

Top Secret

of 3 copies

1714(72) 1st Meeting

RECORD of a Meeting held in
Conference Room E, Cabinet Office, on
MONDAY 3 JULY 1972 at 3.00 pm

PRESENT

Sir Patrick Dean (In the Chair)

Mr D J D Maitland
Prime Minister's Office

Mr J H Waddell
Home Office

Mr G F N Reddaway
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Mr K Barnes
Department of Employment

Mr J L Jones
Security Service

SECRETARY

Mr J. M. Moss

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Copy No. 1 - Lord President of the Council
" " 2 - Mr D J D Maitland
" " 3 - Sir Burke Trend

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1. THE WORK OF THE GROUP

THE CHAIRMAN explained that the Prime Minister had established a small Committee of Ministers to keep under review the problem of subversion in modern society. This Committee consisted, under the Prime Minister's chairmanship, of the Home Secretary, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Lord President of the Council and the Secretary of State for Employment. It had been agreed that this Ministerial body should be supported by a small interdepartmental official group over which the Chairman would preside and of which this was the first meeting. Its terms of reference were as follows:-

"Under the direction of the Lord President of the Council, to develop methods, including appropriate publicity and exposure, by which certain types of subversive activity can be countered; to implement, subject to Ministerial approval, specific projects for this purpose; and to make periodical reports to the Ministerial group."

Continuing, the Chairman stressed the following points which the Group would wish to bear in mind:-

- a. The existence of these groups, both Ministerial and official, should in no circumstances be allowed to become known. His own connection with their work should also remain secret.
- b. The members of the Ministerial and official groups were the only persons with whom this work should be discussed.
- c. The terms of reference made it clear that the link between the official and the Ministerial groups would be provided by the Lord President, with whom the Chairman would normally find it convenient to communicate through Mr Maitland.
- d. The words "... certain types of subversive activity ..." in the terms of reference had been deliberately chosen in order to make it clear that, although the Group would, of course, rely on the Security Service for much of its material, its functions did not in any sense coincide with those of MI5 in so far as the latter were concerned with the whole area of the security of the State.
- e. The words "... subject to Ministerial approval ..." in the terms of reference were also important in as much as they both afforded members of the Group the protection to which they were constitutionally entitled and safeguarded the position of the Security Service, the Directive of which confined its functions to the security of the State and specifically debarred it from any kind of partisan political activity.

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f. The same principle was involved in so far as the Information Research Department (IRD) of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office would be one of the channels through which the Group would naturally work; it was essential that expenditure on IRD was directed solely to ensuring the security of the State and not to securing any kind of partisan political advantage.

The Group - up -

1. Took note.

In discussion it was suggested that it might be useful for the Group to be served by an official responsible for co-ordinating, perhaps on a weekly basis, the relevant information available to, and activities of, the Security Service, IRD and the Department of Employment; he could also liaise with the Press Secretary (Co-ordination) soon to be appointed to Mr Maitland's staff. There was reason to believe that Mr C H Heron, whose experience fitted him particularly well to advise on the wisdom of intervention in particular industrial situations (although not necessarily on the best means of doing so), might be willing to undertake such a function, which might supersede some of the work of the Home Regional Meetings.

The Group -

2. Invited Mr Maitland to consider further with Mr Barnes, bearing in mind the points made in discussion, the desirability of the appointment of a co-ordinator to serve the Group, and to make recommendations.

In further discussion, the following points were made:-

g. The information available to Departments on subversion tended to be rather fragmented, and the Group might usefully commission, as a background both for its own activities and for Ministers, a survey of the broad extent of subversive activity in the country and its development over recent years.

h. It would be beyond the resources of the Security Service to prepare such a survey on an industry-by-industry basis.

j. The Group's own terms of reference were primarily concerned with action, and the commissioning of a survey on the lines suggested might more appropriately be considered by the Official Committee on Subversion at Home.

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The Group -

3. Invited Mr Maitland to consult the Chairman of the Official Committee on Subversion at Home as to whether, taking account of the relevant information which the Department of Employment, IRD and the Security Service might be able to provide, it would be appropriate for that Committee to commission a survey of subversive activity in the United Kingdom.

2. NON-OFFICIAL ORGANISATIONS

The Group had before them the note at Annex in which IRD had provided brief details of certain non-official organisations.

The Group -

Invited Mr Reddaway, in consultation with Mr Jones, to make recommendations as to which organisation of this type were likely to be able to assist the Group in their work.

3. POSSIBLE PROJECTS

The Group considered the four projects listed in Mr Maitland's letter of 28 June to Mr Waddell.

Project (a)

The Group -

1. Invited Mr Maitland to convey to the Editor concerned the advice that -

i. i. it would be undesirable for his newspaper to undertake any general investigation of subversive elements in this country; but

ii. despite this, there might well be some specific instance in the future in which those concerned would be very grateful to take advantage of the Editor's readiness to assist.

2. Invited Mr Reddaway to consider whether he could suggest a project on which this Editor's assistance might usefully be enlisted.

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Projects (b) and (c)

The Group, taking account in particular of the main sources of the unpublished information in the notes which Mr Maitland had circulated about these projects with his letter -

- 3. Agreed that there was no action which could be taken to pursue Project (b) or Project (c).

Project (d)

The Group -

- 4. Invited Mr Maitland to arrange for the Prime Minister's Office to convey to the two industrialists concerned -

- i. the suggestion that, after considering precisely which elements in industry they wished to exert influence, they should seek the help of the Economic League or Industrial Research and Information Services, Limited (IRIS);
- ii. the Prime Minister's gratitude to them for raising the matter and his readiness to consider it further, if necessary, in the light of their discussion with one of these non-official organisations.

4. FUTURE BUSINESS

The Group -

Invited Mr Maitland to determine a suitable date, at least a fortnight later, for their next meeting.

Cabinet Office

7 July 1972

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1. SUB-GROUP ON INDUSTRY

Previous References: 1714(72) 2nd Meeting, Minute 2 and
Minute 4, Conclusions 2

MR. BARNES said that the Sub-Group on Industry had held eight meetings and was proving a very useful piece of machinery which was now able to propose the exploitation of suitable information whenever it became available. In particular, in response to Ministers' interests in SUBIND Nos. 20/72 and 27/72, it had arranged for the preparation of material on the building industry which had been used in an article in *The Times* on which the *Guardian* had subsequently drawn.

The Group -

Took note.

2. INTERDEPARTMENTAL GROUP UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP
OF MR. WADDELL

MR. WADDELL said that an interdepartmental group had been set up under his chairmanship with the following terms of reference:

"To supervise and direct the collection of intelligence about threats to the internal security of Great Britain arising from subversive activities, particularly in industry; and to make regular reports to the Ministers concerned."

Although his group was concentrating initially on long-term assessments, there would no doubt come a time when its work would be of direct use to the Sub-Group on Industry or to the Group itself.

In discussion it was pointed out that recent conversations between Lord Collison and certain trade union leaders on the activities of the Claimants' Unions could be relevant to current work by Mr Waddell's group and to the Sub-Group on Industry.

The Group -

1. Invited Mr Waddell to report orally at future meetings on the activities of his interdepartmental group.
2. Invited Mr Maitland to arrange for Mr Waddell and Mr Barnes to receive any available information on Lord Collison's discussions about Claimants' Unions.

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3. HOME REGIONAL COMMITTEE

MR REDDAWAY said that he had agreed with Mr Maitland to report regularly to the Group on the work of the Home Regional Committee. The Sub-Group on Industry was now handling the industrial matters that had hitherto been covered by the Committee and, although the Committee's interests extended to considerably wider aspects of subversion, the advent of the Sub-Group meant that the frequency of the Committee's meetings could be reduced from approximately once a month to perhaps once a quarter. Meanwhile the full support of IRD's resources was available to the Sub-Group; in particular it was informed of all IRD's potential outlets for industrial information.

The Group -

Took note.

4. ADVANCE INFORMATION FOR INDUSTRY

MR MAITLAND said that he had been asked by the Dunlop Group (among others) whether there was any way in which a firm could be warned when it was in danger of employing an individual who was known to have been a subversive influence in some other part of industry; he had advised Dunlops to seek help from non-official organisations such as the Economic League.

The following points were made in discussion -

- a. It was a cardinal principle of the operation of the Security Service that official information could not be made available merely to protect private industrial interests. This principle was not unique to the United Kingdom; in the Federal Republic of Germany, for example, the release of official information for unofficial purposes was forbidden by law.
- b. Against the background of assurances given to Parliament, for example in the context of the Younger Committee Report, it was similarly impossible to countenance unofficial access to criminal records.
- c. Where there was overt evidence that a subversive employee was likely to change the scene of his operations, it was possible to ensure that this was given enough unofficial publicity to serve as an adequate warning to firms who might be at risk.

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The Group -

Invited Mr Maitland, in any further discussions with industrialists about the provision of advance information of the kind envisaged by Dunlops, to draw on the points made in the Group's discussion.

5. POSSIBLE PROJECTS

Previous Reference: 1714(72) 2nd Meeting, Minute 4

Project (a)

MR REDDAWAY referred to a survey which the newspaper concerned had just begun to publish on its own initiative under the title "The Strifemakers"; the Editor had been supplied with certain photographs which might well be deployed to good effect in an early instalment of the survey.

The Group -

1. Took note

Project (e) - Divergencies between West European Communist Parties over the EEC

The Group -

2. Invited Mr Reddaway to continue to seek a suitable opportunity to give effect to the Prime Minister's wish that reflective Press comment should be promoted to bring out the divergence between the Communist Party of Great Britain and other West European Communist Parties on the subject of Britain's joining the European Communities.

6. FUTURE BUSINESS

The Group -

Invited Mr Maitland to determine a suitable date for their next meeting.

Cabinet Office

3 November 1972