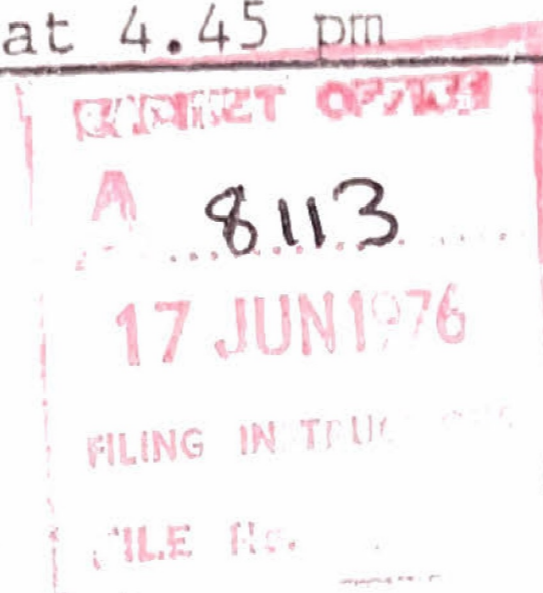


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1367SUBVERSION

Note of a meeting held in Sir Arthur Peterson's room on
Wednesday 9 June 1976 at 4.45 pm

Present:-

Sir Arthur Peterson
Sir John Hunt ✓
Sir Michael Hanley
Mr K Barnes
Mr R Sykes
Mr R T Armstrong
Ms M Hyde



M. Nicholls -
You are examining
R. Armstrong's
draft letter.

17/6

1. The purpose of the meeting was to consider the handling of the Security Service's latest assessment of the threat of subversion in the UK, circulated under cover of Sir Arthur Peterson's letter of 24 May to Sir John Hunt.
2. The consensus of opinion in discussion was that it would be useful to reactivate the interdepartmental group on Subversion in Public Life (SPL) which had previously met under the chairmanship of Sir James Waddell. SPL would be the working but not the policy-recommending body, (which should be ad hoc and pitched at a higher level). The function of SPL would be to assess the information - the episodic reporting of subversive activities could be unbalanced unless linked with such assessment. It was generally agreed that the terms of reference of SPL needed certain revision: at the moment they placed emphasis on the supervision and direction of the collection of intelligence about subversive activities "particularly in industry". It was agreed that the emphasis on industry was now out of place, and that the assessment role needed to be introduced.
3. There was also some discussion about membership. SPL was previously composed of representatives of FCO, DE, Scottish Office, Cabinet Office, Scotland Yard and the Security Service under Home Office chairmanship. These Departments would continue to be on the group, under Mr Armstrong's chairmanship. Given the need to pay attention to subversion in education and other sectors of the community such as the media and the public service, it was agreed that CSD and DES might also be represented on the group. Sir Douglas Allen and Mr J A Hamilton would be asked to nominate representatives. It was important, however, that any information disseminated by SPL should be strictly on a need to know basis and it could be that DES in particular might only have a marginal interest: this was a point which might usefully be discussed with Mr Hamilton.

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4. It was agreed that Mr Armstrong would examine the SPL terms of reference; he would also offer a draft letter to Sir John Hunt to send to the appropriate Permanent Secretaries and to Sir Robert Mark on the reactivation of the group and inviting the nomination of representatives.

5. It was also agreed that Sir John Hunt would consider further in consultation with Sir Arthur Peterson and Mr Armstrong the nature and composition of the body to which SPL would report. The first function of the reconvened SPL group would be to consider the Security Service's document.

Home Office
Secretariat
16 June 1976

Distribution:

Those present at the meeting