



# **POLITICAL WARFARE**

**Lessons Learned from the Cold War**

**by Chris Black**

# WHY POLITICAL WARFARE?

- Gray Zones
- CJCS Dunford – “insufficient to deal with that dynamic”
- On-going debate – “what can we do?”
- Boot and Doran in *Foreign Affairs* – “wage political warfare”
- Nadia Schadlow – “US is in a global argument”

# RESEARCH QUESTION AND THESIS

- What can we learn from Truman and Eisenhower administrations on organizing to conduct political warfare?
- Psychological Strategy Board (Truman) and the Operations Coordination Board (Eisenhower)
- Why were they formed? How they operated? Lessons learned?
- Thesis – recommend an inter-agency policy coordination committee (PCC) be formed on the NSC

# TWO NOTES

- Confusion of terms political warfare, propaganda, covert, information operations
- Focus of paper is the organizational structure needed to conduct political warfare



# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

## Cold War

A state of political hostility between countries characterized by threats, propaganda, and other measures short of open warfare, in particular.

- Post WWII
- Shift in thinking on Stalin
- Containment 1946
- Truman Doctrine
- Marshall Plan
- Avoid war while countering Soviets
- Soviet Efforts



# KENNAN & THE COLD WAR

April 30, 1948 memo "Organizing  
Political warfare"



# HOW TO CONDUCT POLITICAL WARFARE?

- General agreement
- How and who would be responsible?
- Patchwork of NSC policy memos
- Growing recognition to have a single organization



# ITALIAN ELECTIONS 1948

- US concern Communists would win
- Backed the Christian Democrat Alcide De Gasperi
- Confusing, Ad Hoc
- He went on to win

Italian police dispersing some of 50,000 Communists who had gathered to disrupt a rally of the Rightist Italian Social Movement -- Rome - 1948



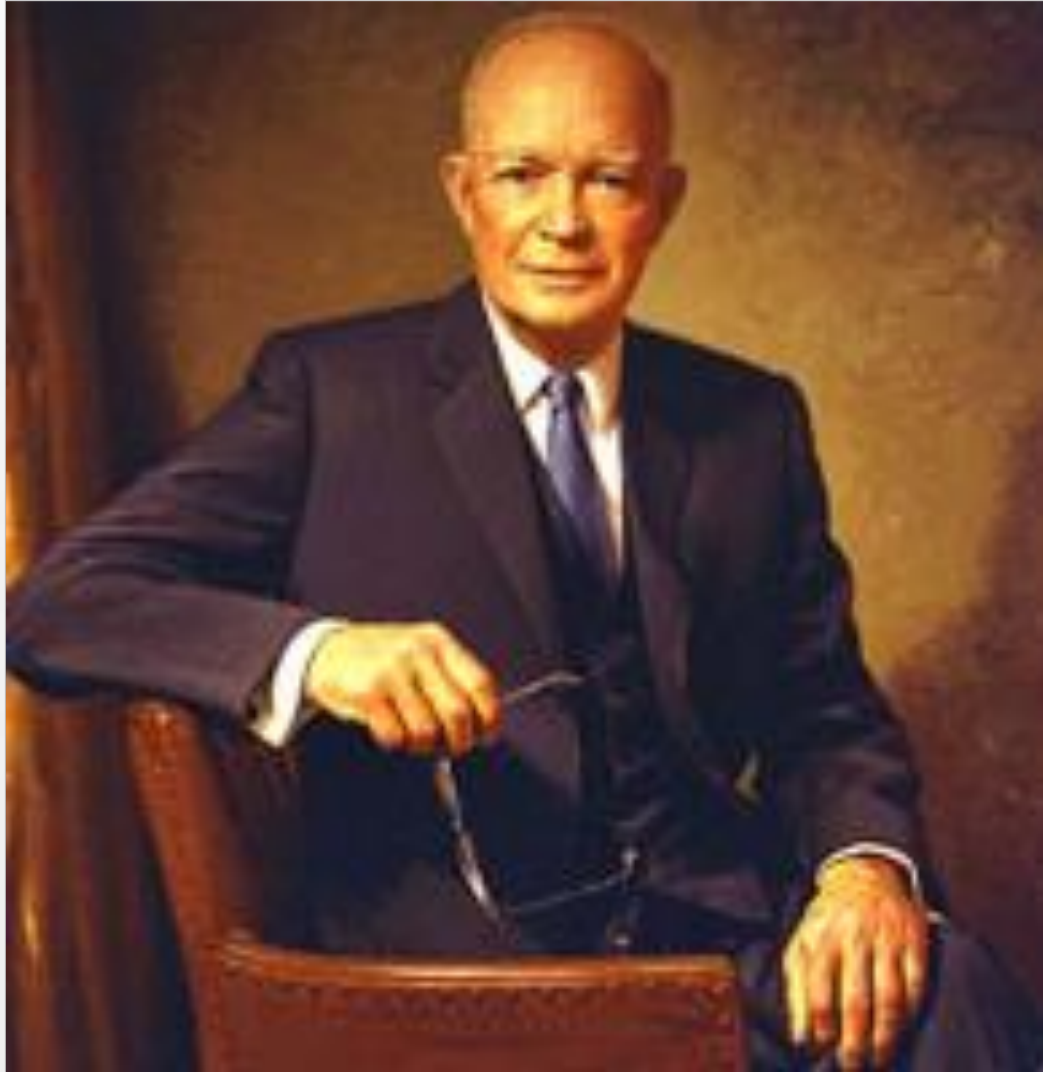


# PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

- The growth of psychological operations
- Formation of PSB
- Coherence and Control

## Psychological Strategy Board Members

- Full time director: Gordon Gray
- Undersecretary of State
- Deputy Secretary of Defense
- Director of Central Intelligence
- Rep from Joint Staff



# EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

- Campaign
- Belief in Propaganda
- Government Review
- Jackson Committee

# JACKSON COMMITTEE

- Full support for political warfare activities
- Confusion of the mission
- Should not be the determining factor
- Psychological activity is not separable from other elements of national power
- Actions to this point were defensive and “haphazard projection of too many and too diffuse propaganda themes”
- No adequate definition of psychological operations
- No such thing as “over-all national psychological objectives”
- Psychological activities are not “separate and distinct” from a “strategic concept for gaining national aims without war”
- Abolish the Psychological Strategy Board

# OPERATIONS COORDINATION BOARD

- PSB planning
- OCB Board Members
- OCB Role and Functions

## Operations Coordination Board Members

- Special Assistant to the President
- Undersecretary of State
- Deputy Secretary of Defense
- Deputy Director for Mutual Security
- Director of Central Intelligence



# TWO MAJOR SPEECHES

## CHANCE FOR PEACE

- Year Long Campaign
- Opening Shot to stop Soviet “peace” offensives
- Contrast Peaceful intent of the free world vs the warlike behavior of the Soviets

## ATOMS FOR PEACE

- Nuclear Disarmament
- Framework for talks about control of Nuclear Weapons
- Three other propaganda goals
  - Place the Soviets on defense
  - Inform the US public on the dangers of nuclear weapons
  - Tell world audience everyone had a vested interest in the outcome of the Cold War

# LESSONS LEARNED

- Agreement on the Term Political Warfare
- A system or organization to bring the varied elements of information power into a coherent whole
- A board like structure, to bring process and a formal mechanism and inform the President
- Board has to be inside of the NSC
- Information operations should not be ad hoc and defensive
- The board has to be manned by senior level reps from each agency
- Information power is part of and cross-cut every other domain of national power

# POLICY COORDINATION COMMITTEE

- Part of the NSC
- Senior level manning
- Run by a deputy national security advisor w/ associated staff directorate
- Three additional members
- Role and Functions

## PCC

- Deputy National Security Advisor
- Assistant Secretary Members from:
  - State
  - Defense
  - CIA
  - Justice
  - JCS
  - Broadcasting Board of Governors
  - National Security Agency
- White House Communications Director

# QUESTIONS

A grayscale world map showing the outlines of continents and oceans. The map is centered on the Atlantic Ocean, with North and South America on the left and Europe, Africa, and Asia on the right. The word "QUESTIONS" is overlaid in the upper left quadrant.