

CABINET OFFICE

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FILING INSTRUCTIONS

FILE No.

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

Sir Burke Trend held a meeting in his room at 3.15 p.m. on Wednesday, 30th June 1971, to discuss papers circulated by Mr. Norbury on 23rd June about subversion in industry and the mass media. There were present -

Sir Philip Allen	-	Home Office
Sir Denis Barnes	-	Department of Employment
Mr. C.F. Heron	-	" " "
The Director General	-	Security Service
Mr. G.F.N. Reddaway	-	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Mr. D.J.D. Maitland	-	10 Downing Street
Lord Rothschild	-	Cabinet Office
Mr. B.M. Day		Secretary

In discussion, it was suggested that subversion should be defined as the attempt to overthrow constitutional government by non-parliamentary means. There were no signs of highly organised subversion in this sense in the country, but on the other hand there was evidence of political motivation in the seamen's strike in 1966, for example, and in more recent times there had been reports, which could not be entirely refuted, of groups of militants moving from site to site during industrial troubles. The number of trouble-makers whose motives were deliberately destructive, rather than being aimed simply at procuring improved wage settlements, was now probably no greater than in the past, but they were able to do more damage because of the fresh opportunities provided by inflation.

In further discussion, it was suggested that the present machinery for dealing with subversion needed strengthening at a high level, e.g. by means of a co-ordinating group, comprising a senior Minister without Portfolio and other representatives of Government and influential organisations and individuals outside Government. Such a group might work through its members to expose the existence of subversive effort in the country and to alert public opinion to the dangers. Although this course of action had its attractions, it also presented substantial difficulties and it ran the risk of defeating its own ends. A cautious approach was therefore desirable, and it would be helpful as a first step to interest a senior Minister, such as the Lord President, in the problem and to invite him to make his own assessment through informal, personal contacts with people inside and outside the Government of the extent of the problem and the support which could be expected for taking action to deal with it.

Summing up the discussion, Sir Burke Trend said that the evidence to confirm fears of organised subversion was neither overwhelming nor very clear. On the other hand, there was sufficient to warrant going more deeply into the problem to consider its scope and the desirability of taking action. He therefore proposed to minute the Prime Minister to set out the background, and to seek his authority to approach the Lord President about the possibility of his concerning himself with the subject on the lines indicated in discussion. Sir Burke Trend would consider whether there was advantage in sending the Prime Minister a copy of the Security Service Memorandum of 10th June 1971 about subversion in industry and the mass media since 1965.

The meeting -

took note of Sir Burke Trend's summing up.

30th June 1971

Distribution - Mr. Norbury, Mr. Day.