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At the meeting here which Sir Philip Allen attended this afternoon, Sir Philip Allen undertook to let Sir Burke Trend have by the end of the week his thoughts on the best means of devising a proper co-ordination of intelligence (both covert and overt) about subversion in industry, with particular emphasis on the provision of this intelligence in times of industrial crises. It would be for consideration how and in what form (if appropriate) this intelligence should be provided for Ministers, and what Departmental officials should receive it. It was thought that any machinery to be created for this purpose should be under Home Office chairmanship, but probably physically situated in the Cabinet Office, that it should be formed on lines analogous to the existing JIC structure (although it would not be part of the existing structure) and that representation on it would need to come, in addition to that from the Home Office and the Cabinet Office, from the FCO (IRD), the Department of Employment and the Security Service. The aim behind this machinery would be to enable appropriate advice to be given to the Security Service about the formulation of the material they provided in this connection and to apply to the material any further analysis which might be judged necessary.

B. M. NORBURY

(B. M. Norbury)

Miss E. J. Sermon

TOP SECRET



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3rd August 1972

Dear Burke

I have had a good deal of discussion with Michael Hanley on the possibilities of improving our present arrangements for co-ordinating and assessing intelligence about subversion in industrial disputes. We hope that the SUBIND series provides information of value to Ministers; but we feel that there is a risk that the provision of intelligence in this form may serve to exaggerate its significance in the over-all picture, and that there is perhaps room for some new piece of organisation which would bring together the intelligence which is obtainable from overt sources as well as covert, and should make available a balanced evaluation to Ministers. If one had some such machinery, it would also be possible to give greater guidance to those concerned with acquiring intelligence as to the particular aspects on which information would be especially valuable.

We have felt some hesitation in making proposals for new machinery, since clearly one does not want to add to the number of committees and supporting structures unless there is a clear need; and certainly I for one have always found that the Security Service has itself had a lively appreciation of the particular points on which intelligence would be especially welcome. Nor do we want to pitch expectations too high. The Security Service has functioned, under administrations of both Parties, under a clearly defined, and publicly announced, charter. There are distinct limits to the scope of their activities under the charter; and serious issues would be involved in any extension of the charter.

Be that as it may, Hanley and I have come round to the conclusion that, provided the limits are clearly understood from the start, there would be some advantage in setting up new machinery to guide those concerned with the provision of intelligence, both covert and overt, about the formulation of the material, and applying to that material an analytical approach which would enable it to be assessed and evaluated for submission to Ministers.

/The existing

The Rt Hon Sir Burke Trend GCB CVO

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The existing JIC structure would not be appropriate and, if anything on these lines is to be done, it will be necessary to set up some new machinery.

It seems that the Home Office ought to be in the chair; and the Cabinet Office, the Department of Employment, the Security Service, and the FCO(IRD) must be represented. The Scottish Office also. Defence and in some circumstances DES are on the margins. We might include Defence but I doubt if DES should be a foundation member. Then there are the police. We should look to the Security Service to co-ordinate their activities with the police, as they have done hitherto, but I am inclined to think that the head of the Metropolitan Special Branch might also be a member.

The question of who should receive the reports of this new machinery is one which would have to be thought about. There would have to be some link up with the new Dean Committee, since that committee would appropriately consider the use which might be made of some of the information which would be forthcoming.

I see this machinery as operating during times of industrial crises, although we would not change the present arrangements for the preparation of SUBINDS, and also in the periods in between when assessments are being made of possible future troubles.

I have not yet discussed this with Denis Barnes, but will do so if you are in general agreement with this approach.

I have mentioned the project in general terms to the Home Secretary but have not had an opportunity of discussing it in any detail with him. I hope to be able to do so soon.

*Yours sincerely*

*Philip Allen*

PS On reading this letter, I realise that I have written it solely in terms of intelligence about industrial disputes; but if new machinery is set up, it will be for consideration whether the remit should not go rather wider than this and cover other subversion problems on the home front.

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