

P1120793

SECRET

CABINET OFFICE

HISTOMCAL SECTION

HISTORY OF THE

SPECIAL OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE

W.J.M. MACKENZIE

VOLUME I

NOTE

This history is bound in four volumes, of which the contents are:-

VOLUME I Table of contents, Preface, Part I (Chapters 1-4)
and the earlier Chapters (5-8) of Part 11.

VOLUME II Remainder of Part 11 Chapters (9-15)

VOLUME III The earlier Chapters (16-24) of Part III

VOLUME IV Remainder of Part III (Chapters 25-29 Conclusion; and Appendices

SECRET

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF H.B.M. GOVERNMENT,
and is issued for the information only of these officials who are con-
cerned with its contents.

The official in possession of the document will be responsible for
Its safe custody and when not in use it is to be kept under lock and key

SECRET

Copy No. /5.

P1120794

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE

BRITAIN
and
THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS
in
EUROPE

BY
VW.M. Mackenzie
Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.

Historical Branch
Cabinet Office,
London, S.W. 1.

S.47699

SECRET

SECRET

CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	1

PART I: ORIGINS

CHAPTER I

1. D. Section

Major Grand seconded, April 1938	2
His directive	3

2. Electra House

Sir Campbell Stuart consulted, September 1939	5
Department E.H. set up, January 1939	6
Its functions and control	6

3. M.I.(R)

G.S.(R) set up, March 1938	7
Lt.Col. Holland appointed, December 1938	9
D/M Section approved, March 1939	10
D/M Section becomes M.I.(R), September 1939	11
Its duties	11

SECRET

VOLUME I	(continued)	
PART I	(continued)	Page
<u>CHAPTER II - THE WORK OF D. SECTION (Contd.)</u>		
4.	Miscellaneous Political Activities	40
	Germany: I.S.K.	40
	'Lex'	41
	I.F.T.W.	42
	The Jews	43
	Spain - the A.D.E.	44
5.	Propaganda	46
		46
	THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS	48
	RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)	48
	OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT	
		49
	'Fact Films Ltd.'	49
	Distribution by Agents	50
	'Whispering'	50
	The use of the censorship	50
	The 'Joint Broadcasting Committee'	51
	The Production Unit	53
6.	<u>Conclusion</u>	54

VOLUME I (continued)

PART I (continued)

Page

CHAPTER III THE WORK OF M.I.R. (Contd.)

56

Organisation

56

1 . General Research

57

Guerilla Doctrine

57

Security in the Middle East

63

Aid to escapees (M.I.9)

63

The Bureaux

63

German subversion

63

2. Technical Research

64

Major Jefferis' Section

64

'Royal Marine'

65

The 'sticky bomb'

65

The 'Blacker Bombard'

65

Helicopters

65

3. Special Projects and Intelligence

66

Major Gubbins in Poland and Baltic States,

May 1939

66

No. 4 Military Mission in Poland, September 1939

66

Major Gubbins in the Balkans, July 1939

66

The Roumanian project

68

The Chinese project

68

G.S.(R) in the Middle East

69

The Caucasus

69

Miscellaneous Missions

69

Portugal and Spain

70

The Balkans: Albania

70

Hungary

70

Yugoslavia

71

Greece

71

Bulgaria

71

Crete

71

Finland - December 1939 - January 1940

71

Scandinavia: 'Avonmouth' and 'Stratford'

February-March 1940

71

The I.S.S.B. , February 1940

72

The 'Assistant Consuls', April, 1940

73

The Sogne Fjord ('Knife')

73

Namsos

73

Andalsnes

74

No. 13 Military Mission

74

The Battle of France

76

Auxiliary Units

76

P1120799

VOLUME I (continued) SECRET
PART I (continued) Page

CHAPTER III - THE WORK OF M.I.(R) (Contd.)

4. Recruitment and Training	78
The Politico-military Courses	79
The Independent Companies	79
5. Conclusion	81

CHAPTER IV ORGANISATION

Col. Grand's proposals, June 1939	83
The Committee on River Transport, January 1940	84
D.M.I.'s proposal for an I.S.P.B., 29th February 1940	85
The I.S.P.B. approved, 1st May 1940	86
Its activities	88
The New Strategy: C.O.S. paper of 25th May 1940	89
The problem set	90
D.M.I.'s proposals, 5th June 1940	92
Lord Hankey's meeting, 13th June -1940	93
D.C.O. set up in the Admiralty, 15th June 1940	94
Sir Alexander Cadogan's paper, 28th June 1940	94
Lord Halifax's meeting, 1st July 1940	96
D.C.O.'s Paper, 30th June 1940	98
Discussed by the V.C.O.S. , 8th July 1940	100
'Public Opinion'	101
Political discussion, 3rd- 8th July 1940	102
The Prime Minister's decision, 16th July 1940	104
The dissolution of D. Section and 'E.H.'	
16th August 1940	105
The dissolution of M.I.(R) , October 1940	105

Part I ends

SECRET

	Page
<u>PART II : THE MAKING OF A WEAPON</u>	
CHAPTER V THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ORGANISATION, JULY - DECEMBER 1940	108
1. Staff and Internal Organisation	108
Directing Personalities	108
Failure to establish a 'General Staff'	110
Lack of a 'Permanent Secretary'	112
Resulting Organisation Chart of S.O.E.	114
Internal Organisation of S.O.2	114
2. The Definition of Policy	121
IThe Fourth Arm'	121
The C.O.S. on Subversion	125
Review of S.O.2's Assets	128
Major Taylor on Organisation	130
Mr. Jebb on Subversion	131
The First C.O.S. Directive to S.O.2	132
3. Inter-Departmental Relations	135
The C.O.S. and the Service Departments	135
D.C.O.	136
The Foreign Office	137
The S.I.S.	137
Propaganda	138
The M. of I., and the origins of P.W.E.	139

P1120801

VOLUME I (Continued) SECRET
PART II (continued)

	Page
CHAPTER IV OPERATIONS IN YUGOSLAVIA	149
Introductory	149
1. The Origins of the Coup d'Etat	150
Organisation in Yugoslavia, late Summer 1940	150
'Forward' policy, December 1940	152
Col. Taylor's Mission, January 1941	154
Action in Bulgaria	155
Action in Roumania.	156
The Coup d'Etat, 27th March 1941	158
2. Collapse and Resumption of Contact	163
The German Attack, 6th April 1941	163
Resumption of Contact, Autumn 1941	164
The Situation within Yugoslavia	166
Capt. Hudson's Mission, 7th September 1941	170
First debates in London, October-December 1941	172
First outbreak of civil war, November 1941	179
'Black-Out', December 1941-June 1942	183
'Capt. Charles Robertson', 29th August 1942	186
Higher Policy, December 1941- August 1942	187

SECRET

P1120802

VOLUME: I (continued)

PART II (continued)

	page
CHAPTER VII OPERATIONS IN GREECE,	195
Mr. Goodwill and the 'Apostles', September 1939- August 1940	195
First steps in Greek politics, September 1940-March 1941	198
Demolitions on the mainland, March 1941	206
The Dodecanese	208
Albania	209
Propaganda in Greece, October 1940- March 1941	209
Collapse and Evacuation, April 1941	211
The Political issues	215
Lines of Contact, September 1941 March 1942	219
Political Developments in Greece, October 1941- April 1942	228
Political Developments outside Greece	232
Kanellopoulos in office, 3rd May 1942	237
General Strike in Athens, April 1942	237
The Andartes, Spring and Sumer 1942	238
Sabotage in the Piraeus, Spring and Suimier 1942	241
Offensive in preparation for 'Torch', September 1942	242
Politics outside Greece, April-August 1942	243
Search for new contacts, Sumer 1942	247
The Six Colonels, October 1942	250

SECRET

P1120803

VOLUME. I (continued)

PART II (continued)

HIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINALS IS

RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4)

OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

CHAPTER VIII THE S.O.E. ORGANISATION IN THE

MIDDLE EAST, AUGUST 1940 - SEPTEMBER 1942

Page

253

1. Miscellaneous Activities

Crete

253

Turkey

253

Ethiopia

254

The 'Yak Mission'

254

The 'Friends'

255

The Caucasus

256

The 'Jerusalem Station'

256

2. The First Organisation and its Breakdown,
August 1940-August 1941

257

Colonel Pollock's Mission

257

The Cs-in-C. and Propaganda

259

The Minister of State

262

Internal troubles of S.O.E. , Cairo

263

C.D.'s Mission

267

3. Mr. Maxwell's Regime, August 1941 - July 1942

273

D.S.O.

274

D.P.A.

274

D.S.P.

276

Difficulties and Disputes

277

4. The Appointment of Lord Glenconner
August 1942

281

Debate

281

Reorganisation

284

Volume I ends

SECRET

VOLUME- II SECRET

PART II (continued)

	Page
CHAPTER II a WESTERN -EUROPE -NORWAY	286
Introductory	286
1. The Background	288
Politics	288
Geography	290
2. The First Attempts	293
3. Initial Orzanisation	297
Recruitment and Training	297
Sea Transport	299
Stockholm	301
4. Operation 1940-41	304
Lindberg and Pedersen	305
Starheim	305
Storlien raid	306
Combined Operations	306
5. Summer 1941	307
The growth of Civil Resistance	307
British Policy	309
6. Operations 1941-42	311
Missions sent	311
Their effects	316
The Ouisling 'Government',	
1st February 1942	318
Combined Operations 1941-42	319
The problem of Anglo-Norwegian	
collaboration	322
The Genesis of the Anglo-	
Norwegian Collaboration Committee	324

SECRET

VOLUME II (continued) SECRET
PART II (continued)

	Page
CHAPTER X DENMARK	329
Conditions of Work	329
First Steps	330
Operations	332
CHAPTER XI FRANCE	335
Importance and Complexity	335
1. The Battle of France and Vichy	337
Up to the Evacuation	337
The Political Situation,	
Summer 1940	338
Propaganda Policy	342
2. The Problem of Recruitment	344
Independent sources	344
De Gaulle's Position	345
First Negotiations with	
De Gaulle, Spring 1941	349
The formation of R/F Section,	
May 1941	352
3. The Problem of Communications	354
Sea Transport	354
Air Transport	358
Land Communications -	363
4. Operations	367
(i) Coup-de-main Parties	367
'Shamrock', November 1940	368
'Savanna A', March 1941	369
'Josephine B', May 1941	371

SECRET

VOLUME II (continued)
PART II (continued)

CHAPTER X1 - FRANCE (Contd.)	Page
Radio Paris, May 1942	373
The 'Maid Honor' and No.62 Commando	374
(ii) F. Section Activities	375
'George 'Noble', May 1941	375
'Lucas,' May 1941,	376
Major de Guelis, August 1941	379
Major Churchill and Major Bodington (1942)	380
'Marie', September 1941	381
'Olive', September 1941	382
'Louis', September 1941 and 'David', July 1942	383
'Alain', September 1941 and 'Nicolas', June 1942	384
Major Cowburn, May-October 1942	384
'Alphonse', July 1942	386
Summery	386
(iii) The Work of R/F Section	388
Programme for the first phase	389
Normandy, July 1941	391
Toulouse, September 1941	392
Vichy, August 1941	393
Bordeaux, September 1941	393
Paris, September 1941	394
Brittany, October 1941	395
The Comite National, September 1941	396
Moulin's Mission, October 1941	401
The REstance Organisations	401
Officiers de Reserve	402
Liberation Nationale	403

SECRET

CHAPTER XI - FRANCE (Contd.)

	Page
'Carte'	404
O.C.M.	405
The Communist Party	405
The Trade Unions	406
The Catholic Church	409
Liberté (Combat)	411
Liberation	412
Franc Tireur	413
Moulin and De Gaulle	413
 (iv) R/F Operations. Second Phase	 415
Adj. Forman, October 1941	416
Morandat, November 1941	417
Thomé December 1941	418
Moulin and Fassin, January 1942	419
Lozannes, April 1942	419
Georges, May 1942	420
'Bernard' May 1942	420
Action towards a military organisation, May-June 1942	422
The Conseil Général d'Etudes	422
'General Vidal'	423
S.A.P. - and B.O.A.	423
Moulin in Paris	423
Minor Missions	423
Technical Summary	424
 5. Politics	 426
 (i) The Vichy Background	 426
The fall of Laval-, December 1940	427
U.S. policy	428
The German Reaction	430

P1120808

VCLUME II (continued) SECRET
PART II (continued)

CHAPTER X1 - FRANCE (Contd.)	page
(ii) De "Gaulle and S.O.E.	431
De Gaulle's First Offensive,	431
November-December 1941	
His Second Offensive, April 1942	433
The British reaction, April-June 1942	434
D4tente and new breach, July 1942	437
M. André Philip, July 1942	439
6. Conclusion	441
F. Section	442
The Gaullists.	442
The British Debate	444
CHAPTER X17	447
THE LOW COUNTRIES	

Ccmmmon factors

1. Belgium	448
Political Difficulties	443
Operations	452
The 'Nativet Organisations	455
P.W.E. Missions in the field	457
2. Holland	458
Political Difficulties	458
Operations	459
The 'Native' Resistance	466

SECRET

VOLUME II (continued)
 PART II (continued)

	Page
CHAPTER XIII POLAND AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA	468
	468
1. Poland	471
The Political Background	471
Operations into Poland	474
Other assistance to the Polish military	477
The 'Polish Minorities' Section	478
2. Czechoslovakia	482
The Political Background	482
Operations	484
The Anglo-Czech Planning Committee	485
CHAPTER XIV OTHER ACTIVITIES	487
'Claribel'	487
1. Iberia and North Africa	488
Spain	489
Portugal	490
North Africa	493
The Gibraltar Wireless Station	494
2. West Africa and Madagascar	495
West Africa	495
'Frawest'	496
'Neucols': 'The Gazon'	497
'Postmaster'	497
Madagascar	498
3. South America	500
4. General	502

SECRET

	page
CHAPTER XV INTERNAL ORGANISATION AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS	505
The General Situation of S.O.E. Summerer 1942	505
1. The Organisation of S.O.E.	507
Numbers	507
H.Q. Premises	508
Training and Signals	508
Research and Production	509
Recruitment	511
The F.A.N. Y. Is	512
The Organisation Overseas	513
2. The <i>Offensive</i> Against S.O.E. and Its Results	514
S.O. E.'s Standing	514
The Effects of Security	515
The Service Departments	516
The Foreign Office	517
The Ministry of Information	518
The S.I.S.	518
The Reshuffle of February 1942	520
The 'Playfair Report'	522
3. The Mechanism of Inter-Departmental Relations	525
(a) The Foreign Office	525
(b) The Chiefs of Staff	531
(i) March 1941	533
(ii) The F.Ops paper, May-June 1941	534
(iii) The Outline Plan of July 1941	542
(iv) Allied Pressure, April-June 1942	547
(v) The Invasion Directive, May 1942	550

VOLUME II (continued) *SECRET*
 PART II (continued)

CHAPTER XV - 'INTERNAL ORGANISATION AND
 EXTERNAL RELATIONS (Contd.)

	Page
(c) The Service Departments	551
The War Office	551
Home Commands	552
Admiralty	554
The Air Ministry	556
(a) Props.	562
The M. of I.	563
The P.W.E.	565
(e) The Secret Services	583
M.I.5	584
S.I.S.	585
4. Cooperation with, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.	594
(a) The U.S.A.	594
First contacts	594
Donovan and the O.S.S.	595
First Agreement in the Middle East, Spring 1942	596
The 'O.S.S. Treaty', September 1942	598
Later experience	599
Conclusion	601
(b) The U.S.S.R.	602
First contacts	602
The 'Moscow Treaty', September 1941	603
The exchange of Missions	604
'Pickaxe'	605
Other Russian complaints,	609

Volume II ends

Part II ends

SECRET

	Page
PART III	
CHAPTER XVI INTRODUCTORY	611
General	611
1. S.O.E Field Organisation	614
<u>The Mediterranean</u>	
S.O.E. Middle East	614
Massingham	614
O.S.S.	615
S.O.M.	616
The West	
S.F.H.Q.	617
E.M.F.F.I.	618
2. Policy Directives and the Allocation of Aircraft	
Directives	
C.O.S. Directive for 1943 (March)	618
S.O.E. Report for 1943 (November)	620
C.O.S. Directive of November 1944	622
<u>Aircraft Allocation</u>	
S.O.E.Appreciation of April 1943	622
The J.P. Paper of June 1943	622
The Prime Minister's Directive in the Balkans, June 1943	624
C.A.S. 's Paper of 24th July 1943	625
The Defence Committee Decision of 2nd August 1943	626
Liaison between S.O.E., the C. O. S. and the R.A.F.	627
'The M.E.D.C. Crisis', September October 1943	629
'The J.I.C. Crisis', December 1943 January 1944	629
New arrangements with the R.A.F.	631
Aircraft allocation, January 1944	632

	Page
CHAPTER XVII YUGOSLAVIA	
Introductory	637
1. Colonel Bailey's Mission	638
Reinforcements to Hudson, September 1942	638
The first 'test case', September 1942	638
The background: (a) The Anti-Fascist Council of Liberation 26th November 1942	639
(b) Hudson's evidence	640
(c) Outside evidence	641
Bailey's Mission, December 1942	642
His Report, January 1943	643
Further missions to Mihailovitch's forces, February-May 1943	644
The 'Fourth Offensive', early 1943	645
2. The First Period of Decision	647
Debate in London, February-March 1943	647
Approach to a decision	647
Action in (i) The Jones and Deakin Middle East: Missions; 18th and 25th May, 1943	649
(ii) The 'Ibar Telegram' 26th May 1943	649
Debate and decision in London, June 1943	650
3. The Parallel Missions and the Abandonment of Mihailovitch	652
Change in S.O.E.'s role	652
Negotiations with Mihailovitch, July-August 1943	652
The Italian surrender and Armstrong Mission	653
The Tito 'boom'	654
The first supply-drop to Tito, June 1943	656
Additional missions to the Partisans	657
The Maclean Mission arrives, 18th September 1943	658

VOLUME III (continued) SECRET
 PART III (continued)

CHAPTER XVII - YUGOSLAVIA (Contd.	page
The Jajce Conference of the A.F.C.N.L. 26th November 1943	658
The Teheran Conference and the first Velebit mission, December 1943	659
The ultimatum to Mihailovitch, December 1943	660
The first withdrawals, December 1943	661
The breach with Mihailovitch, 17th February 1943	662
Full Support for Tito	663
Tito accepts the Subasic government, June 1944	663
The end of S.O.E.'s responsibility the Ballmn Air Force: 15th June 1942	661
Supplies for Tito	666
S.O.E. and the Partisans in Serbia, April -June 1944	667
Deterioration of atmosphere elsewhere in Yugoslavia	669
'Ratweek', September 1944	671
The 21st Mountain Corps escapes, November 1944-January 1945	671
The final Offensive and the race for Trieste	672
5. Conclusion	673
(i) Yugoslav Resistance and the Defeat of Germany	674
(a) Axis forces contained	674
(b) Damage done	675
(c) 'Mopping up'	676
(ii) S.O.E.'s Contribution	677
(iii) The Cost	679

SECRET

VOLUME III (continued)	SECRET	
PART III	(continued)	
CHAPTER XVIII	GREECE	Page
Introductory		681
1. The British Mission, October 1942-August 1943		682
The Mission dispatched, 30th September 1942		683
The Gorpotamas attack, 25th November 1942		685
Consequent action in Cairo		686
The 'Rovelista Conference'		
(Woodhouse-E.A.M.) December 1942		688
Woodhouse in Athens, January 1943		689
E.A.M.'s drive to organise the		
mountains, Winter 1942-43		691
Zervas and E.D.E.S.		692
The 'National Bands' project		692
First attacks by E.A.M. on its rivals,		
Spring 1943		694
The 'Animals' Plan		695
Myers' Tour, March 1943		695
The 'Liaskovo Conference', June 1943		696
The 'Avdhela Conference', and		
Natband Agreement, June 1943		696
The Execution of 'Animals',		
June-July 1943		697
The Joint H.Q. at Pertouli		698
The Greek Mission leaves for Cairo,		
9th August 1943		699
2. The Outside "forld. September 1942-August 1943		699
Appointment of Kanellopoulos, 1542		699
Storm over Albania, November-December 1942		700
Crisis of March 1943		700
The Foreign Office Directive,		
18th March 1943		702
The Greek Government moves to Cairo,		
March 1943		704

VOLUME III (continued) SECRET
 PART III (continued)
 CHAPTER XVIII - GREECE (Contd.)

	page
Development of policy, April-June 1943	705
The Crisis of July 1943	706
Arrival of Myers and the Greek Mission, 10th August 1943	707
3. The British Mission, September 1943-May 1944	710
The Italian Armistice, 3rd September 1943	710
Support for British operations in the Aegean	711
The Return of the Mission, 17th September 1943	712
The First Civil War, October 1943	712
German action	713
Resumption of negotiations, with E.A.M., December 1943	717
The 'Neckhori Conference', 25th January 1944	718
The 'Plaka Agreement', 29th February 1944	719
Formation of 'P.E.E.A.'	719
The Destruction of E.K.K.A. , April 1944	720
The 'Mountains Conference', May 1944	720
The Outside World, September 1943-August 1944	721
Formation of the S.O.C., Middle East, October 1943	721
Fresh crisis and decisions, October-November 1943	721
The 'Noah's Ark' negotiations	724
Papandreou Prime Minister, May 1944	724
The Lebanon Conference, May-July 1944	725
E.A.M. joins the Papandreou government, September 1944	725

SECRET

P1120817

VOLUME III (continued)SECRET
PART III (continued)

CHAPTER XVIII - GREECE (Contd.)

	Page
5. The German Withdrawal	726
Reorganisation of the Allied Military Mission	726
The Caserta Conference, September 1944	728
Noah's Ark launched, 10th September 1944	728
6. The 'Apollo' Organisation	730
Origins of the organisation	730
Apollo's political position	731
The incident of August 1944	732
The Court of Enquiry	733
7. Crete and the Islands	733
Caique traffic	733
Up to the Italian surrender	734
The Italian surrender	735
The last phase	735
8. Conclusion	737
The popular view	737
The scope of British influence	737
Military results	739
Political results	740
The problem of liaison	741

SECRET

VOLUME III	(continued)	SECRET	
PART III	(continued)		Page
CHAPTER XIX	ALBANIA		744
	The situation		744
	F.N.C. and Ball Kombetar, late 1942		745
	The first S.O.E. Missions, April-August 1943		746
	The Italian surrender		746
	Brig. Davies Mission, September 1943		747
	Lt.Col. Maclean's 2 nd Mission		748
	Full support for F.N.C.		749
CHAPTER XX THE SOUTH -EASTERN SATELLITES			
	General		751
1.	Bulgaria		752
	The situation		752
	The Opposition in exile		752
	The 'Patriotic Front'		753
	The approach through Yugoslavia		753
	Major Frank Thompson		754
	The approach from Thrace		756
	The Russian entry		757
2.	Roumania		758
	Stalemate, 1941-43		758
	The Russell Mission, June 1943		759
	The De Chastelain Mission, December 1943		759
	Negotiations with Antonescu		759
	The crisis of April 1944		762
	The final coup, August 1944		764

P1120819

VOLUME III (continued)
PART III (continued)

CHAPTER XX - TH SOUTH-EASTERN SATELLITES (Contd.)

	Page
3. Hungary	766
The political situation	766
	766
The Jerusalem Station	767
Prof. Szentgyengu's mission, Winter 1942-43	768
Lieut. Klement, March 1943	768
Veres Laszlo's mission, August 1943	768
The Davidson mission in Slavonia, August 1943	770
S.O.E. Missions in 1944	770

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

CHAPTER XXI S.O.E.'S CAIRO ORGANISATION	774
The Glenconner organisation	774
Its political side	775
Its military side	776
The M.E.D.C. paper of 2nd September 1943	781
Resignation of Sir Charles Hambrot Brig. Gubbins as C.D.	782
S.O.E.'s case	782
The debate in London	784
The solution	785

SECRET

P1120820

VOLUME III (continued)
PART III (continued)

Page
CHAPTER XXII POLAND AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

1. Poland

Introductory	768
The 'Big Scheme' and, the Allied attitude to it	789
Air operations from England	790
The nature of the Resistance movement	791
Air operations from Italy	794
The 'Wildhorn' operations	795
The background of the Warsaw Rising	796
The Rising, August 1944	798
The Russian attitude	799
Air Supply from the West	801
The sequel	803
The 'Freston' Mission, December 1944	804
Conclusion	806

2. Czcchoslovakia

The season of 10,42-43	807
Air operations from Italy	807
The Slovak Rising, August 1944	808
Resistance in the Protectorate:	
British policy	809
Air supply, 1945	810
The Prague Rising, 5th-9th May 1945	811

SECRET

CHAPTER XXIII THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND ITALY

1. French North Africa	813
Early American organisation	813
S.O.E./O.S.S. preparations for 'Torch'	814
'Massingham'	815
(a) S.O.E.'s Part in 'Torch'	816
The 'underground' contribution	816
S.O.E. supplies and 'signals'	816
(b) 'Brandon'	817
The original plan	817
Training	818
Special Detachments	819
Long-range operations	822
The lessons learnt	823
2. Italy	825
Reasons for late development-	825
(a) The First Phase	826
Minor activities, 1940-41	826
Reorganisation, November 1941	827
(b) J. Section in Control, to September 1943	827
Propaganda	828
Emilio Lussu	828
The Rusea-Pesenti affair	828
other contacts in N. Italy	830
Sardinia	831
'Massingham' and 'Husky'	831
The Italian surrender	833
Corsica	834

CHAPTER XXIII - THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND ITALY (Contd.)

	Page
(c) The Resistance in Italy	837
September 1943-May 1945	
'Brow' - 'Vigilant'	837
The new situation	837
Reorganisation in S.O.E.	838
(i) The first phase September 1943-May 1944	843
First missions	843
Political conditions	843
The Communist 'Partisans'	844
'Independent' leaders	845
'Otto'	845
'Franchi'	845
(ii) The Summer of 1944	846
Allied needs	846
The first British missions	847
The C.L.N.A.I.	848
Military achievements	848
Political significance	849
(iii) The Winter of 1944-45	850
The Rome agreement with the C.L.N.A.I., December 1944	850
The Communist danger	851
The new directive	852
'Maryland' and sub-missions in South France	852
German counter-action	853
(iv) The last phase	853
Negotiations with the Germaxis	853
The break-through	855
Military value of resistance	856
Political value	856

SECRET

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER XX IV	FRANCE
1. Politics and Organisation Outside France	859
Darlan	859
Giraud	859
The C.F.L.N., June 1943	861
The Elimination of Giraud, November 1943	864
S.O.E. Organisation	866
2. The 'British' Organisations in France	867
Giraudist Organisations	868
'Carte'	870
'Donkeyman' (Major Frager)	873
'Farrier' (F/O Dericourt)	875
'Jockey' (Lt.Col. Cammaerts)	876
'Radio Patrie' (Capt. de St. Genies)	877
'Bricklayer' (Major Antelme)	877
Cinéma (Emile Garry)	878
Major C.S, Hudson	879
'Tinker' (Major Cowburn)	879
O.C.M.	
'Scientist' (Major de Baissac)	880
'Actor' (Major Landes)	880
F. Section and the Left	881
The 'Groupes Vény' (Gen. Vincent)	881
'Footman' (Major Hiller)	883
'Fireman' (Major Percy Mayer)	883
Major Boiteux	883
Broken Circuits	
'Physician' (Major Suttill)	884
'Musician' (Major Bieler)	885
'Farmer' (Capt. Trotobas)	885
'Spiritualist' (Capt. Dumont-Guillement)	886
'Salesman' (Major Liewer)	886

CHAPTER XXIV - FRANCE (Contd.)

	Page
Later Organisation	887
Principles	887
(a) The Northern Invasion zone	889
Capt. Benoist	889
Major C.S. Hudson	889
'Hermit' (Lieut. Henquet)	889
'Ventriloquist' (Baron P. de Vomecourt)	889
'Permit' (Lieut. Dedieu)	890
'Historian' (Capt. G.A. Wilkinson)	890
'Scientist' (Major de Baissac)	890
Capt. Dandicolle	890
'Spiritualist' (Major Dumont-Guillement)	891
'Minister' (Capt. Mulsant)	891
'Tinker' (Capt. Dupont)	891
'Pedlar' (Major Bodington)	891
The Polist Circuits ('Monica' 'Bardsea')	891
(b) The Southern invasion Zone	894
Major Boiteux	895
'Jockey' (Lt.Col. Cammaerts)	895
'Pimento' (Major A. Brooks)	895
'Spruce' (Major Boiteux)	895
'Ditcher' (F/Lt. Brown-Bartrolli)	895
'Mason' (Capt. Regnier)	895
'Newsagent' (Capt. Marchand)	896
'Gaspard'	896
'Marksman' (Lt.Col. Heslop)	896
'Donkeyman' (Major Frager)	897
'Woodcutter' (Lieut. Woerther)	897
'Pedagogue' (Capt. Pearson)	897
'Radio Patrie' (Capt. de St. Genies)	897
'Stockbroker' (Capt. Ree)	897
'Treasurer' (Capt. de Brouville)	898
'Chancellor' (Capt. George Millar)	898

<u>CHAPTER XXIV - FRANCE (Contd.)</u>	<u>Page</u>
(c) The Rest of France	899
'Actor' (Major Landes)	899
'Fireman' (Capt. Percy Hayer)	899
'Footman' (Major Hiller)	899
'Stationer' (S/Ldr, Southgate)	899
'Julien' (Capt. Reichemann)	899
'Salesman' (Major Liewer)	899
'Shipwright' (Major Maingaard)	899
'Wrestler' (F/O Pearl Witherington)	899
'Wheelwright' (Lt.Col. G.R. Starr)	899
'Jean' (Major Peuleve)	902
'Nestor' (Capt. Poirier)	902
3. The Fighting French Organisations in France	
General	902
The effects of Torch, July-December 1942	904
The formation of the C.N.R. , January-May 1943	906
'Sea-Horse' (S/Ldr. Yeo-Thomas)	906
The Calliure Disaster (June 1943)	910
The 'Releve' and the 'Maquis'	911
The 'Union' Mission (Savoy)	913
'Citronelle' (Ardennes)	914
'Benjoin' (Massif Central)	914
Resistance politics	914
Centralisation	915
'Jérôme' and the Maquis	916
The Délégue Militaire National	916
The Secretariats	917
The Regional Organisation	918
The Final Solution	918

VOLUME III	(continued)	SECRET
PART III	(continued)	
CHAPTER XXIV - FRANCE (Contd.)		Page
4. The Sabotage Campaign		920
Allied Policy		921
Instances		921
'Armada'		921
Attacks on locomotives		922
Blackmail		924
5. Preparations for 'Overlord'		926
(a) Resources and the Problem		926
(b) Liaison		929
Exercise Spartan March 1943		929
Liaison with the Resistance		930
Jedburghs		930
The use of 'Jedburghs'		931
The S.A.S.		933
Liaison with the High Command		934
Liaison with P.W.D.		935
Liaison with lower Allied formations		936
(c) Planning		937
S.O.E.'s approach		937
The French approach		938
The Colour Plans		938
The 'Plan Vidal'		939
The S.N.C.F. Plan		941
The P.T.T. Plan		941
'Counter-Scorch' Plans		942
(d) Air Supply		942
Mr. Churchill's Directive, January 1944		943
Air Operations, Spring 1944		944

SECRET

CHAPTER XXIV - FRANCE (Contd.)

	Page
(e) <u>Security and Deception</u>	
Security Measures	945
The Cabinet 'ban', April 1944	946
'Deception' and the Resistance	947
'Starkey'	948
'Fortitude'	948
(f) Declenchement	950
6. The Contribution of the Resistance	952
Sequence of Events	953
The outbreak	953
Brittany	955
Northern France in Pursuit	956
'Dragoon'	957
The Centre and South-West	957
The last phase	958
Military Results	959
Moral effect	960
Division of enemy forces	960
Delay	960
Telecommunications	961
Tactical intelligence	961
Helmsman	962
Internal Order	962
Summary	963
Political Results	964

Volume III ends

SECRET

VOLUME IV	SECRET	
PART III (continued)		Page
CHAPTER XXV	THE LOW COUNTRIES	
		966
1. <u>Belgium</u>		
(a) Reorganisation in London		966
The Sûreté		966
The Deuxième Direction		967
M. Ganshof van der Meersch, August 1943		967
(b) Organisation in the Field		968
Individual agents		966
The Secret Army		970
The Civilian Organisations		972
(c) D-day Action		977
The attack on communications		977
Mobilisation		978
Antwerp		979
(d) The Political Aftermath		979
(e) Conclusion		981
2. Holland		983
Reorganisation in London, January-March 1944		983
The state of Resistance, early 1944		984
'Action' organisations: O.D.		984
R.V.V.		984
K.P.		985
C.S.VI		985
'Civil' organisations: C.P.		985
N.S.F.		985
L.O.		985
N.C.		985
C.I.D.		985
Resumption of operations, March-August 1944,		986
Formation of the N.B.S., 31st August 1944		988
The Driehoek		988

P1120829

VOLUME IV (continued) SECRET
PART III (continued)

CHAPTER XXV - THE LOW COUNTRIES (Contd.)

Holland (contd.)

	Page
Air Supply, September 1944- April 1945	989
The Arnhem Operation, 17th September 1944	990
German Counter-Action, October-December 1944	991
The situation January-February 1945	993
The March Offensive	994
The Last Phase	995
Conclusion	996

	Page
CHAPTER XXVI NORWAY	
1. The Season of 1942-43	998
(a) The Plan for the Season	998
The growth of the Home Front	998
The Central Leadership and 'Milorg'	1000
The Activists	1000
The Majavatn affair, September 1942	1001
Allied Requirements	1002
The Main lines of the Plan	1003
(b) Cooperation with 'Milorg'	1003
The problem	1003
The first Mosquito raid	1004
'Gannet' and 'Chaffinch'	1005
(c) Coup de main Parties	1005
Raids by Combined Operations	1006
Operation 'Title'	1006
Heavy Water	1006
Later activities at Vemork	1009
The Orkla pyrites mine	1010
Fosdalen. (iron ore)	1012
Rodsand (iron ore)	1012
Sulitjelma (pyrites)	1012
Max Manus and Gregers Gram	1012
'Carhampton'	1013
(d) Northern Norway	1014
Difficulties in Trondelag	1015
The problem in Nordland	1015
'Archer'/'Heron'	1015
Later attempts in Nordland	1016
The Lofotens	1017
The Far North	1017

CHAPTER XXVI - NORWAY (Contd.)

	Page
(e) Review.	1018
2. The Season of 1943-44	1019
Elements in the Plan	1019
The 'Sub-chasers'	1021
The anti-shipping plan	1023
(a) 'Vestige'	1023
(b) 'Barbara'	1024
(c) 'Chariot' operations	1025
Reasons for failure	1025
Coup de main parties	1025
'Noric (Oslo),	1026
Max Manus & Gram: second phase	1028
Growth of organisation	1030
Changed attitude of Sweden	1030
3. The Last Season	1031
Col. Balchen's Liberators	1031
The final problem	1031
Reorganisation	1032
Personal liaison with Oslo	1033
The Plan	1034
(a) Offensive Action	1034
'Salamander'	1054
Attacks on U-Boats	1035
Attacks on ball-bearings	1036
Attacks on railways	1036
Attacks on shipping	1038
Attacks on aircraft	1038
Miscellaneous sabotage	1038

VOLUME IV (continued)SECRET
PART III (continued)

CHAPTER XXVI - NORWAY (Contd.)

	Page
(b) The Defensive	1039
Communications & supplies	1039
'Hilarg' bases	1039
The 'Sepals' plan	1040
The 'Counter-scorch' plans	1041
'Sunshine'	1042
'Polar Bear'	1043
(c) The Armistice	1044
4. Conclusion	1045

CHAPTER XXVII DENMARK

New developments, February 1943	1047
The sabotage campaign	1047
Demark without a government, August 1943	1048
'The Princes' intelligence organisation	1049
Danish organisation in Sweden	1050
The Freedom Council	1050
Para-military organisation, 1943-44	1051
Organisation in London	1052
The 'Schalburg Corps'	1053
The General Strike of July 1944	1054
Preparations for the last phase	1055
Resistance activity, winter 1944-45	1056
The Liberation	1057

SECRET

VOLUME IV (continued) SECRET
PART III (continued)

Page

CHAPTER XXVIII GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

1.	S.O.E. Organisation, 1940-August 1944	1060
2.	The German Underground	1061
	Unconditional Surrender	1061
	'Peace-Feelers'	1063
	Helmuth James von Moltke	1064
	The 'Kriminalpolizei'	1064
3.	The Exiles	1066
	'Lex'	1066
	I.S.K. and I.T.F.	1067
	Austrian Revolutionary Socialists	1067
4.	S.O.E.'s Agents	1068
	Kuehnel ('Champagne'), April 1942	1068
	Kurt Koenig February 1943 -January 1944	1068
	The Sudetenland	1070
	Operations from Turkey	1070
	The 'Clowder' Plan	1070
	'Clowder' operations in N. Italy	1072
	Hesketh-Prichard in Slovenia	1073
	Further operation into Austria	1075
	(i) Lieut. 'O'Hara' in Graz	1076
	(ii) Salzburg	1076
	(iii) Lieut. 'Kennedy' in Vienna	1076
	(iv) Murzzuschlag	1077
	(v) Zeltweg	1077
	(vi) Gaiswinckler in the Salzkammergut	1078

SECRET

CHAPTER XXVI - GERMANY AND AUSTRIA (Contd.)	Page
<u>5. Foreign Workers in Germany</u>	1079
The Possibilities	1079
The Limits of Action	1081
'Braddock II'	1082
Genesis, September 1941	1082
Production approved, September 1942	1083
Hope Deferred, February 1943- September 1944	1085
Inconclusive action, September 1944- February 1945	1087
6. 'Administrative Sabotage' and 'Black Propaganda'	1089
Collaboration with P.W.E.	1089
Forged ration documents	1089
Malingering instructions	1090
'Black' leaflets	1091
The 'Himmler stamp', etc.	1092
'Periwig'	1092
7. The Last Stage	1094
Reorganisation, August 1944	1094
S.P.U. 24 in Paris	1095
Belgian Liaison	1096
Dutch Liaison	1096
S.P.U. 22	1096
Air Operations from the West	1099
Kappins	1099
Baker-Byrne	1099
Bonzos	1099
S.A.A.R.F.	1100
Conclusion	1101

	Page
CHAPTER XXIX, THE FINAL FORM OF S.O.E.	
1. Politics	1103
Pacification: April 1942-July 1943	1103
The M.E.D.C. Crisis, July 1943-December 1943	1103
The Invasion, January-September 1944	1104
Winding-up, October 1944-December 1945	1105
2. The Size and Cost of the Organization	1105
The difficulties of estimation	1106
Personnel Statistics	1107
3. Internal Organisation at H.Q.	1112
C.D. and his Assistants	1112
Regional Directorates	1113
Service Directorates	1114
Advisers	1115
The 'Character' of S.O.E.	1115
4. Ancillary Services	1117
(i) Research. Production & supply	1118
Research (Station IX)	1118
The problem of 'Operational Research'	1119
Camouflage (Station XV etc.)	1120
Forgery (Station XIV)	1122
Production	1122
Stores Depots	1123
Packing	1123
Special Parachute Equipment Section	
at Henlow	1123
Station 61	1124
'Personnel Despatch' (Station 61)	1125
(ii) Training	1125
The 'Davies Plan'	1126
Preliminary Schools	1127
'The Cooler'	1127
The Students Assessment Board	1128
Para-military Schools	1128
Finishing Schools	1129
Holding Schools	1129
Country Section Schools	1129
Specialist Schools	1129
The position of the Training Directorate	1132
Output of graduates	1133
Conclusion	1134

VOLUME IV (continued) SECRET
PART III (continued)

CHAPTER XXIX – THE FINAL FORM OF S.O.E. (Contd.)	page
(iii) signals	1136
Independence secured, March 1942	1137
	1137
<u>(a) The Main Stations</u>	
Grendon. and Poundon	1138
Malta and Middle East	1139
Gibraltar	1140
Italy	1140
W. Africa and Durban	1141
S.E. Asia	1141
Toronto	1141
(b) Signals Training	1141
Agents	1141
S.O.E. Signals Staff	1142
(c) Development and Production	1143
Size and Weight	1144
Generators	1144
The M.C.R.	1144
'Rebecca' and 'S-Phone'	1145
(d) Signals Security	1145
Signal Plans	1145
The V, X, and Z Plans	1145
The Broadcast Plan	1146
The 'Marker Channel' System	1146
Codes	1147
Identification	1148
'Umbrellas'	1148
Conclusion	1151

Part III ends

SECRET

<u>LIST OF APPENDICES</u>		<u>page Ref.</u>
Appendix A.	W.P.(40)271 of 19th July 1940	104
Appendix B.	Organisation Chart - Spring 1941	119
Appendix C.	(a) Norway - Movement of Personnel September 1941- September 1942	311
	(b) Norway - Arms Dumps September 1941- September 1942	
Appendix D.	'Foreign Office Treaty' - (Relations Between S.O.E. and the Foreign Office)	526
Appendix E.	Organisation Chart - July 1942	508
Appendix F.	'Brooke Letter'	549
Appendix G.	C.O.S. (42)133(0) of 12th May 1942	551
Appendix H.	Extract from Agreement of July 10,42 between S.O.E.and The Ministry of Information	564
Appendix J.	Agreement of September 1942 between	580
Appendix K.	Map of 'F. Section' Circuits	888
Appendix L.	Map of Free French Zones	905
Appendix M.	Official French Chart of Resistance Organisation	916
Appendix N.	Organisation Chart - Spring 1944	1112
Appendix O.	Signal Charts	1438
Appendix P.	Chart S.O.E. Radio Network	1141

SECRET

SECRET
PREFACE

This work is one of the series of official histories of the war of 1939-45 sponsored by the Cabinet Office, but the responsibility for any facts or opinions which it contains is entirely the author's. The work as it now stands has not been subject to any official censorship on grounds of security or of policy.

A word on sources may be useful. The narrative is based primarily on the departmental papers of S.O.E. After the dissolution of the department many of these were destroyed as unimportant, but there still remains an immense mass of material which contains much of historical value. Some of it helps to elucidate particular events or threads of policy but on the whole its importance is in the fullness with which it paints the picture of the life of Europe under German occupation. There is a great deal which it does not contain, but in spite of that it is certainly the best single source of material in the world for the history of European resistance.

This material is in great confusion. Partly through inexperience, partly for reasons of security, S.O.E. began life without a central registry or departmental filing system. Each branch kept its own papers on its own system, from the Minister down to the sub-sections of the Country Sections if a paper existed only in a single copy, it might come to rest finally anywhere in this hierarchy of separate archives. The original confusion was made worse because in 1945, when the end was in sight S.O.E. made a resolute attempt to impose on the existing chaos a proper system of departmental filing by subject. This was an immense task which was scarcely begun when the department officially came to an end, the registry staff was kept in

SECRET

being for some time, but the work was eventually stopped on grounds of economy when it was about a quarter done. One has therefore to cope with two superimposed systems of filing, both radically imperfect.

It should be made perfectly clear that the present is not based on a survey of all this S.O.E. material. It has been an overriding consideration to produce some useful narrative quickly, while events were still fresh in mind: it can be claimed that whatever appears in the narrative has been verified by some good source, but there is still an immense amount of material untouched, which may affect details and local colour though it will probably not affect general conclusions.

In selecting material and pursuing references the author's mainstay has been the patience and experience of his research assistant, Miss Winifred Close; but the following clues are of particular value;

- (a) Practically every section of S.O.E. before its dissolution Produced a narrative of its work. These vary enormously in quality and in the number of references they give, but they are all in a sense primary sources, as they were generally written by junior officers who had been actively engaged in the section's work: most of them were also checked by senior officials.
- (b) A War Diary for the London H.Q. of S.O.E. Was kept in considerable detail by a separate section set up in 1941. This section did not allways receive all the necessary material, nor did it have much grasp of policy: but the Diary is nevertheless invaluable for reference, especially as there goes with it a card-index of names.

SECRET

iii

- (c) When S.O.E. was being wound-up a 'Technical Handbook' was compiled from contributions by branches, in order to leave behind a comprehensive picture of the methods used. This deals with methods not with events, and it has not been much used here as a source except to explain points of detail: but it is important to note that it exists and covers a great deal which is not included in this History.
- (d) There are certain series of branch files which are of particular importance on the level of policy. These are the papers of the Minister's chief assistant, mainly in the AD/S.1 series: the papers of the successive holders of the post of C.D.: the papers of the Regional Directors: and those of the Section (COS/Plans) responsible for liaison with the C.O.S. Committee. So far as possible all these have been kept together in the archives.

Apart from the archives of S.O.E. the author has used no official source except the files of Cabinet. and C.O.S. papers in the Cabinet Office. The papers of other departments are referred to only when originals or copies appear in the S.O.E. archives. The narrative is therefore written primarily from the point of view of S.O.E.: it makes no claim to speak with authority as regards any other department.

Printed sources are already accumulating in embarrassing profusion. The author has covered fairly thoroughly such reminiscences as have appeared in English; but there is a vast literature in every European language, and it has only been possible to use rather random samples of this. These are referred to in footnotes where relevant.

SECRET

P1120841

The author is particularly obliged to Lord Selborne for granting the use of his own set of demi-official correspondence affecting S.O.E.; and to all those members of the S.O.E. staff who have helped him so much by comment or reminiscence. It has been a pleasure and an honour to work with them.

W.J.M.M.

September 1948.

P1120842

SECRET

PART I

ORIGINS

SECRET

SECRET

I

CHAPTER I

FIRST STEPS

The year 1938 opened in an atmosphere which stimulated discussion of revolution and subversive warfare. The Spanish Civil War was at its height, and General Queipo de Llano's reference to the 'Fifth Column' in Madrid had already passed into common usage. The German 'tourist' was a familiar figure in the Balkans and had made his first practical contribution to war in Spain. Austria, Czechoslovakia and Danzig were being harassed by internal disorder stimulated from outside; the 'Cagoulards' were a staple topic of politics in France, Russia had turned the light of publicity on Trotskyist subversion and German intrigue. The Middle East was exposed to a well-contrived propaganda campaign, Italian as well as German; outside complicity in the Arab disorders in Palestine was a matter of fact, though its extent was a matter of speculation.

The general outline of the plan of warfare envisaged by the new Germany and the new Italy was therefore plain to any shrewd observer. Rearmament had already been accepted as a necessity by all but a small minority in Britain, and with it went the scrutiny of existing plans and the completion of a skeleton organisation for expansion in war. It was natural that many minds should turn to the necessity for meeting a subversive enemy by offensive as well as by defensive action, and there was considerable British experience on which to draw. Much of this was defensive -the experience of guerilla warfare in South Africa, in Ireland, in Palestine, on the North-West Frontier of India, sabotage as practised by the I.R.A. in the 'troubles' Of 1919/20, and by Von Papen's organisation in the U.S.A.

SECRET

2.

before 1917. But the British had also a subversive tradition of their own; this was dramatised in the popular mind by 'Lawrence of Arabia', and by the 'Northcliffe propaganda' on which the Germans cast much of the responsibility for their earlier defeat, but it goes back much further into the history of the 'small wars' which made the British Empire.

It was also natural that these ideas which were in the air did not engage much of the time of the higher levels of Government, and that such planning and organisation as there was lacked coherence and clear purpose. A policy of active subversion does not go well with Parliamentary government, nor with organs of administration shaped by the traditions of Parliamentary government. In 1938 the importance of subversion was obvious; the dangers of incompetent subversion were no less obvious, and overburdened Ministers and staffs were not anxious to meet them halfway. In the event, three separate organisations emerged, which at the outbreak of war had hardly gone beyond the stage of research and experiment. Their objectives were obscure and overlapping, their relations to older departments ill-defined and often bad-tempered.

1. D. SECTION

Maj. Grand Seconded. April 1938.

The first of these in order of time was Section IX (later D. Section) of the Secret Intelligence Service. Some time in April 1938 Admiral Sir Hugh Sinclair, K.C.B., (who was head of S.I.S. until his death in the autumn of 1939) secured the seconding from the War Office of Major Lawrence Grand, R.E., for a limited period, in order to study and report on the possibilities of a British organisation for offensive action on the lines already made familiar by Germany and Italy. No record has been found of authorisation from a higher level, but it is scarcely likely that this initiative was taken

SECRET

SECRET

without the concurrence of the Foreign Secretary; the step was quite non-committal, and circumstances were pressing -Austria had been occupied by the Germans a few weeks before. Major Grand was a regular officer in the R.E., then engaged on work on 'motorisation' in the War Office; he was without experience in secret service work, but was a man of energy and ideas, to whose personal force tribute is paid by all who worked with him.

His directive

Major Grand's first task was to write his own directive. His first report (1) was dated 31st May 1938, and consisted mainly of a list of possible sabotage objectives in Germany, such as electricity supply, telephones, food supplies, warships, aeroplanes, agriculture: a very heterogeneous list, with which 'moral sabotage' was oddly coupled as 'Item 12'. Methods of working into Germany were conceived to be: -

- (i) The use of organisations already existing in Germany, e.g. the Communists.
- (ii) Lone workers to carry out isolated and specially dangerous acts of sabotage.
- (iii) 'Moral sabotage', i.e. 'whisperings', etc. possibly organised by the Jews.

It was also made clear that representatives would be required in neutral countries on the German frontiers, both for action against goods in these countries en route for Germany, and to act as bases and supply depots for workers within the country. It was not suggested that action should be taken on any of these items in time of peace; the immediate programme should be:

- (1) S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/2 (first document).

4.

SECRET

- (i) Research, into sabotage devices and production of stocks.,
 - (ii) Investigation of targets.
 - (iii) Organisation of depots and establishment of contacts in neutral countries.
- The cost of this programme was put at £20,000.

This document was circulated within S.I.S. - apparently not outside it - and was received 'with a combination of alarm and fascination'. (1) The upshot of the comments made was that extreme caution would be necessary to avoid diplomatic incidents in time of peace, and that the planning of operations should be concentrated in the first instance on the transport of iron ore from Sweden and of oil from Roumania. Approval for action on these lines was given by Admiral Sinclair, and Major Grand's posting was confirmed for another two months, with a possible extension to the end of 1938.

Section IX was thus constituted originally within the S.I.S., with terms of reference which were narrow, in that they precluded any aggressive action in time of peace, but also wide, in that they left a free choice as to the investigation of means, and included such embracing terms as 'moral sabotage'. The political significance of the means which came to hand, and the natural progression from 'sabotage' through 'moral sabotage' to propaganda and politics, were to make much trouble for Section IX and for the organisation which followed it. (2).

- - - - -

(1) S.O.E. War Diary.

(2) Apparently C.S.S. explicitly extended Col. Grand's task to propaganda in September 1938.
see Note an P.46

SECRET

SECRET

5.

2. ELECTRA HOUSE

The other two components of the future S.O.E. were M.I.(R) (War Office) and 'Electra House'. The latter is the less important to us, as its later fortunes linked with P.W.E., not with S.O.E., and it may be dealt with briefly first. (1).

Sir Campbell Stuart consulted.

The importance of propaganda was just as obvious in the years immediately before the war as was that of an active 'Fifth Column', and there was no lack of competitors for the right to organise it. The Foreign Office, the embryo Ministry of Information, the B.B.C., the Admiralty, the War Office (P.R. and M.I.7) and the Air Ministry, as well as D. Section, all had a finger in the pie; and the confusion was never finally resolved. The history of Electra House seems to begin with a request from Admiral Sinclair to Sir Campbell Stuart during the Munich crisis in September 1938, to look into the problem of propaganda to enemy countries; Sir Campbell was an obvious choice for the purpose, in view of his close association with the work of Crewe House, to which extravagant tributes had been paid by the German General Staff after the defeat of 1918. Sir Stephen Tallent's report (2) to the C.I.D. Sub-committee on the trial mobilisation of the M. of I. in September 1938 emphasized that 'the outstanding lesson ... was the lack of machinery for securing prompt, quick and efficient conveyance of British news and views to potentially enemy peoples'. This led in due course to the appointment of a special sub-committee under Sir Campbell Stuart and to a recommendation (16th January 1939) that an Enemy

(1) Mr. David Garnett's history of P.W.E.

(2) 9th November 1938.

SECRET

SECRET

Department E.H. set up.Its functions and control.

Publicity Section should be established on a small scale in time of peace. This recommendation was promptly acted on, and Department E.H. came into being in January 1939 in Electra House where Sir Campbell Stuart had his office as chairman of the Imperial Communications Advisory Committee.

Its terms of reference do not appear to have been clearly laid down; even apart from developments in D. Section, parallel organisations grew up very early in the Ministry of Information and in the B.B.C. In the former there was a Division for Enemy and Enemy Occupied Countries 'concerned with the collection of news and information from these countries, the distribution of news and information to them, and the conduct of propaganda, and counter-propaganda necessary to meet enemy statements and misstatements'. (1) Similarly, the staff associated with the B.B.C.'s German and other foreign language broadcasts construed its duties as requiring much more than the transmission of material provided by other departments.

The higher organisation of these three bodies is not really intelligible. Electra House was in form a Department of the Foreign Office: the extent of its **authority over the B.B.C.** was obscure, and the latter body complained very early in the war that it was subject to conflicting directives from Electra House, and from the Ministry of Information. A series of fortnightly meetings between Electra House and the Ministry of Information began in December 1939, and in June 1940 an agreement was reached between Sir Campbell Stuart and Mr. Duff Cooper, under which Electra House was to be responsible to the Ministry of Information for policy but was to retain its identity as a department of the Foreign Office financed from the Secret Service vote.

This arrangement broke down almost at once, on

- (1) Memo. on organisation of M. of I., 21st November 1940.

SECRET

the discovery by the Director-General of the Ministry of Information (Sir Walter Monckton), that Electra House was operating a secret station, 'Das Wahre Deutschland', outside the knowledge and direction of the Ministry of Information.

Department E.H's functions were as obscure as its authority: the most that can be said is that it was to be concerned primarily with 'black' propaganda; propaganda that could not be acknowledged as emanating from the British Government, either because of an embarrassing conflict with their official utterances or because it purported to come from some other source. It was responsible for the first British venture (in May 1940) with the device of the 'Freiheitsenderl - a short wave wireless broadcast purporting -to be operated by rebels within the country to which it was addressed-, and it also experimented, as did D. Section, with the production of printed material apparently of German origin and circulated by underhand means within Germany. These techniques proved to be of great importance later, in the occupied countries much more than in Germany itself, and there was a very close connection between their use and the military development of Resistance. (1).

3. M.I.(R).(2)

G.S.(R) set up

The first nucleus of M.I.(R) is to be found in a section known as General Staff (Research) (G.S.(R)), whose functions were explained by the S. of S. for War in the

- (1) See further in the P.W.E. History and W.P.(R) 105 of 29th March 1940.
- (2) Apparently most of M.I.(R)'s papers have been destroyed, lost or merged in the general War Office archives. But after its dissolution a bundle of files on Policy was kept together by Col. Holland's former secretary, Miss Joan Bright, and went with her to the Cabinet Office. They have now been added to S.O.E. archives.

SECRET

House of Commons on 9th March 1938 in these vague terms:-

'When so much instruction is to be gained from present events the absence of any branch exclusively concerned with purely military research is noticeable, and a small section to study the practice and lessons of actual warfare will be established.' Its charter within the War Office was 'Research into problems of tactics and Organisation under the direction of D.C.I..G.S. Liaison with other branches of the War Office and with Commands in order to collect new ideas on these subjects. Liaison with Technical Research branches'; and its status is illustrated by this quotation from a Minute by D.C.I.G.S. - 'I have introduced a research section directly under me. This section must be small, almost anonymous, go where they like, talk to whom they like, but be kept from files, correspondence and telephone calls., 0).

A list of the papers produced by G.S.(R) is given in a footnote. (2)

The variety of topics covered was very wide, and it is not until Report No. 7 that the section began to

(1) Derived from M.I.(R) War Diary 'Introduction', (M.I.(R) File 3).

(2) G.S.(R) Report No. 1 The Re-organisation of the War Office.

2 The Employment of Historians by the War Office in a consultative capacity.

3 Re-organisation of the General Staff.

4 Army Requirements from the R.A.F. in modern warfare.

5 Organisation Of Armoured and Mobile Units and Formations.

6 Training of the Army.

7 Considerations from the Wars in Spain and China with regard to certain aspects of Army policy.

8 Investigation of the Possibilities of Guerilla Activities.

SECRET

Lt. Colonel Holland appointed

follow the line which led to practical Preparations For irregular warfare. This change of direction reflects the appointment to G.S.(R) (in December 1938) of Lt. Col. J.F.C. Holland, D.F.C., R.E., an officer with personal experience of the defensive against irregular warfare in Ireland and India, and a lively appreciation of its technique and possibilities. By this time it was recognised that war was imminent and that investigation must lead very quickly to preparation for action. Contact was established with D. Section, and their joint proposals were embodied in a paper by Colonel Grand dated 20th March 1939.

The basic ideas of this paper are recognisably those of Colonel Holland, Its style and its unquenchable optimism are certainly Colonel Grand's. (1) 'The absorption of Bohemia and Slovakia and the obvious intention of advancing toward and absorbing Roumania (and possibly other countries on the North and West) for the first time gives an opening to an alternative method of defence, that is a method alternative to organised armed resistance. This defensive technique, which must now be developed, must be based on the experience which we have had in India, Irak, Ireland and Russia, i.e. the development of a combination of guerilla and I.R.A. tactics'. The scheme dealt with Roumania, Denmark, Holland, Poland, Bohemia, Austria, Germany, Libya and Abyssinia; it suggested the posting of Colonel Holland and some 25 other officers, and expenditure of the order of £500,000 - 'should this be approved it will be possible to complete arrangements as regards in three weeks, and as regards the remainder of the scheme in three or four

(1)3.0.E. Archives File 1/470/1.

months, i.e. by July it should be possible to give a date on which there would be simultaneous disturbances throughout German occupied areas'.

D/M Section approved.

A diary of the fortunes of this paper was recorded at the time by Colonel Grand. (1) It was submitted first to the Acting C.S.S., and by him to the D.D.M.I. On 22nd March Colonel Grand was seen by the C.I.G.S. with the D.N.O. and the D.D.A.I., and general approval was given subject to the views of the Foreign Secretary. On 23rd March (Hitler had occupied what was left of Czechoslovakia on 15th March) Lord Halifax discussed the paper with the C.I.G.S., Sir A. Cadogan, the Acting C.S.S. and Colonel Grand. The only points recorded in discussion are the importance of secrecy and the special urgency of the problem of Roumanian oil; in conclusion 'Lord Halifax said that he agreed in principle with the scheme, which he now intended to forget, but that he would raise the matter with the Prime Minister and get him to speak to the Chancellor with a view to obtaining the money'. The C.I.G.S. made himself responsible for providing the personnel required, if the Prime Minister's approval were given.

Action followed almost at once. A more specific paper (2) was produced by Col. Holland on 3rd April, and provisional approval was given by the D.C.I.G.S.: the C.I.G.S. was not able to see Colonel Holland until 13th April, but then approved the paper almost without qualification.

The objects of the new Section were defined as:

- '(a) To study guerilla methods and produce a guerilla "Field Service Regulations", incorporating detailed tactical and technical instructions, applying to each of several countries.

(1) M.I.(R) File 1.

(2) - do -

SECRET

(b) To evolve destructive devices for delaying and suitable for use by guerillas, and capable of production and distribution on a wide enough scale to be effective.

(c) To evolve procedure and machinery for operating guerilla activities, if it should be decided to do so subsequently.

A limitation was imposed by the C.I.G.S. only in (c), which was not to involve participation by Regular Officers 'too openly'.

Colonel Holland's new branch was established first as 'ID/M section' in accommodation adjoining that of D. Section. Its first programme of work (1) is dated 13th April 1939. Although adjacent to Colonel Grand, it was not under his control: funds were provided from Secret Service moneys, but the chain of responsibility appears to have been through the D.D.M.I. to the D.C.I.G.S. This arrangement lasted only till the outbreak of war, when the Section was transferred to the War Office building and

D/H becomes M.I.(R)

appeared on the official War Office list as M.I.(R) (sometimes M.I.1(R)).

(2) Its terms of reference were naturally not promulgated, and it was not until the 11th February 1940 that the administrative complications arising from this made it necessary for the D.M.I. to issue a confidential memorandum on the duties of the Section. (3) These were laid down as follows, in terms which cover the work done by M.I.(R) since its inception:-

(1) On U.I.(R) File 1 .

(2) Minutes of meeting with D.C.I.G.S. on 27th June 39,
on M.I.(R) File 1.

(3) Conduct of Work No- 50, **on M.I.(R) File I.**

SECRET

Duties of M.I.(R)

The duties of L.i.(R) are:-

- (a) General research as required by D.M.I. including examination and preparation of projects involving the employment of special or irregular forces to assist or increase the effect of normally conducted operations, directly or indirectly.
- (b) Technical research and production of appliances as required for such projects.
- (c) The operation of such projects as may be decided on in discussion between D.M.I. and D.M.O. & P. and when such operation is not the function of any other branch of the War Office or other organisation or headquarters at home or abroad.
- (d) The collection of information by special means outside the province of other sections of the M.I. Directorate.
- (e) Interviewing, training and recording of personnel possessing special qualifications likely to be required in conjunction with irregular activities.

Such duties naturally involved serious risk of overlap with the activities of D. Section, and relations were by no means happy. No clear 'modus vivendi' was reached before the creation of S.O.E. in the summer of 1940, and the subsequent disappearance of both organisations: but the form of words then suggested indicates the distinction which was more or less observed in practice:-

Those activities which can be discussed by British subjects with the authorities of the country concerned and which can be planned and carried out with the knowledge and

P1120855

SECRET

co-operation of these Authorities, should be the responsibility of the War Office and should be handled in the Field by M.I.(R) Missions.

Those activities which cannot be discussed officially with the Authorities of the country concerned and which must be carried out by underground methods without the knowledge and even against the will of those Authorities, are the responsibility of D. Section and should be handled in the Field by the "D" organisation'.(1)

(1)M.I.(R) No. 309/40 (Report by the D.D.M.I.(R), on M.I.(R) File No. 6.

SECRET

CHAPTER II
THE WORK OF D. SECTION

It will be convenient first to deal briefly with the organisation of the Section, then to give some account of its operations in various fields. These interlock in a confusing way, and it is not easy to arrange them satisfactorily under headings.

1. ORGANISATION

Chain of Command

D. Section was in form an integral part of the S.I.S., sometimes referred to as Section IX. Its head, Colonel Grand ('D'), was responsible to 'C', the head of S.I.S. (Admiral Sinclair, later Brig. Menzies) : the S.I.S. was in turn controlled by the Foreign Office, Where the Permanent Secretary himself generally acted in these matters for the Secretary of State. In the first year of the war Lord Hankey, who was then Minister without Portfolio, appears to have had a special responsibility to the War Cabinet for this field of action, and Col. Grand frequently dealt with him direct. The chain of command, clear enough on paper, was in practice extremely confusing, and Colonel Grand had in many matters a remarkably free hand.

H.Q. Organisation

The organisation in England was at first on a very small scale, and there was no serious expansion of the headquarters staff before the spring of 1939. By December 1939, it included 43 officers (apart from secretaries, watchmen and so forth); (1) expansion continued during the next six months, and eventually about 50 D. Section officers were taken over on the formation of S.O.E. (2) Many of them were then rapidly disposed of.

- (1) Paper and organisation chart of 13th December, 1939, on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0. (destroyed)
- (2) From Aide Memoire dated 22nd February, 191j on S.O.E. File 1/470/1.3.

SECRET

Various elaborate organisation charts exist, but it is clear that to the last the Section was run by Colonel Grand on a basis of direct personal dealings with each officer, and that duties were distributed rather at random according to individual ideas and immediate needs. At the very last (11th August 1940) a plan (1) was drawn up for the appointment of a regular Deputy and five Directors (Plans, Operations, Services, Organisation and Special Projects), but the scheme did not come into effect in Colonel Grand's time.

Recruitment Recruitment also was on a personal basis; this was what happened in most expanding departments in the first year of the war, and it was not altogether inappropriate for a small organisation working in extreme secrecy. The nucleus was provided by a few officers from the S.I.S. , of whom Lt.Col. Chidson was the most experienced. Col. Grand's own contacts apparently lay largely in the City, and recruits were drawn mainly from the business world. The list is headed by a few 'big names', such as Lora Bearstea, Mr. Samuel Courtauld and Mr. Chester Beatty, who were little more than external advisers; the bulk of the staff were business men of lesser note, with a few journalists. On the whole, the London staff and the agents sent out from London were not men with a first-rate knowledge of the countries which concerned them: such experts as there were were mainly recruited locally in the field. The staff as a whole had a great deal of enterprise and ingenuity as well as a strong personal loyalty to Colonel Grand: a number of them remained with S.O.F. to the end and played distinguished parts. Inevitably they had the defects of a staff collected in such a way. They had little idea of the limitations on

(1) Paper on S.O.E. Archives File Z/340/3.0 (destroyed)

16.

individual fancy which are implicit in the work of a Government office, or of how to put their own case effectively in higher official quarters. In particular the Foreign Office and its purposes were mysterious and unattractive to them; this had comparatively little effect in London, but the results were unfortunate for relations with H.M. Ministers in several countries. Relations with Regular Army officers working for M.I.(R) were little better.

Premises

The organisation was housed at first in the S.I.S. Head Office, and expanded from it in April 1939 into adjacent premises in Caxton House: for a short time in the days of D/M Section these were shared with Colonel Holland and M.I.(R), which returned to the War Office on the outbreak of war. The first premises to be acquired outside London were The Fryth Private Hotel, Welwyn (Station IX), which was taken over hurriedly for evacuation on the outbreak of war; and Station XII at Aston House, Stevenage, where the early research and supply organisation was housed from October 1939. In addition the Propaganda Section was evacuated to the old Rectory, Hertingfordbury, in September 1939, (1) and Brickendonbury, near Hertford (Station XVII) was taken for use as a demolition school in June 1940, shortly before the formation of S.O.E.

Finance

At this stage D.Section mainly relied on the existing organisation of S.I.S. to provide the ordinary administrative services. Finance was controlled by the S.I.S. , although there appears to have been little in the way of detailed supervision; Colonel Grand reported personally to the C.S.S. , and projects were approved or rejected by him without passing through other channels within the organisation.

signals

The importance of Signals had scarcely been realised,

(1) After an abortive attempt to join the evacuated 'E.H.' sections at Woburn. Garnett p14.

and nothing had been done to investigate the problems of wireless communications with agents in the field in war conditions; such signals traffic as there was, was handled through the existing S.I.S. channels, and any small requirements which arose for signals material were met by them.

Transport Similarly there had been no investigation of the problem of dispatching material to the field in war conditions, by air or otherwise; the only routes which existed were through commercial channels

Training The question of training had begun to raise some doubts, and Lt.Col. Chidson had in March 1940 posed the question of how long the system of attaching new entrants individually to more experienced officers for coaching could continue. (1) The project of a school had been approved by June 1940, (2) but nothing was accomplished in Colonel Grand's time.

Research and Production

Research and production had been tackled more energetically under Comdr. Langley, who was appointed in December 1938 (3) and established Station XII in the autumn of 1939. The investigation of time-fuses for explosives and incendiaries had gone a long way, and in fact later forms of time-fuse did not vary greatly from the types first developed. A good deal of other useful work was done on explosives and incendiaries, and the output of devices from production Was considerable, for other

- (1) Minute of 15th March 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)
- (2) Minute by D, of 6th June 1940, do.
- (3) S.O.E. Early War Diary and Technical Histories, Pt.II.

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)
OF THE: PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

users as well as D. Section; Colonel Grand mentions £50,000 a month. (1) Research also diverged into other paths, such as the use of free balloons and the development of 'secure' R/T, which had no future in S.O.E.

Western Europe Overseas Organisation

Abroad, D. Section had at one time or another in Western Europe officers responsible for work in Sweden, Norway, Holland, and Spain. In France a mission was established on the outbreak of war under Major Humphries, for liaison with the French 5eme Bureau, and to assist in any projects developing on French territory. Its liaison was mainly on matters of technical development, and it was impossible in the temper of the French government and people at the time to make any effective approach to the problem of action behind the lines if any French territory were occupied. (2) The mission escaped with difficulty on the fall of Paris, leaving a few explosives with personal contacts of their own; but no Organisation of any kind remained in being.

No Organisation whatever survived in Western Europe after the fall of France, except a tenuous contact with the A.D.E. in Spain; this was dropped shortly afterwards as a matter of policy.

The Balkans The situation in the Balkans was better; the Organisation was weakened
and Middle
East

by German diplomatic pressure in Yugoslavia and Roumania, but D. Section passed on to S.O.E. considerable assets in all the Balkan countries. The main weakness here was the lack of any effective co-ordination between the Balkan countries,

- (1) Letter of 5th August 1940 to Mr. Gladwyn Jebb on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)
- (2) Some last minute efforts are recorded in S.O.E. Archives File 3/470/7a.

between D. Section and other agencies working there, and between the preparations for subversion and those for the conduct of large-scale military operations in the area. (1)

In the winter of 1939-40 there was an awkward three-cornered arrangement: Hanau in Belgrade, W.S. Bailey in Istanbul, a certain Mr. Goodwill in Greece. The last named was also frequently in Cairo, and had some very vague responsibility for keeping in touch with G.H.Q. Middle East, and co-ordinating D. Section's Balkan plans with theirs. By May 1940 it was obvious that communications through the Mediterranean might be closed at any moment, and it was inevitable that in future the Balkan countries should be 'fed' from Cairo, the nearest point at which a dump of stores could safely be established. It was also inevitable that the military authorities there would attempt to exercise some control over an organisation holding a store of destructive weapons held under their supervision and proposing to issue them for action in a theatre of vital strategic concern to the Middle East. At this juncture Major (as he then was) G.F. Taylor, Colonel Grand's second in command, secured the use of a Sunderland and flew out to the Middle East in haste, while the route was still open, taking with him such stores as he could collect. In Cairo he insisted, rightly or wrongly, that the chain of command lay from London to those active in the field, not passing through G.H.Q. Middle East, except for matters strictly in the sphere of that Command; and to strengthen the case, the main Balkan H.Q. of D. Section was now established (2)

- (1) D. Section had on the outbreak of war sponsored the attachment of Lt.Col. Clayton to Gen. Wavell's H.Q. as G.S.O.1 Publicity (copy of his directive an S.O.E. File 1/470/1) and had provided secret funds for clandestine propaganda among the tribes in Libya and Abyssinia: at an early stage he was absorbed into the military machine and passes out of the picture.
- (2) For a short time Lt.Col. Hanau, then under Maj. Bailey.

CHAPTER III

THE WORK OF M.I.(R)

The activities of M.I.(R) were very wide but they are much easier to classify and summarise than those of D. Section.

Organisation

M.I.(R) had from the start a reasonably clear programme and charter, and it was to some extent controlled in the execution of it; not so much by the supervision of the D.M.I. (this was probably not much more detailed than C.S.S.'s supervision of D. Section), as by the necessities of existence within a highly organised department such as the War Office. M.I.(R) had various projects which led beyond the original scope of the branch; but most of them were picked up and regularised as soon as they became 'going concerns', either by absorption in an older branch or by the creation of a new one. Though it was largely financed from Secret Funds, M.I.(R)'s establishments were controlled in the normal way, and there was never an unregulated expansion such as blurred the outlines of D. Section. The difference from D. Section was also one of temperament and personnel; M.I.(R), though adventurous enough in some of its projects, had always a keen sense of realities and of the advantage of presenting a case in a hard and realistic light. Its personnel were limited in number, but well selected, and the original selection was in almost every case justified by their later records.

It will be simplest to follow the classification given in the D.M.I.'s memorandum of February 1940, which has been quoted above. (1)

(1) Above p. 11.

1. GENERAL RESEARCH

It will be remembered that D/M was set up in

Guerilla
Doctrine

April 1939 one of its first tasks was to be the production

of Field Service Regulations for guerilla warfare. (1) These had already been begun by Major Gubbins (2) who had been brought into G.S.(R) by Colonel Holland to assist in the preparation of his guerilla warfare papers, and they were complete (i early in May 1939. In their final form they consisted of three slender pamphlets printed on rice paper and bound in brown cardboard covers without indication of their contents. The original intention was to have them translated into various languages, but it is not at all clear what use was eventually made of them. They were entitled 'The Art of Guerilla Warfare' (22 pages), 'Partisan Leader's Handbook' (40 pages), 'How to use High Explosives' (16 pages plus diagrams). (3)

The last two need little comment; the Handbook was designed as a handy collection of practical tips for the aspiring guerilla leader on the lower levels; the notes on explosives were equally technical and practical. 'The Art of Guerilla Warfare' is more ambitious, and invites comment in the light of later experience. It is unfortunately not easy to summarise; there are some twenty pages of it, which contain a compressed bible of general principles without much superfluous verbiage and without any illustration of specific cases. It is plain however that the doctrine is largely drawn from British experience

(1) Above P. 10.

(2) Later Major General Sir Colin McV. Gubbins, K.C.m.G., D.S.O., M.C.

(3) Copies on M.I.(R) File 1: the third was written by Major M.R. Jefferies

SECRET

in the offensive under Lawrence, on the defensive in Ireland, Palestine, the North-West Frontier and Russia, in fact from the German experience of Wassmuss and Von Lettau-Worbeck.

It is an ambitious doctrine; it is conceived that it is possible by guerilla warfare 'so to weaken the enemy's main armies that the conduct of a campaign becomes impossible'. There are three main types of guerilla warfares:-

- (a) The activities of individuals, or of small groups working by stealth on acts of sabotage.
- (b) The action of larger groups working as a band under a nominated leader, and employing military tactics, weapons etc., to assist in the achievement of their object, which is usually of a destructive nature.
- (c) The operations of large guerilla forces, whose strength necessitates a certain degree of military organisation in order to secure their cohesion and to make and carry out effectively a plan of campaign.

The development of the guerilla moves from stage (a) to stage (c), but to be most effective it should include all three together. The 'Nine Points of the Guerilla's Creed' are also worth quoting:-

- (a) Surprise first and foremost, by finding out the enemy's plans and concealing your own intentions and movements.

SECRET

- (b) Never undertake an operation unless certain of success owing to careful planning and good information. Break off the action when it becomes too risky to continue.
- (c) Ensure that a secure line of retreat is always available.
- (d) Choose areas and localities for action where your mobility will be superior to that of the enemy, owing to better knowledge of the country, lighter equipment, etc.
- (e) Confine all movements as much as possible to the hours of darkness.
- (f) Never engage in a pitched battle unless in overwhelming strength and thus sure of success.
- (g) Avoid being pinned down in a battle by the enemy's superior forces or armament; break off the action before such a situation can develop.
- (h) Retain the initiative at all costs by redoubling activities when the enemy commences counter-measures.
- (i) When the time for action comes, act with the greatest boldness and audacity. The partisan's motto is 'Valiant yet vigilant'.

As regards organisation the main stress is in the personality of the leader: granted good local leaders, the rest of the organisation can be and must be very

flexible. Some higher organisation is essential and the attachment of some regular officers will be valuable and even necessary. but they must not presume on their professional knowledge, which will often be irrelevant or dangerous.

The prime guerilla weapon is the 'tommy-gun' - a very early appreciation of this on the British side. The bayonet is merely a nuisance: a dagger is better, and bombs of any type which can be secured are also important.

Finally, there is throughout emphasis on morale: on the strength which guerillas can draw from a friendly population, and on the way in which, in an indifferent population, the spirit of revolt can be awakened by resolute partisan warfare.

This is all sound: indeed there is little in the pamphlet which was disproved by later experience. But there are a few notable omissions. There is for instance no reference to air supply as a means by which a friendly Power can sustain and guide a partisan movement; and it was in the end air supply which made possible the growth of Resistance in Europe. Again, there is no indication of the effects on a partisan movement of reprisals against the civilian population on whose support they ultimately depend. (1) The British, though ruthless enough at times, have always been reluctant to adopt the hostage system on a large scale, or to attempt to control the guilty by executing the innocent, enslaving their families, and looting their goods. The Black and Tans tried reprisals - very mild reprisals by German standards - in the Irish war of 1919-21, and the Irish were shaken by the experiment;

but it was disclaimed by His Majesty's Government and had a good deal to do with the final abandonment by public opinion in Britain of the idea of holding Ireland by force. The Germans had no such scruples, and their planned policy of large-scale execution and destruction had serious effects in distorting and confusing the Resistance movements in areas otherwise very suitable for guerilla warfare. Finally, Major Gubbins had then perhaps little inkling of the political confusion which always accompanies guerilla warfare. He sees clearly T.E. Lawrence's dilemma -a mission attached to guerillas must 'be prepared, at the risk of future regrets and disillusion, to identify themselves in every way with the peoples they are to serve' - but he could hardly be expected to foresee the internal struggle for power 'after the war' which racked almost every Resistance in Europe, and was sedulously fomented by the enemy, as one of his best means of self-defence. In practice, the guerilla leader, and the officer attached to him, had to be as much politician as soldier, and it was rarely possible to undertake serious operations without considering political consequences.

From May 1939 until May 1940 M.I.(R)'s staff were busy with problems and projects involving immediate action, and there is not much development

(1) General Gubbins's recollection is that this was deliberately omitted, as a point best passed by in silence.

of doctrine until the revolution in policy viltich followed the fall of France, and which is discussed below. (1) But it is worth mentioning (2) the final version of G.S.(R) neport No.8 on 'The Possibilities of Guerilla Activities' dated 1st June 1939, which is annotated to the effect that an abridged copy had been passed to the C.I.G.S. and to General Gamelin: M.I.(R) Report No. 1 on 'The Progress of Para-Military Preparation', (3), dated 10th July 1939, of which a copy was passed to the French General Staff; and M.I.(R) Report No. 2, dated 8th August, which surveys the ground so far covered and includes an elaborate report by Capt. Peter Fleming on the possibilities of action against the Japanese in China. The pessimism of its conclusion is interesting, as compared with the buoyancy of Colonel Grand's forecast in March: (4): 'Apart from the Polish arrangements, nothing that is likely to have an immediate effect has been achieved yet. Nor is substantial progress likely to be made without something more assured in the way of financial arrangements

It is impossible to avoid the feeling that, on the present scale, the work is little more than busy-bodying'.

During this period 'research' was mainly a matter of dealing with special problems as they arose: a report on

Security
in Middle
East -

security orealisation in the bliddle 7-ast was made and approved in September 1939 and was followed up by a visit

(1) Below p. 89.

(2) M.I.(R) File No. 3.

(3) Copy, in French, is on S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1.

(4) Above p. 9~

by Colonel Elphinston of M.I.(R); in October 1939 the branch put up a proposal (1) for the formation of an organisation to assist escaping prisoners-of-war. This led in December 193 to the formation of a new branch, M.I.9, under an M.I.(R) officer, Major Crockatt, which came to play a very large and novel part in the lives of prisoners of war. It was not until France collapsed that there was for the first time a real urge in high quarters to secure good estimates of the possible range and effectiveness of subversive activities. M.I.(R) had a large hand in drafting J.P.C. and J.I.C. papers in which these considerations were important and which eventually became the basis of higher policy. Under its own name, it contributed an Aide Memoirs on 'The Coordination of Subversive Activities in the Conquered Territories', (2) and papers on 'The Possibilities of Revolt in Certain Specified Countries by March 1941'- (3) Research projects, like others, profited from the The Bureaux

greatly increased emphasis on subversion in the summer of 1940, and approval was given shortly before the dissolution of M.I.(R) for the establishment of a series of Bureaux, covering various countries and regions, and intended to act as planning and research staffs on which the

German subversion

encouragement of revolt could be based. These never came into being, but one important Piece of research

- (1) M.I.(R) War Diary (M.I.(R) File 2)
- (2) Report Ho. 6a, d/d 6th July 1940, on M.I.(R) File 4
- (3) Report No- 7a, d/d 25th July 1940, on 1,1-I.(R) File 4.

was done at this stage. This was an elaborate report (1) by Major Kenyon, circulated on 19th September 1940, on 'Quasi-Military Organisations and Activities': a most able and comprehensive analysis of the Nazi technique of subversion, which draws excellent conclusions on measures of defence and on the adaptation of the technique to our own purposes.

2. TECHNICAL RESEARCH

Major
Jefferis,
Section

As soon as D/M Section was authorised in April 1939,

Major M.R. Jefferis, R.E. (2) was brought in to work on any technical developments which would be useful in guerilla warfare. (3). His section M.I.(R)c was originally concerned with such things as boring devices to produce camouflets for road demolition; time-delay fuses; fuses sensitive to the vibration of vehicles; booby-trap switches;'limpet' magnetic bombs for the sabotage of ships or barges.Devices on all these lines were later produced and used in large quantities, and M.I.(R) certainly contributed much to their development. There was apparently no M.I.(R) research establishment in the ordinary sense until June 1940, when premises were taken at 35 Portland Place; at this stage the civilian staff numbered 20. Earlier, most of the development was done by small firms working on M.I.(R) projects, and development work passed easily into small production contracts for urgent requirements. There was thus an obvious risk of conflict with the orthodox channels of research and supply, and minor discord arose in this way. There was also an obvious overlap with the D. technical section under Cdr. Langley, and there were no arrangements except by personal

- (1) No. 4 d/d 19th September 1940, on M.I.(R) ?ile 5.
- (2) Later Sir M.R. Jefferis, K.B.E., M.C.
- (3) Inform tion mainly from note in M.I.(R) File 3.

co-operation for the adoption of particular devices as standard, or for their production and allocation in bulk. This trouble was in due course overcome by the absorption of both sections into S.O.E.

M.I.(R)'s technical reputation however rests on various projects which soon passed beyond the scope of guerilla warfare. The 'Royal Marine' operation, which

'Royal Marine'

played a minor but complex part in relations with the French in early 1940, grew out of Major Jefferis's invention of a floating mine which could be used to attack bridges and barges on the Rhine. The section also developed the 'sticky bomb', which was for a time in great

The 'sticky bomb'.

favour as a simple anti-tank weapon for use by the Home Guard or other lightly armed troops.

The 'Blacker Bombard', (1) which had a similar vogue, was originated

The 'Blacker Bombard'

by Lt. Col. L.V.S. Blacker in the early summer of 1940 while he was on the staff of M.I.(R).

Helicopters

Another project (2) of some interest was the development of the helicopter as an Army weapon, for use by modern 'light cavalry' on raids or reconnaissance into occupied territory. Colonel Holland pushed discussions of it to a high level in the autumn of 1940, and the ideas worked out then had their part in later tactical developments of airborne operations and 'air observation posts'. But that summer the pressure in the aircraft industry was too great for anything serious to be done.

(1) Papers in M.I.(R) File 8.

(2) - do -

3. SPECIAL PROJECTS AND INTELLIGENCE

These two points in M.I.(R)'s charter are best taken together. In practice any special project involved a mission, and a mission on odd jobs in odd places collected much news that would not otherwise have reached the War Office. The division between 'operations' and 'intelligence' is always a little arbitrary: in irregular operations it is almost meaningless. One of the difficulties found later in the division between S.O.E. and S.I.S. was that S.O.E.s activities involved the collection of much odd information which was in its way as important as their offensive projects. So here it is not possible to classify M.I.(R) missions formally, their only common feature was that they arose out of particular crises and particular projects which did not fall neatly within the sphere of any existing War Office branch.

The projects which mature first are naturally those which Major Gubbins in Poland and Baltic States. affected Poland and Czechoslovakia - the country immediately threatened, and the one in which it was hoped that conditions for resistance already existed. Authority to contact military attachés and to take unofficial soundings as to the possibilities of guerilla warfare appears to have been given early in May 1939. In that month Major Gubbins visited Poland and the Baltic States, made contact with the British military attachés, and tentatively approached the Polish General Staff. The results were relatively encouraging. The Polish tradition had much in it which fitted well with M.I.(R)'s ideas, and even at that stage (in spite of their great self-confidence) the Poles were prepared to think in terms of guerilla warfare and underground resistance. There was limited disclosure of Polish plans, and interest was shown in British devices and the possibilities of British assistance. Tentative arrangements were made for assistance with supplies and for the reception

SECRET

of an M.I.(R) section as part of the British Mission in the event of war.

No. 4 This M.I.(R) Mission (No. 4 Military Mission) (1) was

Military
Mission.

formed in haste when war became imminent, and left by air for Poland on 25th August. It reached Poland after some vicissitudes on 3rd September, but in the prevailing confusion there was little to be done. One of its officers, Capt. Devises was flown back to England on 6th September, to report on behalf of General Carton de Wiart to the Chiefs of Staffs and was seen by the Chiefs of Staff on arrival; his report was discussed at their meeting on 9th September.(2) The mission itself was evacuated with some difficulty to Roumania on 18th September, where a number of its officers were left to assist the M.I.(R) representatives there to keep touch with the Polish organisations and to make any possible use of routes from Roumania to Poland; In October Colonel Gubbins saw General Sikorski and General Ingr (the Czech Chief of Staff) in Paris, and an M.I.(R) mission was established there in November to keep contact with the Poles on all matters affecting resistance in Poland. It was charged at the same time with similar duties vis-a-vis the Czechoslovak government in exile.

The question of Roumanian oil was next in order of

Gubbins in the Balkans.

Priority, and Major Gubbins's second trip was to the Balkans, in July 1939; he explained the role of M.I.(R) to the Military Attaches in all the Balkan countries except Bulgaria, which he did not visit, but he had no contacts

- (1) Col. Gubbins was head of the M.I.(R) Mission, which included a section responsible for work into Czechoslovakia: he was also G.S.0.1 to General Carton de Wiart as chief British military representative.
- (2) C.O.S.(39) 8th Meeting. Item 2 and Annex. (The diary and report of the mission has not come to hand).

SECRET

SECRET

with the local General Staffs. The chance of effective action by the Roumanians appeared in sight, and it was essential to prepare for British assistance, and possibly for independent action. A preliminary appreciation had been made in London, and some local reconnaissance was carried out during July and

The Romanian project. August. (1) On 24th August Cdr. R.D. Watson, R.N. was flown out in haste as local representative of M.I.(R); and simultaneously Major G.A.D. Young proceeded to Egypt with a small party to arrange for a Field Coy. R.E. to be available to proceed to Roumania at once in case of need. Cdr. Watson's party was reinforced after the fall of Poland by officers from Major Gubbins' mission, and was concerned in the Roumanian end of the confused story of the attack on Roumanian oil: - Major Young's Field Company had an equally complex history, and in the end was never used, though on one occasion it got as far as Turkey. There was talk of its transport by air, which involved the possibility of landing in neutral territory in Turkey or Greece, and led to complex negotiations with these two; there was also talk of its transport by warship, or by a merchant ship which would cruise in the Black Sea till required. All this occupied the time of many high-placed persons and committees, and was of potential importance - the destruction of the oilfields would have been a decisive act of war, but it would be aimless to trace the details now. (2).

The Chinese Project.

Another early project, which broke down on Foreign Office objections, was for the despatch of Captain Peter Fleming and Captain Michael Lindsay to China to assist in organising guerilla activities against the Japanese. Foreign Office

- (1) Cdr. Watson's Report on M.I.(R) File 5
- (2) The story can be traced very fully in C.O.S., D.C.O.S., P.O.G., P.O.G.(D) and I.S.P.B. series of papers. D.C.O.S . (39)51, Annex II, is the best single review.

objections also limited action in the Middle East before the Italian declaration of war, but M.I.(R) was in the field early with plans for raising the tribes in the Western Desert and in Abyssinia. Colonel Elphinston visited the Middle East more than once in the latter part of 1939, and eventually (in April 1940) Lt. Col. Adrian Simpson went out to form an

G.S.(R) in the Middle East

"M.I.(R) Section" in H.Q. Middle East (later known as G(R)).

This was an integral part of General Wavell's H.Q., and M.I.(R) as such had no responsibility for the preparation of the Abyssinian rising. But it acted as the expert "rear link" in London, and most action at the London end depended on its briefing and its persuasion. It was also responsible for such preliminary investigation as was done (it amounted to

The Caucasus

little) with a view to raising trouble in the Caucasus if relations with Russia deteriorated further; and it fathered various other missions sent to overseas theatres to harass the Italians, to resist German penetration, or to advise on technique.. These included:-

Miscellaneous Missions

±

Capt. Rodd to Lagos, June 1940

A reconnaissance in the Azores, July 1940

No. 19 Mission to the Belgian Congo, July 1940 W

No. 101 Mission to Abyssinia, (2)

No. 102 Mission to Libya (for Sienussi tribes)

No. 103 Mission, to 'inspect' British Communities in South America (1)

No- 104 Mission to Australia, October, 1940 (1)

No. 105 Mission to the Canaries (1)

(1) Some details in Note 'Aims of Missions and Personnel', on M.I.(R) File 3.

(2) Note on M.I.(R) File 3 - (this was the Sandford Mission.)

SECRET

P1120876

No. 106 Mission to Aden (1)

No. 107 :assion to Kenya (2).

Portugal and Spain

There were also projects for establishing officers in Portugal and Spain. The former was vetoed completely by the Foreign Office; a certain Captain Peter Kemp (a veteran of the Spanish Civil War) was actually dispatched as Press Attaché to Madrid in June 1940, but was turned back by the Ambassador.

In other Balkan countries, as in Roumania, M.I.(R) operated under great difficulties and all its labour produced little

Albania.

Albania at this stage was the only 'occupied' country, and it would be ripe for guerilla activity should Italy declare war; but it would have been unwise to take undue risks there while Italy's action was in the balance. In addition D. Section was already involved in Albanian affairs and there was a good deal of jealousy and confusion between local representatives. Elsewhere in the Balkans the Foreign Office representatives were already perturbed by the activities of D. Section, and were distinctly hostile to the idea of another secret organisation with a penchant for the clandestine transport of explosives. Besides it was never easy to discuss with a Balkan General Staff the action which ought to be taken after German occupation; in Balkan eyes this was an admission of Britain's inadequacy as an ally, and a recommendation to accept German influence without too much fuss.

Hungary.

In Hungary the main problem was of assistance to the Poles in communications across the frontier, and an Assistant Military Attaché (soon on the worst of terms with the local D. representatives) was appointed in April 1940.

(1) See Mr. Gordon Waterfield's book 'Morning will Come'

(2) Some details in Note 'Aims of Missions and Personnel', on M.I.(R) File 3.

SECRET

Yugoslavia.

Apart from visits by Major Gubbins and Captain Davies, The first action in Yugoslavia was the 'unofficial' mission under General Sir John Shea, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., who went out on the indirect invitation of the Yugoslavs in November 1939, to make contacts with the Yugoslav General Staff and to try to make some estimate of the country's military potentialities. A project for the establishment of a permanent mission under cover as A.M.A. was turned down on the suggestion of the British Minister in June 1940: but

Greece.

Representatives were sent under similar cover to Athens in June 1940 (Major Barbrook, for work into Albania), to Sofia

Bulgaria.

in August 1940 (Capt. K.S. Elliott); Mr. Pendlebury (the well-known archaeologist) went to Crete as Vice-Consul at Candia; and other men with local knowledge were held available to reinforce them if necessary. A number of these men distinguished themselves later, but the missions achieved nothing of note, either before or after the dissolution of M.I.(R).

Crete.Scandinavia.

M.I.(R)'s Scandinavian missions had a much more lively history. As we have seen, D. section had very early become involved in schemes for the denial of Swedish iron ore to

Finland.

Germany. In its purely military aspect the Russo-Finnish war, which broke out on 30th November 1939, was very relevant to the same problem: a complete Russian occupation of Finland would have left the Gellivare mines and the port of Lulea open to attack by Russia over the long open frontier between Sweden and Finland. Narvik and Northern Norway would have been equally difficult to defend, and the potential threat from an ally (even a doubtful ally) of Germany required investigation and planning. M.I.(R) was not the only department concerned in the Finnish question -

it had no responsibility for instance for the raising and training of the British "volunteers" - but it was involved in much of the negotiation, and various officers visited Finland on its behalf in December 1939 and January 1940. (1) The first plans for a Scandinavian operation grew out of the Finnish problem

'Avonmouth' ; the 'Avonmouth' and 'Stratford' expeditions and 'Stratford' were intended to occupy Narvik, Trondheim, Bergen and Stavanger, to secure lines of communication to Finland, and if , possible to advance to the Gellivare iron ore region. M.I.(R) was involved in the preliminary secret reconnaissance of an area where open action by British officers was impossible. Parties visited Norway and Sweden in February and March 1940, but most of their members were withdrawn when the prospect of action receded (2) - Finland capitulated on relatively moderate terms on 12th March 1940. M.I.(R) was also involved in the preparation of security and cover plans for the operation, and was partly responsible for the formation of a proper inter-departmental organisation for the purpose;

The I.S.S.B. the Inter-Service Security Board, (3) which came into existence on 20th February 1940, with Major Coombe of M.I.(R) as its Secretary, and played a very important part in all deception planning later. M.I.10, the War Office branch concerned, was formed under Major Coombe in September 1940.

- (1) See reports by 2nd Lieut. Scott-Harston, Capt. Croft, Lieut. Munthe, and 2nd Lieut. Whittington-More, on M.I.(R) File 5. These parties left for Scandinavia on 19th and 21st December 1939, returned 23rd and 27th January 1940.
- (2) Details of their departure and return in M.I.(R) War Diary: no reports available.
- (3) J.I.C.(40)8(S) of 18th February. See also J.I.C.(40)11(S) of 5th March 1940.

The Scandinavian plans revived abruptly at the end of March, when the Cabinet finally accepted the plan for a minefield in Norwegian waters, to be backed if necessary by reconstituted 'Avonmouth' and 'Stratford' expeditions, and M.I.(R) was again called on for reconnaissance. On 2nd April arrangements were made for officers to be

The 'Assistant Consuls'.

established as 'Assistant Consuls' in Narvik (Capt. Torrance), Trondheim (Major Palmer), Bergen (Capt. Croft), and Stavanger (Capt. Munthe).

Unfortunately they were barely in position when the German attack began on the night of 7th/8th April; Major Palmer was captured, the other three escaped with much danger and difficulty. (1)

The hasty extemporisations to meet the German invasion included four (2) M.I.(R) parties, one of them abortive. This was the 'knife' expedition which was to have landed by submarine in the Sogne Fjord area to harass German

Sogne Fjord.

Communications: it set sail on 23rd April, but the submarine 'Truant' which carried it was damaged by enemy action and had to put back to Rosyth. The first party to leave was

Namsos.

that flown out to Namsos under Captain Peter Fleming on 13th April; this consisted only of Capt. Fleming and two Signals Sergeants with a W/T set, and their role - a little vague - was apparently to report direct by wireless to the force which followed on 16th/17th April, and to do anything that could be done to facilitate their landing. In fact they failed to make radio contact with the British naval force, and they achieved little, although they remained in Namsos till the evacuation. (3). Major Jefferis, of the M.I.(R) technical section, was somewhat

(1) Reports by major Torrance and Capt. Croft on M.I.(R) File 5.

(2) The Independent Companies are dealt with separately below P.79

(3) On M.I.(R) File 5

SECRET

SECRETAndalsnes.

similarly associated with the British forces which landed at Andalsnes though his main concern was with demolitions rather than reconnaissance. The expedition landed early on 19th April, and Major Jefferis (with one sergeant) was flown out the same day with 1000 lbs. of explosives and various small demolition stores, including pressure switches. He at once went forward with 148 Brigade which reached Lillehammer. As appears from his report (1) he was just beginning work in his proper role of instructing the Norwegians in demolitions and of carrying out demolitions himself, when the position crumbled; for the rest he was involved in infantry fighting and extracting parties of British stragglers, and was finally evacuated by air on 28th April.

No.13 Military Mission

The third party was more formally designed, as No. 13 Military Mission, which left via Stockholm on 16th April with instructions 'to act as D.M.I.'s representative at Norwegian H.Q., and to proceed there as quickly as possible, reporting direct to the Norwegian C.-in-C. on arrival: to encourage every aspect of guerilla warfare, if necessary by personal appearance with the Norwegian forces. to carry out liaison duties between all British and Norwegian forces. Other M.I.(R) officers were to be brought into contact with No. 13 Mission if possible, and to come under its orders with a view to assisting the Norwegians in guerilla warfare. The Mission consisted of Major A.W. Brown, M.C., R.T.R., Capt. R.B. Readhead, 12th Lancers, and Serg. Dahl, R.A.P.C. (Interpreter).when it set out, the plan for a direct attack on Trondheim was still being considered, and discussions were to be opened with the Norwegian authorities on that basis. Major Brown and Serg. Dahl reached General Ruge's H.Q. at Oyer

(1) On M.I.(R) File 5

in the Gudbrandsdal on 19th April, and in the confusion of the time they were mainly engaged on keeping such contact as they could with General Ruge. (1) Capt. Readhead was delayed by transport difficulties, but eventually got through on 22nd April; in time to take part in the only serious attempt made to cut in on German communications. This involved the use of two parties of Norwegian ski-troops to operate against the Gudbrandsdal road from the hills to the east and west. Unfortunately the troops were inexperienced, Norwegian leadership was poor, and equipment was almost lacking. The western party, to which Major Brown was attached, was forced to break off after two days, and Major Brown was back with Norwegian H.Q. on 26th April, being withdrawn finally through Molde. The eastern party, with Captain Readhead, similarly disintegrated in a few days, but Captain Readhead with some Norwegians remained and gathered round them various parties of British stragglers; at one time there were 63 British together, many of them unarmed and practically all without skis or snow-shoes, except what could be improvised. This party moved north parallel to the German advance, and by extraordinary efforts held together, and even inflicted damage on the enemy, until 2nd May, when they heard of the evacuation of Andalsnes and Molde. Their only chance was then to split into small parties and make for the Swedish frontier, which Captain Readhead reached in ten days with three other British, after a journey of some 200 kms. over very difficult country. (2)

(1) See Report by Major Brown, on M.I.(R) File 5

(2) Capt. Readhead's Report, on M.I.(R) File 5-

The Battle of France

There was little for M.I.(R) to do in the Battle of France; the French were naturally not disposed to accept British assistance for demolitions, or guerilla warfare in France, and when the crash came it was too sudden for much last minute organisation. A little was done by D. Section to leave stocks and personal contacts, nothing by M.I.(R). (1)

The latter did however make some plans (which were never executed) for demolitions in Holland and Belgium; and from 13th to 15th May Captain Davies paid a hasty trip to Amsterdam to destroy or remove securities held in the National Bank there. In this he was successful. (2)

It should also be mentioned, for the record, that M.I.(R) was probably, the first to send a party across the Channel into occupied France. Unfortunately the party's report has not come to light, but some details are given in the M.I.(R) War Diary. It consisted of 3 officers and set out on 2nd June for the Boulogne-Etaples area, which the Germans had overrun about 25th May: its mission was to rally and withdraw any British stragglers it could contact, in fact to 'try it on' and see what possibilities there were. Only one straggler was found, but all returned safely on 10th June, after a week abroad and 13 hours at sea in a rowing boat.

'Auxillary Units'.

The end of the campaign in France overlapped with the first preparations for a 'resistance' movement in England the Organisation known as 'Auxiliary Unitst', which will

(1) See D. Section papers on S.O.E. Archives File 3/470/7a. M.I.(R) provided one officer who carried out a very successful demolition of oil storage at Gonfreville near Le HRvre on 7th June. See report by 2nd Lt. Mayler; on File 5.

(2) M.I.(R) War Diary (M.I.(R) File 2.)

presumably be covered by a separate narrative. The idea seems to have arisen independently in D. Section and M.I.(R). There is a D. Section paper (1) headed 'Pessimism' dated 22nd May 1940, which puts the proposal in a nutshell; on 25th May Capt. Fleming (back from Namsos) was attached to Home Forces for the purpose of training L.D.V's etc. in fighting behind the German lines in case of invasion of this country'. (2) The Inter-Service Project Board (3) set to work to sort out this competition; the project was discussed at the Board's meetings of 27th May, (4), with the conclusion that a memorandum should be submitted by the Board, setting out their view that activities in England should be controlled on a military basis and that -

- (a) The Regular Defences require supplementing with guerilla type troops who will allow themselves to be overrun and who will thereafter be responsible for hitting the enemy in the comparatively soft spots behind zones of concentrated attack.
- (b) The S.I.S. (i.e. D. Section) should be prepared similarly to organise and execute action of a technical sabotage kind requiring special equipment.
- (c) The whole population whether in formed or loose formations, or whether as individuals, must be instructed in the sort of contribution

(1) S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/7-1

(2) M.I.(R) War Diary, M.I.(R) File 2.

(3) See below p. 85

(4) Copy in S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/7.3.

they can make to assist the services, and must be encouraged to make their contribution should the need arise, with the same ruthlessness we may expect from the enemy, whether he is provoked or not.?

The first of these conclusions led directly to the formation of "Auxiliary Units" under Colonel Gubbins, and his G.2 was Major P., Wilkinson, who had been with him in Poland; the date is given in the M.I.(R) War Diary as 17th June. The third was met by the famous 'Official Instructions to Civilians' which were issued by the Ministry of Information on 18th June and were given immense publicity at the time; an excellent document, in the drafting of which Major Kenyon of M.I.(R) was much concerned. The second conclusion, which affected D. Section, proved less happy, as military control lay with the War Office and G.H.Q. Home Forces, and it was not easy to fit in a body ultimately responsible to the Foreign Office. D. Section with its usual energy speedily created a network of local representatives, operating in the deepest secrecy: this had to be dissolved, and there were many complications, humorous and otherwise. (1)

4. RECRUITMENT

There are two main lines to be followed on this side of M.I.(R)'s activities; the card-indexing and training of men with special qualifications to form the 'officer corps' of guerilla activities, and the development of field training for a British rank and file. In the early stages the possibility of actual British guerillas was rather in

(1) Papers on S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/7.1

the background; but it was obvious that Britain had an immense potential asset in its resources of men who possessed special knowledge of odd corners of the globe. The business of collecting names had begun before the outbreak of war, (1) on the basis of personal knowledge or indirect recommendation: the idea of training was put

The 'Politico-Military' Course.

forward first mainly as an excuse for getting promising men together, and looking them over unostentatiously, without giving too much indication of what was in mind. Two small courses of about 30 men each were run in London in May and June 1939, more or less out of M.I.(R)'s own resources; this had to be dropped when war broke out, but the project was revived again in the autumn. Arrangements were made for O.C.T.U. courses for selected men, and Lt. Col. Gubbins and others visited Cambridge in November 1939 (2) with a view to establishing a so-called "Politico-Military" course there. The University authorities collaborated warmly and the first course opened for about 40 officers on 15th January 1940; it ended on 9th March, when the V.C.I.G.S. was present in person. The project was then regularised by transferring it to the Directorate of military Training (N.T.7). On this side of M.I.(R)'s activities the main asset which passed to S.O.E. was a card-index of about 1,000 potential recruits for unlikely projects.

The Independent Coys.

The idea of British guerilla companies matured later, largely in response to the Norwegian campaign. A proposal for training Czech guerillas was made and rejected in September 1939. In October 1939 there was

(1) See note on 'Personnel Section M.I.(R)' Appendix H, in M.I.(R) File 3.

(2) M.I.(R) War Diary, M.I.(R) File 2.

P1120886

80.

talk of incorporating a training wing in the Lovat Scouts, (1) but nothing came of it at the time, and the scheme was still in the air in the spring of 1940. But in April the Lovat Scouts were despatched to the Faroes, the idea of using them was hastily replaced by a new scheme for Independent Companies. This was formally submitted to the C.I.G.S. on 13th April and was approved in principle at once. Details were agreed at a meeting with D.D.S.D. on the 15th, and ten Companies had been formed by the 25th, under the command of Lt. Col. Gubbins, as he now was. There could be no question of special training in these circumstances; the Companies began to move to Norway on 1st May, and were at once heavily engaged in the Mosjoen area. Their later history belongs to the narrative of that campaign and to the story of the Commandos and of Combined Operations. They speedily became 'regular' shock troops, rather than the 'irregulars' envisaged by their founders; and their main legacy to S.O.E. was the training school and training area near Loch Ailort on the West coast of Scotland. D.M.T.'s approval for a centre for guerilla warfare training, for up to 500 men was given on 9th May, and the Centre opened on 3rd June: instruction was first provided by the M.I.(R) officers who had been trained for the abortive 'Knife' ex-pedition to Norway. This remained one of the centres of Commando training; S.O.E. in due course took over a house not far off, near Arisaig, originally requisitioned as an auxiliary school by M.I.(R), and from this developed the para-military side of its training organisation.

(1) M.I.(R) War Diary, M.I.(R) File 2.

5. CONCLUSION

M.I.(R) was certainly extremely successful as a research department, in the widest sense. There is always argument about the exact origin of any scheme which proves successful, but it is safe to say that M.I.(R) was one of the really live spots in British military organisation, and that it launched or helped to launch a number of projects which had an important future. There were for instance aid to escaping prisoners (M.I.9), strategic deception (the I.S.S.B. and M.I.10), the Independent Companies, from which came the Commandos, the guerilla training centre at Loch Ailort, the Politico-Military courses at Cambridge. These were all projects which have left a deep mark on our ideas of training and organisation for war, which are not likely to be forgotten. It should be noticed that M.I.(R) was successful as a research department largely because it was also allowed to assume some executive responsibility. Its job (as construed by Col. Holland) was not only to think up new schemes, but to drive them through the clogging medium of War Office discussion till they worked and stood on their own legs.

It is not so easy to sum up its value in the narrower field of subversive warfare. It was unquestionably superior to D. Section in all matters of technique, its schemes have a harder and more practical air than those of Colonel Grand, it had no conspicuous and damning failures, and there was never any suspicion that its position was being misused. Its men were more carefully picked, and they were

better schooled in the discipline of organisation, possibly because there was a nucleus of regular soldiers; in spite of this, it was not inferior to D. Section in enterprise and vigour and esprit de corps, though these were D. Section's strong points. It had perhaps less sense of the endless political ramifications of subversive warfare, but it was certainly not blind to them, and it suffered much frustration in the attempt to impress them on more orthodox sections of the War Office.

Yet it is impossible to claim that it achieved much subversion, or that it left much organisation on which S.O.E. could build. There were its contacts with the Poles and Czechs, which were never broken, and in the Middle East its missions had a considerable future, largely outside the scope of S.O.E. But in the West its organisation was swept away as completely as that of D. Section, and its Balkan contacts were also very flimsy. It must be admitted that both organisations were insufficiently pessimistic about Allied prospects, and did little to prepare for the situation which actually arose in the summer of 1940. But that, of course, was a matter above their heads.

CHAPTER IVREORGANISATION

There is plenty of evidence that the problem of co-ordinating clandestine activities was present to various minds at a comparatively early stage. But the essence of the problem was not to see that co-ordination was needed but to decide who should co-ordinate and how far his powers should reach.

Col. Grand's proposals The first considered paper on this subject is one prepared by D. in June 1939. (1) Along with various proposals for expansion, this suggests (P.8):-

'Co-ordinating machinery'

(27) Various ministries and organisations are each primarily concerned with certain aspects. It is recommended that they now need special sections.

(28) These special sections should within the sphere of their ministries be co-ordinated by C.S.S. , using D. Section for the purpose.'

The special sections envisaged are to be at the War Office and Admiralty; there is no mention of Electra House - it is quietly assumed that D. Section can be responsible for all clandestine propaganda - nor of the Air Ministry, which ultimately proved to be of vital importance as a 'common carrier'. The Ministry of Economic Warfare and the Ministry of Information are also omitted, but this is less surprising, as they had no official existence until the outbreak of war. The proposal then is that each Ministry should retain control

(1) Recommendations with regard to the control of 'extra-departmental' and 'para-military' activities, dated 5th June 1939 - on S.O.E. Archives File 1/476/1-

SECRET

SECRET

of the activities developed by it, but that D. Section should be the senior and co-ordinating organisation; its responsibility would be to the Foreign Secretary through the C.S.S.

The only project in this paper which came to anything was the development of D/M Section into MI.(R) at the War Office, and no formal co-ordinating machinery existed in the early months of the war. M.I. (R) was controlled by the C. I. G. S. through the D.M.I., D. Section by the Foreign Office through the C.S.S. Electra House also owed allegiance to the Foreign Office independently. The Ministry of Information also had some ill-defined responsibilities for propaganda to the enemy, and it was harassed chiefly by difficulties with the British Press and existed only on a precarious tenure. The B.B.C. was to some extent under the control of the Ministry of Information, in virtue of powers inherited from the Post Office, but the extent of these powers in war time was obscure. The Ministry of Economic Warfare, which had some responsibility to the Foreign Office, had inherited the work of Major Morton's Industrial Intelligence Centre, on which much of the planning for sabotage was based. So far as clandestine operations were concerned, Lord Hankey, then Chancellor of the Duchy, acted as arbiter and chaperone on behalf of the War Cabinet; his experience and prestige gave him great influence, but he possessed no department and department control of any kind.

The Committee on River Transport.

The first Practical step toward co-ordination was the constitution (under the aegis of Lord Hankey's War Cabinet Committee on German oil) of an Inter-Departmental Committee on River Transport, to sort out various competing projects for

SECRET

action on the Danube. (1) This first met on 8th January 1940 and continued to sit at intervals until June, under the chairmanship first of Vice-Admiral Sir C.E. Kennedy-Purvis (then President of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich) and later of Rear-Admiral Bellairs, the D.N.I. It cannot be said that it achieved much, as the projects considered were without exception abortive, but at least it brought together some of the parties to the existing confusion.

D.M.I.'s proposal for an I. S.F. B

The next initiative seems to have come from the D.M.I. (Major-General Beaumont-Nesbitt), doubtless inspired by M.L(R). The text of his proposals has been lost, but there is a record of his discussion with Colonel Grand on 29th February 1940. (2) The D.M.I. had suggested an Inter-Service Board, on the lines of the Joint Security Board and including representation of the French. To this Colonel Grand had two objections; first, that the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Economic Warfare had important responsibilities, but were not to be represented, second, that it would be impossible to adjust British inter-departmental conflicts and disputes on a board including a French representative. He admitted the need for co-ordination - indeed he complained sharply of War Office, encroachment on his own field - but what he suggested to the C.S.S. was a joint Inter-Services D. Project Board, parallel with and similar in constitution to the Inter-Services Security Board'; it should not be inter-Allied, 'anyway at this stage', and should include an M.E.W. representative; the Foreign

- (1) Its activities are recorded in the P.Q.G.(D) series of papers in the Cabinet Archives.
- (2) On file 1/470/7.2 S.O.E. Archives.

SECRET

Office should not normally be represented, but should retain liberty to traverse the Board's recommendations on a higher level if necessary.

This idea seems to have been combined with the War Office proposal in a scheme which the J.I.C. put forward to the C.O.S. on 21st March, (1) and which was taken by them on 1st April. (2) The paper is a little deprecatory in tone - 'such' (irregular) activities when taken by themselves may not be of great importance, but if properly co-ordinated and directed, they should make an appreciable contribution to the main strategy of the war: and its conclusion was only that there should be a consultative Inter-Service Projects Board which will not normally be responsible for putting into effect any project which is approved. The proposal was pressed by the Foreign Office representative and D.M.I. and was not resisted by C.S.S. , although he stressed the somewhat increased risks of leakage: the First Sea Lord was more sceptical, but in the end the scheme was accepted in outline, subject to his promise that 'it was made quite clear that the Board should not impose delay on action being taken and did not interfere with Departmental action.'

The I.S.P.B. approved.

The paper was then referred back to the J.I.C. for re-drafting with these points in mind, and a revised version was produced on 26th April (3) which contained little change of substance, although rather more emphasis is laid on the secondary and consultative character of the Board. This re-draft was apparently

- (1) C.O.S.(40)271 (J.I.C.(40)15)
- (2) C.O.S.(40)62nd Mtg. Item 2.
- (3) C.O.S.(40)305(J.I.C.) (J.I.C.(40)36).

accepted informally by the Chiefs of Staff on 1st May. (1)
The essential points in this paper are:-

- (1) 'The Board will consist of representatives of the Service said Intelligence Departments on the level of Commander; The Ministry of Economic Warfare and Electra House should be asked to detail officers to attend when their Departments are affected. The War Office will provide a permanent secretary, accommodation, and clerical staff.'
- (2) 'The Board will be primarily an advisory and consultative body and will not have executive functions',
- (3) 'The Board is set up to provide machinery for the co-ordination of projects for attacking the enemy by sabotage or other "irregular" operations, with the object of ensuring:
 - (a) that there is no overlapping or misdirected effort in connection with such projects;
 - (b) that full use is made of "irregular" activities in order to assist the objects of "regular" operations and economic warfare.
 - (c) that no project of value, which cannot be put into force immediately, is allowed to lapse;
 - (d) that the inter-departmental consultation necessary when any project affects more than one department, is facilitated.'

(1) M.I.(R) War Diary, 1st May 1940: no record in C.O.S. Minutes.

- (4) 'Contact with the Foreign Office will be maintained through the Foreign office representative on the J.I.C.'
- (5) 'It will be for the J. I.C. to consider when and how the French should be consulted.'

This was a cautious and comprehensive scheme, which brought in all likely interests - the importance of the Ministry of Information and the B.B.C. hardly became clear till later. Its obvious weakness was that departmental responsibilities remained unchanged and that the Board had no executive authority; but this was mitigated by the fact that the War Office provided the Chairman (Col. Holland), and a full-time Secretary (Major Kenyon), and that the Charter was so drafted that additional full-time staff could if necessary be put up by the War Office to act on the Board's business. In fact, the Board was a first step on a line of advance which might lead to centralisation under the War-Office; a tentative beginning, but as much as was practicable at the time.

Its activities

The Board met frequently during the next month; eight meetings were held between 3rd and 20th May, there was a special meeting (1) on Danube projects on 24th May, at which Lord Hankey was present, and there were meetings on 27th May, 10th June and 5th July. There is no record of further meetings, and the Board vanishes when S.O.E. is set up. It had certainly achieved something, in that it ensured for the first time that projects were put down on a common list and seen by all departments interested. There is however little to be found in its minutes which ever came to anything, except the organisation of the

(1) See D.C.O.S.(40)79 of 25th May 1940.

SECRET

Auxiliary Units in England, and the preparations for intervention in Abyssinia; but this is hardly surprising in the circumstances.

The New Strategy

By this time, German successes in the West had transformed the attitude in high quarters to the potentialities of subversion. By the end of June Holland, Belgium, Denmark and Norway were fully occupied; France had signed an armistice surrendering half its territory to occupation; Italy was at war, the Mediterranean was closed to all normal traffic, and the fate of North Africa was in the balance. Even at the end of May it was already evident that the West was lost and that in Eastern Europe Britain could impose no military check on further German expansion. What this meant may be indicated by quoting two passages from the paper which the Chiefs of Staff submitted to the War Cabinet on 25th May (1) -

'Ability to defeat Germany

14. Germany might still be defeated by economic

pressure, by a combination of air attack on economic objectives in Germany and on German morale, and the creation of widespread revolt in her conquered territories.'

'Subversive Activities (in Annexe)

59. The only method of bringing about the downfall of Germany is by stimulating the seeds of revolt within the conquered territories. The occupied territories are likely to prove a fruitful

(1) C.O.S.(40)390 also W.P.(40)168 of 25th May 1940

The earliest reactions are summarised in a paper put up to the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee by the D.N. I. on 15th July 1940 proposing a great expansion of M.I.(R)'s activity. -

'Subversive Activities in Enemy and Conquered Territory', J.I.C.(40)180 of 18th July 1940.

ground for these operations, particularly when economic conditions begin to deteriorate.

In the circumstances envisaged, we regard this form of activity as of the highest importance. A special organisation will be required and plans to put these operations into effect should be prepared, and all necessary preparations and training should be proceeded with as a matter of urgency'.

In other words, a British victory was possible on the basis of naval blockade, air bombardment and subversion. The first two would undermine the German position, but British manpower, heavily committed to the Navy and the R.A.F., could not provide an army large enough to deliver the coup de grace single-handed; only the occupied countries could so disperse and demoralise the German army that it could be destroyed by a relatively small British striking force. This was the dominating strategic concept in the early summer of 1940, (1) and it at once raised the problem of subversion to a level not inferior to any other strategic task. It was this factor, rather than the known shortcomings of D. Section and Electra House, which made thorough reorganisation inevitable.

The problem set.

Reorganisation was therefore being discussed in many quarters from the early days of June, 1940, and it is unlikely that the documents available give a complete story. But the

- (1) It remained dominant on paper until both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. were at war in 1941; but in practice (though nothing could be said) ultimate American intervention was accepted as pretty certain once Roosevelt had won the election in November 1940, and the breach between Germany and Russia became visible in the Spring of 1941. This is important for the later history of S.O.E.; its status soon receded from what had been expected in the enthusiasm for its creation.

views of many of the parties are on record, and the choice open to them was fairly limited. No one pretended any longer that the drive and initiative needed could be provided by a Committee; it was common ground accepted that responsibility must be centralised and laid on one man. But the type of man required and the nature of his responsibility were not so clear; the problems may be tabulated somewhat as follows:-

(a) Should he be a politician, a service officer, or a civilian official?

(b) The appointment of a politician would in effect imply responsibility direct to the War Cabinet, perhaps primarily through one of its members. If a non-political head were appointed, he must necessarily fall within the field of some existing department, and there could be only two serious claimants, the War Office and the Foreign Office, the latter acting possibly through the C.S.S.

(c) It was pretty well agreed that unity of purpose must be imposed on all the subversive organisations, ranging from the clandestine propaganda of Electra House to the open guerilla warfare planned by M.I.(R). It was not clear whether Electra House, D. Section and M.I.(R) could retain separate identities under a 'Grand Coordinator' or whether they should be amalgamated to form a new department; nor was it easy to provide for the 'frontiers' of the new organisation, on the one hand with diplomacy and open propaganda, and on the other hand with orthodox warfare as handled by the Service Departments through the existing organisation.

D.M.I.'s proposals.

The first stages of the discussion can be traced in the papers of M.I.(R). On 3rd June 1940 the D.M.I. saw the V.C.I.G.S. (1) with a paper by Colonel Holland on the scope of M.I.(R) and its possible extension, (2) and these proposals were embodied in a formal minute dated 5th June, (3) which puts vigorously the case for a very great expansion of all irregular activities. Its conclusion is:- 'I recommend therefore the early creation of a separate directorate of the War Office to plan and carry out all operations and activities of an irregular nature ... The Director should work under the general direction of the V.C.I.G.S. It will be necessary for the directorate to coordinate and exercise a measure of control - the extent to be a matter for discussion with the parties concerned - over S.I.S. and the Campbell Stuart organisation, (4), and it should be directly responsible for all shadow missions, School of Irregular Warfare and the special Cambridge course.' It is clear from Colonel Holland's paper that there was hesitation within the War Office about accepting responsibility for anything more than the coastal raiding parties which were the first task of Combined Operations; V.C.I.G.S.'s views are not on record, but it seems clear that though he accepted the idea of coordination by a soldier in the War Office

- (1) M.I.(R) War Diary under date 3.6.40 (M.I.(R) File 2)
- (2) In M.I.(R) File 6 - on Branch folder, paper headed 'Duties of M.I.(R) ' (ref. M.I.R./M/I/1 d/d 2.6.40)
- (3) In M.I.(R) File 6 - on Branch folder.
- (4) i.e. Electra House.

he did not press it heartily. (1) However, Colonel Holland saw Mr. Eden (then Secretary of State for War) on 6th June (2) and the D.M.O. on 8th June, (3), and a letter embodying the scheme for a War Office Directorate of irregular operations was sent by Mr. Eden to the Prime Minister. (4).

Lord Hankey's meeting.

The first inter-departmental discussion recorded was a meeting (5) between Lord Hankey, Colonel Menzies, Colonel Grand and Colonel Holland on 13th June 1940 'to discuss certain questions arising out of a possible collapse of France'. The crucial point is in para. 4 -

'No adequate machinery for such coordination at present existed. It was suggested that this machinery might consist of:

- (a) A representative of three Service Departments, who should be a Director in the War Office, employed whole-time on this work and with naval and air force officers attached to him.
- (b) A representative of the Secret Service.
- (c) A representative of the organisation for propaganda in enemy countries.

All the above should have direct access to a Minister who would also be employed whole-time in this work.

- (1) Brief for DM.I. by M.I.(R) d/d 6.6.40 (M.I.(R) File 4,)
- (2) M.I.(R) War Diary (M.I.(R) File 2)
- (3) do.
- (4) M.I.(R) War Diary (M.I.(R) File 2). The letter is not available, but was sent on or shortly before 12.6.40.
- (5) M.I.(R) File 6 'Re-organisation'.

It was agreed that a draft scheme on the above lines should be drawn up, after which Lord Hankey might take informal soundings of individual chief. of Staff before putting up the proposal more formally'.

This is clearly based on the War Office line of thought, but there are two important new suggestions:-

- (a) That a full-time Minister should be appointed: a new and very important idea, probably suggested to Lord Hankey by the analogy of Lord Swinton's position in relation to the Home Defence (Security) Executive. (1)
- (b) That the 'governing body' should continue to be a board, containing naval and air representatives, as well as spokesmen of S.I.S. and Electra House.

Apparently no objection was raised by the C.S.S. to the proposal that D. Section should be transferred to the War Office outside his control and that of the Foreign Office.

The 'draft scheme' referred to (if it ever existed) has not been found, nor is there any record of Lord Hankey's discussions with the Chiefs of Staff. Possibly the matter was confused by the creation on 15th June under the Admiralty of the Directorate

D.C.O. set up in the Admiralty.

of Combined Operations, under Lieut.General Bourne, R.M. , which cut sharply across the line of development proposed by the War

Office. The next stage is to be found in a minute (2) from

Sir Alexm-Aer Cadogan's paper.

Sir Alexander Cadogan to Lord Halifax dated 28th June, in view of a meeting to be held under the latter's chairmanship on

(1) W.P.(40)172 of 27.5.1940 and W.P.(40)271 of 19.7.40, paras. 1-3.

(2) On S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 - with pencil comments by Mr. Dalton. (destroyed)

29th June (postponed in the event to 1st July). The last paragraphs of this are worth quoting in full; as will be seen, they largely endorse the War Office proposals, and do not insist at all strongly on the Foreign Office's interest in the political implications of subversion:

- Para. 9. They should be concentrated under one control. They should probably be divorced from S.I.S., which is more concerned with intelligence, and has enough to do in that sphere, and placed under military authority as an operation of war.
10. If this is accepted, it might seem wise to amalgamate the "D" organisation with M.I.(R), the whole thus coming under control of the D.M.I. If possible, the staff should be housed in the War Office.
11. If that were accepted, the D.M.I. would take over the whole "D" organisation, and be responsible for (1) sabotage, (2) subversive activities, and (3) to some extent propaganda in all countries.
12. The D.M.I. , who would be the chief executive, would thus be responsible, in regard to his various activities, to War Office, Foreign Office and Ministry of Information.
- (1) On sabotage in enemy and enemy-controlled countries, he would be assisted and advised by M.E.W. and would be responsible to the War Office.

SECRET

SECRET

- (2) On sabotage in neutral countries, the same would apply, but he would have to obtain the consent of the Foreign Office.
 - (3) On subversive activities, he would be responsible to the War Office, but should seek advice of the Foreign Office.
On propaganda, he should seek direction from the Ministry of Information, who have a sufficient liaison with the Foreign Office and with Sir Campbell Stuart.
13. The D.M.I. would arrange for proper liaison with D.M.I. and D.A.I. and C.S.S.
 14. An officer from the Foreign office could be Provided, if desired, to form a permanent liaison with the new organisation.
 15. The funds required would have to come from the S.I.S. vote and could be paid through the Director of the S.I.S., who might be able, from his experience, to give advice as to their application.'

Lord Halifax's meeting.

The meeting to discuss this Paper was attended by Lord Halifax (in the Chair), Lord Lloyd (then Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Chairman Of the British Council), Lord Hakey, Mr. Dalton, (1) Sir Alexander Cadogan, the D.M.I. , Colonel Menzies, Mr. Desmond Morton (representing the Prime Minister) and Mr. Gladwyn Jebb (then Sir Alexander Cadogan's private secretary). There was no representative either of the Ministry of Information of Electra House, which were then engaged in

- (1) Mr. Dalton seems; to have been drawn into the matter a few days earlier; see his letter of 27th June to Mr Attlee, forwarding a note on the work of M.E.W. (S.O.E. Archives File 1/4?0/7.)

SECRET

private warfare of their own as to their respective powers. (1) The minutes, which are on record, (2), are of great interest, since the proceedings virtually decided the future form of S.O.E., even though no firm conclusions were recorded. The main points put in opposition to the Joint Foreign Office - War Office view were as follows: -

- (a) Mr. Dalton 'held that there was a clear distinction between "war from without" and "war from within", and that the latter was more likely to be better conducted by civilians than by soldiers.'
 - (b) Lord Hankey was inclined to defend the existing machinery and to attribute the failure of major sabotage schemes to 'the reluctance of the Foreign Office to authorise them, or at any rate to authorise them until too late.'
 - (c) 'There was a general feeling, voiced by Lord Lloyd, that what was required was a Controller armed with almost dictatorial powers'.
 - (d) Mr. Morton appealed to the analogy of Lord Swinton's position in relation to the Home Defence (security) Executive. 'Lord Swinton, he explained, presided over a committee on which all the various bodies dealing with this question were represented. If he differed with the view of any particular department, he was at liberty to take the matter up direct
- (1) Garnett's 'History of P.W.E. p.30.
 - (2) On M.I.(R) File 6 'Re-organisation'.

SECRET

with, the Prime Minister.

The current, opinion thus set sharply against the limited action Proposed in Sir Alexander Cadogan's paper, and it does not seem that either the Foreign Office, the War Office or the S.I.S. were anxious to insist on adding this unlimited commitment to their existing responsibilities. There was general agreement that there should be a Coordinator, who, 'provided he was the right man, would be able to look at the problem as a whole, and, subject only to the approval of the Prime Minister, would be able to override if necessary any departmental objections. Whether any reform of the existing machinery was required could safely be left to him to decide, after he had had some experience of its working. He should in any case devote his whole time to the work'. This clearly implies (though it is not stated) that the Coordinator should be a Minister, not an official.

The meeting then broke up, on the understanding that names would be suggested and a report should be made to the Prime Minister by Lord Halifax, after a further meeting.

D.C.O. paper.

Almost at the same time a paper (1) on the re-organisation of irregular activities was put forward to the Chiefs of Staff by Lt.General Bourne, R.M. , then D.C.O. ; this pointed in the same direction, though it laid more stress on the position of the War Office, Its origin is explained in para. 1:-

'Since taking up my appointment as D.C.O. I have daily been impressed with:-

(1) C.O.S. (40)523(0). Copy on M.I.(R) File 6, under date 30.6.40.

SECRET

- (i) The need for co-operation between, and single control of, all the activities which reach overseas, of which my department is one.
- (ii) The political implications which continually arise in these activities, and which need to be rapidly resolved.'

The essence of its conclusions (1) is that M.I.(R), M.O.9 (the 'raiding' section of the War Office), D. Section and Electra House should be amalgamated to form a new Directorate in the war Office (Col. Holland's proposal of the 5th June): that a Minister should be appointed to control this Directorate, S.I.S., M.I.5 and D.C.0. ; that the administration of these Departments should remain as at present, though their policy would be a matter for the new Minister. It will be seen that this was the most ambitious project for centralisation. yet put forward.

The War Office in its brief on this paper (dated 5th July) (2) warmly supported the appointment of a Minister, but it did not accept the proposal for a separate War Office Directorate, which had come first from Colonel Holland early in June - 'the duties of such a Director could well be done by D.M.0. and P., and D.M.I. I suggest that D. Section and "C.S. (i.e. Electra House) should be placed under the control of D.M.I. I It is clear once again that prevailing opinion in the War Office scarcely appreciated what was involved in the development of irregular activities on a large scale and was

- (1) Given very clearly in the chart at Appx.II of the paper.
- (2) Copy on M.I.(R) File 6.

SECRET

not desperately anxious to take control. Colonel Holland's attitude was much more energetic. This is to be seen in his Aide-Memoire (1) of 6th July and the Strategical Appreciation attached to it, which are designed to show the vast importance of irregular warfare in the situation of 1940 and to establish that its ultimate objective is strictly military and can be reached only by proper attention to technique and to the canons of strategy. 'All subversive activities must eventually aim at open rebellion, either as a forerunner to, or an auxiliary of, direct military action'. "What has to be welded into one whole campaign to the one end of promoting open rebellion is subversive propaganda, minor sabotage (which, after all, is only incidental), and irregular warfare.' This is a clear-cut view which contains much truth, and its operation can be traced throughout the history of S.O.E.: it is sharply opposed to the view put forward with equal conviction by Mr. Dalton, that subversive activities are too serious a matter to be left to soldiers' and that it is by no means self-evident that the final stage must always be open rebellion; political subversion and economic sabotage may also play a great part without leading to open warfare.

D. C. O.'s paper came before the V.C.O.S. on 5th July; (2) discussion on the lines of the War Office brief is recorded, but a decision was postponed until D.C.O. and the Directors

Discussed by the C.O.S

of Intelligence could be present. The paper was taken again by the V.C.O.S. in their presence on

- (1) Copy on M.I.(R) File 6 (also 6a on M.I.(R) File 4)
- (2) C.O.S.(40)210th Mtg. Item 2.

8th July (1) when there was full discussion. The points which are of most interest in the light of later history are the following:

- (a) 'There was a tendency to plan and carry out certain types of "irregular" operations without the knowledge of the Chiefs of Staff. There was, in consequence, a danger that such activities might not contribute towards the effective strategical conduct of operations and might even prove detrimental.
- (b) There was a risk, under the present organisation, that activities that were strategically desirable might be initiated before, or without, their political repercussions had been properly assessed.
- (c) It was emphasised that as the Chiefs of Staff were responsible to the Government for strategical advice, they must be kept informed of all activities that might affect the conduct of operations.'

The conclusion reached was that D.C.O.'s diagnosis was sound but that his reorganisation scheme was open to some objections; the Secretary was instructed to draft and circulate a report in the light of the discussion. But the problem had already been taken up on the political level; the report was never prepared and no later Chiefs of Staff discussion is recorded until after the creation of S.O.E.

Public Opinion

These political discussions were decisive, but they cannot be traced in detail from the papers available, nor

- (1) C.O.S.(40)212th Mtg., Item 1.

is it possible to assess precisely the weight carried by political opinion outside Ministerial circles. The existence of the problem was by this time obvious to the intelligent public, and outside interest and pressure is shown by a paper (1) on 'Guerilla Warfare' which was produced on 2nd July by a Committee of M.P.'s consisting of Vernon Bartlett, Cdr. Fletcher, Mr. L.H. Gluckstein and Cdr, King-Hall. and was widely circulated, as well as by an Evening Standard 'leader' of 8th July (2) which calls pointedly for the establishment of a Ministry of Political Warfare parallel to the Ministry of Economic Warfare. There were also many 'bright ideas' on these lines submitted about this time by members of the public of varying degrees of eminence and intelligence. (3)

Political discussion

So far as the evidence goes, the sequence of events was as follows:

- 3rd July Mr. Dalton discusses with Mr. Attlee by telephone. suggests Brig. Spears as Chief Executive, with himself as Minister responsible and Mr. Attlee as War Cabinet member in general charge. (4) Probably writes to Lord Halifax an similar lines. (5)
- 4th July Letter from Mr. Dalton to Mr. Attlee making the case for Brig. Spears, appointment.

- (1) Copies on M.I.(R) File 4.
(2) do.
(3) do.
(4) Letter of 4th July from M.E.W. to the Lord Privy Seal, on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)
(5) Letter of 5th July from Lord Halifax to M.Fw. on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)

- 5th July Letter from Lord Halifax to Mr. Dalton accepting the latter's argument for civilian control, expressing some doubts as to whether a member of the War Cabinet need be involved, and undertaking to see the Prime Minister. (1)
- 7th July Mr. Dalton discusses with Mr. Attlee. (2)
- 8th July Letters from Mr. Dalton to Lord Halifax and Mr. Attlee stressing need for first-class executive officer, and urging the latter to see the Prime Minister that day. (3)

At this point it seems that Mr. Neville Chamberlain, then Lord President, was asked by the Prime Minister to look into the position and report. There is no record of his action, but his report was in draft and had been discussed with Mr. Dalton before 16th July. (4) It envisaged an organisation 'to co-ordinate all action by way of subversion and sabotage, against the enemy overseas'. Mr. Dalton is appointed as Chairman, to be assisted by Sir Robert Vansittart, and is to refer to the Lord President for assistance and arbitration when required. The various departments concerned 'will, for the time being, continue to be administered by the Ministers at present responsible for them'. Provision is made for delimiting subversive and regular operations and for coordination with the Foreign Office and the Chiefs of Staff.

- (1) Letter of 5th July from Lord Halifax to M.E.W. on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)
- (2) On S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)
- (3) do.
- (4) Prime Minister to Mr. Dalton, 16.7.40, on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)

This must have been the last, or almost the last important political action of Mr. Chamberlain's career. His first operation was on 24th July, and he was never effectively at work again.

The P.M.'s decision

on 16th July the Prime Minister wrote formally to Mr. Dalton acquainting him of these proposals and asking, him to accept the task.(1) On 19th July, Mr. Chamberlain's paper, the formal charter of S.O.E., was circulated as W.P.(40)271, and on 22nd July it was formally approved by the War Cabinet, with one minor amendment. The effective decision had already been taken by the Prime Minister in consultation with the Ministers concerned, and the Minutes add only the Cabinet's opinion that 'it would be very undesirable that any (Parliamentary) Questions in regard to the S.O.E. should appear on the Order Paper'.

.This solution was clearly to some extent a compromise in between political interests.A concentration of power such as D.C.O. had suggested would have been politically impracticable, even in the summer of 1940., and it was appropriate that a Labour Minister should be appointed to S.O.E. to balance the appointment of Lord Swinton to the Home Defence (Security) Executive, and the control of S.I.S. by the Foreign Office under Mr. Eden.This Labour responsibility was balanced in its turn by making the Minister responsible through Mr. Chamberlain rather than through Mr. Attlee, as at first suggested.After Mr. Chamberlain's retirement nothing more is heard of the Lord President in connection vrith S.O.E. It also seemed appropriate that a Labour representative should be in charge of subversion, which was expected to rely mainly on the forces of the Left in Europe. There was some case on practical grounds for the association of

- (1) Prime Minister to Mr. Dalton, 16.7.40, on S.O.E.
Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)

SECRET

S.O.E. with M.E.W. , as subversion activities required close collaboration with economic warfare both in intelligence and in planning, but politics enter into this also, as the responsibilities of the M.E.W, were in themselves hardly adequate to a Minister of Mr. Dalton's status holding Cabinet rank.

But as a matter of organisation the charter was an almost complete victory for Mr. Dalton's point of view, and it was secured without serious opposition from any quarter. In form he was a mere chairman and the existing departmental administration remained in existence. But he was a chairman authorised to recruit his own staff, (1) and the old administration was relieved only 'for the time being' (para. 4(e)).

The dissolution of D. Section and of Electra House

The time proved to be very short. Control of D. Section and of Electra House was formally transferred to Mr. Dalton by Lord Halifax on 16th August. (2) The Foreign Office acted apparently without further consultation with the C.S.S., who wrote on 4th September (3) that he had only that day become aware of the transfer of control, and predicted sadly the difficulties which would follow when two sets of secret agents worked independently into the same territory.

The dissolution of M.I.(R)

Mr. Dalton also at once raised the question of absorbing the subversive side of M.I.(R) into the new

- (1) W.P.(40)271, para.4(d).
- (2) Two letters Halifax to Dalton 16.8.40, on S.O.E. Archives File 1/460/1.
- (3) 'C' to Mr. Gladwyn Jebb, ref: C/4824 of 4,9.40, on S.O.E. Archives File 1/460/1.

SECRET

P11209013

organisation; he writes (1) on 19th August what I personally would like is for M.I.(R) in so far as it is responsible for military operations to be somehow absorbed in the Operations side Of the War Office, and for its other functions to devolve on the reformed D. Organisation. If certain of the particularly gifted Junior officers of M.I.(R) could gravitate towards the latter, nobody would be more please than I. Like the C.S.S., M.I.(R) had not foreseen that action would entail the disappearance of the old organisation, and it had continued actively to develop its own plans during July and August. But Mr. Dalton's ideas were accepted with little hesitation by the higher authorities of the "War Office. Brig. Wyndham was appointed over Colonel Holland' s head as D.D.M.I.(R) to report on the future of the department, and on 25th August he recommended its dissolution and a partition of its empire. His proposals were largely endorsed by V.C.I.G.S. on 3rd October, (2) and the formal dissolution of M.I.(R) followed later that month. (3)

- (1) Para. 3 of Annex I to Paper on Subversion circulated by Foreign Office in October 1940: copy on S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1.
- (2) Papers on M.I.(R)309/40 - now in M.I.(R) File 6.
- (3) M.I.(R) War Diary (M.I.(R) File 2).

PART II

THE MAKING OF A WEAPON

CHAPTER V.THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ORGANISATION

'When Mr. Dalton took over in July 1940, he was given wide powers and almost unlimited objectives, and the existing organisation contained little on which to build. The steps to be taken were:-

- (i) To recruit directing staff, and through then to frame an organisation.
- (ii) To define the task more closely and to secure higher approval for the line to be followed.
- (iii) To delimit the frontiers between S.O.E. and other Departments.

I. STAFF AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONDirecting Personalities

Mr. Dalton's charter had attached Sir Robert Vansittart to him as assistant and had empowered him to recruit such additional staff as they might find necessary. (1) Sir Robert continued until his retirement in June, 1942, to fill the post of Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and his attachment to S.O.E. was neither executive nor full time; he seems at first to have been consulted regularly on matters of high policy, but his influence grew less and disappeared as the organisation found its feet. The first full-time officer recruited (2) was Mr. Gladwyn Jebb, who was then Private Secretary to Sir Alexander Cadogan, and was thus familiar with the genesis of S.O.E.; he took up his duties almost at once, bringing

(1) W.P.(40)271 paras. 4(o) and (d).

(2) See correspondence between Mr. Dalton and Sir Alexander Cadogan, dated 17th, 18th and 19th July, 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0. (destroyed)

109..

with him as assistant Mr. Philip Broad, also a Foreign office Official. Mr. Jebb's post was that of Chief Executive officer; apparently there was not at the time any Office Instruction or other official paper setting out his duties, but it is clear from correspondence that he was in effect to act as Permanent Under Secretary. The ordinary business of the office would be conducted by him on behalf of the Minister, and papers for the Minister's attention would normally pass through him to the Minister with no intermediary except the Minister's Private Secretary. Mr. Jebb was accommodated with the Minister in the Ministry of Economic Warfare's offices in Berkeley Square House, under cover of Foreign Policy Adviser to the Ministry of Economic Warfare and with the rank of Assistant-Under Secretary in the Foreign Office; Mr. Fugh Gaitskell was the Private Secretary nominated as the sole channel for S.O.E. business.

The first obvious need was to obtain reports on the works of the three existing departments, M.I.(R), D. (1) and Electra House, and to take decisions about their future. As we have already seen, (2) the conclusion was reached early in August that D. Section and Electra House should be taken over by S.O.E. in toto; while M.I.(R) should be absorbed in part by S.O.E. , in part by other branches of the War Office. After collecting opinions (3) Mr. Dalton decided that the existing heads of D. and Electra House could not continue to hold their posts.

(1) See final fom of D.'s Report on 'Great Britain's only Successful Experimental in Total Warfare', dated 27th August, in S.O.E. Archives File HD/P.370, with extremely adverse comments by C.S.S.; also lists of D. Section officers employed, with functions and symbols, sent by D. to Jebb 14th August 1940, on S.O.E., Archives File F/138 (AD/S.1).

(2) Page 106.

(3) See files HD/P.370 (Col. Grand) and HD/S/72 (Sir Campbell Stuart) (AD/S.1)

SECRET

Sir Campbell Stuart (who was then in Canada) was courteously dismissed, (i) and was replaced as chief of propaganda by Mr. R.A. Leeper, (2) then head of the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office, which continued to exist as cover for the subversive propaganda organisation; Mr. Valentine Williams, Sir Campbell Stuart's second in command, remained in charge of Electra House's 'Country House' at Woburn. It proved more difficult to find a suitable replacement for Colonel Grand, and it was not until late in August that the post was accepted by Sir Frank Nelson, a man of business and formerly a Conservative M.P.

THIS IS A COPY. THE -ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

There, was an awkward interregnum during August and at first it was intended that Colonel Grand should continue as Sir Frank Nelson's second in command (as D. under Nelson as C.D.); (3) this soon proved unworkable and Colonel Grand left the organisation about the end of September. (4)

Failure to establish a 'General Staff'

These personal changes were in themselves difficult and important decisions, but they did not affect the main problem, the forging of the three conceptions of propaganda, sabotage and open revolt into a single 'fourth arm' of war. To anticipate, it may be said here that this problem was never solved, in spite of the breadth of Mr. Dalton's own conceptions, and the very wide charter given to him by the Cabinet. Electra House and D. Section were re-christened S.O.1 and

- (1)Letter of 16th August 1940 on S.O.E. Archives File HD/S/72 (AD/S.1) (See also File F/138 (AD/S.1) notes from CD/XX/252 of 16.11.40 - para. B.)
- (2) Suggested in letter from S.O. to Mr. Duff Cooper, 26th July 1940 on S.O.E. Archives File HD/S/72.
- (3) See interview between C.D. and D. of 26th August 1940, and D's letter of 29th August, in S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0.
- (4)Letter from Grand to S.O. dated 29th September 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File HD/P/370.

SECRET

S.O.2, but they remained separate organisations which grew apart rather than together. The decisions which made this inevitable were taken in the summer of 1940, although their consequences did not emerge for some time.

One factor was the acceptance of the Minister of Information's Claim that he should retain control of overt as distinct from covert propaganda. (1) Another was the breakdown of the plan for regional 'Bureaux', which appears first in Mr. Gaitskell's paper of 31st July. (2) As there outlined, the project was that the centre of the organisation should be a series of 'Bureaux' (the name perhaps derived from a similar project conceived by M.I.(R)); (3) small-but highly qualified bodies, on a 'country' basis, each to be divided internally into three 'Sectors' - the Propaganda Sector, the Organisation and Personnel Sector, and the 'Activities' Sector. The Bureaux should be concerned with intelligence, in the sense of gathering all relevant information from other departments and putting it in shape for the purposes of S.O.E.; and with planning, which should include the drafting of propaganda directives and the preparation of plans for destructive operations. The Bureaux might even, at some stage, become responsible for directing some operations; but they were not to be executive bodies. Indeed, they would be flanked by three other main departments, the Directorate of Propaganda, the Directorate of 'Activities', and the Directorate of Technical Matters and Supply; and projects would pass for approval from the Bureaux through the relevant Directorate to the Chief

- (1) Dealt with more fully below, p. 140.
- (2) On S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1 Vol. I.
- (3) Above p. 63.

SECRET

Executive Officer and the Minister. The Bureaux might draw staff from the corresponding sections of D. and of Electra House; but they would in themselves be weak bodies, with no head comparable to Mr. Leeper and Sir Frank Nelson, and with no corporate existence as a driving force in the organisation. This plan may have been to some extent forced on the Minister by the inescapable fact that Electra House and D. already existed as living and working departments; but it was doomed from the outset by the failure to give the Bureaux (known for a period as S.0.3) an effective weight equal to that of S.0.1 and S.0.2. Mr. Broad was at one time head of this 'Planning and Intelligence' Department in Lansdowne House, with Brig. van Outsem as Director of Intelligence; (1) appointments clearly not of the same status as those of Mr. Jebb, Mr. Leeper and Sir Frank Nelson, S.0.3 as such had already disintegrated by the end of September 1940, and what was left then ranked as the Intelligence and Planning Department of S.0.2; this in its turn was abolished in January 1941 and its stronger personalities were absorbed elsewhere in the organisation. (2)

Lack of a 'Permanent Secretary'

The problem of centralisation was made worse by the ambiguity of Mr. Jebb's position as Chief Executive Officer; according to the original plan he was to be responsible for the working of the department as a whole, and when the Bureaux broke down he was left as the only possible central point. His role as 'Permanent Secretary' is indicated quite clearly in the

- (1) C. E.O.'s paper of early October, 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1.
(See also AD/S.1 File F/138 notes from CD/XX/252 of 16th November 1940, para. F.)
- (2) Letter from Mr. Jebb to Mr. Cadett (PID/1576 of 14th January 1941) refers, on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.1.

letters regarding his original appointment, in Mr. Dalton's Paper of 19th August on 'the Fourth Arm', and in the description of the Organisation prepared by Mr. Jebb early in October. (1) Unfortunately it was in practice ambiguous, largely as a result 'of the problem of relative standing as between himself and Mr. Leeper (who was much his senior), aggravated by the vested interests of the two existing departments. Mr. Jebb's original position was virtually abandoned in Mr. Dalton's letter (2) of 17th August to Mr. Valentine Williams, offering him the post of head of the country establishment of S.O.I. - 'Mr. Leeper ... will act under the general direction of myself as responsible Minister and of Sir Robert Vansittart. He will rank on an equality with Mr. Jebb who will be my Chief Executive Adviser' (sic) 'under Sir Robert Vansittart for a wide range of activities, extending beyond propaganda, with which I have now been charged by the Prime Minister and the Cabinet'. This is clinched by an amendment (3), circulated by Mr. Jebb on 17th October to his paper on 'Subversion', obviously in response to an objection. The operative sentences are: 'Mr. Leeper, of course, is in no way directed by me, who am responsible for the 'operations" side. In practice,, all major questions are discussed at a periodio meeting of the Minister, Sir Robert Vansittart, Mr. Leeper and myself. C.D. also attends this meeting, when necessary. At the same time all papers for submission to the Minister come through me, and I, therefore, act as a central, coordinating link'.

(1) Printed copy on S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1.

(2) On S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0. Mr. Leeper had said the same thing to Mr. Valentine Williams on 13th August, (Garnett. 'History of P.W.E.' p. 31)

(3) On S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1.

The Result

The plan at this stage is somewhat as follows:-

Mr. Dalton (Berkeley Sq. House)

Sir R. Vansittart (F.O.)

C.E.O. (Berkeley Sq. House)

S.0.1 (Mr. Leeper at
Woburn
Mr. Warner at
Lansdowne House)

S.0.2 (Sir F. Nelson at
Baker Street)

Intelli- operations
gence
(Baker St.)

Military
Wing

Mr. Broad

Operating
(Lansdoyme House)

P.I.D. Mr. V. Williams
at Woburn at Woburn
& Lansdowne House
House

Intel: & Planning
Brig.Brocks
at. Lansdowne House
Intel: (Brig. van Outsem)

I

The link interposing Mr. Jebb between S.0.1 and the Minister has become very tenuous, and soon vanishes, leaving Mr. Jebb as Chief Executive Officer of S.O.2 alone; the Bureaux have disintegrated into their elements, and are nominally attached to S. 0. 2, which in practice can find no use for them. Geography played almost as much a part in this confusion as did personalities; whatever the personalities, it is hardly conceivable that a unified force could have been built with the Kinister in Berkeley Square, one of his Directors in Baker Street, and the other in Bedfordshire; the latter represented in London only by a 'holding party', itself geographically separated from the rest of the Ministry.

Internal Organisation of S.O.2.

The internal organisation of S.O.2, with which we are mainly concerned here, (1) was equally fluid and it would be a waste of time to follow it through each stage of its development. Many of the 'old hands' remained throughout, but their roles changed continually, and in addition innumerable new solutions were tried as new problems arose.

- (1) As will be seen later, S.0.1 became P.W.E. , and S.0.2 took over the name S.O.E.: hence some confusion in terminology in the narrative.

At first the main framework was inherited from D. Section. Its 'country sections' were retained, and Colonel G.F. Taylor, who had been Grand's second in command, also remained as A.D., chief assistant to C.D. The first important additions were-

- (a) The introduction of S/Ldr. (later G/Capt.) Venner, a very experienced professional accountant, as Director of Finance, a position which he continued to hold to the end, with the warm approval both of S.O.E. and of the Treasury. (1)
- (b) Col. Davies (a Courtauld's Director), who had been one of the most successful 'amateur' members of M.I.(R), was at first the only representative of the M.I.(R) tradition: he came in as 'Personal Assistant' (2) to Sir Frank Nelson, and was required in the first instance to advise him on organisation at home. His interests were thus turned mainly to the 'general services' side of the organisation, to which he continued to devote himself: he ultimately became a Director of Research and Supply in the autumn of 1941, and continued to hold that post to the end.
- (c) One result of Col. Davies's period as P.A. was a very far-sighted report on training; (3) this laid down a programme for the provision of schools, which never required fundamental alteration. The Training Section, set up as a result of this report, was in

- (1) See C.D.'s letter to Jebb, No. 92 undated, on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) F/138, paras. 12 and 13.
- (2) This is made completely clear in C. D.'s 'Office Instruction' on Higher Organisation', of 22nd March 1941, copy on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.1
- (3) Dated 12th October 1940, copy On S.O.E. Archives File 1/270/02. See also Chapter 1 page 2 of Training History, and below p. 1126.

the first instance in the charge of Lt.Col. G. S. Wilson, an old Indian policeman, now a leading figure in the Boy Scouts Organisation, who was later head of the Scandinavian Section.

- (d) Colonel Gubbins (now a Brigadier) was released on 18th November 1940 (1) from the organisation of Auxiliary Units for guerilla warfare in England, and came back into the organisation. He had been in M.I.(R) from the first, and was excellently qualified to maintain its tradition within S.O.E. He retained the old symbol 'M' from the days of D/M, and he was charged both with the supervision of training and with the actual conduct of operations planned and prepared by the Country Sections; a somewhat clumsy arrangement which in practice meant that M. became a 'Director-General' of country sections so far as their operations were based in the United Kingdom, with no clearly defined control over the political bearings of their work. To confuse matters further, he retained sole responsibility for Poland and Czechoslovakia, which were both old M.I.(R) commitments. (2)
- (e) In October 1940 (after an unsuccessful attempt (3) to secure offices in St. James's Street) the organisation moved to 64 Baker Street and assumed the cover name of 'Inter-Services Research Bureau' (4) Other offices in the same area were gradually added as the H.Q. expanded.

(1) London War Diary Vol. I, pp. 31 and 54,

(2) Chart of M. Section as at February 1941 on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.1

(3) 5th Meeting of S.O. Board, 3rd October 1940. Copy on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) '103.a'.

(4) 7th Meeting of S.O. Board 10th October 1940. Copy on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) '103-a'.

These were the main points on which some stability in organisation had been reached by the spring of 1941; in other respects it was still very fluid:

- (a) The provision of a personal or 'high-level' planning staff to assist the head of an organisation is not a matter which can be settled by any simple formula, since so much depends on his personality; and there would be little point in working through the various solutions adopted by S.O.E. At this stage the position was particularly unsatisfactory, since the Intelligence and Planning Section, under Colonel Anstruther, had hardly yet recovered from the confusion created by the original Bureaux. Its theoretical role is set out in para. 8 of the 'Aide Memoire on S.O.2', submitted to the Joint Planning Committee on 26th March 1941. The first step in examining a project is that its appropriateness for S.O.2 should be considered by C.D. and his Council; the second stage is a decision on its feasibility in consultation with the Country Sections concerned. Only then does it pass to the Intelligence and Planning Section for the preparation of an appreciation, for which Brig. Gubbins' Training and Operations Section is jointly responsible. This does not give 'Planning' a position of much serious importance, and a more rational solution was reached in July 1941 (1) when Intelligence was

(1) CD/OR/317/AD of 2nd July 1941 Pt.1 para. 2. Copy on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) File 138.

separated from Planning, and Air Commodore Boyle (till then Director of Intelligence at the Air Ministry) took responsibility for the former, along with other duties.

Planning thereafter passed through various vicissitudes; first as a 'Chief of Staff's' office attached personally to C.D., later as virtually the liaison section with the C.O.S. and the J.P.S. It was only in this last phase that some stability was reached.

- (b) There was no Director of Personnel until the appointment of Air Commodore Boyle, who added this responsibility to that of the Intelligence Section.
- (c) An 'Admin' section under Major G. Courtauld existed from an early date. But this was concerned mainly with minor routine matters, and on larger issues each Directorate, Station or Section, had to look after itself; if no one inside the organisation could help, the Section itself went outside it. On the whole this method at first made for speed and good service, as an officer from S.O.E. could generally claim high priority for the relatively small facilities he required. But in the long run it created confusion intolerable in a large organisation, and the appointment of a Director of Organisation was very much overdue when the post was finally filled in November 1943 by Mr. M.P. Murray, then an Assistant Secretary in the Air Ministry.
- (d) It is also worth noting that, with the exception of a few Regular Army Officers, the whole staff from top to bottom was amateur, and the

SECRET

organisation lacked entirely the minor 'bureaucracies' of a Government department, which were provided as a matter of course for other new Ministries - for such in effect S.O.E. was. There was no Central Registry with the usual accessories of archives and library; no central filing system; no central branches for routine personnel matters, or for the allocation of rooms. This is something of a grievance to the historian, as papers were kept separately for each section; it is impossible to find any complete series of routine records, for organisation and duties, postings, movements, and so forth and there is not even a continuous record of policy decisions. There was some real justification for this on grounds of security, but the minor forms of 'red tape' were badly missed when the organisation grew to its full size. In the early stages they were hardly necessary, and they could not be introduced later without a dislocation which would have been intolerable.

A chart of the organisation of S.O.2 as it began to emerge from this first stage is given in Appendix B, which refers to March or April 1941. There is not much to be said for it as a theoretical distribution of the functions of a great department; but practice was a little better than theory. The 'old hands' of the organisation formed a fairly small and compact group, which was given formal existence as an executive council, whose title varied at different stages.

At the outset the old Inter-Services Projects Board was

SECRET

in effect continued as the D. Board (or S.O. Board), (1) including representatives of the Director of Combined Operations, S.O.1 and S.I.S., as well as the three Services liaison officers and the leading members of S.O.2. Its first meeting (2) was held on 30th August 1940, and some records are extant up to its 25th Meeting on 27th February 1941. (3) It is not clear that it was then formally abolished, but it had undoubtedly become too large and vague a body for anything more than 'inter-departmental co-ordination', alias pious platitude.

The effective organ was now the Committee of heads of branches, constituted as the 'S.O.2 Executive Committee' on 5th December 1940. (4) This was known as the 'Board of Directors' from November 1941, and simply as the S.O.E. Council' after February 1942: and it continued to meet with varying membership once or twice a week throughout S.O.E.'s history. It was in a real sense the Directorate of S.O.E. a corporate body of experienced persons - although formal responsibility rested solely on C.D. 'Council' was not the 'governing body' of S.O.E.; the chain of command and responsibility led from the Minister through C.D. to the Directors and their subordinates. But all major matters of organisation and policy (not necessarily of operations) were laid before it, and through it was expressed the 'corporate opinion' of the Department.

- (1) For this title see Minutes of 7th Meeting of the Board, para. 1, dated 10th October 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File 1/360/3.
- (2) See letter from C.E.O. to Col. Grand, ref: 0/1106/26 of 26th August 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File 1/360/3.
- (3) S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) '103/a'.
- (4) See CD/XX/42/PA of 30th November 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.1 convening first meeting and giving list of those summoned: see also CD's Minute of 1st December 1940, on S.O.F. Archives File (AD/S.1) HP/138.

SECRET

2. THE DEFINITION OF POLICY

In a sense the settlement of policy was at this stage a matter of secondary importance, as no instrument yet existed with which to execute it. But the early discussions of the role of S.O.E. still possess more than academic interest.

'The Fourth Arm'

The first step is to be found in Mr. Dalton's paper of 19th August (1) entitled 'The Fourth Arm', which was discussed by the Vice-Chiefs of Staff on 21st August. (2). The bulk of this paper is concerned with questions of organisation and liaison which are dealt with elsewhere, but, its opening paragraphs contain some general principles of great importance. Their drift is best seen by Putting together a few sentences from the paper itself. 'The Germans have shown that success in war can, to a large extent, be achieved by "Subversion", by which I mean not only propaganda, but subversive activities in the widest sense .. , Subversion, I suggest, is an essential element in any large-scale offensive action: per contra, it is of little or no value when the main strategy is defensive ... Indeed, I imagine that such considerations are now very nearly axiomatic.'

It has, I think, already been laid down by the Chiefs Of Staff that, if we are to win the war, we must, at some stage, pass to the offensive on the Continent of Europe. The preparation for such an offensive is naturally the business of the Fighting Services, but it is probable, to say the least, that their plans will be very materially assisted if Subversion is Planned on the broadest scale now.,

- (1) Annex I to the Prjnt circulated in October 1940, On S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1.
- (2) C.O.S.(40)276th Mtg. Item 2 of 21st August 1940.

'During the last fortnight I ... have reached certain general conclusions. One is that the selection of the right men is even more important than the creation of the right machine. Another is that I shall be able to achieve little or nothing unless I have the confidence and the cooperation of the Fighting Services ... A third conclusion is that it will be essential for my activities to be within the framework of some strategical plan. I have no views on strategy as such, and I shall certainly not attempt to formulate any. But clearly I must be told what not to do as well as, within broad limits, what I am to do - My last conclusion (which is really elementary) is that no one of the Fighting Services is in a better position than another to run "Subversion". It seems to follow from this that Subversion should be clearly recognised by all three Fighting Services as another and independent service'.

The Vice-Chiefs of Staff recorded that they 'found themselves in general agreement with the organisation as set out in Mr. Dalton's paper', and discussed in detail only the question of Service, Liaison Officers on the ID. Board'. Their attention was clearly not directed to the far-reaching implications of Mr. Dalton's axioms, and in particular not to his claim that Subversion was in effect a "Fourth Service". Mr. Dalton himself had not pressed this very far: he had not claimed for his organisation a share in strategic decisions - it would have been laughable to make such a claim for an organisation which did not yet exist even on paper - and he had left much of the propaganda field in the hands of the Ministry of Information. But the logic is difficult to evade. It can fairly be held that Subversion in the widest sense is

SECRET

one of the major arms of modern war and that it cannot be handled as a side-line by one of the Fighting Services. The implication of this must be that the Head of Subversion is entitled to a status equal to that of the other Chiefs of staff. and that his subordinates must be consulted on each level in the preparation Of the strategic plan.

This logic did not work out so clearly in practice. For one thing S.O.E. never attained an inclusive control of Subversion. Later, when it had grown to maturity as an organisation, its claim to rank as a Fourth Service was taken up more earnestly; but propaganda was by that time entirely outside its scope, and the Foreign Office had reasserted control over 'the political aspects of its work. S.O.E. was charged only with the Organisation of sabotage and the preparation of guerilla warfare - a very large and important task, but not in itself comparable with that of any of the three Fighting Services and certainly not sufficient to sustain an equality of status with them. The second difficulty is more theoretical, but not without practical implications. The position of the Chiefs of Staff as a technical advisory committee rests an the assumption that the Fighting Services are concerned with the means and not with the end; that a clear distinction can be drawn between the objects of strategy and its technique - the first is for the political Cabinet, the second for the Chiefs of Staff. This distinction is not easy to sustain even for the Fighting Services in modern war, but it is a lifeline to which they must cling; if it gives way, the soldier is merged in the politician, and the tradition of the 'profession of arms' is broken.

SECRET

It would be almost impossible to make such a distinction for a Subversive Service in the full sense, charged with policy and execution, both for propaganda and for the resistance which breeds in ground made fertile by propaganda. Policy in these respects is concerned with war aims, not with war strategy; at every step it raises the question of what situation is, to be aimed at 'after the war'. Shall we strengthen the Left, or the Right, or the Centre? Is it our policy to reduce an enemy country to ideological and political chaos on which nothing can be re-built? Unless we are to accept the political nihilism which was Hitler's policy for every country except his own (and which eventually involved his own), these questions are for the highest political authority to decide; they go far beyond even the scope of the Foreign Office as it is usually conceived, and 'technical advice' from a reorganised Chiefs of Staff would advance matters very little.

These questions are indicated here because they raise the most complex of all the issues illustrated in the story of S.O.E. For the moment we are concerned with the practical problems of the autumn of 1940, debated to the accompaniment of the Battle for Britain and the first of the 'winter blitzes' of 1940-41.

Some indications of policy can be gathered from reports (1) by Mr. Dalton to Mr. Attlee (on 16th August) and to the Prime Minister (on 2nd September), but these papers are mainly concerned with organization, and some time was required in which to frame a policy formally for submission to the

(1) On S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)

Extract from C.O.S. (40)683 of 4th September, Paras. 195 -199.

195. The review of the state of readiness and ability of the enemy peoples and subject populations to rise in revolt, contained in paragraphs 51 to 57, has indicated that with the exception of Poland and Czechoslovakia none of these countries is likely, from its own resources, to initiate risings on an effective scale. Nevertheless, the stimulation of the subversive tendencies already latent in most countries is likely to prove a valuable contributory factor towards the defeat of Germany. By such means the enemy will be compelled to increase his armies of occupation and to make inroads into the resources required for offensive operations elsewhere. A general uprising, coinciding with major operations by our forces, may finally assist to bring about his defeat.

196. Subversive operations must be regarded as a strictly supplementary course of action, and must conform with regular operations undertaken as a part of our strategic plans.

197. The objectives of subversive operations will be as follows:-

- (a) Sabotage of key plants, commodities and communications, to supplement the effects of the blockade and air attack.
- (b) The containing and extending of as many of the enemy's forces as possible, thus forcing him to expend his military resources.

SECRET

- (c) The preparation of the requisite conditions for a general rising of subject populations to synchronize with the final military pressure we exert on Germany and Italy or to coincide with land operations in any particular theatre.

198. Successful results will require careful planning and detailed organisation. If successful revolts are to be organised in German-occupied territories the following conditions must be fulfilled:-

- (a) Adequate preparations to provide the necessary material and physical assistance and support for the revolts. The provision of this support must be clear beyond all doubt.
- (b) A carefully prepared scheme of propaganda.
- (c) A clear policy as to the economic and political future of Europe.

199. It will be important to ensure that subversive movements should not be allowed to break out spontaneously in areas that individually become ripe for revolt, No appreciable results can be expected in the early future and we should organise these activities On a large Scale so that they are timed to mature in relation to regular operations undertaken as a part of our general policy, In the interim we should endeavour to obtain the assistance of individuals and small factions to carry out sabotage and to co-operate with our harassing action on the enemy coasts.'

There is a considerable difference of emphasis between this passage and the earlier references to subversion in the days of June (1), when it ranked with sea power and air power as

(1) Quoted above P. 90.

an essential to the defeat of Germany - the only means by which the necessary manpower could be found in the final crisis. There is now a much more cautious estimate of the difficulties and possibilities of revolt; and its importance has been reduced to that of - 'a valuable contributory factor' which 'may finally assist to bring about the enemy's defeat'. The solution contemplated was now American participation in the war, and not a European rising: American opinion had moved a long way since June - the Destroyer/Bases deal was announced on 3rd September 1940, and the U.S.A. were now scraping the bottom of the barrel to find arms for Britain. It was therefore not as pessimistic as it might seem to include Para. 207 - 'We believe that the active belligerency of the United States has become essential for a successful prosecution and conclusion of the war. Without this it is difficult to see how or when we can pass from a grim defence to a resolute offence.'

Review of S.O.2's Assets

In some ways the most important of the other papers is C.D.'s review (1) of the resources he had inherited, which strongly reinforced this more modest view of the possibilities of subversion. The results of the paper can be tabulated very simply—

THIS 19A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4)
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

<u>Country</u>	<u>Agents in the Country</u>	<u>Notes</u>
U. S. A.	3	
S. America	Nil	
Eire	Nil	
ITon,iay	Nil	(6 or 8 Norwegians in training)

- (I) See also a similar review by Major Taylor on 11th November 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1.

SECRET

129.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Agents in the Country</u>	<u>Notes</u>
.Sweden	Nil	(2 D. agents in gaol)
Finland	Nil	(except a man trying to buy the s.s. 'Ulea', see above P. 10)
Holland	Nil	
Belgium	Nil	
France	Nil	(some chance of reviving contact with 5eme Bureau in Lisbon)
Switzerland	Nil	THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT
Portugal	Nil	
Spain	Nil	
French Africa	Nil	
Italy	Nil	(except for Slovene Irredentists in Istria)
Poland	Nil	(this was M.I.(R)'s concern, as was Czechoslovakia)
Hungary	3	
Yugoslavia	9 British 3 Serbs	'Definitely the best of our organisations'
Roumania	7 British	
Bulgaria	Nil	(banned by H.M. Minister)
Greece	7	
Turkey	6	H.Q. of Balkan OrCanisntion
Middle East	Vague	Control vested in C. - in-C. M. E.
Russia and Far Earit	Nil	

or

These figures speak for themselves.

Brig. van Cutsem's contribution was a very sound technical analysis of what ought to be sabotaged, doubtless written in ignorance of the facts set.out above; it was to take two years of hard work to bring its proposals within the range of practical

SECRET

Maj. Taylor on organisation

politics. Major Taylor's paper on the other hand is directed to the immediate problem of organisation, and his specific proposals were rather important in the first phase of S.O.2's development. They include much detail which need not be covered here, but the following points of policy are significant:

- (a) There should be a basic distinction between a 'Special Projects Force' and a 'Field Force'. The former would consist of a relatively small force of selected 'toughs' of all nationalities, who would be trained and held in readiness for 'butcher-and-bolt raids of a type more irregular than those of Combined Operations. They should be under a first-class British leader.' This force would be the only weapon available for the execution of sabotage until the Field Force had been patiently built up, and it was therefore essential at present; but even later it would have a valuable part to play. The Field Force on the other hand would consist essentially of local and permanent organisations in the occupied countries. 'It cannot be too strongly emphasised that under present conditions we are, for subversive work, almost entirely dependent upon the support of such local underground organisations Our object must therefore be to lay down as our Field Force a network of agents who will get in touch with all the organisations (mostly underground) which are prepared to work against the common enemy The ultimate object of the whole of this work must be to raise

SECRET

Europe against German domination at the moment when the hold of the German army upon the Continent can be seen to be weakening,'

- (c) 'It is my view that these Field organisations in the Balkans area, (as yet unoccupied) 'will become less and less concerned with direct sabotage projects, and more and more concerned with the development of their contacts with anti-German organisations in the various countries and the fostering and directing of their activities.'

These three points are all illustrated with some accuracy by what followed.

Mr. Jebb on 'Subversion'

Mr. Jebb's paper was for the most part a condensation of the earlier papers in a form suitable for outside circulation, but it is worth noting that it does not in any way disguise the nakedness of the land: 'For the moment, and probably for some time to come, we are simply not in a position to effect any major sabotage operation in Western Europe (1) ... or do anything at all in these areas beyond sending in an occasional man for the principal purpose of collecting our own type of intelligence'. Its main new contribution is on the political side. Here Mr. Jebb's ultimate aim was a Europe which would, under the guidance of Britain and the U.S.A., gradually grow more conscious of its own unity of history and of interest. But, in the short run 'what really counts at this time, when the spirit of Europe, its mind and intelligence, have been very nearly broken, is simply Power; Power and the ability to provide people with bread ... There is surely no objection to our employing any particular slogan at any time and in any place which may seem desirable. We may even find it necessary, in certain countries, to encourage the Right and the Left simultaneously.' This line of action was never then or

(1) Underlined in the original.

SECRET

afterwards formally endorsed on a higher level, but it was followed in action with reasonable consistency, partly for the sake of immediate practical objectives, partly because it made it possible to evade problems which seemed insoluble. Whether it was the best policy, morally or practically, is a controversy not likely to be set at rest for a long time to come.

The First C. O. S. Directive to S.O.2

The issues involved on the Propaganda side were being handled separately through S.O.1, and discussions in which the Minister took part led through the Joint Planners to the Chiefs of Staff, and finally to the approval by the War Cabinet of a paper on Propaganda Policy put forward jointly by the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Economic Warfare and the Chiefs of Staff. (1) There is little in this to affect S.O.2 directly, but the S.O.2 papers already mentioned led up to the preparation of a similar directive for violent subversion. The Joint Planners were at work on this early in November in consultation with Mr. Broad and Brig. van Cutsem, and while it was in preparation (2) Sir Frank Nelson attended a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff on 12th November (3) and gave a general review of the situation of his organisation. The Chiefs of Staff paper on 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', which arose out of this meeting, constituted S.O.2's formal directive for the first phase of its activity. The Chiefs of Staff express rather unwonted enthusiasm for subversion – 'We are very conscious of the important and even decisive part which subversive activities may play in our strategy ... We

- (1) The refs. are C. O. S. (40)858(J.P.) of 23rd October
C.O.S.(40)375th Mtg. Item 1 of 5th November, W.P.(40)444 of
15th November, and W.M. (40)292nd Wtg. of 20th November.
- (2) As J.P.(40)631(S).
- (3) C.O.S.(40)386th Item 2 of 12th November.

SECRET

feel that if we are to exploit the use of subversive activities to the full, these activities must be planned on a very big and comprehensive scale. Our aim, in fact, should be to get subversive activities laid on and ready for execution in all areas where there is any chance that they may be needed, so that, wherever the fortune of war may require action, the ground will be prepared in advance.' The detailed programme put forward corresponds to this introduction; the long list can be roughly summarised as follows:-

Priority 1 Italian morale.

Railway traffic between Italy and Switzerland (1)

Communications and supplies of enemy forces in France, Belgium and Holland.

Communications from Roumania to Germany and Italy.

Enemy communications in the Middle East, and oil.

Preparations to destroy communications in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Ditto. in Spain and Portugal.

Preparations for cooperation with our own forces in the Atlantic Islands, Tangier; the Balearics, Spanish Morocco and S. Spain.

Enemy shipping in neutral ports.

Priority 2 Preparations for cooperation with our own forces in Tunisia, Sicily, Sardinia and S. Italy.

Priority 3 Similar preparation in S. Norway, Brittany, Cherbourg and the Bordeaux area. Ditto. in Holland and Belgium.

It is difficult to decide whether S.O.2 were wrong to accept such a directive. It bore no relation to their existing resources, the poverty of which had been freely confessed, and it tended to

- (1) A paper on this subject was put up to the C.O.S. (i.e. C.O.S.(40)9(0) of 28th September, and considered at C.O.S.(40)345th Mtg Item 1 of 11th October. S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.) SC/48.2 also refers.

SECRET

lead to excessive claims later in an attempt to measure up to the task, But the strategic sequence of the programme was sound enough - as witnessed by later events - and no organisation could refuse to assume power and responsibility offered to it for a task in which it believed profoundly.

This first phase of policy formation may be suitably concluded by quotation from a letter (1) which the Prime Minister addressed to Mr. Dalton on 20th January 1941, in reply to a report by the Minister. 'Pray press on with any useful scheme to cause trouble to the enemy in his own country or occupied territories. Should you meet opposition from any of your colleagues in regard to any special scheme about which you hold strong views, I shall always be glad to give the matter my personal consideration if you will bring it to my notice ... Local action .. and the organisation in occupied territories of passive resistance to the enemy may embarrass enemy plans out of all proportion to the energy expended or the risk of loss incurred ... As a result of the Defence Meeting (1) on Monday last you are now empowered to proceed urgently with action to prevent Roumanian. oil reaching Germany. If you wish for authority to pursue other major plans elsewhere I shall be glad to consider them.'

With such encouragement, S.O.2 had some excuse for a lively sense of its own importance and of the obstructive lethargy of older departments.

(1) D.O.(41) 3rd Mtg. of January 13th. No record of this point in Minutes.

3. INTER-DEPARTMENTAL RELATIONS

The C.O.S. and the Service Departments

These debates on policy raised another problem, that of S.O.E.'s appropriate sphere of action, in relation to those of other departments, and of the mechanics of cooperation between departments.

As regards the Chiefs of Staff and the Service Departments, the matter was handled, at least in London, as one of mutual assistance rather than of rivalry. The principles of a solution were fairly simple and were established early: there was a good deal of controversy about the details of their operation, but the system itself was never seriously disturbed.

These main principles were -

- (a) 'Advisers', or liaison officers, should be appointed by the Service Departments to live and work within S.O.E.
- (b) These representatives should be full members of the 'Inner Council' of S.O.E., should have free access to all the facts, and should be entitled to state their views at an early stage in the formulation of plans.
- (c) The converse of these arrangements was that C.D. himself, or officers on his behalf, should have direct access to the Joint Planning Committee or to the Joint Intelligence Committee on any matters that concerned the department, and should be fully aware of the general strategic 'picture' and of any particular operations under consideration. If necessary, C.D. should be invited by the Chiefs of Staff to be present when matters affecting S.O.E. were discussed. S.O.E. sometimes went so far as

to demand equal participation in all the work of the Chiefs of Staff and their Sub-Committees; but this was never within the sphere of practical politics, and the looser system proved perfectly adequate so long as personal relations were good.

D.C.O. There was however one special case which might have raised 'boundary disputes' with the Services, that of Director of Combined Operations, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Keyes, with whom Mr. Dalton opened discussions on 20th July 1940. (1) The territory of Director of Combined operations was ill-defined and potentially unlimited, and there might have been difficulties if the Director had been another man. But subversive warfare was the last thing to which Sir Roger was likely to turn his hand, and in any case his mind was nudging on projects quite beyond the scale of S.O.E.'s ideas. (2) A rather vague but amicable 'agreement' was concluded in December 1940. (3) The clearest point which emerges is that D.C.O.'s raids will normally be made by parties of 50 or more British troops, to be withdrawn after the operation, whereas S.O.E.'s operations will be primarily carried out by not more than 30 men, usually foreigners and capable of 'fading into the landscape': apart from this, the 'agreement' deals only with informal co-operation on training, intelligence, equipment and so forth. At this stage Cdr. Fletcher, M.P. sat as the Director of Combined

- (1) Letters of 20th, 22nd and 23rd July 1940, on S.O.E. Archives File 2/340/3.0 (destroyed)
- (2) Para. 5 of Mr. Dalton's paper of 19th August, 1940.
- (2) PA/XX/95 of 14th December: copy on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) SC/75. See also record of meeting between Col. Davies and Capt. Knox, R.N. on 16th December (same file).

SECRET

Operations' representative on the 'S.O. Board': but the Board disappeared in February 1941, and for the time being no formal liaison was left, (1)

The Foreign Office

The Foreign Office was to raise very serious difficulties later, but at first it showed little uneasiness about the position. It had itself concurred readily in the creation of S.O.E. ;Mr. Dalton, himself a former Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was advised by a former Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Robert Vansittart, who still worked within the Foreign Office: his principal aides, both in S.O.1 and S.O.2, were active members of the Foreign Service. This seemed to give the essentials of control, and there was no attempt at first to create more formal machinery.

The S.I.S.

The S.I.S. had equally been acquiescent in the creation of S.O.E. ;but C.S.S.'s agreement had been given only under the mistaken impression that he would retain full administrative control of D. Section, (2) and he saw serious difficulties when it became clear that the divorce was to be complete. Sir Frank Nelson was however familiar with the S.I.S. side of this issue, and a first agreement (3) was reached without much trouble on 15th September 1940. It presupposes that 'D. is intimately associated with C. both on historical and on practical grounds, and if he is to function efficiently, it must be with the friendly cooperation of C.': and it provides rules to cover Projects, Transport, Communications, Spheres of Interest and Recruitment of Agents. On the first two, the rules only provide

(1) See further below P. 553.

(2) See memorandum written by Cdr. Arnold-Forster after D. Board meeting of 30th August 1940, and C.S.S.'s letter of 4th September 1940, both on S.O.E. Archives File 1/460/1.

(3) Printed as Annex II to Mr. Jebb's Subversion Paper of 5th October 1940, or, S.O.E. Archives File 1/470/1: see also File 1/470/14.

for reference to 'higher authority' in the event of disputed priorities - and in fact there was no common higher authority below the Chiefs of Staff and the Defence Committee of the War Cabinet. On the other three points D. (i.e. S.O.2) is strictly limited: W/T traffic will be handled through C., who will have liberty to reject it: any intelligence collected by D. must be passed to C. before circulation even within D.: D. may take the initiative in recruiting agents, but may not proceed further without C's consent. These limitations were very reasonable from the point of view of C.S.S., as the advocate of a single centralised Secret Service, in the interests of good administration, good security, and good intelligence; but experience very soon showed that they were incompatible with the licence to grow which had already been given to S.O.E. by the War Cabinet. The dispute came to a head early in 1942, and was then in part adjusted: but incompatibility of temperament remained to the end.

Propaganda S.O.2 began early to fight for freedom from control by S.I.S.; conversely it was the proponent of centralisation as against S.O.1, which soon became anxious to have its own representatives in countries overseas, and to put agents in the field itself in order to spread propaganda and to report on its effects. The original understanding was that all 'operations' beyond the shores of England were a matter for S.O.2. (1) S.O.1, in its later guise as P.W.E., fought hard on this issue and secured the right to establish its own missions in friendly territory overseas, (2), but it was never allowed to establish

- (1) Minute from C.E.O. to Mr. Leeper, ref. 0/26 of 21st December 1940: copy on S.O.E. Archives File 1/270/3.
- (2) Below P. 578 ff.

a third Secret Service (a fourth if we include M.I.9), although many agents trained jointly by S.O.E. and the political Warfare Executive were sent into the field under S.O.E.'s auspices to perform tasks designated by the P.W.E.

The M.O.I. and the origins of P.W.E.

- This frontier dispute was interlocked with that between S.O.1 and the Ministry of Information; an organisation much buffeted in the first year of the war, which was now (under Mr. Duff Cooper) fighting hard to gain some efficacy and prestige. The controversy concerned control of subversive propaganday not of operations, and it is therefore not directly relevant to the narrower field to which S.O.E. was eventually reduced. But some account of it is essential to explain the early collapse of the original conception of a union of propaganda and subversive operations as a single weapon of war, and it will be convenient to introduce this here although it leads us some distance forward into 1941.

The first step was taken in a memorandum (1) circulated by Mr. Duff Cooper on 18th July 1940 to the Prime Minister, the Lord president, the Foreign Secretary and Mr. Dalton. In this paper the Minister attacks the old organisation both on administrative grounds, and because it rested on an illogical distinction between propaganda to enemy and occupied countries (Electra House) and propaganda to unoccupied countries (Ministry of Information). As a remedy he proposed -

(1) On S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) 'CD/I.10/2a' .

- (a) to make a distinction between European and non-European, and not between occupied and unoccupied; the whole propaganda side of Electra House should be 'fused with the Foreign Policy Department' of the Ministry of Information, which would be headed by a senior diplomat.
- (b) that all open propaganda 'that is to say, propaganda by leaflet and by broadcasting should remain' (sic) 'under the Ministry of Information'.

What this amounts to is that the Ministry of Information is to be given sole charge (under the Foreign Office) Of all propaganda policy and that the new S.O.E. will be its agent in the limited role of distributor through 'black' channels. The idea of a 'Ministry of Subversion' would go by the board; the decision taken in W.P.(40)271 is challenged even before it has been formally placed on record. The ruling given in that paper, that S.O.E. should 'coordinate all action, by way of subversion or sabotage, against the enemy overseas' is at first sight flat and unqualified: but 'subversion' is not defined, and a loophole can be found in a later paragraph of the paper where the reference is to 'secret subversive propaganda', a hint perhaps that 'non-secret subversive propaganda' would be outside Mr. Dalton's control.

The first stage of the argument was decided by a meeting between Mr. Dalton and Mr. Duff Cooper on 1st August, and by an agreement which arose from it. (1) Mr. Dalton's

- (1) See Mr. Dalton's Aide Memoire of 1st August, his letter of 2nd August with Memorandum of agreement, the revised version in Mr. Duff Cooper's letter of 3rd August; Mr. Dalton's letter of 3rd August and Mr. Duff Cooper's of 6th and 15th August: all in S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/I. 10/2a.

SECRET

SECRET

initial position was in essence the converse of Mr. Duff Cooper's though perhaps a shade less possessive. S.O.E. would assume sole responsibility for all propaganda to enemy and enemy-occupied territories, including the whole of France, and her possessions in Africa; but the Ministry of Information would deal with the rest of the world. The solution reached in August 1940 was an unhappy compromise, doubtless accepted (as Mr. Dalton said later) because the immediate problems of S.O.E. were a sufficient burden for any man. The vital point is in Para. 1 of the Agreement: 'From a practical point of view the best dividing line would be between those activities which might be discussed in Parliament and those which might not. Mr. Duff Cooper would control the former, Mr. Dalton the latter. Thus public broadcasts which anyone might listen to must fall on one side of the line, while leaflets and the Country House, regarding both of which it has been laid down that Parliament would be refused information, must fall on the other'. As a corollary (Para. 3) 'Mr. Duff Cooper would be free to establish in his Ministry Sections or Departments dealing with all foreign countries and Mr. Dalton likewise would be free to undertake with the knowledge and approval of Mr. Duff Cooper appropriate activities, not only in enemy and enemy-occupied countries but in neutral territories. 1

It would surely be hard to invent, 'from a practical point of view', any less workable arrangement than this division of propaganda policy between two parallel organisations, one 'overt' and the other 'covert', both covering the entire field. It was certain that there would be further controversy very soon.

SECRET

SECRET

142.

The first re-statement of S.O.E.'s claim is to be found in Memoranda of 11th and 18th October, (1) on the second of which the Minister has minuted 'hold in suspense, till D. gets under way'. Soundings 'on the official level' were quite ineffectual, and the issue was forced to the notice of Ministers by a Cabinet decision of 18th November to set up a Committee under the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Kingsley Wood) to examine 'what changes, if any, were necessary in the constitution and management of the B.B.C., in order to insure its effective control by H.M.G.' (2) This was important because in practice open B.B.C. broadcasts were the only means of propaganda to the enemy and to occupied territory at the Ministry of Information's disposal; and the controversy therefore turned fundamentally on control of the policy of these broadcasts, although it strayed into many side-issues. The immediate result of the battle of memoranda which followed was the appointment (by the Prime Minister) of Sir John Anderson (then Lord President of the Council) to arbitrate on the frontier dispute(3) since the Cabinet Committee concerned held that this vital point was outside its terms of reference.

The opposing points of view may be indicated briefly.

Mr. Dalton was strong (4) - indeed impregnable - in theory: 'all subversive activity should be under unified control', he had been entrusted with such control, and 'subversion ... clearly should include all propaganda having a subversive object'.

(1) One by Mr. Gaitskell, the other unsigned (? by Mr. Leeper), both on S.O.E.

Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/I. 10/2a.

(2) W.M. (40)290 Item 4 of 18th November.

(3) Mr. Dalton's note of 18th December, on S.O.E. Archives File (.AD/S.1) CD/I. 10/2a.

(4) Paper of 15th December, on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/I.10/2a.

SECRET

143.

But practical considerations made it hard for him to suggest that all propaganda should be transferred from the Ministry Of Information to S.O.E., and short of this it was not easy to find a logical halting-place. One of the gravest problems in constitutional theory is to distinguish between subversion (which must be judged criminal) and fair political persuasion, which is the essence of free government; and even arbitration by Sir John Anderson was not likely to produce a definition which would end that controversy. Mr. Dalton's practical proposal was that he should be responsible for all enemy and enemy-occupied territory, to which he added any other country in which H.M.G. desired to create subversion - the Foreign Secretary to pronounce in each case whether H.M.G.'s policy was or was not 'subversive'.

Mr. Duff Cooper also opened his argument with a large generalisation; 'all propaganda should, if possible, be directed by one Department in order that control may be centralised and a consistent policy pursued' (1) - a proposition which Mr. Dalton could neither refute nor follow to its logical conclusion. From this premise it was easy for him to make hay of distinctions between 'subversive' and 'non-subversive' propaganda, or between occupied and unoccupied territory. But his paper ends with a more practical and more conclusive argument - 'All foreign propaganda should be controlled by one Department, that Department may be the Ministry of Information, or the Ministry of Economic Warfare, but if it be transferred to the latter, the activities of the Ministry of Information would be so reduced as hardly to justify its continuance as a separate Department of State'.

(1) Paper of 13th December, on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/I.10/2a.

SECRET

SECRET

144.

It is clear from Sir John Anderson's letter (1) of 23rd December that his terms of reference were based on this premise - 'I should find it difficult to reconcile with the continued existence of Ministry of Information the removal of "open" broadcasts of any character from the sphere of their responsibility'; the result of his enquiry was therefore prejudged within narrow limits, and it served little purpose except to keep the status quo in being for a time. There were some sporadic and ineffective discussions between officials, but no progress was made until in March 1941 disputes arose within the Foreign (Allied) Resistance Committee (2) regarding the control of policy for propaganda to France. There were renewed Cabinet discussions, and the Lord President was again called upon to arbitrate. (3) He met Mr. Duff Cooper and Mr. Dalton on 16th May, and embodied his conclusions in a memorandum (4) dated 19th May; but Mr. Duff Cooper then fell sick and it was some time before his comments were available. The interval was enlivened by discussion of a minor 'gaffe' by the Prime Minister on 15th May, when he admitted in reply to a Supplementary Question (5) in the House of Commons that there were some propaganda questions on which the Ministry of Economic Warfare might answer in the House - in spite of the clear Cabinet ruling that S.O.E. should not be the subject of Parliamentary discussion.

- (1) On S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/I.10/2-a.
- (2) The "Morton Committee".
- (3) See Garnett's P.W.E. History, Vol. II p. 67.
- (4) S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/I.10/2a.
- (5) Hansard, 15th May 1941.

SECRET

The 'Anderson Award', which was finally submitted to the Prime Minister on 4th June, (1) was in the end merely an endorsement of the old distinction between 'overt' and 'covert' propaganda; the only change was that the Foreign Office secured a rather distant responsibility for the formulation of propaganda Policy. The Lord President did indeed suggest that there should be various coordinating Committees, ranging from a Standing Ministerial Committee to working committees for countries and groups of countries; but no-one believed much in the value of 'coordination', and there was no visible effect except the appointment of Mr. Bruce Lockhart as the Foreign Office's 'Coordinator of Propaganda'. The Award was overtaken almost at once by another 'Ministry of Information crisis', brought on by the imminence of a debate in the Commons. (2) Lord Beaverbrook this time made a personal investigation, on behalf of the Prime Minister, which gave rise to much Cabinet discussion: (3) but he decided at once that the Anderson Award should stand, (4) and the rest of the controversy did not involve S.O.E.

But the respite was very brief, two meetings of Mr. Bruce Lockhart's Standing Committee are recorded, (5) and then the whole issue was reopened by Mr. Brendon Bracken; Mr. Bracken had been appointed to the Ministry of Information (on 20th July) in consequence of the Commons debate. of 3rd July (6) in which

- (1) Minute by Sir John Anderson on S.O.E. File(AD/S.1) CD/I.10/2a.
- (2) Mr. Duff Cooper minuted the Prime Minister on 6th June about all the troubles of his Dept. Copy on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/I. 10/2a.
- (3) W. P.(41)137 of 21 st June, W.P.(41)139 of 24th June, W.P.(41)142 of 26th June, W.P.(41)147 of 28th June, W.M.(41)64th Mtg., Item 7, Of 30th June, and W.P.(41)149 of 2nd July refer.
- (4) Minutes from Lord Beaverbrook to Prime Minister d/d 11th June, on S.O.E. Archives File CD/I.10/2a.
- (5) See letter from Mr. Eden to Mr. Dalton d/d 4th July 1941, and Minutes of Meetings on 20th July and 1st August: all on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/P.5/23.
- (6) Hansard, 3rd July 1941. - Cols. 1529 ff.

SECRET

146.

no-one had a good word to say for our propaganda services. He opened the campaign by circulating on 31st July the draft of a Cabinet Paper proposing the creation of a Department of Political Warfare, 'to be regarded as a secret body, furnished with officers and a secretariat independent of any Ministry', with 'the right to create and lay down policy for every Government organ concerned with political warfare' - i.e. for the B.B.C. European Services and for S.O.1 as well as for some parts of the Ministry of Information. This new Department should be supervised by the existing Ministerial Committee, (the Foreign Secretary, Ministry of Information and Ministry of Economic Warfare), and should be directed by an Executive Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. Bruce Lockhart (B.B.C.), and consisting of Brig. Brooks (M. of I.), Mr. Kirkpatrick (B. B.C.), Mr. Leeper (S.O.1.) and Major Desmond Morton. This is curiously reminiscent of the old Inter-Services Projects Board - a Committee with license to become a Department by recruiting its own staff - but at least it gave some hope of progress, in that the Ministry of Information made it clear that it was at last prepared to surrender part of its responsibilities to an autonomous department provided that other Ministries did likewise. Matters were driven forward with great rapidity by Mr. Bracken, seconded by Mr. Bruce Lockhart's Committee and by judicious pressure in the Commons. (1) On 8th August the Foreign Secretary, the Minister of Information and the

- (1) cf. Cdr. King-Hall's demand for a Political Warfare Department: Hansard 5th August (a question which received a negativ reply) and 6th August, Col. 1991 (in a general war debate). Doubtless the question was also ventilated in the Press, but I have not pursued this.

SECRET

Minister of Economic Warfare met and reached cautious agreement on principles; (1) an official Committee was set up under Mr. Bruce Lockhart to consider ways and means; by 19th August (2) this Committee had produced a specific plan for amalgamation. The Ministerial Committee met and blessed this on 21st August, in face of some protest from Mr. Dalton, (3) and the official Committee - now the Executive Committee - was authorised to begin work at once. A minute dated 27th August and initialled by Mr. Bracken and Mr. Dalton authorised it to prepare arrangements 'for the complete fusion of the personnel of the Ministry of Information, the B.B.C. and S.O.1 now engaged in propaganda in war zones'. (4)

The Committee's proposals were ready on 1st September, and were endorsed at once, (5) subject only to the proviso by Mr. Dalton that 'all activities of the Political Warfare Executive outside Great Britain will be conducted through the medium of the Special Operations Executive' (6).

- (1) Letter from Eden to Dalton d/d 8th August on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/P.5/23 and attached memorandum. This latter document, which was initialled by the Prime Minister on 1 9th August on his return from 'Arcadia', was regarded by P.W.E. as its foundation charter.
- (2) On S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/P.5/23.
- (3) Letter, Dalton to Eden d/d 20th August, on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/P.5/23.
- (4) On same file as Ref. (3).
- (5) The formation of the Political Warfare Executive (P.W.E.) was announced by the Prime Minister on 11h September in answer to a question by Cdr. King.-Hall.
- (6) Mr. Jebb's Minute of 5th September on S.O.E. Archives File (AD/S.1) CD/P.5/23. This minute also makes the point that the old S.O.E. no longer exists, and that the title should now pass to S.O.2.

S. 0. 1 was therefore at an end, and we are concerned now only with S.0.2, which inherited the title 'S.O.E.' It was a sad breach of principle that the great idea of Subversion should have fallen to pieces, leaving two independent departments united only by that most tenuous of bonds, a Ministerial Committee. But the separation was a relief from sore frustration, and it is worth repeating the unanimous opinion of the Executive Committee 'based on intimate knowledge of all the facts,

- (1) that for twelve months the energy of our whole propaganda effort which should have been directed against the enemy has been largely dissipated in inter-departmental intrigues and strife-
- (2) that in view of the fact that to-day propaganda is assuming new and vital importance which has been recognised by the Defence Committee it is imperative this deplorable state of affairs should be ended immediately.'