

10 February 1953

PSYCHIATRY AND NEUROLOGY CONSULTANTS DIVISION

OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Record

SUBJECT: Discussion of the problem of research in the prisoners of war problems

1. On 5 February at 1300 the undersigned officer and Colonel Ratcliffe of the Research and Development Board of this office met with the following:

Dr. C. D. Leatherman, Psychological Warfare Division
 Colonel Charles W. Hill, G-1
 Lt. Colonel Jay B. Mowbray, G-1
 Major James J. Kelleher, Psychological Warfare Division
 Colonel James O. Boswell, Psychological Warfare Division
 Mrs. June B. Devlin, Psychological Warfare Division
 Colonel James C. Todd, Psychological Warfare Division
 Lt. Colonel Charles M. Trammell, G-2
 Lt. Colonel Gilbert E. Bursley, Psychological Warfare Division

2. The purpose of this meeting was to acquaint Colonel Ratcliffe with the broad general implications of the indoctrination of prisoners of war and to explore the possible areas of research as designed by the various members of the Army staff. The meeting proceeded along informal lines with members of the Psychological Warfare Division conducting an orientation for Colonel Ratcliffe and covering the latest developments in the situation as far as the Secretary of Defense is concerned. It appeared from the discussion that definite questions would be posed to The Surgeon General in the near future. Two of the questions under consideration were: Could deorientation take place and how long a period of time would be necessary for deorientation to be accomplished? Members from Psychological Warfare Division and G-2 expressed the view that there was no doubt in their minds that a problem of deorientation existed. The principal points for discussion, they felt, were - what were the numbers involved and to what extent had they been conditioned by Communist propaganda. Colonel Ratcliffe expressed the view that the questions involved needed a great deal of exploration before any definitive research could be done. He expressed the tentative suggestion that the Surgeon General might well select a group of outstanding psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers in order to study the question in greater detail and to assimilate the present knowledge of the problem, after which time a definite research proposal would be made.

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3. Members of G-1 were concerned with the possibility that insufficient use of agencies such as HUMPRO and ORO was being made. The undersigned officer expressed the view that without their participation, research in this area could not be accomplished with as much dispatch or efficiency and suggested a coordinated program so that all research facilities could be utilized to the fullest extent practicable.

4. Colonel Ratcliffe then suggested that any further approach to this problem would have to be delayed until General Chambers, Chief of Professional Divisions, Office of the Surgeon General could be consulted in the matter.

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