impress upon Newton the importance of the IRD's work and the desirability of NIIS working closely with IRD when dealing with counter-propaganda. Given the British experience in this field, Peck recommended that Newton should appoint a Briton, Mr Newton currently at the BBC, as his assistant responsible for counter-propaganda. Peck gave the NIIS head a full and frank overview of IRD's methods of operation. He described in detail the multitude of sources from which IRD derived the raw material for counter-propaganda. It was a considerable undertaking to collate and digest this material and Peck suggested it would be 'costly and needless duplication of effort' for NATO to embark on this. 'A view with which Newton heartily agreed.' Peck also provided Newton with examples of the IRD's output, a copy of the fortnightly 'Trends in Communist Propaganda,' and a specimen basic paper, 'The Soviet Peace Campaign.' Newton felt this was precisely the level at which the IRD and NIIS could best cooperate and he agreed that if IRD could provide him with material in this form 'he would endeavour to get

it disseminated as widely as possible in Governmental circles in the NATO area.' Peck expressed IRD's concerns about saturating the market, and given the existing wide distribution of this material, the wish to avoid NATO being identified as an IRD channel. In order to counter this it was suggested IRD could rewrite some of the material in a slightly different form, 'since the facts could bear repeated reiteration.'¹¹⁷

Peck's meeting with Theodore Newton was something of a coup for the IRD. This early meeting with the new head of the NIIS gave Peck a prime opportunity to offer IRD's services and position the IRD as the principal supplier of NATO's anti-communist propaganda. Although Newton informed Peck that 'any Government could join in on this, if we happened to be the most prolific nobody could object.'¹¹⁸ With the provision of specially modified material, NIIS gave the IRD another outlet for its material at the intergovernmental level. At the same time there was no question of NIIS replacing IRD's work. Following the same two-tier approach to cooperation with the Brussels Pact powers, Peck recommended that, 'IRD should continue their present activities throughout the NAT territories where they are now operating until something happens which makes it necessary or desirable to discontinue our operations.'¹¹⁹

In addition to providing a extra channel for IRD material, IRD also gained influence over the direction of NATO's anti-communist propaganda. The appointment of a British representative as Newton's assistant responsible for counter-propaganda gave the Foreign Office an influential input into NIIS planning. Moreover, the newly appointed head of NIIS was only too pleased to accept the assistance IRD offered. Newton asked Peck if the IRD could provide him with a draft directive on counter-propaganda which he could put up to the Council of Deputies 'as his own and that we would not be connected with it in any way.'¹²⁰ These contacts helped to place the IRD at the centre of activities to counter communism in Western Europe. Their expertise was such that other European governments began to look Britain for advice in this sphere.¹²¹ IRD's influence in the NATO information service also allowed them to distribute

their own unattributable material, whilst continuing to press NATO to refrain from any overt anti-communist propaganda which might undermine Britain's efforts.¹²² However, the question of whether NATO itself should actively seek to provide a unified response to hostile communist propaganda, or whether such counter-propaganda was the preserve of individual nations was the subject of debate within the alliance for some years to come.¹²³

Conclusion

The provision of anti-communist propaganda material to like-minded governments was an important and expanding part of the IRD's work. By July 1949, the IRD's Adam Watson observed that, it was clear that the IRD would need 'to supply more governments with material about the workings of communism as time goes on.'

We already supply the four Brussels Powers and the seven Commonwealth powers. We have an embryo system for Iraq, though the Iraqi Government has not had much. We may soon send stuff to all the governments in the Atlantic Treaty. And we are preparing to send stuff to the German Government.¹²⁴

The same degree of cooperation was not, however, extended to all governments. By mid 1949, the IRD had established several distinct levels at which cooperation with foreign governments was instituted. In developing intergovernmental cooperation in the field of anti-communist propaganda the Foreign Office had two overriding concerns. Firstly, that the existence of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy should not be revealed, and that IRD's discreet methods and confidential contacts should not be jeopardised by public disclosure. Secondly, that by revealing their methods to foreign governments the IRD's activities in that particular country should not be curtailed. Consequently, security concerns weighed heavily on considerations regarding which countries to cooperate with, and the level of cooperation was defined by the degree to which foreign powers were taken into Britain's confidence regarding Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy and methods.

At the most basic level cooperation was a one-way street in which the Foreign Office provided foreign governments with the product of IRD's research. In this case the governments involved were themselves the target of IRD's propaganda. Information was

provided in the hope that they might be influenced to adopt a more serious view of the communist threat. Closer cooperation was afforded to those governments such as the Brussels powers who largely shared Britain's perception of the Soviet threat. These countries were offered the product of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy, they were also informed of the existence of the anti-communist propaganda policy, and the role and something of the methods of the IRD. At this level it was hoped that cooperation would involve a reciprocal exchange of propaganda material and possibly the adoption of similar policies and methods by the governments involved. Yet even at this level, although governments were informed about the IRD's indirect methods, details of the IRD's activities in their countries were not revealed to them. In this case the benefits of cooperation were weighed against the overarching concern that the IRD's existing information activities should not be in any way curtailed or undermined. This concern was also behind Foreign Office reticence towards efforts to establish a multilateral response to communist propaganda through the Brussels Treaty and NATO. On practical grounds the Foreign Office had no faith in the ability to conduct effective propaganda through an international committee, particularly as Britain was the only European nation with an established information apparatus. It was also felt that Britain's anti-communist propaganda would be blunted if exposed to the consideration and possible veto of the European allies. When an international information service was finally established under NATO, British officials ensured that they were in a position to provide NATO with anti-communist material and exert an influence over NATO propaganda policy. At the same time the IRD continued its own anti-communist activities within the NATO countries.

In marked contrast to the various degrees of cooperation extended to other powers the United States government was taken entirely into Britain's confidence regarding the new propaganda policy, the methods adopted, activities undertaken and the development of cooperation with other powers. The level of cooperation between the Foreign Office and the State Department's

information apparatus was far above any other bilateral cooperation Britain established in the field of anti-communist propaganda. In 1948, although the Foreign Office had serious concerns about the effectiveness of American propaganda and the state of the American propaganda machine, US officials were shown complete details of the new propaganda policy a little over a month after it was revealed to the British Cabinet. Cooperation was instituted between London and Washington and began with the exchange of propaganda material. Cooperation was encouraged between the BBC and VOA, and in contrast to IRD's relationship with other powers, cooperation was also extended to the field. British and American information officers around the world were given broad discretion to develop cooperation with each other. It was established at an early stage that Britain and America would not seek to combine their propaganda output and the policy of cooperation would be characterised by Britain and America aiming to 'shoot at the same target from different angles.'

Chapter 4

**'Close and continuous liaison.'
British and American cooperation, 1950-1951.**

Chapter 4

'Close and continuous liaison.'¹

British and American Cooperation, 1950-1951

In 1950, two years after Britain launched its anti-communist propaganda policy, the United States Government launched its own coordinated global response to communist propaganda entitled the Campaign of Truth. This propaganda offensive was part of a new global strategy for resisting communist expansion and undermining the Soviet monolith. It was the product of a fundamental reassessment of American national security objectives which began in mid-1949. This review was prompted by the Berlin blockade and the Soviet detonation of an atomic bomb, and given added impetus by the communist victory in China, and in 1950 the outbreak of the Korean war. The resulting policy document, NSC-68, recommended a dramatic military rearmament, increased support for America's allies and a programme of psychological warfare and covert action designed to 'rollback' communist power.²

The development of this new global strategy had a direct effect on cooperation with Britain in the field of anti-communist propaganda. In late 1949, as part of the review of American strategy, the State Department began to review its overseas propaganda activities, and in particular cooperation with other powers in this field. Just as the British Foreign Office had done in 1948, at the earliest opportunity the State Department canvassed Foreign Office opinion, and proposed expanded cooperation between Britain and America in the field of anti-communist propaganda. Their proposals met with qualified enthusiasm. America's new commitment to anti-communist propaganda, coincided with the British government's final rejection of the Third Force concept. In October 1949, Bevin presented the Cabinet with a paper arguing for the rejection of the Third Force in favour of 'the closest association with the United States.'³ Britain's commitment to an alliance with the United States, coupled with the launch of the new American propaganda offensive resulted in increased cooperation in anti-communist propaganda activities. From 1950, although Britain would continue to promote the anti-communist propaganda

activities of other powers, British anti-communist propaganda policy was based increasingly on the premise that 'there are only two governments conducting anti-communist operations on a worldwide scale, the British and the United States Governments.' Success against the communist propaganda machine, it was felt, was dependent on the closest cooperation between these two powers.'

This chapter will examine the expansion of British and American cooperation in anti-communist propaganda in the wake of America's new global strategy for responding to communist propaganda. It will begin by assessing the impact of the Campaign of Truth on American strategy for resisting communism. The principal features of the campaign will be examined, and the policy and machinery for American overt and covert propaganda activities will be outlined. The central section of this chapter will assess the impact of this new strategy on British and American cooperation in the field of anti-communist propaganda. As American propaganda activities grew, so did the areas in which cooperation with Britain was sought. The policy and organisational machinery for cooperation between the two powers, in London and Washington, and in the field, expanded considerably in 1950. Nevertheless, both nations maintained a distinctive approach to anti-communist propaganda activities, and it will be argued that with few exceptions British and American information staff maintained the policy of shooting at the same target from different angles. The chapter will conclude with an assessment of the expansion of Britain's anti-communist propaganda activities in which it will be argued that in 1951 propaganda was elevated to become a central feature of Britain's strategy for fighting the Cold War.

The Campaign of Truth and American Psychological Warfare.

1950-1951

In 1950 a fundamental reassessment of American Cold War defences led to a new global strategy for countering communist propaganda under the banner, 'The Campaign of Truth.' In April 1950, Edward W. Barrett, the new Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, produced a memorandum outlining 'proposals for

a total information effort abroad.' Barrett compared the existing information programme with an attempt 'to battle a four-alarm fire with a bucket brigade.' He advocated an urgent strengthening of America's propaganda apparatus and a reassessment of their objectives. According to Barrett, if used intelligently, American propaganda could perform two important tasks: strengthen the free world to resist Soviet imperialism, and expose the people of the Soviet Union and its satellites to the truth about the peaceful intentions of the free world.⁵ Barrett's paper was passed to President Truman. Later that month, in a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, Truman launched the Campaign of Truth, in which he promised:

...to meet false propaganda with truth all around the globe. Everywhere that the propaganda of the Communist totalitarianism is spread, we must meet it and overcome it with honest information about freedom and democracy.⁶

The Campaign of Truth marked the revival of American propaganda and America's first organised response to communist propaganda. Up to 1950, the American government's anti-communist propaganda had been improvised on a piecemeal basis. The Campaign of Truth heralded a global counter-offensive which signified a shift to 'long term strategic planning in American propaganda based on fundamental goals and policies.'⁷ It also marked a new more offensive response to communist propaganda. As George Kennan observed, this entailed a shift away from the 'full and fair presentation' of America as encapsulated in his original concept of containment, towards the development of propaganda as a 'major weapon of policy.'⁸ Planning for the Campaign of Truth entailed targeting key regions around the globe with a 'propaganda weapon' designed to 'win the cold war.' In this first attempt at long term strategic planning for propaganda activities the world was divided into four categories: the hard core, comprising the Soviet Union; the Iron Curtain, including the satellite states, China, North Korea and Tibet; the crucial periphery, which included Indo-China, Malaya, Greece, Turkey, West Germany, Yugoslavia, Austria and Japan; and the danger zone, comprising France, Italy, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Indonesia and the Philippines.⁹

In order to secure additional funding for this global propaganda campaign, the State Department deliberately emphasised its offensive nature. Officials in the State Department stopped referring to American overseas propaganda benignly as 'information activities' and instead began to use the term psychological warfare. Edward Barrett later conceded that the resurrection of the term psychological warfare was to some degree motivated by Congressional considerations:

I guess, from a purely philosophical standpoint, that I would question the term. I'm afraid it was adopted partly as a means of getting appropriations out of Congress. In those days we found that money for pure information operations, for libraries in neutral areas, for sending American performers abroad, was very hard to come by. If you dressed it up as warfare, money was very easy to come by.¹⁰

The Campaign of Truth was not, however, simply a device for securing additional funds for the State Department's information programme. It was part of a fundamental reassessment of the Soviet threat and America's response which began in 1949 and culminated in a major policy review in 1950. The basic principles underlining the Campaign of Truth were outlined in the influential policy document NSC-68, through which the Truman administration began to develop a more offensive strategy 'intended to check and to roll back the Kremlin's drive for world domination.'¹¹ Although NSC-68 was not implemented until September 1950, following the outbreak of the Korean War, its psychological dimension was launched in April when the document was first drafted.¹²

NSC-68 began by stressing that the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union was essentially a conflict of ideas, 'between the idea of freedom under a government of laws, and the idea of slavery under the grim oligarchy of the Kremlin.' In engaging in this conflict Soviet power could be resisted when faced with economic strength and military power, it could also be undermined using America's psychological weapons.¹³ Details of the information programme's objectives were outlined in an Annex to NSC-68 which stated that America's global propaganda campaign should aim to: increase the Free World's psychological resistance to Soviet aggression; foster a 'community of

interests' in the free world; and create doubt among people in the Soviet dominated countries. To implement the new propaganda offensive it provided for a series of five year appropriations averaging \$120,000,000 a year.¹⁴

At least some of the funding for this new psychological offensive was channelled into the expansion of the State Department's existing propaganda activities. According to the State Department, funding under the Campaign of Truth provided 'improved publications and press facilities, more and better motion pictures, larger libraries, and a greater volume of information materials of all kinds tailored to the needs and understanding of specific audiences.'¹⁵ However, the most ambitious plans were undertaken in the field of international broadcasting. The centrepiece to the psychological operations provided for under NSC-68 was the expansion of broadcasting over the Iron Curtain as part of what became known as the radio 'Ring Plan.'¹⁶

Soviet jamming of the Voice of America began in 1948 and by 1950 had become increasingly intensive. The State Department had identified 250 Soviet jamming installations, and estimated that a further 1000 installations were operating inside the Soviet bloc.¹⁷ The Ring Plan aimed to overcome jamming by encircling the Soviet bloc with a ring of high-powered transmitters, strong enough to force an audible signal into the Soviet Union capable of being received on small medium wave sets. The three-year plan provided for fourteen high-powered medium wave transmitters, which at 1000 kilowatts each were twenty times more powerful than was legally permitted in the United States. Each medium wave transmitter was to be accompanied by two medium powered short wave transmitters. A further six short wave feeder stations were to be built in the United States. Initial authority was secured for the first five bases in the Philippines, Munich, Okinawa, Greece and Ceylon.¹⁸ In addition, due to the problem of obtaining and then securing sites for such installations on the Soviet periphery, a further plan, named Project Vagabond, was implemented for placing high-powered transmitters on ocean going vessels. The first Vagabond vessel, *USS Courier*, began operating

in March 1952, and five more vessels were ear-marked for the project. The *Courier* was a reconditioned cargo vessel manned by electronic technicians from the State Department and crewed by the US Coast Guard, it carried a transmitter more powerful than any radio station in the United States. The vessel was dedicated by President Truman and was publicised as, 'an ingenious new instrument devised to aid the Voice of America in carrying the testimony of the Free World to peoples behind the Iron Curtain.'¹⁹

Allied to this overt global propaganda campaign was a programme of covert action designed to put pressure on the Soviet bloc at certain strategic points. NSC-68 recommended an '[i]ntensification of affirmative and timely measures and operations by covert means in the fields of economic warfare and political and psychological warfare with a view to fomenting and supporting unrest and revolt in selected strategic satellite countries.'²⁰ Although US covert action had been underway in selected satellites since November 1948, covert operations expanded considerably in the wake of NSC-68.²¹ In April 1950, before the final draft of NSC-68 was approved, Robert Joyce of the Policy Planning Staff instructed the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) to begin consideration of 'increased activities.'²² Between 1949 and 1952, the OPC grew from 302 to 2812 personnel, with 3142 overseas contract employees. Its budget increased from \$4.7million to \$82 million, and in a significant indication of the global ambition of this covert counter-offensive OPC presence in overseas CIA stations grew from 7 to 47.²³ OPC activities centred around the organisation of emigres from the Soviet Union and the satellites in support of a covert American strategy aimed at the liberation of volatile sections of the Soviet bloc, most notably Albania, the Baltic States, and Ukraine. OPC provided covert support for paramilitary incursions into the Soviet bloc by groups of emigres.²⁴ It also supported anti-communist propaganda activities by a network of private individuals and groups in the United States. This State-private network provided an extensive 'front' for the more offensive and covert aspects of the US

Government's attempts to rollback communism.²⁵

The most prominent of the private organisations which benefitted from the OPC's largesse was the National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE). The NCFE was established in May 1949. Its board was chaired by former Under-Secretary of State Joseph C. Grew, and included Dwight D. Eisenhower, Cecil B. Mille, and OSS veterans such as William Donovan and DeWitt Poole. The NCFE acted as a rallying point for Russian and Eastern European exiles in the United States. It sought, first of all, to put the exiles 'on their feet, materially and spiritually.'²⁶ When the emigres were organised, the NCFE aimed to 'put the voices of exiled leaders on the air, addressed to their own peoples, back in Europe, in their own languages, in familiar tones.'²⁷ In July 1950, the NCFE began broadcasting across the Iron Curtain through Radio Free Europe (RFE). Although covertly funded and guided by the CIA, as an independent broadcaster, RFE enjoyed an operational freedom not available to official national broadcasters. The station's main task was, 'the disintegration of the Soviet Communist regimes, sowing dismay, doubt, defeatism and dissension in the minds of the present usurpers.'²⁸ An early draft RFE policy directive observed that in pursuing this objective, RFE was not hampered by the restraints under which stations such as the Voice of America and the BBC operated.

Among the number of other differences are Radio Free Europe's emphasis on subject matter of immediate interest to its audience - an emphasis which is largely if not exclusively dependent on a constant flow of excellent inside information - its acceptance of rumor and gossip as effective weapons of psychological warfare, and especially the informality and intimacy of its contact with its listeners.²⁹

In the wake of NSC-68, as propaganda became an increasingly important, and expensive, part of the US armoury, the US government sponsored a range of academic studies designed to identify the most effective means of wielding the new propaganda weapon. Various studies were undertaken to identify Soviet psychological vulnerabilities, the best means of getting the American message over the iron curtain, and the most effective means of undermining Soviet control.³⁰ The largest of these, entitled Project TROY, was launched by Edward Barrett in October

1950. Barrett convened a panel of 21 distinguished academics - scientists, social scientists, and historians - to consider the technical problems of overcoming Soviet jamming of the Voice of America.³¹ By the time Project TROY reported early in 1951, its remit had extended to consider other means of perforating the Iron Curtain and it had sought to develop a concept of 'political warfare.' Project TROY reported that 'real opportunities for political warfare against Russia exist and have been only barely exploited.' It advocated 'a vigorous unified psychological warfare program,' designed to: consolidate support among allies and neutrals; impair the functioning of the Soviet regime by exploiting fissures in the system; and lay the basis for eventual negotiation by creating possible alternatives to Soviet policies and organisations:

leaving the way open for the top leadership to move, under internal pressure, toward one of these alternatives without sacrificing prestige so utterly that they would feel compelled to embark upon an all out war.³²

For such a policy to be effective the academics on Project TROY were convinced that political warfare 'should be organised like any form of warfare, with special weapons, strategy, tactics, logistics and training.'³³ The reorganisation of America's propaganda operations was already being considered by others in the US administration. By late 1950, propaganda operations were divided uneasily between the State Department, the Defense Department, the Economic Cooperation Administration, and the CIA. To solve the organisational problems, on 4 April 1951, following protracted negotiations and against State Department wishes, President Truman established a Psychological Strategy Board to provide more effective planning, coordination and conduct of psychological operations.³⁴ The PSB was composed of senior officials of the three interested agencies, State, Defense and CIA with an independent director appointed by the President. It was not an operating agency, but was authorised to plan psychological operations at the strategic level, coordinate the implementation of psychological strategy by operating agencies, and evaluate the results of the entire psychological effort in its fulfilment of national policy.³⁵

The creation of the Psychological Strategy Board was the culmination of a process which began in late 1949, in which propaganda was elevated from being an adjunct to diplomacy to become a major weapon in American strategy for winning the Cold War. The organisational imperative for the creation of the PSB reflected the expansion of the American propaganda apparatus, both overt and covert, in the wake of NSC-68. The location of the PSB within the national security apparatus of the US government indicates the elevated position psychological warfare had taken in US planning. According to Dr Edward Lilly's internal study, the major accomplishment of the establishment of the PSB was 'that interdepartmental planning and coordination in the psychological field was raised to a much higher level,' just below the National Security Council and with a link to the President.³⁶ Gregory Mitrovich later observed, 'so extensive and ambitious was the planning for covert and psychological warfare that it may be considered strategic in nature; that is, the framers of the plans designed them not only to fight, but also to win, the cold war.'³⁷

British and American Cooperation, 1950-1951

In late 1949, as part of the reassessment of America's propaganda programme the State Department reviewed the possibility of 'expanded US-British cooperation in the foreign information field.' Cooperation, the State Department suggested, could be extended beyond the exchange of propaganda material to include an exchange of papers on current and prospective information policy.³⁸ As part of this review US missions were asked to comment on current arrangements for cooperation with British information staff in the field, and to make recommendations of areas in which propaganda cooperation might be expanded. In anticipation of additional cooperative measures an informal approach was made to the British Embassy in Washington to determine the procedures for expanding cooperation.³⁹

The Foreign Office, however, had been somewhat disappointed with the results of cooperation since 1948. In October 1949, the British Embassy in Washington informed the Foreign Office that

the State Department was reviewing its anti-communist propaganda. The State Department, they said, had found the exchange of material with IRD of the 'greatest value,' and felt the time had come for a further exchange of views with the Foreign Office.⁴⁰ Warner replied that, 'we have not been particularly impressed with the results of [the State Department's] Research Section, nor with the activities of US Information Officers in the field.' Nevertheless, he added, it would be worthwhile to send someone to Washington with a view to finding out 'what their resources are and also to get a better idea than we have at present of how they are using them.'⁴¹

In January 1950, the IRD's Adam Watson was despatched to Washington. His remit, however, was strictly limited. IRD was not keen on any division of labour and Watson was merely to report back on US suggestions. He was informed that the Foreign Office was not contemplating any closer coordination in the policy of anti-communist propaganda, and he was instructed that he 'should not discuss this at all.'⁴² It is apparent that Foreign Office views of American propaganda had improved little since 1948. Closer coordination of activities 'would be too hampering and prevent our operations being as speedy as is essential.' Watson was also asked to raise, tactfully, the quality of America's anti-communist propaganda. Reports from some British missions suggested that 'the general desire of the United States Information Officers put into the field is to be able to report large quantitative results, regardless of whether they have done any good or not.' Watson was asked to pass on the Foreign Office's concern that the large volume of American propaganda material, particularly in South East Asia, could spoil the market for Britain's anti-communist material. In addition to his meetings in the State Department, Watson was given a wide remit to explore other potential sources or recipients of the IRD's anti-communist material, most notably the newly established National Committee for a Free Europe, about which the Foreign Office apparently knew little. He also planned to visit a number of research institutes at the Universities of Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Columbia, which according to Warner, generated a

volume of research material on a scale not practicable for the Foreign Office, and `much of which may be of considerable value as raw material for publicity.'⁴³

Despite Foreign Office expectations Watson's visit to the United States in January 1950 was a success. He spent some time working in the State Department and was able to impress upon senior officials the need for greater subtlety in US anti-communist propaganda. Watson explained at length the IRD's methods for distributing propaganda material unattributably. Citing the example of South East Asia, he discussed the `de-Europeanising' treatment required in the production of propaganda material, he stressed the value of material written by natives, signed feature articles by prominent individuals, and interviews with refugees by prominent local journalists. Where material was sent from home, Watson emphasised the need for accurate translations, and in all output, the importance of propaganda based on facts. Dissemination, Watson said, was best undertaken through, `native, if necessary obscure and small publishing houses, unsuspected of foreign contacts.' The IRD, he added, had already begun to develop such outlets.⁴⁴

Watson clearly had some success in attempting to explain the value of a more subtle approach to anti-communist propaganda. According to the British embassy, US officials were particularly interested in Watson's explanation of IRD's tactics:

They have freely admitted that, in many ways, they consider our publicity techniques in this field superior to their own. For example, I gather that people like Tommy Thompson (Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs) and John Davies (of the Policy Planning Staff) have been concerned for some time at the relative lack of sophistication and of selectivity in the State Department's anti-communist publicity. They therefore particularly welcomed Watson's visit, since it enabled them to point out their own deficiencies to their own people.⁴⁵

Observing his terms of reference Watson was deliberately vague about any future division of labour in the production of propaganda material, suggesting that informal exchanges of information in London and Washington and in the field should be based upon personal relationships. He stuck to the existing Foreign Office line, which allowed a pooling of resource

material, designed to enable 'the two services to aim at the same target from different angles.'⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Thompson felt that Watson's 'penetrating and substantial conclusions based on British experimentation and practice' would serve to increase cooperation around the world and make 'our parallel efforts more effective.'⁴⁷

Although there was no real change in policy on cooperation, the visit was considered a success on both sides of the Atlantic. In his attempts to influence the Americans, Warner noted that Watson had 'evidently done well.'⁴⁸ In Washington, Thompson declared that Watson's visit, 'has brought this initial stage of cooperation to a new and promising level.'⁴⁹ Moreover, both powers considered such an exchange of views worth repeating. The Embassy in Washington thought the cross fertilisation of ideas resulting from such visits was valuable and recommended 'continuing to concert our anti-communist publicity fairly closely with the Americans.'⁵⁰ Thompson also considered the visit to be 'eminently worthwhile' and hoped that 'this type of cooperation may be continued and increased in the future.'⁵¹

The launch of the Campaign of Truth in April 1950, reinforced the British Foreign Office's positive impression of the American anti-communist propaganda effort. The British were now also keen to expand cooperation. In May 1950, a Foreign Office memorandum regarding priorities in the field of anti-communist propaganda, observed that, 'the State Department and the Foreign Office have now arrived at much the same ideas about the general need for publicity, both overt and covert and for kindred activities, in order to counteract the spread of communism.'⁵² Although the Foreign Office appreciated that differences of resources and policy might lead to certain variations of approach, it was felt that 'a frank exchange of opinion about projects, and about the effects of these projects, cannot fail to be beneficial.'

It may therefore prove valuable in future to extend the collaboration between the State Department and the Foreign Office beyond the existing exchange of material and programme of action, so as to include comment by each Department, on the general strategy of the other, and the results which appear to be

obtained, as well as observations on individual projects while these are still at the planning stage."³

The Foreign Office was given an early opportunity to discuss these proposals at a series of meetings between British and American officials which followed the Foreign Ministers Conferences held in London in April 1950. Between 20th and 22nd May 1950, the most senior officials responsible for the propaganda activities of the Foreign Office and the State Department, met at the Foreign Office to discuss the increased coordination of propaganda policies. The British delegation comprised: Christopher Warner, Ralph Murray and Adam Watson of the IRD, representatives of the Information Policy Department, and J.B. Clarke of the BBC External Services. The US delegation comprised: Edward W. Barrett, Bill Stone, Chairman of the Interdepartmental Foreign Information Staff, and Mallory Browne, Public Affairs Officer at the US Embassy."⁴

Barrett began the meetings by outlining his hopes for extending cooperation in five broad areas: the coordination of policy and ideas; the exchange of propaganda material; cooperation in techniques of distribution; the Voice of America and the BBC; and the consequences in the information field of the North Atlantic Treaty."⁵ Barrett described the changing attitude in the United States towards the use of propaganda as a weapon in the Cold War. He emphasised the increase in Congressional support for propaganda activities generated by the Campaign of Truth. Although American plans, Barrett stated, were still in the 'preliminary stage', the US was devoting considerable resources to the propaganda effort. Barrett informed the meeting in the strictest confidence that estimates were for 78 million dollars for the first year, and 120 million for the second."⁶

As Watson had done in January, Warner and Murray sought to impress upon the Americans the importance of concentrating less on the quantity of propaganda and focus on the need for a more subtle, carefully targeted and indirect campaign. Warner said that the Foreign Office had found that saturation point for directly distributed material was very quickly reached and

British information officers devoted much time and effort to developing local contacts who would print British material, or reflect British views in their own writing. In particular, he suggested, there was little value in saturating areas such as South East Asia and the Middle East with Western-issued anti-communist material which would be automatically distrusted. American officials once again expressed great interest in British methods. Barrett replied that although much could be done through public statements which stressed the 'unity of purpose of the nations of the free world,' he was also interested in developing similar techniques to the British for the use of 'grey' propaganda, particularly in South East Asia.⁵⁷

One area in which the United States was keen to expand cooperation was broadcasting. One of the problems in the development of the Ring Plan was the fact that with the exception of Alaska, where new transmitters were planned, the United States had no territory near the Soviet bloc. The British, of course, had territory and influence in various strategic locations where the Americans hoped to site new transmitters, most notably in the Middle East and South-East Asia. Although full details of the radio Ring Plan were not revealed to the British at this stage, Barrett described American efforts to overcome Soviet jamming. He also gave a brief account of American plans for broadcasting over RFE, which, he said, would 'take a tougher line than the BBC or even VOA.'

Barrett did suggest further technical cooperation to circumvent Soviet jamming. The Voice of America had already begun negotiations with the BBC for relay time on BBC transmitters at Singapore, Malaya and Ceylon, in return for time on American transmitters in Munich and Salonika. Barrett proposed the construction of new transmitters in Ceylon, Singapore and Bahrein to relay BBC and VOA programmes. The State Department also wished to take advantage of the high powered transmitter at Crowborough in Sussex, which under the codename Aspidistra, had broadcast BBC and black radio transmissions during the war.⁵⁸ In early 1950, an American technical team had visited the facility at Crowborough, which was now used by the

Diplomatic Wireless Service (DWS), and found that it was not being used to full advantage.⁵⁹ Barrett wanted to use the Aspidistra's 650 watt medium wave transmitter after midnight for broadcasts to Ukraine. He also offered to provide two additional transmitters for DWS morse code use, releasing two larger short wave transmitters for further VOA relays. The Foreign Office supported the proposals for the BBC and VOA to share facilities, and agreed to approach the relevant governments regarding the construction of new transmitters in Ceylon, Bahrein and Singapore. It was also agreed that technicians from the BBC and VOA would undertake a joint study of the problems of overcoming jamming. A decision on the use of Aspidistra was deferred pending further investigations.⁶⁰

There were, however, signs that the Foreign Office was somewhat uneasy at the Americans' ambitious broadcasting plans. Warner noted that, BBC contracts with Malaya, Singapore and Ceylon included clauses reserving the power of veto over anything carried from transmitters in their territories, and he warned that broadcasts criticising the Chinese communist government might lead to protests.⁶¹ Barrett reassured the Foreign Office that the VOA would 'avoid anything in their relays which might be embarrassing to His Majesty's Government or to the local authorities on whose territory relay transmitters were situated.'⁶² The British were also sceptical about RFE. British experience during the war had, Warner said, 'shown that exiles were apt to get out of touch with their own countries surprisingly quickly and to be moved by personal and internal political considerations rather than strictly patriotic considerations.' He made it clear that Britain would not be returning to 'black' broadcasting. Wartime experience had shown such work had to be 'exceptionally brilliantly done,' and it would now be 'prohibitively difficult and expensive.'⁶³ The British were also concerned that the expansion of American broadcasting in Europe might be provocative and lead to interference in domestic broadcasting. The allocation of long and medium wavelengths in Europe had been agreed by thirty-three nations, including those from the Soviet bloc, at a conference

in Copenhagen in June 1948. Warner stressed that the British government would be 'averse to anything which might lead to a breakdown in the Copenhagen Plan and broadcasting "war," particularly on medium waves.'⁶⁴ The American minutes recorded, 'that the British Government is apprehensive about the European broadcasting situation and will be careful not to take any action which might affect British home services.'⁶⁵

The meetings also revealed significant differences in the target area priorities for British and American anti-communist propaganda. The British gave a higher priority to countries outside the Iron Curtain, particularly those parts of the free world in danger of communist penetration, and in which 'public opinion could still exercise a considerable effect on policy, especially in times of crisis.' First priority was given to France, Italy, Germany and South East Asia. Secondary priority was given to India, Pakistan and the Middle East. American propaganda, Barrett replied, was principally directed over the Iron Curtain, and most strongly at the Soviet Union itself. British efforts to penetrate the Iron Curtain with propaganda were limited to the overseas services of the BBC. Moreover, the Foreign Office focused greater attention on the satellite states than the Soviet Union. They considered these countries to be 'less firmly controlled, more recently Sovietised, and more used to listening to foreign broadcasts.'⁶⁶

Despite such differences the talks concluded with a wide-ranging discussion, in which various degrees of cooperation in certain 'critical areas' were agreed. In South East Asia, Barrett recommended closer liaison at Singapore including an exchange of propaganda material, translations and analysis of the Chinese press. Warner invited the Americans to send a top man or team to work at the British Regional Information Office in Singapore. It was also proposed that Chinese press reading could be divided between the British service in Peking and USIS in Hong Kong. There was a general agreement on cooperation in the Middle East, where Britain and America would occasionally pursue joint policies to offset communist charges of disagreement and rivalry. Cooperation was also to be extended in India and Pakistan. In

Europe, there was concern at the trend towards neutrality, particularly in France. In an effort to counter this trend and promote the North Atlantic Treaty, it was agreed to 'exchange ideas on all possible common lines of action and give more attention to developing effective slogans.' It was noted that cooperation between British and American information officers in Paris was already very close. The British information officer, it was reported, even passed on, 'insulting remarks about the Americans made to him by Frenchmen.' It was hoped that the Americans would pass on similar insulting remarks made about the British! Finally, there was an agreement to exchange ideas on all output to the satellite states.⁶⁷

In a significant indication of British and American cooperation in covert propaganda activities, it was agreed that 'further study should be given to exploiting the propaganda possibilities in Albania.' In late 1948, the British Government had formulated a policy of subversion aimed at 'detaching' one of the satellites from the Soviet bloc. The proposed target was Albania, and a covert operation was launched in cooperation with the American CIA to infiltrate Albanian resistance fighters into the country to foment unrest. The first team of men had gone ashore at the beginning of October 1949.⁶⁸ In planning, it had been assumed that special operations in Albania would be accompanied by a propaganda offensive.⁶⁹ However, the restriction on the Foreign Office conducting subversive propaganda in communist countries was not lifted until December 1949, after the operation had begun.⁷⁰ Even then, Britain and America had few resources for propaganda in Albania. Neither Britain or America had embassies in Tirana, and therefore had no direct contact with the Albanian people, or local channels for the dissemination of subversive propaganda. The IRD conducted little anti-communist propaganda in Eastern Europe, and relied upon the overseas services of the BBC. The BBC's daily fifteen minute Albanian language programme was broadcast ninety minutes before the electricity was switched on in Albanian towns.⁷¹ Radio Free Europe did not begin broadcasting until July 1950, and the VOA Albanian service was not launched until May 1951.⁷²

The BBC remained the principal means of directing propaganda at the Albanian people. Albanian resistance leaders were given time on the BBC's Albanian service, and shortly after the first landings the Foreign Office agreed to fund an additional fifteen minute Albanian language slot, later in the evening.⁷³ However, with no representation in Albania, it was difficult to assess the impact of the operation, or acquire new material for broadcasts. At the meetings in May 1950, Warner agreed to ask the French, who had an embassy in Tirana, to provide information on events in Albania which could be broadcast by the BBC and VOA.⁷⁴ Barrett said the State Department was also considering 'various suggestions in the "H.G. Wells" category' for penetrating the Iron Curtain, such as the use of balloons.⁷⁵ A balloon leaflet drop over Albania was later aborted when the wind changed.⁷⁶ The whole Albanian operation eventually collapsed when it was realised that the country was not ripe for revolt. Those emigres dropped into Albania were betrayed by Kim Philby, the MI6 liaison officer in Washington, and arrested by the Albanian security services.⁷⁷

Although the operation in Albania marked the failure of covert intervention as part of a strategy of liberation, the meetings in London in May 1950 resulted in the expansion of British and American cooperation in the use of propaganda as a weapon in the Cold War. The meetings cemented the close personal ties between those senior British and American officials responsible for anti-communist propaganda, and revealed the extent of common thinking in the Foreign Office and the State Department regarding the use of propaganda. Barrett recorded in his own notes on the trip, that Britain and America now agreed 'that informational activity, indeed psychological warfare, is becoming vitally important.'⁷⁸ As a result Britain and America agreed to maintain 'close and continuous liaison' on all aspects of information policy.⁷⁹

The most important development was the decision to institute continuous liaison through the appointment of information liaison officers (ILO) to the British Embassy in Washington and the American Embassy in London. The IRD's Adam Watson was appointed

ILO at the British Embassy in Washington in August 1950. According to Watson, his role was, 'to explore every part of the field as best I could, and to see what could be done to bring American and British operations and long term planning as much into harmony as possible.'⁸⁰ In addition to liaison with the State Department, Watson's post involved a certain amount of work at the United Nations and liaison with the Voice of America in New York. Watson's counterpart at the US Embassy in London, W.F.Frye, was instructed to liaise with the British government on 'all aspects of current information activities, including broadcasting and certain special activities.' Both ILO's were also expected to make occasional field trips to attend regional meetings of information officers and maintain a personal knowledge of the operational problems of information work.⁸¹

The most immediate result of the London talks was an increase in cooperation in the field. The State Department and the Foreign Office sent instructions to field missions regarding the talks and the desirability of extended cooperation.⁸² Both expressed the importance of maintaining 'freedom of action' in propaganda work, but as the State Department's circular indicated, there was a new policy for the closest possible cooperation short of joint operations:

While each government will retain complete freedom of action in conducting overseas information, there should be close cooperation wherever possible in support of common objectives. To this end there should be continuous exchange of ideas between the Department and the Foreign Office and between our missions abroad with a view to developing common lines of information policy, planning and conduct of activities. It was agreed, however, that such cooperation should normally stop short of joint information operations.⁸³

Despite the restriction on joint operations, it is apparent that in many countries the extent of cooperation in the planning and implementation of propaganda activities was such that joint activity was often undertaken. Indeed it is difficult to see how information staff could seek to develop common lines in information policy, and the planning, and conduct of operations without becoming involved in joint activity. In practice, rather than avoiding joint operations, British and American information

staff in the field took great care to maintain the outward appearance of acting independently. A US review of field comments on cooperation with the British information services in August 1950 found that most posts agreed that, 'no appearance should be given publicly of joint action either in policy formulation or programming.'⁸⁴ Information officers were happy to exchange material and consult in private, but there was no question that they would seek to combine the output of their propaganda activities. In each case the State Department found information officers in the field were careful to maintain 'individuality of output.'⁸⁵ The one notable exception to this rule was the Middle East. In response to Soviet propaganda which sought to highlight Anglo-American rivalry, it was agreed, 'to lay on from time to time demonstrations of solidarity between the USA and UK in the Middle East.'⁸⁶

In 1950, the Foreign Office and the State Department both completed reviews of British and American cooperation in propaganda work in the field. Both concluded that British and American information staff generally enjoyed 'cordial relations.'⁸⁷ The Foreign Office review, which was concluded after the talks in London, found a significant expansion of cooperation followed the circular instruction outlining the result of the talks.

Though there has generally been goodwill before the arrival of the circular, and in some cases active cooperation, there is no doubt that it has led to a complete re-examination of what can be done and in many cases to more effective measures for joint consultation and the pooling of ideas and for mutual help in every possible way. As a result, regular discussions between the information staff have been arranged in most posts and the exchange of material and films has been placed on a regular footing.⁸⁸

The degree to which British and American information staff worked together continued to vary from post to post. In several cases cooperation involved a division of labour designed to avoid duplication of effort in, for example, press reading or the translation of propaganda material into local languages.⁸⁹ In other cases British staff provided the benefit of their experience regarding possible channels for the distribution of

propaganda material. For example, the US Embassy in Bombay reported that British information officers regularly commented on local editors and 'the editorial policies of Bombay papers.'⁹⁰ Similarly, in Hong Kong, British information staff provided information 'relative to subversive activity among local trade unions so that appropriate pamphlets and posters can be more strategically distributed.'⁹¹ In posts where cooperation was even closer, British and American information staff agreed to distribute each others propaganda material through their own established channels. In Baghdad, the US Embassy reported, 'we have used certain anti-communist squibs from the British in our Kurdish bulletin, they in turn have translated some of our Soviet Affairs Notes material, notably the one on the treatment of moslems in the USSR.'⁹² One notable example which serves to illustrate several aspects of liaison was Venezuela. British and American information officers in Caracas inaugurated weekly meetings in 1950. As a result of these meetings, the US Embassy reported that the British Press Officer had many journalistic acquaintances of long-standing, particularly in the provinces, and 'British press channels are somewhat more effective than ours.' Consequently, it was agreed that anti-communist material would be translated by the US embassy and given to the British for distribution. Similar arrangements were made for the distribution of material on religious persecution behind the Iron Curtain, which the British passed to Venezuelan parish priests, with whom they had long established contacts. As a result, the US Embassy reported, this material often appeared in their weekly sermons!⁹³

One area in which particularly close cooperation developed was South East Asia. By 1950 British officials concluded that since communism had been held in check in France and Italy, Western Europe was not the weak spot it had been, and South-East Asia was now 'the softest spot in the world picture'⁹⁴. The decline of the communist threat in Western Europe was, British officials believed, due in no small part to the anti-communist propaganda effort. On 1st August 1950, the Russia Committee paid tribute to the 'revolution that has been achieved in the field

of publicity.'

Partly by the compulsion of events, but also as a result of a deliberate counter-propaganda campaign, a majority of people, certainly in the English-speaking world and Western Europe and a growing number elsewhere have come to recognise communist aims and methods for what they are... Much remained to be done in the areas more vulnerable to communism, such as South-East Asia.⁹⁵

By 1950, the British already had a well established organisation for countering communism in South-East Asia. The British Government had become concerned about the spread of communism in the region following the outbreak of the Malayan Emergency in 1948. Malcolm MacDonald, the British Commissioner General in South East Asia, was a powerful proponent of what later became known as the domino theory of communist expansion. The region he insisted should be viewed as a whole, the communists planned their actions on a theatre-wide basis and Britain should respond in a similarly coordinated manner. In late 1948, MacDonald advocated the creation of a regional centre to coordinate anti-communist propaganda activities throughout South-East Asia.⁹⁶ In May 1949, the IRD established a Regional Information Office (RIO) at the Commissioner General's headquarters at Phoenix Park in Singapore. Singapore was the centre for British defence forces east of Suez, and the Commissioner General's crowded headquarters at Phoenix Park already hosted local centres for the British intelligence and security services.⁹⁷ The RIO served as a central planning and production centre for propaganda, both anti-communist and positive, for South East Asia. It produced propaganda material 'suitably prepared for Asiatic audiences' and where necessary in local languages which was passed to 'local publicists for them to pass on to their own public in their own manner.' It used local contacts in the media, trade unions and youth organisations. It also passed background information on communism and Soviet policy 'not of a secret nature but not normally available through public channels' to governments in the region.⁹⁸

In February 1950, as Britain's involvement in Malaya intensified, further regional coordination was provided by a

Joint Information and Propaganda Committee (JIPC) which was established in Singapore. Its role was to coordinate the propaganda activities of all agencies involved in the campaign in Malaya to ensure they all 'speak with one voice,' and organise an effective counter to communist inspired propaganda throughout the region.⁹⁹ In August 1950, following the outbreak of the Korean war, MacDonald also established a high level committee of British regional Governors which held monthly meetings at Bukit Serene to consider 'the cold war as it affects us here.'¹⁰⁰ The committee devoted considerable time to the discussion of propaganda. One of its first meetings, in December 1950, was attended by Ralph Murray and Angus Malcolm, respectively heads of the Foreign Office's IRD and IPD. The committee informed Murray and Malcolm that British propaganda was 'of great importance in helping maintain stability' in South-East Asia. The committee, they were told, regarded 'all British propaganda here as being anti-communist in effect.' Although purely negative anti-communist propaganda was required, its impact was reinforced by a large volume of positive material, the latter was required 'not only for its own sake, but in order that we may demonstrate how communism is inimical to the alternative way of life we offer.'¹⁰¹

The Americans were informed about the plans for the creation of the RIO as early as January 1949.¹⁰² Shortly after the RIO's creation, the IRD's Adam Watson wrote to its director John Rayner instructing him to take the Americans on the spot 'fairly fully into your confidence' regarding the functions of the RIO.¹⁰³ Cooperation between British and American information staff in South East Asia expanded considerably following the outbreak of the Korean war in June 1950. At talks in Washington in July, British and American information officials agreed on the importance of coordinating propaganda on Korea to avoid divergences of presentation.¹⁰⁴ Later that month, the State Department despatched special instructions to information officers in South East Asia on cooperation with the British RIO. These indicated a 'wide area in which cooperation could contribute greatly to the achievement of common objectives.' It

inaugurated a regular exchange of all propaganda material, particularly 'special Chinese-language material' and information on groups which could receive locally prepared unattributable material. There was also some division of labour, with the Americans providing the product of their press monitoring service in Hong Kong, in exchange for British translation facilities in those posts maintaining such a service.¹⁰⁵

The Americans also began to build up their propaganda organisation in the region along similar lines to the British RIO. In November 1950, the US Consul General in Singapore recommended that he be kept informed of all USIS activities in the region so that he might be 'in a position to supply RIO with information duplicating on the American side what RIO is receiving on the British side.'¹⁰⁶ British officials in Singapore and in Washington pressed the Americans to establish their own regional information office, and in 1951, a Far East Regional Production Centre with a similar remit to the British RIO was established in the US Embassy in Manila.¹⁰⁷ A Regional Liaison Officer, the highly respected Si Nadler, was appointed to keep Rayner informed of American propaganda activities in the region.¹⁰⁸ Early in 1951, British and American information staff also began to hold monthly meetings at Phoenix Park to consider proposals for joint activity.¹⁰⁹ A further level of liaison was established when the CIA opened a small station in Singapore in the early 1950s.¹¹⁰

Cooperation in anti-communist propaganda did not, however, extend as far as Korea itself. On the outbreak of war the US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, activated an interdepartmental information committee chaired by Edward Barrett who immediately turned over all the United States Information Service personnel in Korea to General MacArthur and effectively turned the committee into a psychological strategy board.¹¹¹ The handover of the State Department's information work to the Army rather cut the British out of psychological warfare in Korea. Although there was a proposal to attach a British representative to the US psychological warfare organisation in Korea, the military intelligence section (G-2) of the US 8th Army in Korea, jealously

guarded its control of this activity. In June 1951, the IRD's Peter Wilkinson observed that, 'as long as General Willoughby was in charge of G-2 there was little chance of any agreement being reached to British participation in the psychological warfare run by the American military authorities.' Wilkinson added that Willoughby would not even allow the CIA's covert action arm, the OPC, to operate in this theatre.¹¹² The US military did provide the British with extensive details of their psychological warfare activities in Korea.¹¹³ Moreover, a Foreign Office review of information work in Korea concluded that Britain had no interests in Korea which were not identical with those of the Americans, and any service Britain could offer would be 'hardly better than a poor duplication of the American effort.'¹¹⁴

Whilst propaganda in Korea was largely controlled by the American military, Tony Shaw has shown that the British played an important supporting role in South-East Asia. Through the RIO in Singapore the British monitored the effect of events in Korea on audiences throughout South-East Asia and disseminated replies to communist propaganda through local channels.¹¹⁵ In July 1950, Paul Gore-Booth, the head of the British Information Service in Washington, told Howland Sargeant the acting head of the State Department's information programme that Britain's propaganda aimed to 'nail the main Communist lies' to the effect that: the South Koreans attacked first; the United States or South Koreans were premeditating aggression or action of any kind; that the Security Council's action was illegal under the UN Charter; that the action taken by the United States had even less justification; and the 'peace' campaign can honestly be regarded as a genuine effort towards peace.¹¹⁶

British propaganda on the Korean war also had an important secondary aim which was directed at the United States and reflected the desire of the British government to localise the conflict and rein in what many in Britain saw as a rising tide of anti-communism in the USA which threatened to extend the conflict to China or even the Soviet Union. The Foreign Office informed Rayner in Singapore that it wanted 'to avoid giving any support to the tendency in some circles in America to regard the

United Nations as a body to crusade against communism.'¹¹⁷ In Washington, Gore-Booth informed Sargeant that although there was in the public mind 'little doubt that the Soviet Government is in fact behind the Korean adventure,' British propaganda was based on the premise that 'the Soviet Government should not be explicitly identified with the military aggression committed by North Korea.' They should, he wrote, do nothing which 'would make it difficult for the Soviet Government to retreat from the support of North Korea.'¹¹⁸ Britain's fears of a wider conflict receded, however, following the beginning of the armistice negotiations in July 1951. In discussions with USIS staff at the end of July, Rayner now agreed that British propaganda would stress the achievement of the United Nations in 'putting a stop to Russian imperialist penetration in Asia,' and present the armistice as 'a defeat for Stalin and the communist regime.'¹¹⁹

From 1950, the British RIO and the US Information Service cooperated closely in the dissemination of anti-communist material in South-East Asia. In 1950, the IRD began production of a South-East Asian version of its unattributable weekly digest consisting of quotations of news and comment from the South-East Asian press and radio.¹²⁰ The RIO also distributed a large volume of pamphlets most of which appeared 'without any publishers imprints and constitute our "discreet" publications.'¹²¹ One pamphlet, produced by USIS, and distributed by the British RIO was entitled When the Communists Came and was targeted at the overseas Chinese, with stories of extortion and suicide among their families in China.¹²² Articles for which second rights had been obtained were despatched from London for distribution to the local English and vernacular press in Singapore, including, in December 1950, 12 articles on China from the Manchester Guardian, which the RIO turned into a pamphlet in English and Chinese.¹²³ USIS and the RIO also distributed cheap imprints of prominent anti-communist literature in local languages. In June 1951, USIS informed British information staff that their new book translation programme intended to produce two Malay and twelve to fourteen Chinese volumes in the year. Notable subjects were Richard

Crossman's edited volume of revelatory essays The God that Failed, and Orwell's Animal Farm.¹²⁴ The American information officer in Djakarta reported that the editor of the national newspaper Keng Po had received a copy of The God that Failed from the British Information Services. He had subsequently written two front page editorials on the book, and 'pointedly commended it to the Chinese of Djakarta as worthwhile reading for those toying with communism.'¹²⁵

Most of this propaganda material was directed at the educated classes. MacDonald admitted in 1951, that the Commission-General had no contact with Chinese working classes in South-East Asia, and more innovative thinking was required to target the less educated.¹²⁶ Broadcasting clearly had a key role to play. In the early 1950s, the VOA had only modest medium wave broadcasts in the region, but the BBC Overseas Service was considered an important branch of overseas propaganda and was kept fully informed by the Foreign Office of the government propaganda line.¹²⁷ The British also had important contacts with local broadcasting services. A Director of Broadcasting jointly responsible to the Governments of Malaya and Singapore sat on the JIPC. In July 1951, he was provided with the first scripts of interviews with captured communist soldiers.¹²⁸ There was also regular consultation regarding propaganda themes between the RIO and government controlled Radio Malaya. RIO advice was given in particular in connection with weekly series of broadcasts entitled 'World Affairs' and 'This is Communism' broadcast in English and various Chinese dialects.¹²⁹

Various visual formats were also used. The British government had employed film and newsreel to good effect in Malaya since 1948, and British newsreel coverage of Korea was intensive in the first sixth months of the conflict.¹³⁰ In July 1951, USIS asked Rayner for documentary newsreels showing, through the mouth of a Chinese ex-communist soldier, how the Korean war had been planned in Moscow, the communist defeat, and separate documentaries on each Asian contingent in Korea. USIS also ran a 'photo review' poster campaign for which they requested photographs of Chinese and Korean POWs.¹³¹ The use of

strip cartoons to illustrate the points made in the printed matter was one of the more innovative developments in targeting mass opinion in South-East Asia. A film and strip cartoon based on the booklet When the Communists Came was produced at the US Regional Production Center in Manila.¹³² The RIO produced a weekly booklet, Inside Soviet China, which included cartoons depicting the effects of communism in China, together with two strip cartoons of our popular Chinese victim of communism, Mr Wang.¹³³ Plans which were already underway to produce a strip cartoon version of Animal Farm were halted when Mrs Orwell's agent refused rights on the grounds that a commercial cartoon was already planned. The RIO's haste in undertaking this project before securing the rights caused some embarrassment in the Foreign Office, 'because the agent has been most cooperative in granting us rights in this and other books.'¹³⁴

Alongside this considerable propaganda effort British and American authorities also worked together to censor opinion about China and the war in Korea. In December 1950, MacArthur's headquarters introduced direct censorship of military news. A Press Advisory Commission was established in Tokyo with the full support of the British authorities. In London, the IRD worked with the Foreign Office News Department to brief journalists on the conflict and when *The Daily Worker* ran a piece attacking Rhee's tyranny and implicitly criticising American policy, the Cabinet toyed with the idea of introducing draconian press laws banning journalism which brought 'aid and comfort to the enemy.'¹³⁵ In South-East Asia, British authorities were less chary about wielding their administrative power. In August 1950, the British High Commissioner and the Governor of Singapore claimed to have enough information to bring a case against two pro-communist newspapers in the territory. 'The suppression of both newspapers' they concluded, 'was highly desirable and if possible the timing should be coordinated.'¹³⁶ In Singapore the JIPC considered the control of films, gramophone records and songs from Chinese sources and agreed that films which 'focused the loyalty of the Chinese audience on China,' were 'undesirable and should be banned.'¹³⁷

British and American cooperation in the production and dissemination of anti-communist propaganda in South-East Asia was the primary example of the kind of 'close and continuous liaison' agreed by Barrett and Warner in London in 1950. Britain and America closely coordinated their propaganda activities in South East Asia. Cooperation in the production and dissemination of anti-communist propaganda material was aided by the existence of a large British propaganda organisation in Singapore, and British experience and contacts across the region. It is also apparent that America's propaganda organisation and methods in South-East Asia were in some degree modelled on the British effort. Both powers, however, maintained an independent propaganda programme. There were geographical divisions. The British were satisfied to take a back-seat in Korea and America limited its propaganda activities in Malaya. Britain also pursued an independent line in its policy and propaganda with regard to the Soviet role in the war in Korea, at least until mid-1951. Most importantly, Britain and America were careful to maintain an independent output. 'Though collaborating closely in private,' wrote Rayner in June 1951, 'we continue our propaganda separately, in this way getting the benefit of approaching our target with two separate weapons.'¹³⁸

The coordination of propaganda activities in the field was mirrored by close consultation on the development of anti-communist propaganda policies between London and Washington. Adam Watson was particularly successful as the ILO at the British embassy in Washington and he became an important link in the development of cooperation in anti-communist propaganda. Watson was a prodigious liaison officer, and established many influential contacts in Washington. He had, of course, visited Washington in January 1950, and had met Barrett and Stone in London in May. He began regular meetings at the State Department shortly after arriving in Washington in August 1950.¹³⁹ Watson also established contact with 'certain sections of the CIA,' most notably Frank Wisner of the OPC. Through his contacts with the CIA, Watson met C.D.Jackson, a highly connected psychological warfare veteran, who was a guiding hand behind the NCFE. Jackson

went on to become Eisenhower's Special Assistant for psychological operations. He was, Watson wrote, 'warmly anglophile' and the two 'worked very closely together' under Truman and Eisenhower.¹⁴⁰ Watson's role became even more important in mid-1951 when his counterpart at the American embassy in London was relieved of his responsibilities. Frye, had failed to establish an effective role in London, and Watson proceeded to handle liaison in both directions. He informed the Foreign Office:

This means I have been playing the part of a broker: exploring the advantages which cooperation in various fields might bring, and trying to arrange it where desirable. I have been a strictly British broker, of course; but the Americans have not minded this.¹⁴¹

Following a visit from the new head of the IRD, John Peck, in May 1951, Watson established liaison with the Psychological Strategy Board. During his visit, Peck had astutely recognised that the ongoing struggle in Washington for control of psychological operations had implications for cooperation with Britain and was keen for Watson to establish contact with the new PSB. Hitherto, Foreign Office cooperation in this field had, for the most part, been with the State Department, whose amenability was, according to Peck, 'probably greater than that of the other governmental agencies concerned with psychological warfare.'¹⁴² Peck observed, and events in Korea supported his view, that if the international situation deteriorated and war became probable, 'the controlling emphasis will shift from the State Department towards the Service Departments,' and Britain's influence would diminish. He was, therefore, keen to seize the initiative and establish close ties with the PSB and accustom them 'to a policy of cooperation with the UK.'¹⁴³ In August 1951, Watson met with Gordon Gray, the newly appointed Director of the PSB, to request arrangements for liaison.¹⁴⁴ US officials were in favour of extending cooperation to include the PSB as long as it did not bring similar requests from other governments, and Watson was informed that he should liaise directly with Gray.¹⁴⁵ By the end of 1951 Watson had established contact, at very senior levels, with all of the principal agencies responsible for American psychological operations, both overt and covert.

From his position in Washington, Watson was well placed to witness the elevation of propaganda in America's cold war strategy. In October 1950, he reported discussing 'the new concept of influencing public opinion' which was developing among 'the more thoughtful people concerned in the State Department.'

More than one of the people concerned here has said to me that we must look on these activities as among the most important in all foreign policy... It was not just a question of "projecting America" but rather of seeing how public opinion in each country could be influenced so as to incline the Government more towards the policy which the US desired it to adopt and deter it from those policies which the US disliked. In many areas this might involve saying little about the United States itself. I will write more fully about this in the near future: it is a pretty new concept even in Washington and has hardly reached the field. But I will quote one remark of Stone's "I presume that the Projection of Britain is regarded as old time around Christopher Warner's office too?"¹⁴⁶

In June 1951, shortly after the creation of the PSB, Watson provided a more detailed overview of American thinking on political warfare. 'The Americans,' he began, 'have accepted "the struggle for men's minds" as a major feature of their general struggle with the Kremlin.' Psychological strategy, he stated, had now been given its due place alongside more traditional means of waging war. The Administration, he observed, was not merely concerned with minimising communist propaganda and subversion in the free world, Russia was 'the heart of the matter.' Alongside the plans for propaganda advocated in the TROY project, Watson revealed that 'other aspects of promoting and exploiting disorder inside the Soviet Union have been carefully studied.' These plans fitted into a broader American strategic concept on how war against Russia might be waged. The Americans he said were strongly opposed 'to slogging the issue out on the plains of Northern Europe: what they call "rolling our troops down the old European bowling alley."' They were looking at other ways of weakening the Soviet drive in Europe:

A large proportion of the population of Central Asia and Western Siberia is made up of racial minorities, political exiles, discontented draft labour and forced

labour. In war, the Americans seem to think these men could be supplied with arms and built up by radio into a serious though disconnected threat to Soviet power and especially communications with the Far East.¹⁴⁷

The Americans, Watson said, had told him many of the details of these schemes, and were `anxious for our cooperation not only in the event of war but also now during the preparatory period.'¹⁴⁸

American officials were particularly keen to encourage British participation in Radio Free Europe. In London in September 1950, Frank Wisner and Robert Joyce of the OPC met with Christopher Warner, the IRD head Ralph Murray, and D.P. Reilly of the Permanent Under-Secretary's Department. The Americans wanted the Foreign Office to join with them in organising Radio Free Europe, and pressed them to organise the large Russian and Eastern European exile groups in London along similar lines to the National Committee for a Free Europe. The Foreign Office were cautious about the American proposal and deferred their decision pending a closer investigation of the organisation and broadcasts of RFE.¹⁴⁹ In Washington, Watson was asked to provide details of the station's programmes and policy but warned to discourage further developments of the idea of cooperation. According to Murray, they had to consider, among other factors, `the damage we might be doing to ourselves by boosting Radio Free Europe at the expense of the services of the BBC.'¹⁵⁰ As a result of wartime experience, officials in London also remained cautious about getting involved with exile groups. In February 1951, Murray informed Watson that they had `only just got some way in obtaining authorisation' to organise exiles and establish liaison with them, `the arrangements envisaged do not go beyond appointing a liaison official and providing some finance.'¹⁵¹ In a chilling reply, Watson wrote:

Kim Philby, George Jellicoe and I were all most interested... that you had obtained authorisation to proceed to organise the Eastern European exiles in the United Kingdom and to establish some liaison with them... in spite of a search we do not know anything about this development. Could you therefore please arrange for us to be informed?¹⁵²

Whilst the Americans went ahead with RFE alone, the Foreign

Office undertook a detailed review of the service. BBC monitoring reports and a sample of RFE scripts provided by Watson were scrutinised by the Information Policy Department, who found that 'their quality is quite good - most of it has been reasonably sound, dignified and unsensational stuff.'¹⁵³ From his contacts in the CIA, Watson also provided information on the general policy of RFE, and the extent of guidance exercised by the US government. This was, according to Watson 'of a very general kind.' The exiles were allowed to write their own scripts, 'subject to occasional warnings and requests,' but, he reassured the Foreign Office, 'the squabbles and feuds between the various groups of exiles here' did not get on the air.¹⁵⁴ C.D.Jackson impressed upon Watson the importance of RFE, and in March 1951, following discussions with Paul Gore-Booth, head of the British Information Services in America, Watson urged the Foreign Office not to 'rebuff overtures from an organisation of this calibre to help with cooperation and advice.'¹⁵⁵ Such cooperation, he added, need not be publicly known. There was also, he argued, no reason why RFE should damage the BBC.

If it is recognised that the BBC and the Voice of America can shoot into the same target from different angles, there must also be a place for a broadcast which is not that of a free western power but of exiles from the country itself who have found refuge abroad. Since the approach is so different, I do not see that we should lose anything in effecting an improvement in the quality of Radio Free Europe broadcasts.¹⁵⁶

The following month C.D.Jackson called on Warner in London. He described current and planned RFE services, and agreed a programme for cooperation with the British. British missions would be asked for comments on the effectiveness of RFE transmissions, and this information would be passed to Jackson through Watson. In return Jackson would provide the Foreign Office with RFE policy directives, and details of any Eastern Europeans resident in the UK whom RFE proposed to employ. The British Government's comments on these individuals, Jackson added, would be welcome. It was agreed that a representative of the RFE's editorial organisation in Munich would visit IRD in London to discuss 'material requirements,' and that an IRD

official might visit Munich.¹⁵⁷ At a meeting with Wisner and Jackson in Washington in July 1951, British officials agreed that the Foreign Office would supply news and 'discreet advice' to a RFE correspondent who was about to be appointed to London. Jackson also asked the Foreign Office help him to hand-pick people for the new Hungarian and Polish services, as some of 'the best Poles for the purpose' were in London.¹⁵⁸ British cooperation was, however, to remain strictly confidential. Warner made it clear that any official British connection with RFE, 'must be kept secret and also the British official origin of any material we supply.'¹⁵⁹ Although the offer for the Foreign Office to participate in RFE remained open, the possibility of putting British representation inside RFE was problematic as long as there was no emigre organisation in London to act as a front for Foreign Office involvement. B.A.B. Burrows, the British Information Officer in Washington, observed in July 1951, although the CIA assisted RFE and even had men in the organisation, the NCFE had an independent existence and its own funds. Consequently, the US Government could claim it was an unofficial organisation for which they were not responsible.

If, however, we put someone into Radio Free Europe he would in present circumstances have to be either directly dependent on the Foreign Office or some other government organisation, and if H.M. Government were asked questions in Parliament about it they could probably not say they had nothing to do with it. This would in the American view, gravely prejudice the whole operation.¹⁶⁰

The Americans, Burrows said, found the NCFE an 'indispensable buffer' between themselves and RFE, and pressed the British Government to establish a similar buffer. Although the IRD were keen on the idea, Bevin turned down IRD's recommendation that they should enter into an 'informal relationship' with the East European section of the European Movement, which was headed by Harold Macmillan. IRD put the suggestion up again to Bevin's successor Herbert Morrison, who was similarly cautious of involvement with exile politics.¹⁶¹ It was not until late 1952, under Churchill's leadership that the Foreign Office was given permission to provide financial support for a new Central-Eastern European Committee of the European

Movement, with Richard Law MP as President and the former Ambassador to the USSR, Sir David Kelly as Secretary General. This Committee, the Americans hoped, 'would try to coordinate long-range activities... with that of its American opposite number.'¹⁶²

Prior to this, although there was no official Foreign Office involvement in RFE, informal contact was maintained. Sir Ian Jacob of the BBC Overseas Services, met C.D.Jackson in April 1951 and agreed to keep Warner informed of the BBC's contacts with RFE.¹⁶³ IRD representatives visited RFE in September 1951, and in February 1952, the veteran British propaganda expert, Robert Bruce-Lockhart provided IRD with a detailed account of his own independent tour of RFE.¹⁶⁴ Some degree of institutional contact was provided in August 1951, when Mr Ramsey of IRD was offered a post as a RFE correspondent in Germany. Following discussions with the intelligence section of RFE, it was agreed that Ramsey might also 'serve as an unofficial link between RFE and IRD.' Ramsey, IRD observed, was keen to accept the position, not least because the pay was over five times what he was earning at the Foreign Office!¹⁶⁵

In addition to support for exile broadcasting, the US Government sought British assistance in the development of the Ring Plan. When Peck visited Washington in May 1951, he met with representatives of the State Department, the CIA, the PSB and VOA. In the course of these discussions Peck was given a detailed overview of American offensive psychological operations and the objectives of the Ring Plan. The aim of these operations, he was told, was to 'make things as difficult as possible for the Soviet government in their relations with their satellites and with their own people.'¹⁶⁶ The objectives of the Ring Plan, Peck discovered went beyond planning for psychological operations in peacetime. It was, he observed, 'an essential part of military preparedness' for war. In addition to fostering discontent in the Soviet bloc, the Ring Plan had three further objectives: to divert Soviet electronic research into seeking means of countering the American operations; and in the event of war, to create a secure wireless link around the world for use

by American and allied armed forces; and provide a means of establishing contact with the Russian people for psychological warfare purposes. Peck also heard of a plan, 'still in the discussion stage,' to use the ring of transmitters as part of a combined military and psychological warfare operation directed at the 'soft under-belly' of the Soviet Union, those regions east and north-east of the Caspian sea, 'with the aim of detaching the subject peoples of the region from the Soviet Union and virtually cutting it in half.'¹⁶⁷

The Americans, Peck reported were quite clear regarding the assistance Britain could provide in developing the Ring Plan.

They frankly look to us for help in negotiating the necessary permission to build radio stations in those parts of the world where we have influence, e.g. India, Pakistan and the Persian Gulf.¹⁶⁸

Peck, however, was a little taken aback at the wholly offensive nature of America's plans for psychological operations. He was surprised that although it was clear the Americans 'intended to go ahead vigorously, both on political and military grounds with their preparations for offensive psychological warfare,' their approach to defensive operations in the free world were, 'tentative and uncertain.' Moreover, the operations described to Peck, including the Ring Plan, revealed a general blurring in American plans between peacetime psychological operations and preparations for war. Although the Americans were anxious to stress that they aimed to avoid any incitement to premature revolt, Peck was concerned that it was not always clear whether American psychological operations were intended to be part of a plan leading up to open warfare, or whether it was hoped they would make war less likely.

Those that I talked to appeared genuinely anxious to avert another world war, but they certainly do not consider the present situation, in which tens of thousands of Americans have been killed in Korea and a vast effort is being made to defend America and Western Europe, as peace. They have no hesitation in seeking to deploy against Russia in peacetime a psychological warfare effort as vigorous as that being deployed by Russia against the free world. They do not think this effort makes world war any more likely; but they hope that, if war comes, their current PW efforts will have contributed substantially to

weakening the Russian war effort and strengthening that of the free world.¹⁶⁹

Reaction to the Ring Plan in London was decidedly mixed. There was a good deal of scepticism as to whether it would be effective in overcoming Soviet jamming, and opinions differed as to whether the plan was provocative. The Permanent Under-Secretary's Department (PUSD) doubted that the plan would be successful, but worried that, if it was, the Soviets, 'might feel compelled to take counter-action.' The PUSD brief on the Ring Plan placed it alongside such clearly provocative measures as the establishment of US bases in Norway.¹⁷⁰ Foreign Office regional departments also identified local political difficulties regarding the location of broadcasting facilities. Warner had told the Americans that the output of stations in the Middle East needed to be carefully monitored to avoid reference to controversial political issues such as Palestine. Bahrein was felt to be a poor choice because of the need to avoid provoking Persian sovereignty claims over the state.¹⁷¹ The Foreign Office Eastern Department also rejected the option of Kuwait on the grounds that the regime there was already unstable. They concluded that Anglo-American broadcasting would serve to 'focus upon Kuwait the attentions of all those subversive and communist-inspired elements in the Middle East,' this would not only 'imperil the stability of the present regime but would be likely to put in jeopardy both the oil operations and the station itself.'¹⁷² The IRD disagreed with the PUSD, and did not believe the plan to be provocative. Notwithstanding local political concerns, the IRD did not object to the Ring Plan, and pursued a policy of 'cautious cooperation.'¹⁷³ Although they accepted that broadcasts that could not be jammed easily might be seen as 'a good deal more provocative than broadcasts which could be jammed,' IRD officials dismissed the idea that the erection of a ring of transmitters was in itself provocative.¹⁷⁴

The IRD's policy of cooperation was, however, almost fundamentally undermined by the Foreign Secretary, Herbert Morrison in September 1951. The lack of progress in securing arrangements for broadcasting facilities in Bahrein and Kuwait,

following the Barrett-Warner talks, meant that by the spring of 1951 the Americans had already begun to doubt British cooperation in developing the Ring Plan. In September 1951, Morrison visited Washington and took with him the Permanent Under-Secretary's Department brief on the Ring Plan. As a result Morrison informed Acheson, 'we would regard as provocative any scheme for ringing the Soviet Union with broadcasting transmitters.' Acheson and the State Department were, to say the least, somewhat taken aback by Morrison's assertion. The US Embassy in London reported that the Secretary of State had been 'shocked' by Morrison's statement, not least because the Foreign Office, 'had been kept fully informed of the project for a considerable time and had not raised any objections in principle.'¹⁷⁵ The IRD were similarly alarmed. They had not been consulted prior to the Foreign Secretary's visit to Washington, and the PUSD brief had not been cleared in draft form by either the IPD or the IRD. To the obvious relief of Acheson and the IRD, the issue was resolved by the election of the Conservatives in October 1951. On the 5th of November, the IRD's J.W.Nicholls wrote:

I accordingly recommend that we should authorise Washington to tell the State Department that Mr Morrison's remarks on this subject should not be taken as meaning that we were against the project in principle; that the doubts that we had expressed on previous occasions about particular aspects of the scheme (e.g. the proposal for a transmitter in the Persian Gulf) were based solely on practical considerations and were certainly not mere pretexts to conceal any fundamental objection to the scheme; and that, so far as provocation was concerned, it was in our opinion the uses to which the transmitters were put rather than their mere existence which would have to be handled with caution.¹⁷⁶

British cooperation with the Ring Plan was not the only concern American officials had regarding Britain's commitment to the anti-communist propaganda offensive. Whilst American propaganda activities had expanded, there had been a gradual reduction in British information expenditure since 1947. In September 1950, Foreign Office officials expressed 'grave concern' at the effect of successive cuts in the information budget.¹⁷⁷ Annual cuts since 1947, coupled with rising costs meant that by 1950 the information services had reached the point

at which there were insufficient funds to maintain basic services. At the end of 1950 the Foreign Office information departments, the BBC and the Central Office of Information had no money left for new campaigns. Even if no further cuts were made it would, they claimed, be impossible to carry out work planned for 1950 and 1951. The Foreign Office also pointed out that the United States Government was stepping up its propaganda activities around the world. It would, the Foreign Office suggested, 'be difficult to maintain our present close and friendly collaboration' if the United States was left to take the burden of anti-communist propaganda. Moreover, in a phrase which echoed the 1948 Cabinet paper, it claimed:

it is important in our and common interest that we, as Europeans and with our special knowledge of the Middle East and Far East and South East Asia, should be able to influence United States planning and day-to-day publicity just as we influence United States policy.¹⁷⁸

The Foreign Office proposed that a reserve fund of £250,000 be created to cover expenses not covered in the previous year's estimates.¹⁷⁹ In support of this proposal officials stressed that Britain had entered an 'acute phase of the struggle against Communism,' in which the Government were obliged to devote large sums to all aspects of the country's defences, including propaganda:

It is a commonplace that one of the most powerful weapons in the Soviet and Communist armoury is the propaganda weapon... It follows that the publicity arm should be an equally important branch of the defence of the West. The Cabinet recognised this when they laid down their overseas publicity directive in January 1948. Since then the Communist propaganda campaign has been greatly extended and intensified... The burden of our own publicity organs has been correspondingly increased.¹⁸⁰

The Chancellor of the Exchequer Hugh Gaitskell was not convinced and more drastic cuts were to follow. In January 1951, faced with the burden of contributing forces to the war in Korea the Cabinet reluctantly approved a massive programme of rearmament amounting to £4700 million over three years. This was funded by large cuts in government spending not least in the health services.¹⁸¹ It also prompted a reevaluation of

Britain's overseas information activities. It was Gaitskell's view that expenditure on propaganda could be dispensed with more easily than other areas of Britain's defence. 'We could afford "no frills" at the present time', he asserted. The cost of the information services were a frequent target for Parliamentary criticism and propaganda he believed could be sacrificed without serious effect. Far from sanctioning further funding Gaitskell suggested a cut of £2million in overall information expenditure, and even proposed dismantling the British Council.¹⁸² Although the eventual cuts in information expenditure for 1951-1952 were closer to £1.4 million,¹⁸³ and the British Council was saved, the Foreign Office noted with some bitterness that the danger from communist propaganda had been largely ignored: 'the Treasury attitude is "Let us avoid war by all means, provided that it does not cost more than £10.5m."' ¹⁸⁴

As the Foreign Office suggested, the Americans were indeed, concerned about the proposed reductions. The State Department heard of Gaitskell's proposed cuts from Watson early in 1951, and quickly sought to impress upon the British the importance of maintaining their propaganda effort. Barrett suggested the State Department 'exert a little pressure' to keep the British from cutting their budgets, and also asked the OPC 'to indicate through your channels, the deep concern with which the US Government has heard this news.'¹⁸⁵ In February 1951, Acheson wrote to Frye, instructing him 'to inform Strang personally at first opportunity for informal conversation that all our plans count heavily on British psychological warfare as important part joint defence effort.'¹⁸⁶ Frye replied two days later, after having discussed the matter with Murray and Warner. They had told him that some cuts in the information budget were inevitable, but that although this would result in some paring of staff from anti-communist propaganda activities, the cuts would be targeted at Britain's positive propaganda work. Murray mentioned that Latin American services might be cut down to Press Offices only, except for Venezuela where IRD maintained a regional centre. The most drastic cuts would be in British Council support, and the BBC overseas services would be affected,

short term cuts in Western Europe would only be made if necessary and anti-communist propaganda would be the least affected.¹⁸⁷ When US embassy officials finally spoke to Strang late in February 1951 he was more forceful in reassuring them that anti-communist activities would not be affected. He repeated that wherever possible cuts would be made in the British Council and the BBC and assured the Americans that 'no (repeat no) cuts are planned in direct anti-communist activities and there even may be some expansion in this field.'¹⁸⁸

'Combatting Communism'

The Development of British Political Warfare, 1951

Strang was not being disingenuous. In the course of 1951, whilst stringent cuts were applied to other areas of Britain's information activities, the anti-communist propaganda campaign expanded. Under the financial pressure of rearmament the Foreign Office was successful in presenting anti-communist propaganda activities as an essential part of Britain's defence. As propaganda work as a whole was pared down, the main focus of Britain's overseas propaganda shifted away from the 'Projection of Britain,' and combatting communism became the principal function of the British Government's propaganda both at home and abroad.

In May 1951, Patrick Gordon-Walker took over from Morrison as Minister with overall responsibility for the information services. Gordon-Walker was determined that 'all our publicity should be geared to the cold war.'¹⁸⁹ He chaired two new ministerial committee's which were created to deal with the domestic and overseas information services. In July 1951, Gordon-Walker presented the Cabinet with a paper on information policy which called for 'a renewed and vigorous information campaign in this country.' Its principal aim was to counter the 'uncertainty and confusion in the public mind' regarding the basis and economic implications of Britain's foreign policy.

What therefore we have to do is to bring home to our people with greater emphasis and persistence than has yet been done the true nature of the Soviet regime and the real motives behind Soviet behaviour in international affairs. Only if we successfully bring home to our people the root cause of our policies will

they sufficiently accept the need for rearmament and all that it implies.¹⁹⁰

Gordon-Walker also ordered an enquiry into Britain's overseas propaganda activities. In July 1951, the IRD presented him with a detailed overview of Britain's anti-communist propaganda operations.¹⁹¹ It documented a substantial propaganda effort by the IRD, and a considerable expansion of the department's work since the launch of the new propaganda policy in 1948. In January 1948, the Foreign Office had been instructed to conduct propaganda designed to: expose the myth of the Soviet workers paradise and reveal the real conditions of life under Soviet rule; to promote the virtues of British social democracy; and encourage resistance to communism in the free world. To these themes, the IRD had added propaganda about: Britain's defence arrangements; the Brussels Treaty and North Atlantic Treaty Organisations; and in addition to the 'Projection of Britain,' propaganda 'about the virtues of the western way of life.'¹⁹²

The IRD's output had also expanded considerably. By 1951, the IRD was producing four main types of propaganda material: detailed 'Basic Papers' for dissemination to opinion formers; the 'Digest' which was issued in English, French, Italian, Spanish and Greek with a total circulation of nearly 2000 copies per week; specially commissioned or second rights articles; and miscellaneous publications such as Points at Issue, a 'handbook of comment on Soviet and communist behaviour and practice,' which had gone through five editions since 1949, a total print run of 32,000.¹⁹³ During 1951, there had also been some interesting additions to the IRD's output. A new Defence Digest was created to provide Ministers with material to sustain public support for rearmament. This interdepartmental production, with contributions from the Treasury and the Ministry of Defence, emerged from the briefing group on rearmament.¹⁹⁴ In November a fortnightly Religious Digest was launched. It was intended to cover the communist attitude to all religions, although as most states under communist control had been Catholic, the first editions had a heavy bias towards Catholicism.¹⁹⁵

The most notable new project was the first in the series of

Background Books. Book publishing was one of the IRD's favoured methods. The Foreign Office believed that the public would more readily accept information which did not emanate from official sources, and the most effective propaganda was attributable to authoritative or prominent authors. The IRD's early work in this field included the publication of R.N.Carew-Hunt's The Theory and Practice of Communism, which had been written as an internal guide when Carew-Hunt served in the intelligence service.¹⁹⁶ The IRD had also sought to buy up and distribute foreign editions of prominent anti-communist literature such as, Animal Farm and The God that Failed.¹⁹⁷ Securing copyright for existing works, however, was often complicated and expensive. By commissioning its own work, the Foreign Office and British missions abroad were free to make local arrangements for the printing, translation and distribution of the Background Books.

The Background Books series ran until 1970, and comprised almost 100 titles. They were edited by Stephen Watts a former MI5 officer and published by Batchworth Press, Phoenix House, and most widely and stylishly by Bodley Head. It was to all intents and purposes a Foreign Office venture.¹⁹⁸ It is apparent that in many cases IRD directly commissioned Background Books from trusted confidential contacts, often with a secret service or Foreign Office background, such as Robert Bruce Lockhart, and Christopher Mayhew.¹⁹⁹ The IRD also provided commissioned authors with source material. Brian Crozier, who later worked as an IRD consultant, has described how, whilst working for The Economist in the 1960s, he 'transformed a thick folder of IRD documents into a short book called Neo-Colonialism.' Crozier added that books produced in this manner would be vetted by IRD officials to ensure that secret material had been removed.²⁰⁰ Most importantly, the whole series was financially supported by the IRD who bought up vast quantities of each title for distribution abroad.

This series of small pocket-sized books became the IRD's most ambitious publishing venture. A prefatory note on the cover stated:

These little books are designed to provide ordinary people, interested in what is going on in the world

today, with some background information about events, institutions and ideas. They will not interpret current history for you but they will help you to interpret it for yourself. Background Books will range widely in subject, dealing with what lies at the root of the questions thinking people are asking, filling in the background without which world affairs today cannot be properly seen or judged.²⁰¹

The first volume entitled What is Communism?, by an anonymous 'Student of Affairs' was sent to British posts in February 1951. It was, according to IRD, 'an anti-communist work written in dispassionate style and therefore more acceptable to waverers and fellow travellers who recant from arguments more trenchantly expressed.'²⁰² In total the Foreign Office sent 3,169 copies to British posts, the Colonial Office took a further 10,000. Copies were also freely provided to the United States, the American Embassy in Caracas, for example, agreed to print 5000 copies. It was followed shortly afterwards by Trade Unions - True or False? by Victor Feather, Why Communism Must Fail a symposium of essays by Bertrand Russell, Leonard Schapiro, Francis Watson, W.N.Ewer and C.D.Darlington, and Cooperatives True or False? by J.A.Hough. Posts were asked to seek local publishers for the series, and offer copyright 'as a minor inducement.' Profit was clearly not a consideration, the Foreign Office added, 'if a means of publication offers itself which requires financial help within reason, let us know, and we will see what can be done.'²⁰³

In addition to its editorial activities the IRD had also assiduously cultivated recipients for its material. The IRD, Gordon-Walker was told, worked, 'through all available channels to ensure that the facts about Soviet aims and methods are known as widely as possible.'²⁰⁴ Internally the IRD briefed British spokesmen, Ministers, and delegations to United Nations organisations and international conferences. In 1951, it began to brief all Heads of Missions on their appointment, and close cooperation was developed between Heads of Missions, Labour Attaches and Information Officers.²⁰⁵ It was also responsible for day to day monitoring of Soviet propaganda and for initiating counter-action when necessary, either through the Foreign Office News Department, a Ministerial statement, a question in

Parliament, or instructions to British missions abroad. IRD material was disseminated widely to other government departments, and British missions. Regional centres for the adaptation and translation of IRD material had been established in Singapore, Cairo, Buenos Aires and Caracas. There was, IRD reported, still a 'growing tendency' for foreign governments to cooperate with British missions in anti-communist activities.²⁰⁶

There had however, been a significant, if predictable, change in the IRD's methods since 1948. Mayhew and Bevin's instruction that British propaganda should be directed at the broad masses of workers and peasants in Europe and Asia had been dropped. Foreign Office officials who were more accustomed to directing information at opinion forming elites had always been sceptical about this policy. Since 1948, in practice the IRD had gradually reverted back to the entrenched Foreign Office view that, 'it is better to influence those that can influence others than to attempt a direct appeal to the mass of the population.'²⁰⁷ The paper drafted for Gordon-Walker gave the clearest summation of Foreign Office thinking on this subject.

[I]n any organised community there are certain leaders on whom the general public depends for a large part of its thinking. These leaders and the confidence reposed in them by the public are the key to any campaign of indoctrination. By working through them, the appearance of official propaganda is avoided. In a western state the greater part fall into the following categories :- minister and members of parliament, trade union leaders, churchmen, editors and journalists, certain professors and teachers, and leading public figures... To conduct an indoctrination campaign effectively and economically it is necessary to impress upon these groups the importance and urgency of the operation, to enlist their cooperation, and provide them with all necessary material facts and arguments.²⁰⁸

In January 1952, British diplomats were informed, that combatting communism was no longer simply a publicity task and should not be left to Information Officers. 'The task is one in which all the principal members of a Mission have a duty to participate.' The greater part of the IRD material was no longer designed for dissemination to the general public, but rather aimed to 'enable or assist recognised leaders of public

opinion... to influence their own following.' As all diplomatic staff had access to local opinion formers, they should all work to ensure the widespread dissemination of IRD material. These contacts, it was suggested, should be encouraged to turn to them for 'reliable and accurate advice on the technical and general aspects of enlightening public opinion about Communism.'²⁰⁹

The IRD had developed contacts with many of these leaders of opinion, at home and abroad, including the Labour and Conservative party headquarters,²¹⁰ the TUC and through them the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the British Council of Churches, the Quakers, the National Peace Council, and 'certain selected scientists.' The purpose of these contacts was to ensure that those individuals and organisations who wished to combat communism had the necessary factual material, 'which they can work on in their own way to make acceptable and comprehensible to their particular target audience.' In certain cases, the trade unions, for example, IRD sought to provide material which 'may induce leaders to take administrative action against Communists.'²¹¹ Cooperation with the BBC had become particularly important, as this was the only means the Foreign Office had for directing propaganda at the communist bloc. There was, Gordon-Walker was informed, 'very close contact' at all levels from the Director-General of the Overseas Services down to regional editors and desks.

Not only is the broad policy of their broadcasts to the Communist countries agreed but they welcome suggestions, criticism and discussion; the Regional Editors attend regular meetings with the political departments of the Foreign Office; His Majesty's Missions in the Communist countries send special telegrams designed for the BBC; and there is a regular correspondence between His Majesty's Missions and the BBC on the subject of the BBC's foreign language broadcasts to each particular country.²¹²

The defining characteristic of the IRD's methods remained unchanged. Its output was 'grey' propaganda, disseminated discreetly and to be used without attribution. The restriction forbidding disclosure of the fact that Britain was distributing anti-communist material through official channels had been lifted in December 1949, but there had been no change in the IRD's

methods.²¹³ The IRD proudly boasted to Gordon-Walker, that 'during the three years since it was set up the fact that His Majesty's Government is conducting anti-communist publicity operations has been successfully concealed from the public at home and abroad.'²¹⁴ This was not entirely true. References to the British anti-communist propaganda campaign had appeared in the Eastern European press in 1948. More remarkably Barrett's trip to London in May 1950 had been prominently featured in the New York Times, and was followed by an article in Pravda.²¹⁵ In September 1951, the IRD head, John Peck, told a meeting of European information officers, 'the communists themselves were aware of what we were doing.' Nevertheless, he added, 'it was essential to avoid public discussion at home or abroad of H.M.G.'s anti-communist work.'²¹⁶ The Foreign Office remained committed to a discreet strategy based on the assumption that, 'the public has a tendency to react against officially issued information.'²¹⁷

Given the IRD's size, and the scale of its activity, it is perhaps surprising that there were not more leaks. By 1951, the scope of the IRD's activities was clearly considerable, and remarkable when viewed against the substantial cuts in other areas of British propaganda. What had begun in 1948 as 'a small section in the Foreign Office' had by 1951 grown into one of the largest departments in the Foreign Office. Most significantly, the IRD's expansion reveals how important propaganda had become in Britain's Cold War strategy. As the IRD's activities had expanded the Foreign Office had also developed a more expansive definition of the role of propaganda in British foreign policy. This definition was more in line with the American conception of psychological operations than the Foreign Office's traditional view of propaganda as a useful tool of diplomacy. British overseas propaganda was no longer simply used to publicise British achievements, and counter communist misrepresentations. Like the Americans, the Foreign Office now advocated a strategy which elevated propaganda alongside diplomacy and military power as part of a coordinated political warfare offensive. Propaganda was no longer simply an adjunct to British foreign policy but an

essential and indivisible part of a combined strategy for combatting global communism.

This shift towards a combined political warfare offensive was outlined in the IRD's memorandum for Gordon-Walker. The phrase 'anti-communist propaganda,' the IRD argued, was now an 'incomplete and in some respects misleading' description of the department's activities. Firstly, it was not communism they were seeking to counter but the aggressive aims of the Soviet government, which operated through communist parties and communist controlled organisations. Communism was 'merely a technique of political agitation' used by the Soviet government, alongside other rallying cries such as 'peace,' it merely served as 'a convenient umbrella for such diverse activities as sabotage and fomenting disunity in the West.' Secondly, as political, military and propaganda activities were interconnected in the Soviet strategy of political warfare, it was insufficient to counter it with propaganda alone, 'propaganda and diplomacy must go hand in hand, and the Soviet military threat must be counterbalanced.'

To "counter communism", therefore, what is required is a worldwide operation of factual indoctrination, sufficient military strength to eliminate fear of aggression as a motive for listening to Communist arguments, and sufficient police and internal security precautions and democratic vigilance to ensure that there is no forcible interference with the sources of knowledge; on the positive side measures to sustain a hope of economic improvement and to promote an understanding of and enthusiasm for the democratic way of life are no less important.²¹⁸

By the end of 1951, the Foreign Office was moving closer to the US position regarding the use of propaganda as a weapon to undermine Soviet rule behind the Iron Curtain. In October 1951, the Conservatives had returned to power, under Winston Churchill. Churchill had made it clear that he believed world tension could be relaxed, and war avoided, by seeking a negotiated settlement with the Soviet Union on a range of issues.²¹⁹ Almost immediately on taking office, Churchill was presented with a detailed Foreign Office review of British policy towards the Soviet Union. This review, prepared by the Permanent Under-Secretary's Committee (PUSC), sought to dampen Churchill's

enthusiasm for a negotiated settlement by arguing that the West was not yet in a position to negotiate from strength. It raised the possibility of a counter-attack against the Soviets involving covert action designed to 'compress and disrupt' the Soviet bloc, but stopped short of advocating a strategy of liberation, such as that favoured by the United States. 'Operations designed to liberate the satellites are impracticable and would involve unnecessary risks.' Nevertheless, it argued, useful measures could be taken, including, 'intensified psychological warfare operations', to 'cause trouble and disturbance in the satellites.' Although this policy was along similar lines to the US strategy of liberation, the United States it suggested, 'will probably wish to go faster and further' than Britain. Britain should, therefore, be prepared to exert a moderating influence.²²⁰

Whilst the PUSC review was being prepared, the IRD was revising its own policy for anti-communist propaganda operations. In December 1951, a revised version of the memorandum presented to Gordon-Walker, questioned whether British propaganda should be more offensive. There was, it argued, a certain dualism in British propaganda policy, in that it attacked communism but was not concerned with the internal regimes of the Soviet Union and other communist dominated countries. It suggested that Britain should not be content to attack communist subversion in the free world, but should 'attack communist regimes wherever they are found.' It argued that British propaganda should be based on the assumption that Soviet communism was 'a wicked system' and hold out some hope of bringing about some 'fundamental change in the Soviet Union... and that the peoples of the satellite countries need not endlessly suffer under their present regimes.'

It would mean that the aim of our propaganda to communist countries should be to weaken the existing regimes and that subject to the policy considerations of the moment, we should openly in our propaganda to the Soviet Union and the satellite countries adopt the line that they live under a tyranny from which we wish to see them free themselves.²²¹

Such a policy, it was argued, would prevent a 'widening divergence' between Britain and America in the field of

propaganda. It would allow Britain to agree with the general American approach to 'psychological operations.' As the PUSC review had suggested, it would also allow Britain to exert a restraining influence over American operations, 'to ensure that they were well planned and well worked and did not by rashness, blatant inaccuracy, and lack of constant adaptation, do more harm than good.'²²²

This marked the beginning of a new phase in Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy, in which a more offensive strategy of political warfare was developed, often in cooperation with the United States Government.²²³ The new strategy was heralded in a circular letter to Heads of Missions from the Permanent Under-Secretary, William Strang, on 30th January 1952.²²⁴ It was, Strang wrote, almost four years since British Missions had been informed of the new propaganda policy and the establishment of the IRD. The department's functions were at that time expected to be an extension of Britain's existing propaganda policy. 'In the last year or so,' he wrote, 'it has become apparent that the task is essentially a combined operation calling for a joint diplomatic and propaganda approach.' Strang reassured British diplomats that Churchill's much publicised plans for an accommodation with the Soviet leadership did not mean that 'we have felt able to revise our basic assumption' regarding the long-term aims of the Stalinist regime. Nor, he wrote, should the recent cuts in information budgets give rise to the impression that the Government was relaxing its efforts to counter Soviet political warfare.

I want in the first place to reassure you that so far from curtailing their activities in this field the Government are resolved to continue their efforts to the highest possible degree.²²⁵

Moreover, the objectives of Britain's propaganda policy had changed. The short term aim remained largely the same, that was, to increase knowledge of the true nature of the Soviet regime, of Soviet policy and the methods by which the Soviet Government attempted to achieve its aims. The long term aims, however, were somewhat more offensive and, as with American psychological operations, an essential part of preparations for war. The long

term objectives were: to convince 'responsible leaders of free communities' that the only way of reaching a lasting settlement was for the free world to neutralise the Soviet military threat as quickly as possible; to undermine the strength and effectiveness of Communist parties 'until Communism as an instrument of Soviet policy has palpably failed'; and finally, to create throughout the world, a climate of opinion which, in the event of war, would be solidly united against the Soviet Government, and would represent a major defeat for the Soviet political warfare offensive. This campaign, Strang conceded, was now concentrated 'wholly on the negative, anti-Communist, anti-Soviet aspect.' Strengthening the morale of the free world remained an essential part of British foreign policy. However, the failure to motivate the anti-communist activities of most of Britain's allies meant the need for Britain to take a leading role in combatting communism was even greater than it had been in 1948. Strang observed, 'the halfheartedness of a few of our associates, and the lack of means of most of the remainder' were all the more reason for Britain to make the fullest use of its resources and experience. He concluded:

Our justification for taking so prominent a part in an operation which is in fact the task of every government is that, apart from the United States Government, we are virtually the only Government which has made a worldwide study of the problem and has the organization to carry out counter-measures on a scale in any way comparable to that of the Soviet Government.²²⁶

Conclusion

Cooperation between Britain and the United States in the field of anti-communist propaganda expanded dramatically in the period between January 1950 and January 1952. In 1948, British officials had been keen to inform the United States of Britain's new propaganda policy. British officials, however, had not been impressed with the product of cooperation with the United States between January 1948 and January 1950. In 1950, the willingness of United States officials to seek British advice and experience regarding the most effective methods of conducting anti-communist propaganda, coupled with the launch of the Campaign of Truth, restored British faith in the American anti-communist propaganda

policy. Cooperation was formalised at a series of meetings between senior officials from the Foreign Office and the State Department early in 1950. Instructions to British and American missions following these talks prompted Information Officers in the field to do, what to many came naturally, cooperate with their opposite numbers. Relations were particularly close in South-East Asia, where the propaganda effort was in many respects combined. Both nations, however, were careful to maintain 'individuality of output.' The policy of 'shooting at the same target from different angles' remained the guiding principle for cooperation in the field.

The most important development, however, was the appointment of Adam Watson as Information Liaison Officer at the British Embassy in Washington. Watson was one of those officials, like Sir John Dill or Oliver Franks, who seem to embody the 'special relationship' between Britain and the United States. Watson was the linchpin of British and American cooperation in anti-communist propaganda. He assiduously cultivated contacts with the most senior officials in the State Department, the VOA, the CIA, RFE and the PSB. Every aspect of the American propaganda offensive, overt and covert, was discussed with him. After only eight months in Washington, Watson claimed to know more about American anti-communist propaganda than he did about British policy.²²⁷

To be sure, American hospitality was not entirely benign. It is clear that the US Government was keen to elicit British support for many of their psychological operations. In particular, organising Soviet and Eastern European emigres and developing Radio Free Europe. The State Department was also dependent on British facilities to expand VOA broadcasting through the Ring Plan. The extent to which American plans for anti-communist propaganda depended upon British cooperation are revealed by the American reaction to British cuts in spending on propaganda activities. Acheson, urgently sought to impress upon the Foreign Office that, 'all our plans count heavily on British psychological warfare as important part joint defence effort.'²²⁸

However, whilst cuts in spending led to dramatic reductions in Britain's positive propaganda activities, anti-communist propaganda expanded considerably. By 1951, all of Britain's propaganda activities at home and abroad were geared towards the Cold War. The IRD's editorial output was increasing and the department had established contacts with a great number of prominent opinion formers. Moreover, the IRD had begun to develop a more expansive definition of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy, which by the end of 1951 would bring the IRD closely in line with the US strategy of political warfare.

Conclusion

Conclusion

It was with some reluctance that the British Government embarked on a new anti-communist propaganda policy in January 1948. The postwar Labour Government was not averse to the use of propaganda. Although wartime propaganda agencies, such as the Ministry of Information and the Political Warfare Executive, were dismantled, substantial elements of the propaganda apparatus were retained within the Foreign Office and in a new Central Office of Information. Moreover, the Labour Government was ready to use propaganda to explain British policies abroad, and in the face of declining power, to advertise British achievements. Bevin in particular was keen that Britain should not 'hide its light under a bushel.'¹ Given such enthusiasm it was perhaps inevitable that propaganda would once again be used in an offensive capacity. However, faced with an increasingly hostile barrage of anti-British propaganda from the Soviet Union and communists around the world, Bevin resisted calls from senior officials in the Foreign Office to respond with offensive propaganda. Events at the end of 1947, most notably the creation of the Cominform and the breakdown of the Council of Foreign Ministers meetings in London, prompted Bevin to reconsider this position. He was persuaded to adopt a new propaganda policy when his Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Christopher Mayhew, combined the Foreign Office's call for a propaganda offensive with the promotion of Bevin's own strategy for 'Third Force' defence.

The new propaganda policy was an uneasy compromise between Foreign Office thinking, and the desire of Bevin and the Labour Government to promote a British led 'Third Force.' The new propaganda policy had several radical features. It was to be based upon the 'vital ideas of British Social Democracy' and attack by comparison the 'principles and practice of communism, and also the inefficiency, social injustice and moral weakness of unrestrained capitalism.' Moreover, British propaganda was to be directed at the 'broad mass of workers and peasants.'² Although the new propaganda policy was designed to take the offensive against communism, Bevin was quite clear as to how far that offensive would be allowed to go. He firmly resisted a

return to wartime methods of political warfare. In contrast with World War II, British anti-communist propaganda was not directed at the enemy, but was designed to consolidate democracy in the free world. Bevin resisted calls to embark upon a campaign of 'political warfare' against the Soviet Union. Very little propaganda was directed at the Soviet Union or the satellite states, and propaganda which aimed to incite unrest in the communist bloc was, until December 1949, strictly prohibited. Britain's new propaganda apparatus was not modelled on the wartime Political Warfare Executive, and Bevin forbade the use of the phrase 'political warfare,' even within Whitehall, to describe Britain's propaganda activities.³ Moreover, in contrast to wartime arrangements, all overseas propaganda activities were the responsibility of the Foreign Office. The new Information Research Department (IRD), was located within the Foreign Office, and Bevin resisted pressure from the Services for a more offensive propaganda policy and organisation.

The IRD's methods were informed by Foreign Office experience of propaganda in two world wars. This experience dictated that the most effective propaganda was the truth, and that propaganda of any kind, was most likely to be believed if it was not seen to emanate from an official source. Consequently, the IRD's work was well researched and authoritative. It was also disseminated on discreet basis, to be used unattributably. The Foreign Office, however, was uncomfortable with certain aspects of the new propaganda policy and the policy was modified somewhat between January 1948 and January 1952. The idea of attacking capitalism was never a sensible proposition and officials in the Foreign Office had few qualms about dismissing it in practice. More significant was the shift from targeting mass opinion towards a propaganda campaign directed at opinion formers. The Foreign Office was more accustomed to targeting elite opinion, according to the principle that, 'it is better to influence those who can influence others than to attempt a direct appeal to the mass of the population.'⁴ From the beginning the IRD's output was a little too detailed and scholarly to appeal to mass opinion. Although genuine and imaginative attempts were made to

develop propaganda with mass appeal, most notably in the Middle East and South-East Asia, the Foreign Office gradually shifted back to its traditional position of targeting leaders of opinion.

The Foreign Office also found the positive side of the new propaganda policy problematic. The positive aspect of the new propaganda policy was treated separately from its negative anti-communist aspect. The IRD was tasked with coordinating anti-communist propaganda and was never asked to produce positive propaganda. This is a significant point, because the IRD has often been castigated for ignoring the positive side of the new propaganda policy. The positive projection of British values and the merits of a British led 'Third Force' were the responsibility of a new Foreign Office working party on the 'spiritual aspects of the Western Union.' This work continued alongside but independently from the anti-communist work of the IRD. Although the idea of a British led 'Third Force,' independent of the United States, ultimately proved untenable, perhaps the biggest blow to Britain's positive propaganda work was financial. Budgetary constraints led to severe cuts in Britain's overseas propaganda work, and positive propaganda bore the brunt of these cuts. As the Cold War intensified only direct anti-communist propaganda was considered essential. By 1951 all British propaganda, both at home and abroad was directed towards fighting the Cold War.

In one important respect, however, the IRD did seek to promote a 'Third Force' propaganda campaign. Although the department was not concerned with the positive projection of the 'Western Union' it did seek to give a lead to the forces of anti-communism in Europe and Asia by providing an arsenal of anti-communist propaganda for Britain's allies. The IRD established a complex series of arrangements for cooperating with foreign governments in the field of anti-communist propaganda. It also provided a vast amount of anti-communist material to individuals and organisations in friendly countries sometimes with the knowledge of the host government. If this campaign was not always conducted independently of the United States it was certainly led by Britain. Whilst the United States launched

campaigns to counter-communism in key crisis points such as Italy, France and Korea. The IRD's campaign to counter communism in the free world was global, highly organised, and coordinated. If there was, in any sense, a Third Force propaganda campaign, this was it.

Nevertheless, perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy was the extent of cooperation with the United States. It is extraordinary that only days after the Cabinet approved a memorandum which stated that it was up to Britain, 'not the Americans' to give the lead to the forces of anti-communism, and which openly criticised American propaganda, the same document was being shown to American information staff in both London and Washington.⁵ However, given that Britain and America had developed complementary perceptions of the threat from communist propaganda and subversion prior to 1948, and were already working together in some areas to respond to that threat, the continuation of cooperation after 1948 is perhaps not so surprising. Moreover, Britain's attempts to lead a coordinated counter-offensive to communist propaganda ultimately foundered because none of Britain's allies in Europe or Asia had a propaganda apparatus comparable with that of Britain. Only the United States had the inclination and the resources to pursue a similar policy for responding to anti-communist propaganda.

This thesis has shown that the extent of cooperation between Britain and America in the field of anti-communist propaganda was far greater than has previously been appreciated. The United States was informed of Britain's new propaganda policy only one month after the British Cabinet, and practical cooperation began almost immediately, in Italy in March 1948. In contrast with cooperation with other powers, British cooperation with the United States involved the formal exchange of propaganda material between London and Washington, and a great deal of close and informal contact between information staff in British and American missions around the world. The United States was keen to involve Britain in some of their own more ambitious projects, most notably Radio Free Europe and the radio 'Ring Plan.' The

policy for cooperation developed at a regular meetings between senior officials from the Foreign Office and American propaganda agencies which took place in February 1948, October 1948, January 1950, May 1950 and May 1951. In between these high-level summits there were numerous trips between London and Washington by representatives of the Foreign Office, the State Department, the CIA, VOA and RFE. Cooperation expanded considerably in 1950, following the launch of the American Campaign of Truth. Information Liaison Officers were appointed to the British and American Embassies in Washington and London, and a policy of 'close and continuous liaison' was agreed with a view to developing, 'common lines of information policy, planning and conduct of operations.'⁶

It has been generally assumed that Britain's anti-communist propaganda effort was soon eclipsed by the greater resources of the United States, and British propaganda was redirected against other 'anti-British' targets.⁷ This thesis has sought to argue that, although Britain clearly took the lead in providing a coordinated global response to communist propaganda in 1948, it did not merely hand the baton to the United States in the 1950s. Britain retained and expanded its anti-communist propaganda policy and machinery, and expanded cooperation with the United States. In many respects British and American approaches to anti-communist propaganda were complementary. Firstly, although this was not intentional, Britain and America effectively divided the world between them for the purposes of conducting anti-communist propaganda. Although the anti-communist propaganda policies of both nations was global in scale, Britain concentrated its effort on countering communism in the free world, the principal focus of American propaganda was the Soviet Union and the Iron Curtain countries.

Similarly, although Britain and America adopted quite different methods, these methods were often combined to good effect. Britain favoured a discreet approach, whereas American propaganda was often more overt, or at least more prominent, conducted through large broadcasting operations such as Radio Free Europe. It has been suggested that the IRD could not

compete with the din of the CIA's 'mighty Wurlitzer.'⁸ However, as officials in the Foreign Office were keenly aware, the scale of the output did not necessarily guarantee its impact, and there were benefits in both approaches. Britain's more discreet approach was more appropriate for countering communism in the free world. The more bold propaganda of the Americans was more suited to bolstering resistance behind the Iron Curtain. Moreover, the two approaches were not mutually exclusive. A Foreign Office review of British and American cooperation completed in 1950 observed:

It seems that our general approach is often somewhat different from that of the Americans and, on the whole, the discreet and personal approach of our Information Officers gets more material effectively placed than the American reliance on volume of output. The rather aggressive portrayal of the American way of life is not always welcome and may be self-defeating. In any case it is preferable to maintain the two independent lines of approach, since both together certainly cover more ground than either could hope to do working alone.⁹

It has not been the purpose of this thesis to assess the effectiveness of the IRD's campaign. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that through its discreet approach the IRD achieved some remarkable successes. The department's first set-piece campaign, the publication of documents and a series of Ministerial speeches to publicise the use of forced labour in the Soviet Union, received widespread coverage in the press around the world, and in every national newspaper in Britain. The Daily Telegraph, the IRD recorded, 'splashed on page 1 a story from its Vienna Correspondent giving details of life in forced labour camps allegedly told by people who have escaped, but in fact all based on various IRD papers.'¹⁰ Numerous examples of a similar use of IRD material may be found in the IRD's day to day work. In June 1949, the British information service in Karachi reported that it had been able to place in the local media, one hundred percent of everything issued by the IRD.¹¹ Most remarkably, a review of British overseas propaganda in 1952 reported that, 'in one major European country large passages of the Prime Minister's speeches during the last two years have been lifted bodily from IRD publications.'¹² The department also commissioned and

distributed articles on Soviet affairs by some of the most prominent commentators of the day, including Harold Laski, A.J.P. Taylor, Woodrow Wyatt, R.H.S. Crossman, and Leonard Schapiro.¹³

British and American officials were keenly aware of the value of each others anti-communist propaganda, although the Americans were a good deal more complimentary about the IRD's work than British officials were about American propaganda. Both also recognised the value of maintaining their own independent propaganda campaigns. The policy for cooperation was characterised in a Foreign Office circular to British missions in May 1948, as 'shooting into the same target from rather different angles.'¹⁴ This aphorism was used frequently to describe the relationship between British and American propaganda throughout the period covered by this thesis. By maintaining 'individuality of output' in anti-communist propaganda Britain and America sought to concentrate their fire from as broad a front as possible. The policy had the added advantage of presenting the communists two targets to aim at in response.

Finally, rather than shifting its focus to 'anti-anti-British' operations, through its cooperation with the United States the IRD was drawn towards a more offensive anti-communist propaganda policy. By the end of 1951, the IRD had developed a strategy for offensive political warfare and was advocating an increase in British propaganda directed at stimulating unrest behind the Iron Curtain. These proposals were motivated, at least in part, by the desire to exert a restraining influence over some of the Americans' more provocative plans. Nevertheless, it is clear that in the 1950s Britain went on to develop, in cooperation with the United States, a more offensive strategy for the use of propaganda to undermine communism in the Soviet bloc. An unpublished section of the 1953 Drogheda Enquiry into Britain's overseas information services stated that the British propaganda had to do three things: strengthen the morale of those weak nations, particularly in Asia, which were 'inclined to be apathetic about the Cold War;' promote understanding between Britain's allies; and 'encourage our friends and weaken

our enemies behind the Iron Curtain, we cannot escape from this responsibility.'¹⁵

This thesis has traced the origins of Britain's anti-communist propaganda policy. It has established the organisation and the methods of Britain's principal Cold War propaganda agency, the Information Research Department, and it has stressed the importance of cooperation between Britain and the United States in the field of anti-communist propaganda. The evolution of Britain's propaganda policy must be the subject of further studies. The Drogheda enquiry concluded that the 'struggle for men's minds' was likely to continue for some time.¹⁶ It is clear that propaganda remained a central and increasingly important feature of British foreign policy throughout the Cold War. In 1964, the Plowden Committee on overseas representation concluded that it was 'in the general interest that Britain's voice should continue to be heard and to carry weight in the world.' Moreover, it added, the 'spread of communism' had put upon Britain's 'representational services a new range of activities and problems on a world scale.'¹⁷

The IRD continued to operate until 1977. It was dissolved at the height of detente, when the Labour Government 'adopted a different strategy for dealing with Soviet communism.'¹⁸ Detente, however, was short lived and British and American anti-communist propaganda enjoyed a revival, along with Anglo-American relations, under Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. In May 1980, in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Thatcher said that because modern weapons were so hideous she did not think the Soviet invasion justified taking the world to the brink of war. The West, she proposed, should concentrate on methods short of war. It was time, she said, for 'a massive propaganda campaign of a kind we have never mounted yet.'¹⁹ Two years later in a speech before the British Houses of Parliament, President Reagan called for a new 'crusade for freedom.'²⁰ British and American cooperation in the field of anti-communist propaganda may well prove to have been as close at the end of the Cold War as it was at its start.

Notes

Introduction - Notes

1. P.M.Taylor, 'The Projection of Britain, 1945-51', in J.W.Young & M.Dockrill, (ed.), British Foreign Policy 1945-1956, (London: Macmillan, 1989), p.10.
2. P.M.Taylor, 'Through a Glass Darkly? The Psychological Climate and Psychological Warfare of the Cold War', in G.D.Rawnsley, (ed.), Cold-War Propaganda in the 1950s, (London: Macmillan, 1999), p.225. See also, P.M.Taylor, 'Back to the Future? Integrating the press and media into the history of international relations', Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, 14, 3 (1994), 321-329.
3. W.Scott Lucas, 'Beyond Diplomacy: Propaganda and the History of the Cold War', in Rawnsley (ed.), Cold-War Propaganda in the 1950s, pp.11-30.
4. 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy', CP(48)8, 4 January 1948, CAB 129/23, PRO.
5. *ibid.*
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7. Reference on the Information Research Department for the Foreign Office Order Book, 22 March 1951, FO 1110/383, PRO.
8. Cmd.9138, Summary of the Report of the Independent Committee of Enquiry into the Overseas Information Service - The Drogheda Report, (London: HMSO, April 1954); Cmd.225, White Paper on Overseas Information, (London: HMSO, 1957); Cmd.2276, Report of Committee on Overseas Representation, 1962-63, (London: HMSO, 1964); Cmd.4107, Report of the Review Commission on Overseas Representation 1968/69 - The Duncan Report, (London: HMSO, July 1969); Fourth Report from the Expenditure Committee (Defence and External Affairs Sub-Committee): Central Policy Review Staff Review of Overseas Representation, Session 1977-78, Parliamentary paper, 286-1, lxxix.
9. IRD was listed in the Diplomatic List each year from 1950 until its dissolution in 1977, the description of its activities remained the same throughout that time. The Foreign Office List and Diplomatic and Consular Yearbook, (London: Harrison & Sons Ltd., 1950-1964), Diplomatic Service List, (London: H.M.S.O., 1965-1977). Lord Strang was similarly reticent in The Foreign Office, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1955), p.211, 'Appendix II Departmental Allocation of Work, October 1954.' IRD's role is described as: 'Research and provision of material on special subjects.'
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12. Lord Mayhew, House of Lords Debates, Hansard, 25 October, 1993; Institute of Contemporary British History Conference, 'The Waldegrave Initiative on PRO Releases: One Year On,' 24 November 1993; B.Cathcart, 'Eden's lessons of Suez revealed, 37 years on', The Independent, 28 November 1993; R.J.Aldrich, 'Open More Archives', letter to The Daily Telegraph, 9 February 1994.
13. See Foreign Secretary's Announcement of the pending release of the first batch of IRD papers in House of Commons Debates, Hansard 22 February 1994, see PRO website for subsequent releases, <http://www.pro.gov.uk>
14. D.Leigh, 'Death of the department that never was,' The Guardian, (27 January 1978), p.13; R.Fletcher, G.Brock, & P.Kelly, 'How the FO waged secret propaganda war in Britain,' The Observer, (29 January 1978), p.2; D.Leigh, 'UK propaganda machine worked on in peacetime,' The Observer, (20 December 1981), p.3; R.Fletcher, 'How the secret service shaped the news,' The Guardian, (18 December 1981), p.13. See also books by investigative journalists, J.Bloch & P.Fitzgerald, British Intelligence and Covert Action, (London: Junction, 1983), and D.Leigh, The Frontiers of Secrecy: Closed Government in Britain, (London: Junction 1980).
15. Leigh, Frontiers of Secrecy, pp.218-224.
16. This point is most consistently argued in, R.Fletcher, 'British Propaganda since World War II - A case study', Media, Culture and Society, 4 (1982), 97-109. Fletcher, an investigative journalist, wrote some of the first press reports regarding the IRD and expanded upon them in this journal article.
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18. P.Lashmar, 'Covert in Glory', New Statesman and Society, (3 March 1995), pp.14-15. Conquest worked in the IRD in the late 1940s and early 1950s, see R.Conquest, 'In Celia's office, Orwell and the Cold War,' Times Literary Supplement, 21 August 1998, pp.4-5.
19. D.Campbell & A.Thomas, 'The FO and the Eggheads', New Statesman, (27 February 1981), 13-14.
20. R.J.Aldrich, 'Never-Never Land and Wonderland? British and American Policy on Intelligence Archives', Contemporary record, Vol.8, No.1, (Summer 1994), p.136.
21. D.Leigh, 'The 30-year-old secrets which cannot be told', The Observer, (3 January 1982); D.Leigh, 'Secret cold war files are scrapped by Foreign Office', The Observer, (28 February 1982); P.Lashmar, 'Covert in glory'.

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24. 'Celebrity team used in secret anti-Soviet campaign', The Times, (17 August 1995); 'Poet used as secret weapon', The Independent, (17 August 1995); 'Healey served as covert linchpin in war of words', The Times, (18 August 1995); 'Healey was conduit for anti-Soviet propaganda', The Independent, (18 August 1995). There has been a huge amount of interest in George Orwell's fleeting involvement with the IRD, see for example, 'Orwell was recruited to fight Soviet propaganda', The Times, (11 July 1996); 'Orwell offered writers' blacklist to anti-Soviet propaganda unit', The Guardian, (11 July 1996); 'Orwell is revealed in role of state informer', The Daily Telegraph, (12 July 1996). See also, P.Deery, 'Confronting the Cominform: George Orwell and the Cold War Offensive of the Information Research Department, 1948-50', Labour History, 73 (November 1997); P.Davison (ed.), Orwell and Politics, (London: Penguin, 2001), pp.501-509.

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31. In the article Smith referred to these documents as 'a collection of British official documents which have come into my possession from a confidential source.' In her introduction to Mayhew's final volume of memoirs, which she edited, Smith revealed that Mayhew had been the source of these documents. C.Mayhew, A War of Words: A Cold War Witness, (London: I.B.Tauris, 1998), p.ix.

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50. *ibid.* pp.142-159.
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54. *ibid.* pp.5-29.
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83. For example, copies of the first 21 issues of the 'IRD Digest' from 1948 and 1949 may be found in the files: FO 371/71713, FO 371/71714, PRO.

84. IRD 'basic papers,' which ran from 1948 may be found in class FO 975; 'The Interpreter,' a periodical from the 1950s may be found in class FO 1059, PRO.

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Chapter 1 - Notes

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116. undated minute, circa. Sept. 1946, N11812/140/38G, FO 371/56788, PRO.
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Chapter 2 Notes

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22. Russia Committee meeting, 15 January 1948, N765/765/G38, FO 371/71687, PRO.

23. It should be noted that the minutes of Russia Committee meetings are more detailed than Cabinet minutes, and include for example the names of speakers.

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39. 'Political Warfare', Memorandum by Norman Brook, 10 March 1948, approved by Attlee, CAB 21/2745, PRO.
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41. Anti-Communist Publicity - Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 30 April 1948, GEN231/1, FO 1110/9; See also the Cabinet Secretary's brief for the Prime Minister for the first meeting of the Cabinet Committee on anti-communist propaganda, 'Anti-Communist Propaganda,' Memorandum by Norman Brook, 10 May 1948, CAB 21/2745, PRO.
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43. Anti-Communist Publicity - Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 30 April 1948, GEN231/1, FO 1110/9, PRO. For minutes and papers of Ministerial Committee on anti-communist propaganda see CAB 130/37, PRO.

44. Anti-Communist Publicity - Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 30 April 1948, GEN231/1, FO 1110/9, PRO.

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46. Russia Committee meeting, 29 January 1948, N1372/765/G38, FO 371/71687, PRO.

47. Minutes of Russia Committee meeting, 29th January 1948, N1372/765/G38, FO 371/71687; Office Circular No.21, Information Research Department, 25 February 1948, XS03/95H(1/48), FO 366/2759, PRO.

48. Notes of First Meeting of Working Party on 'Spiritual Aspects of Western Union,' 19 February 1948, P2476/1474/950, Warner to Sargent, 13 February 1948, P1474/1474/950, FO 953/144, PRO. For a personal insight into the working party see Lockhart's diary entry for 20 February 1948:

Lunched today at Savoy after attending a fantastic meeting at the F.O. on aspects of Western Union other than political and strategical. After an hour and a half's argle-bargle, after which I had to leave, we had just cleared point one on an agenda of twelve subjects.

K.Young, (ed.), The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart Volume 2 1939-1965 (Macmillan) p.648.

49. Circular telegram No.6, 23 January 1948, PR1/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

50. Reference on the Information Research Department for the Foreign Office Order Book, 22 March 1951, FO 1110/383, PRO.

51. Russia Committee meeting, 15 January 1948, N765/765/38G, FO 371/71687, PRO.

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53. A.Boyle, The Climate of Treason, (London: Coronet edition, 1980); P.Lashmar, 'Covert in Glory', New Statesman & Society, (3 March 1995), 14-15; P.Lashmar & J.Oliver, Britain's Secret Propaganda War 1948-1977, (Stroud: Sutton, 1998), pp.37-38.
54. Y.Modin, My Five Cambridge Friends, (London: Headline, 1994), pp.135-165; C.Andrew & O.Gordievsky, KGB: The Inside Story of Its Foreign Operations from Lenin to Gorbachev, (London: Sceptre, 1991), p.398-402.
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56. Minutes of Western European Information Officers Conference, 12-14 September 1951, PR121/7, FO 1110/458, PRO.
57. Mayhew, Time to Explain, p.109.
58. Circular No.6, 23 January 1948, PR1/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.
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60. GEN231/3rd meeting, Confidential annex, 19 December 1949, Anti-Communist Policy and machinery, CAB 130/37, PRO.
61. FCO Historians, IRD: Origins and Establishment, p.9.
62. *ibid.*
63. Murray to Grp.Capt D.C.Stapleton, MoD, 14 May 1948, PR290/290G, FO 1110/38, PRO.
64. IRD Office Memorandum, T.S.Tull, 12 November 1952, PR89/58, FO 1110/516, PRO.
65. H.A.Caccia to J.I.C.Crombie, Treasury, 15 Jan. 1948; C.F.A. Warner minute, 9 Feb. 1948, XS03/95H (5/48)G, FO 366/2759, PRO. Among those proposed but not recruited were Harman Grisewood controller of the BBC Third Programme and the historian Elisabeth Barker, Young (ed.), The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart: Volume Two, p.648.
66. Mary Tucker, wife of H.H.Tucker, correspondence with author, 2 Nov. 1996. H.H.Tucker died on 30 August 1996.
67. IRD official from 1949-50, correspondence with author, 4 October 1996. Another early recruit Cecil Parrott came to IRD from the information office at the British Embassy in Prague after the Czech coup in 1948. He describes his brief time in IRD: 'After a preliminary run of a year in one of the Information Departments of the Foreign Office I was relieved when I was told that I should be transferred to the United Nations Political

Department[.]', The Serpent and the Nightingale (London: Faber & Faber, 1977), p.34. For other anecdotal evidence see Lashmar & Oliver, Britain's Secret Propaganda War, pp.31-32.

68. H.A.Caccia to J.I.C.Crombie, Treasury, 15 Jan. 1948, XS03/95H (5/48)G, FO 366/2759, PRO.

69. Walter Stewart Roberts, minute, undated, XS03/954 (5/48)G, FO 366/2759, PRO.

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73. Information Research Department's Finances, 9 January 1950, FO 1110/128, PRO.

74. Future Foreign Publicity Policy, 4 Jan. 1948, C.P.(48)8, CAB 129/23, PRO.

75. Office Circular No.21 Information Research Department, O.Sargent, 25 Feb. 1948, XS03/95H (1/48), FO 366/2759, PRO.

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77. FO to HM Representatives, Circular telegram No.6, 23 Jan. 1948; FO to Helsingfors, No.11, 23 Jan. 1948, and to Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, PR1/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

78. Prague to FO, No.11, 7 Feb. 1948, PR2/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

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81. Intelligence Requirements, I.R.D, October 1949, PR2840/9/G, FO 1110/187, PRO.

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85. 'Essence of Soviet foreign policy', FO 975/10; 'Communist conquest of the Baltic states', FO 975/12; 'The facts of Soviet expansionism', FO 975/8, PRO.
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90. R.Murray memorandum, August 1948, FO 366/3759, PRO. On the Intel system see, 'Purpose of the Intel', memorandum by M.G.L. Joy, 11 November 1947, W8450, FO 371/65578, PRO.
91. McNeill memo, 12 May 1948, PR472/57/913, FO 1110/128, PRO.
92. Warner minute, 16 June 1948, PR472/57/913, FO 1110/28, PRO.
93. FCO Historians, IRD: Origins and Establishment, p.9, quoted from FO 975/14, PRO. Extract in FCO History Note does not include last line regarding detaching the cover sheet. Another version of the cover sheet instructions may be found in R.J. Aldrich, Espionage, Security and Intelligence in Britain 1945-1970 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p.179.
94. Colonial Office Circular despatch, 'Publicity policy in regard to Communism', 2 April 1948, FO 1110/5, PRO.
95. Lucas & Morris, 'A Very British Crusade', p.105; Anti-Communist Propaganda, 2nd Meeting, 22 July 1948, GEN231, CAB 130/37, PRO.
96. Committee on Colonial Information Policy, Meeting 1st October 1948, PR826/23/913G, FO 1110/21, PRO.
97. FCO Historians, IRD: Origins and Establishment, p.14; Mayhew to Secretary of State, 27 November 1948, PR1165/23/913, FO 1110/22, PRO.
98. Colonial Office Circular despatch, 'Publicity policy in regard to Communism', 2 April 1948, FO 1110/5, PRO.

99. Anti-Communist Propaganda: Liaison between Foreign Office and Chiefs of Staff, Memorandum by the Secretary of the Cabinet, 31 March 1948, GEN231/2, CAB 130/37, PRO.
100. Anti-Communist Propaganda, memorandum by the Secretary of the Cabinet, March 1948, PR137/137/913, F1110/38, PRO.
101. Anti-Communist Propaganda, memorandum by the Secretary of the Cabinet, March 1948, PR137/137/913, F1110/38, PRO.
102. Inter-Service Committee on Propaganda Dissemination, minutes of meeting held 4 May 1948, PR313/137/913, FO 1110/38, PRO.
103. T.Fife-Clark, The Central Office of Information, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1970); Cmd. 7567, Annual Report of the Central Office of Information for the Year 1947-48, (London: HMSO, November 1948).
104. 'Publicity Policy in Regard to Communism in Relation to COI Standard Services', PR173/1/913G, FO 1110/5, PRO.
105. Murray minute, 19 February 1948, PR139/139/13G, FO 1110/39, PRO.
106. Memorandum by Murray, August 1948, XS03/95H, FO 366/2759, PRO.
107. Murray minute, 2 March 1948, PR139/139/913, FO 1110/39, PRO.
108. Murray minute, 19 February 1948, PR139/139/G, FO 1110/39, PRO.
109. Murray minute, 2 March 1948, PR139/139/913, FO 1110/39, PRO.
110. Programme of Anti-Communist Articles, PR797/375/913, FO 1110/60, PRO.
111. R.Fraser to Hadfield, 30 November 1948, PR1226/1/913G, FO 1110/15, PRO.
112. Murray minute, August 1948, XS03/95H, FO 366/2759, PRO.
113. Memo Barnes to Lovell, 20 October 1948, PR922/375/913, FO 1110/60, PRO.
114. Maclaren (IRD) minute, 23 Mar. 1949, PR846/846/913, FO 1110/123, PRO; G.W.Aldington to M.Lovell (COI), 28 Apr. 1949, P2807/53/950, INF 12/418 - this document which relates IRD's wish for signed articles on LPS is retained and therefore unavailable at the PRO. I am grateful to Margaret Bryan of the FCO Records and Historical Services for providing me with a copy.
115. Anti-Communist Propaganda, memorandum for the Prime Minister, by Norman Brook, 17 April 1948, CAB 21/2745, PRO.

116. Aldrich (ed.), Espionage, Security and Intelligence in Britain, p.229.
117. Memorandum for Sir Edward Bridges, 20 April 1948, CAB 21/2745, PRO.
118. Quoted in Aldrich (ed.), Espionage, Security and Intelligence in Britain, pp.191-192.
119. Memorandum for Sir Edward Bridges, 20 April 1948, CAB 21/2745, PRO.
120. Anti-Communist Propaganda, Memorandum by the Secretary of the Cabinet, March 1948, PR137/137/G, FO 1110/38, PRO.
121. Minute by Warner, 5 June 1948, PR358/1/913G, FO 1110/9, PRO.
122. Memorandum for Sir Edward Bridges, 20 April 1948, CAB 21/2745, PRO.
123. FCO Historians, IRD: Origins and Establishment, p.7; Murray minute, August 1948, FO 366/2759, PRO.
124. FCO Historians, IRD: Origins and Establishment, p.17; Warner to Mr Hadfield, COI, 30 November 1948, PR1226/1/913G, FO 1110/15, PRO.
125. H.A.Caccia minute, 23 September 1948, XS03/95H (10/48)G, FO 366/2759, PRO.
126. Information Section, British Embassy Rangoon to IPD, 23 July 1948, IRD to Information Section, Rangoon, 2 September 1948, PR612/57/913, FO 1110/29, PRO.
127. 'Reorganisation of Information Research Department', R.Murray, 21 September 1948; Warner minute, 21 September 1948, XS03/95H(10/48), FO 366/2759, PRO. A review of Foreign Office research facilities in 1949 recommended that the two departments should remain separate but it would be beneficial if the intelligence sections of FORD and IRD could share a room or at least be situated in close proximity, Minutes of meeting to discuss use made by Departments of FORD, 7 September 1949, XS03/28H(15/49), FO 366/2823, PRO. Remarkably FORD and IRD remained in separate buildings until 1973 when the research sections of the two departments were finally merged, interview with IRD official, 23 January 1996.
128. 'Reorganisation of Research Department', August 1949, XS03/28H(15/49), FO 366/2823, PRO.
129. Warner minute, 2 September 1949, XS03/28H(15/49), FO 366/2823, PRO.
130. Progress Report: Information Research Department 1st January to 31 July 1948, Ralph Murray 13 August 1949, FO 1110/277; Intelligence section figures in 'Reorganisation of Research

Department'. FO memo, undated circa August 1949, XS03/28H (15/49), FO 366/2823, PRO.

131. Anecdotal evidence suggests indicates that IRD continued to expand almost unhindered until 1973. At its peak in the 1960s and early 1970s it became the largest department in the Foreign Office with a staff of up to 300, and an annual budget of over £1 million. Interview with former IRD official, 23 January 1996; interview with Brian Crozier, 20 February 1997.

132. 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy', 4 January 1948, CP(48)8, CAB 129/23, PRO.

133. Circular telegram No.6, 23 January 1948, PR1/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

134. Circular Telegram No.6, 23 January 1948, PR1/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

135. FO to Middle East missions, No.6 Saving, 23 January 1948, PR 1/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO. 'Russia in the Middle East' Publicity Directive, 17 October 1946, GN1/5 Part A, INF 12/61, PRO, see chapter 2.

136. FO to Helsingfors, Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, Moscow, 23 January 1948, PR1/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

137. Jack Troutbeck, British Middle East Office, Cairo to Warner, 19 March 1948, PR136/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO.

138. British Embassy, Lima to Foreign Office, 29 March 1948, PR134/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO.

139. Despatch from Caracas, 19 March 1948, FO 1110/5, quoted in FCO Historians, IRD: Origins and Establishment, p.8.

140. 'Russia in the Middle East' Publicity Directive, 17 October 1946, GN1/5 Part A, INF 12/61, PRO.

141. Prague to Foreign Office, 5 February 1948, PR2/1/913, Belgrade to Foreign Office, 17 February 1948, PR16/1/913, FO 1110/1, PRO.

142. Belgrade to Foreign Office, 17 February 1948, PR16/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO. See also, Sofia to Foreign Office, 16 February 1948, PR3/1/913, Prague to Foreign Office, 5 February 1948, PR2/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

143. Helsinki to Foreign Office, 9 February 1948, PR4/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

144. Prague to Foreign Office, 5 February 1948, PR2/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.

145. Madrid to Foreign Office, 11 February 1948, PR9/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.
146. V.Mallett, British Embassy, Rome to Bevin, 24 February 1948, PR24/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.
147. J.E.Cowburn, British Embassy, Paris to Bevin, 9 March 1948, PR60/1/913G, FO 1110/3, PRO.
148. Jack Troutbeck, British Middle East Office, Cairo to Warner, 19 March 1948, PR136/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO.
149. 'Anti-Communist Measures', H.Mack, British Embassy, Baghdad, to Foreign Office, 17 March 1948, PR138/1/913, FO 1110/4, PRO.
150. 'Anti-Communist Measures', H.Mack, British Embassy, Baghdad, to Foreign Office, 17 March 1948, PR138/1/913, FO 1110/4, PRO.
151. Sir R.Campbell, British Embassy, Cairo to Foreign Office, 9 March 1948, PR58/1/913, FO 1110/3, PRO.
152. 'Anti-Communist Measures', H.Mack, British Embassy, Baghdad, to Foreign Office, 17 March 1948, PR138/1/913, FO 1110/4, PRO.
153. Rangoon, to Foreign Office, 17 March 1948, PR82/1/913, FO 1110/3; Batavia to Foreign Office, 25 March 1948, PR126/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO.
154. 'Anti-Communist Measures', H.Mack, British Embassy, Baghdad, to Foreign Office, 17 March 1948, PR138/1/913, FO 1110/4, PRO.
155. Batavia to Foreign Office, 25 March 1948, PR126/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO; Sir R.Campbell, British Embassy, Cairo to Foreign Office, 9 March 1948, PR58/1/913, FO 1110/3, PRO.
156. 'Anti-Communist Measures', H.Mack, British Embassy, Baghdad, to Foreign Office, 17 March 1948, PR138/1/913, FO 1110/4, PRO.
157. The Brotherhood of Freedom was set up by the renowned travel writer Freya Stark who worked for the Ministry of Information in the Middle East during World War II. For a detailed account see Stark's biography, Jane Fletcher Geniesse, Freya Stark: Passionate Nomad, (London: Chatto & Windus, 1999), pp.261-274, 287-306. For the Brotherhood's postwar role see, Memorandum by R.W.Fay, 29 April 1947, J2166/164/16, FO 371/63033, PRO.
158. For discussion of utility of Brotherhood of Freedom see Sir R.Campbell, British Embassy, Cairo to Foreign Office, 9 March 1948, PR58/1/913, FO 1110/3; Warner to Troutbeck, BMEO Cairo, 4 May 1948, and minutes on file, PR136/1/913, FO 1110/4, PRO.
159. Anti-Communist Publicity - Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 30 April 1948, GEN231/1, FO 1110/9, PRO.

160. Mayhew Memorandum for Secretary of State, 9 July 1948, PR445/142/913, FO 1110/41, PRO.
161. P.Weiler, British Labour and the Cold War, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), p.216; Mayhew Memorandum for Secretary of State, 9 July 1948, PR445/142/913, FO 1110/41, PRO.
162. Mayhew memorandum, 24 March 1948, PR142/142/913; Mayhew Memorandum for Secretary of State, 9 July 1948, Warner minute, 13 July 1948, PR445/142/913, FO 1110/41, PRO.
163. Attlee to Mayhew, 20 July 1948, PR445/142/913G, FO 1110/41, PRO.
164. Ralph Murray minute, 18 March 1948, PR 148/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO.
165. Circular Telegram No.13, 27 March 1948, PR 147/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO.
166. Circular Telegram No.13, 27 March 1948, PR 147/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO.
167. Philip M.Taylor, British Propaganda in the Twentieth Century: Selling Democracy (Edinburgh University Press, 1999), see in particular Chapter 1, 'Opening Pandora's Box,' pp.5-29.
168. Taylor, British Propaganda in the Twentieth Century, p.234.
169. The view of IRD as a reconstituted Political Warfare Executive is a common misperception in the literature on British Cold War propaganda, see in particular, Lashmar & Oliver, Britain's Secret Propaganda War; Philip M.Taylor, 'The Projection of Britain Abroad, 1945-51', in J.W.Young & .Dockrill (eds.), British Foreign Policy 1945-1956 (London: Macmillan, 1989) pp.9-30; W.K.Wark, 'Coming in from the Cold: British Propaganda and Red Army Defectors 1945-1952' International History Review, Vol.9, No.1 (1987), pp.48-72.
170. 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy', 4 January 1948, CP(48)8, CAB 129/23, PRO.

Chapter 3 - Notes

1. Mayhew minute, 8 May 1949, PR795/91/G, FO 1110/270, PRO.
2. 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy', CP(48)8, 4 January 1948, CAB 129/23, PRO.
3. *ibid.*
4. Minute by R.Murray, August 1948, XS03/95H, FO 366/2759, PRO.
5. 'Future Foreign Publicity Policy', CP(48)8, 4 January 1948, CAB 129/23, PRO.
6. *ibid.*
7. Warner to Balfour, 16 February 1948, P138/138/G, FO 953/128, PRO.
8. Warner minute, 19 March 1948, PR41/41G, FO 1110/24, PRO.
9. Warner to Balfour, 16 February 1948, P138/138/G, FO 953/128, PRO.
10. Russia Committee, minutes of meeting held on 15 January 1948, N765/765/G38, FO 371/71687, PRO.
11. Warner to Balfour, 16 February 1948, P138/138/G, FO 953/128, PRO.
12. J.Kent & J.W.Young, 'British Policy Overseas: the 'Third Force' and the Origins of NATO - in search of a new perspective,' in B.Heuser & R.O'Neill (eds.), Securing Peace in Europe 1945-62 (London: Macmillan, 1992), p.48.
13. Warner to Balfour, 16 February 1948, and 28 February 1948, P138/138G, FO 953/128, PRO.
14. Warner to Balfour, 26 February 1948, P138/138/G, FO 953/128, PRO.
15. W.P.N.Edwards to Warner, 19 February 1948, [received 6 March], PR41/41/G, FO 1110/24, PRO.
16. Warner to Balfour, 26 February 1948, P138/138/G, FO 953/128, PRO.
17. W.P.N.Edwards to Warner, 19 February 1948, PR41/41/G, FO 1110/24, PRO. John Lewis Gaddis has identified a certain degree of enthusiasm for the Third Force among State Department officials, J.L.Gaddis, 'The United States and the Question of a Sphere of Influence in Europe 1945-49', in O.Riste (ed.), Western Security: the Formative Years (New York: Norwegian University Press, 1985), p.78; Kent & Young, 'British Policy Overseas', p.44.

18. W.P.N.Edwards to Warner, 19 February 1948, PR41/41/G, FO 1110/24, PRO.
19. Warner to Balfour, 26th February 1948, P138/138/G, FO 953/128, PRO.
20. Foreign Office circular, 12 May 1948, PR229/1/G, FO 1110/6, PRO.
21. Warner to Mallett, 24 February 1948, PR 1/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO. This operation has been covered by, H.Wilford, 'The Information Research Department: Britain's secret Cold War weapon revealed,' Review of International Studies, 24 (1998), 358-359.
22. Mallett to Foreign Office, 24 February 1948, PR24/1/913G, FO 1110/1, PRO.
23. Warner to Balfour, 12 April 1948, PR196/1/913G, FO 1110/5, PRO.
24. Minutes of Russia Committee meeting, 4 March 1948, N2915/765/38, FO 371/71687, PRO.
25. Rome to Foreign Office, 18 March 1948, PR93/1/913G, FO 1110/3, PRO.
26. Foreign Office to Rome, 14 April 1948, PR93/1/G, FO 1110/3, PRO.
27. Balfour to Warner, 31 March 1948, enclosure - Department of State, Office of Information and Educational Exchange, Special Guidance, Elections in Italy, 19 March 1948; Warner to Balfour, 12 April 1948, PR196/1/913G, FO 1110/5, PRO.
28. Clearly other factors had at least as much impact on the election result as the intervention, overt and covert, of other powers, not least DeGasperi's clever exploitation of fears of communism and even more decisively the Vatican. See J.E.Miller, 'Taking Off the Gloves: the United States and the Italian Elections of 1948', Diplomatic History, 7, (1983), 35-55; D.W.Ellwood, 'The 1948 Elections in Italy: A Cold War Propaganda Battle', Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, 13, 1 (1993), 19-33; C.E.Martinez & E.A.Suchman, 'Letters from America and the 1948 Elections in Italy', Public Opinion Quarterly, 14, 1 (Spring 1950), 111-125.
29. The literature on the American intervention in the 1948 elections is now voluminous, see in particular, J.E.Miller, 'Taking Off the Gloves'; D.W.Ellwood, 'The 1948 Elections in Italy: A Cold War Propaganda Battle'; T.Barnes, 'The Secret Cold War: The CIA and American Foreign Policy in Europe 1946-1956 Part I', The Historical Journal 24, 2 (1981), 399-415.
30. Department of State, Office of Information and Educational Exchange, Special Guidance, Elections in Italy, 19 March 1948 PR196/1/913G, FO 1110/5, PRO.

31. Warner to Balfour, 18 March 1948, PR99/1/913G, FO 1110/3, PRO.
32. Minute by R.Murray, August 1948, XS03/95H, FO 366/2759, PRO.
33. P.F.D.Tennant, British Embassy, Paris to Foreign Office, 28 May 1948, PR383/1/913, FO 1110/9, PRO. In fact in spite of the lack of direction from Washington Paris was one of the few places where US information staff did exchange material with their British counterparts.
34. Warner to Hoyer-Millar, British Embassy, Washington, 22 September 1948, PR801/1/G, FO 1110/14, PRO.
35. Warner to Sir J.Balfour, 24 June 1948, PR497/1/913G, FO 1110/11, PRO.
36. Warner to Hoyer-Millar, British Embassy, Washington, 22 September 1948, PR801/1/G, FO 1110/14, PRO.
37. Memorandum by C.F.A.Warner, 6 October 1948, PR865/865/913, FO 1110/128, PRO.
38. *ibid.*
39. 'Soviet Affairs Notes,' 1948, PR1178/865/913, FO 1110/129, PRO. For State Department instructions to missions on use of 'Soviet Affairs Notes' see Acheson, State Dept. to American Consul, British Guiana, 5 May 1949, 800.00B/5-549, Box 4073, State Dept Central Files 1945-49, Decimal File, RG 59, NARA.
40. D.Allen, British Embassy, Washington to R.Murray, 23 October 1948, PR943/865/913, FO 1110/128, PRO.
41. Soviet Affairs Notes, No.18, The Inadequacy of Soviet Economic Statistics, 1 December 1948, PR1178/865/913, FO 1110/129, PRO.
42. 'Soviet Statistics: a study in secrecy', FO 975/40, PRO.
43. Memorandum by C.F.A.Warner, 8 November 1948, PR1034/865/913, FO 1110/128, PRO.
44. Memorandum by Mr C.F.A.Warner, 6 October 1948, PR865/865/913, FO 1110/128, PRO.
45. C.F.A.Warner, record of talk with Charles Thayer, 10 October 1948, PR901/865/913G, FO 1110/128, PRO.
46. B.Ruthven-Murray minute, 26 October 1948, PR901/865/913G, FO 1110/128, PRO. See also, A.Watson minute, 8 December 1948, PR1259/10/913, FO 1110/16, PRO.
47. Watson minute, 28 October 1948, PR901/865/913G, FO 1110/128, PRO.

48. Report of European Trip, December 1948 - January 1949, by Charles Thayer, IBD, Box 11, Papers of Charles W. Thayer, Truman Library.

49. Memorandum by C.F.A. Warner, 6 October 1948, PR865/865/913, FO 1110/128, PRO.

50. Foreign Office Circular Telegram, 29 November 1948, PR1034/865/G, FO 1110/128, PRO.

51. Foreign Service Serial No.932, Cooperation with British Information Services, 17 November 1948, 841.20200/11-17-48, Box 5981, Decimal File, State Department Central Files, 1945-1949, RG 59, NARA.

52. American Legation, Reykjavik, to State Department, 13 January 1949, 841.20200/1-1349; The American Consul General in Montreal also interpreted the State Department's circular as prohibitive and criticised the Department for their `extreme caution and hesitancy, American Consulate General to State Department, 8 December 1948, 841.20200/12-848, both in Box 5981, The Decimal File, State Department Central Files, 1945-49, RG 59, NARA.

53. American Embassy, La Paz, Bolivia to State Department, 30 December 1948, 841.20200/12-3048, Box 5981, State Department Central Files, 1945-1949, RG 59, NARA.

54. See for example, American Embassy, Moscow to State Department, 21 December 1948, 841.20200/12-2148; American Embassy, Prague to State Department, 6 January 1949, 841.20200/1-649, American Embassy, Warsaw to State Department, 31 December 1948, 841.20200/12-3148, Box 5981, Decimal File, State Department Central Files 1945-49, RG 59, NARA.

55. British Embassy, Stockholm, to IRD, 15 December 1948, PR1295/865/913, FO 1110/129, PRO. See also American Embassy, Colombo to State Department, 17 July 1949, 841.20200/7-1549, Box 5981, State Department Central Files 1945-49, RG 59, NARA.

56. American Embassy, Karachi to State Department, 841.20200/12-1748, Box 5981, The Decimal File, State Department Central Files 1945-49, RG 59, NARA.

57. American Mission in Korea, Seoul to State Department, 7 January 1949, 841.20200/1-749; American Embassy, Bangkok to State Department, 7 April 1949, 841.20200/4-749, Box 5981, State Department Central Files, 1945-49, RG 59, NARA. See also, Information Office, British Legation, Bucharest to IRD, 15 January 1949, PR205/58/G, FO 1110/245, PRO.

58. British Legation, Manila to IRD, 7 January 1949, PR187/52/G, FO 1110/239, PRO.

59. American Embassy, Warsaw to State Department, 31 December 1948, 841.20200/12-3148, Box 5981, Decimal File, State Department Central Files 1945-49, RG 59, NARA.

60. See for example, Sir Philip Nicholls, British Embassy, The Hague, to Foreign Office, 18 March 1948, PR118/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO; Oliver Harvey, British Embassy, Paris to Foreign Office, 7 April, 1948, PR312/1/913, FO 1110/9, PRO.
61. The First Aim of British Foreign Policy, 4 January 1948, CP(48)6, CAB 129/23, PRO.
62. Future Foreign Publicity Policy, 4 January 1948, CP(48)8, CAB 129/23, PRO.
63. Warner to Sir Philip Nicholls, British Embassy, The Hague, 20 April 1948, PR118/1/913G, FO 1110/4, PRO.
64. Proposal for an Information Executive to be Established by Brussels Pact Consultative Council, R.Murray 19 March 1948, P2604/1474/950, FO 953/145, PRO.
65. *ibid.*
66. Third Meeting of Working Party on Spiritual Union, 24 March 1948, P2604/1474/950, FO 953/145, PRO.
67. Coordination of Information Activities of Brussels Pact Powers, Memorandum by C.F.A.Warner, 3 April 1948, P2604/1474/950, FO 953/145; R.Murray minute, 15 October 1949, PR860/860/G, FO 1110/126, PRO.
68. Extract from Record of Meeting at the Quai d'Orsay, 4 October 1948, SU/48/44, FO 800/502, PRO.
69. Extract of Meeting of the Consultative Council, 25 October 1948, SU/48/47, FO 800/502, PRO. See also, C.Mayhew, A War of Words: A Cold War Witness, (London: I.B.Tauris, 1998), pp.32-3.
70. Foreign Office to Paris, Brussels, The Hague, 11 November 1948, PR1045/860/913, FO 1110/126, PRO.
71. FCO Historians, IRD: Origins and Establishment of the Foreign Office Information Research Department 1946-48, History Notes No.9, (London: FCO, LRD, August 1995), p.19; For Murray's report of this tour see, 'Exchange of Information Regarding Anti-Communist Publicity with the Brussels Powers,' R.Murray, 30 November 1948, PR1162/860/913, FO 1110/126, PRO.
72. Mayhew, A War of Words, p.33.
73. 'Exchange of Information Regarding Anti-Communist Publicity with the Brussels Powers,' R.Murray, 30 November 1948, PR1162/860/913, FO 1110/126, PRO.
74. Progress Report: Information Research Department, 1 January - 31 July 1949, FO 1110/277, PRO.

75. `Exchange of Information Regarding Anti-Communist Publicity with the Brussels Powers,' R.Murray, 30 November 1948, PR1162/860/913, FO 1110/126; Progress Report: Information Research Department, 1 January - 31 July 1949, FO 1110/277, PRO.
76. Progress Report: Information Research Department, 1 January - 31 July 1949, Annexe C List of Papers sent to Brussels Powers, FO 1110/277, PRO.
77. `Exchange of Information Regarding Anti-Communist Publicity with the Brussels Powers,' R.Murray, 30 November 1948, PR1162/860/913, FO 1110/126, PRO.
78. Foreign Office Circular, 4 March 1949, PR499/9/G, FO 1110/184, PRO.
79. Minutes of CIPC meeting, 15 October 1948, PR952/23/913G, FO 1110/21, PRO.
80. Murray minute, 15 October 1948, PR860/860/913, FO 1110/126, PRO.
81. US Embassy London to State Department, 20 May 1949, 841.20200/5-2049, Box 5981, Decimal File, State Department Central Files, 1945-1949, RG 59, NARA. These categories of IRD material were first revealed by L.Smith, `Covert British Propaganda: the Information Research Department, 1947-1977', Millennium: Journal of International Studies, 9, 1 (1980), p.73. Smith and others have assumed that this was the standard format for all the IRD's output and have not explained that this division grew from decision to distribute material to the Brussels powers. The origins of the division of material may be found in Foreign Office to Paris, Brussels, The Hague, 11 November 1948, PR1045/860/913, FO 1110/126, PRO.
82. Russia Committee meeting, 28 October 1948, N1182/765/38, FO 371/71687; FO to Paris, 11 November 1948, PR1045/860/G; `Exchange of Information Regarding Anti-Communist Publicity with the Brussels Powers,' R.Murray, 30 November 1948, PR1162/860/913, FO 1110/126; Murray minute, PR459/20/G, FO 1110/205, PRO.
83. British Information Services distribute critical analysis of communism to press of India and expose Soviet aims in Iran, American Embassy, New Delhi to State Department, 13 February 1948, 841.20245/2-1348, Box 5981, Decimal File, State Department Central Files 1945-1949, RG 59, NARA.
84. Circular No.0121, Directive Regarding Counter-Propaganda on Colonial Issues, 17 August 1948, PR580/23/G, FO 1110/20, PRO.
85. Mayhew to P.Gordon-Walker, 22 November 1948, PR1159/23/913G, FO 1110/22, PRO.
86. Minutes of CIPC Meeting 1st October 1948, R.Murray, PR1265/23/913, FO 1110/22, PRO.

87. J.P.Cloake minute, 18 December 1948, PR1265/23/913, FO 1110/22, PRO.
88. Mayhew to P.Gordon-Walker, 22 November 1948, PR1159/23/913G, FO 1110/22, PRO.
89. Adam Watson minute, 20 December 1948, PR1265/23/913G, FO 1110/22, PRO.
90. US Embassy, London to State Department, 20 May 1949, 841.20200/5-2049, Box 5981, Decimal File, State Department Central Files 1945-49, RG 59, NARA.
91. American Embassy, New Delhi to State Department, 22 June 1949, 841.20245/6-2249, Box 5981, Decimal File, State Department Central Files 1945-49, RG 59, NARA.
92. J.H.Watson, IRD, to W.D.Allen, British Embassy, Washington, 10 February 1949, PR284/65/G, FO 1110/255, PRO.
93. W.S.Lucas & C.J.Morris, 'A very British crusade: The Information Research Department and the beginning of the Cold War', in R.J.Aldrich (ed.), British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945-51, (London: Routledge, 1992), p.101; PUSC(22)Final, 'A Third World Power or Western Consolidation?' 9 May 1949, FO 371/76384, PRO.
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Chapter 4 - Notes

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