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17 January 1949

To: []

From: []

Subject: Interrogation of Dr. Hans Fritzsche, Conducted on
6 and 7 January 1949, in the Hospital of the Internment
Camp at Langwasser Near Nurnberg.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

1. Dr. Hans Fritzsche was acquitted by the International Military Tribunal and was subsequently tried by a German Denazification court. He was found guilty and is now serving time at the Langwasser Internment Camp. Due to the fact that the subject had undergone a bone operation, interrogation had to be conducted in the hospital at the camp.

2. Under the Hitler regime, Dr. Fritzsche held the job of Chief of Radio in the Propaganda Ministry. Though nominally under Dr. Naumann (who was the chief of the subsections for Propaganda, Radio, Film, Theatre, Music, Art, Schrifttum (printed matter), Administration and Ausland (foreign countries)), Fritzsche held a factually autonomous position, reporting directly to Goebbels only on major issues. A detailed organizational chart of the whole Propaganda Ministry setup under Goebbels was reproduced at the Nurnberg trials during proceedings against Dr. Dietrich, who was Reichs Press Chief. Dr. Dietrich's verdict is expected in Nurnberg between 15 January and 15 February 1949.

3. The terms "white" and "black" propaganda were known as "legal" and "illegal" propaganda in Germany. The Propaganda Ministry was charged with "white" propaganda inside Germany and "black" propaganda outside Germany, whereas the "black" propaganda for home consumption was conducted by the Reichsleitung fur Propaganda in der Partei (NSDAP).

4. Actually, little was done in the field of black propaganda. Subsections Propaganda, under Herr Dieverge, and Radio, under Fritzsche, coordinated all black activity with Subsection Ausland, headed by Dr. Brauweiler and Professor Hunke. The key man in the Radio Section under Fritzsche was Dr. Toni Winkelkemper (Ausland's Direktor des Rundfunks). He is believed to be still in the U.S. where he was brought as a witness in the proceedings against the U.S. traitor, Chandler.

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5. Diplomatic missions abroad had special attaches for black propaganda who worked along with men from the Auslandsorganization of the NSDAP, these latter being charged exclusively with party espionage abroad. According to Fritzsche, the "black" attaches were not very effective and the best results were accomplished through espionage agents.

6. Since almost all black propaganda was conducted immediately prior or immediately after a military operation or invasion of a foreign country, most of their methods do not seem applicable to the situation today. At no time was there any hesitation in Germany to trespass sovereign territory by employing propaganda techniques and penetration. Asked about the best and the worst major propaganda campaigns conducted by the Propaganda Ministry, Dr. Fritzsche stated that the best was "Europe for the Europeans" which in 1940 resulted in 90% solidarity in the West. The failure to follow up this initial success with the formal building of a continental union and the failure to counteract the Atlantic Charter with a comparable German or European equivalent nullified the initial victory in the West. As the worst propaganda campaign, Dr. Fritzsche pointed to "Liberation of the West from the Bolshevik and Russian yoke".

7. Newspapers Abroad. Though there was actually little subsidization of foreign newspapers, several were bought and owned outright by the German Government on a covert basis. In connection with this, Dr. Fritzsche stressed the necessity for continuing the editorial policy of such a paper for at least a year to build up complete confidence in the minds of its regular readers and then using it for propaganda purposes only once or twice to support either a major policy decision or prepare the ground for a major economic, political or military break.

8. Rumors. Dr. Fritzsche considers rumors as one of the most important aspects of black propaganda. Dr. Goebbels had a rumor factory with a corps of experts, the leader of which was Schwarz van Berg. Rumors which were initiated by this Goebbels factory were then disseminated to espionage agents abroad who were then charged with the spreading of them. As an example of one of the most effective rumors disseminated by Great Britain, Dr. Fritzsche gave the following: One day in 1940, a rumor to the effect that King George of England had approached the German Government with a peace offer was introduced into the German telephone system and all long distance telephone operators participated in spreading it by saying to the long distance operator of another community just before making the connection "Have you heard...". The campaign started at 9:00 a.m. and by noon the rumor had gripped the whole of Germany with such force that Dr. Fritzsche found it necessary to deny it officially over a nationwide hookup shortly after 12:00 noon. Applied to the situation today, Fritzsche considers Russia more vulnerable to rumors than any other country at any other given time.

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9. Blackmail and Bribery. In the field of propaganda, no blackmail was used to Fritzsche's knowledge though bribery in one form or another was used regularly. A very effective way of using foreign wire news services was employed frequently through supplying them regularly with news free of charge and slipping in important items when the occasion arose.

10. Character Assassination. This method also was used very effectively. But in this connection, Fritzsche pointed out several dismal failures which resulted from a too fictional approach. He stressed that character assassination and poison pen letters should be based on facts rather than fiction whenever possible or should at least have a factual basis which could be built up fictitiously to greater proportions.

11. Radio: Black radio was not used before the war. However, it was effectively used immediately after the invasion of a country in order to spread confusion and break down resistance. Three methods were used: (1) stations on German territory beamed to a certain country, (2) mobile radio stations in the field, and (3) planes equipped for radio operations. All of these were purported to be underground or freedom stations within the country. DFing never was effective and did not at any time seriously interfere with or compromise operations. Dr. Fritzsche does not believe that Russia today is equipped to cope with any allied radio activity on a mobile basis. Radio stations Stuttgart and Koeln beamed all code messages to the agents of Colonel Skorzeny on the whole Western front and Radio Steetin on the Eastern front. Outside of regular code messages sent at prearranged times to agents, fictitious code messages for the purpose of spreading confusion and terror were used frequently. All in all, five mobile black radio stations were in operation. These were operated by the two firms, Lorenz-Berlin and Telefunken. Mobile antennae were used in the beginning and later, several alternate sites for antennae, where fixed antennae for periodic use could be erected, were selected. Heavy wooded areas and along side smoke stacks proved the best sites. One fully equipped radio station was given to General Franco in 1936 and he used it effectively during the Spanish Civil War.

12. Forgery. Forgeries were used extensively by the military in the field, but only to a small extent by the Propaganda Ministry. One of the most effective stunts in this field was the forging of a protocol of a British House of Commons session which had as its subject terms of a British-Russian pact. In order to help the justification of German aggression, this protocol was placed in the hands of a foreign correspondent and thus found its way into the neutral press.

13. Personnel. The recruiting of personnel was never a problem since Fritzsche was in a position to offer much higher salaries from unvouchered funds and thus lure key people into his organization.

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His main sources of personnel were wire services, like UP and INS, former consular employees who had returned to Germany for their lukewarm support of the USDP and experts among the prisoners of war at the Oberursel interrogation center who were freed and brought to Berlin. As far as experts on Russia were concerned, the main source was Professor Hoetsch, "the analyst of currents in the East" in the Reichs Sicherheits Hauptamt, who selected personnel from White Russians and Trotskyites. Members of Russian groups were selected and played against each other. One more source of personnel was Goering's monitoring service, the Forschungsamt, charged with the tapping of telephones and the monitoring of foreign broadcasts. The three key people for operations against Russia were Dr. Taubert, Head of the "Vienta", a Goebbels-Rosenberg organization for Ostpropaganda; Fran Melitta Weidemann, a Ukrainian by birth, who was in close touch with the Vlassov movement and who organized the so-called "Bodenstellen" in Russia ("Bodenstellen" could be translated as "ground points"); and Herr Pannwitz, a former commissar of the Gestapo, charged with subversive activity in Russia. Most of these ground points were controlled by Col. Skorzeny and it is believed that an organization exists today among German technicians, scientists and other key figures who were brought to Russia after the war. Col. Skorzeny supposedly has knowledge of this organization and might even have an active part in it. The three individuals named above are living covertly and their whereabouts will be determined in the near future.

14. Asked about the present situation and propaganda methods to be employed against Communism, in general, and Russia, in particular, Dr. Fritzsche stated that the most effective propaganda, in his opinion, could be based on a key word, which allied propaganda lacks at the present. One word which embodies in itself the enemy and all he stands for and which stands on a solid foundation so it can withstand scrutiny and analysis. "Imperialism", used by the Communists, and "Plutocrats", used by Goebbels, are examples of the effectiveness of such a punch symbolical word. A unique opportunity propagandistically speaking, presents itself to the West in the fact that Communism sacrifices the happiness of the individual today for the sake of a Utopian life for future generations. On the other hand, the Democratic way of life has the happiness of the individual and his family today as its principle. The "inhuman philosophy" of the East which transforms the individual into a machine and makes him the tool of an unproven idea professes that benefits, if there should be any, will be reaped two or three generations hence. This tremendous individual sacrifice bases itself on an assumption of happiness for future generations, an idea conceived a hundred years ago, for which the present generations of the East are still toiling and sacrificing their lives. Fritzsche points out the absence in Communist theory and practice of what he calls "grundidee", a primitive and simple basic idea which has the happiness of the individual of today as its core. What does the individual have to

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expect of human happiness from a Communistic state? His sacrifices are enormous though they are made in the name of an experiment, from which some future generation might or might not benefit. Again and again, he emphasized the necessity of pointing out to any and all individuals that while they are sacrificing their personal happiness, the West has only the single aim of bringing happiness--material, tangible benefits--to people today--during their lifetime. The betrayal of the teachings of Marx is already more than evident. Marx promised the liberation of the people from the sovereign authority of the state and a hundred years of sacrifices have resulted in the super state which, contrary to all of the principles and theories of Marx and Engels, makes the individual a slave and tool of the state.

15. It is a deep disappointment within Russia, particularly among the peoples of the Ukrain and the Caucasus, that the Soviet Government has been engaged in the policy of punishment ever since the war's end. These regions have lost their autonomy by punishment and should provide a more than fertile ground for allied operations. Again, the name of Col. Skorzeny was mentioned as the man who has extensive knowledge of underground personalities, channels and methods to be employed.

16. Dr. Fritzsche advocates strongly the use of black radio on a mobile basis. He suggested the erection of ten scattered antenna sites in the American Zone, to be situated formally among existing allied installations and to be used on a shifting schedule. He pointed out that any antenna problem could easily be solved by the former Post Minister Ohnesorg. He also urges the use of the voices of refugees from satellite areas without their knowledge of how these recordings will be used.

Attachments:

Fritzsche Ltr to Lt. Moller of 20 Nov 48
Translation of above letter.