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By AT NARA Date 9/1/04SECRETH. Roberts
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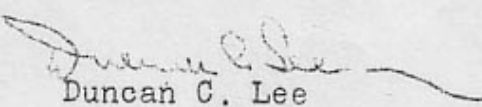
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

Washington, D.C.

7 July 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL BRANCH CHIEFS AND
STRATEGIC SERVICES OFFICERS

Attached is a brief statement describing the origin and functions of OSS. For reasons of security this statement should not be given general circulation but should be filed in your office and used in indoctrinating such new members of your staff as, in your discretion, should have access to the information which it contains.


Duncan C. Lee
Major, AUS
Chief, Secretariat

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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT OSS

Since you have reported for duty with the Office of Strategic Services it is proper and essential that you should have some knowledge of its functions and of the reasons for its existence.

The conquests of Germany and Japan created in the occupied countries a situation potentially favorable to the Allies. While it is true that these conquests have increased enormously the enemy's strength, they are at the same time a source of weakness. The people whom the enemy conscripted to work in his factories, to grow his food and to run his railroads are not accustomed to slavery. They have not accepted their new rulers. They are living and in many instances working for the day when their freedom will be regained. The presence of such people within the enemy's economy is potentially a liability, perhaps the greatest single liability that the enemy has.

There are two principle ways in which this liability can be exploited. One is through the collection of secret intelligence and the other is by the conduct of special operations in support of resistance groups. Success of both of these activities depends upon the cooperation of the people in the occupied countries. To the extent that we can encourage resistance and furnish the arms which will make resistance effective, we can shorten the war and bring about the enemy's defeat.

The tasks of collecting secret intelligence and of waging this unorthodox type of warfare are ones that the established branches of the Armed Services had not attempted. Secret intelligence can be procured only through the use of agents specially trained and recruited for undercover activities.

These agents must possess unusual language qualifications and be able to pass as natives of the country in which they will work. To supplement the intelligence procured through secret channels, research must be undertaken by experienced scholars. Moreover, the techniques of organizing and supplying resistance groups are very different from the tactics used in more orthodox military operations. They require special skills and training unlike those needed or developed by the Armed Services for combat purposes.

Since there was no established agency of the United States Government equipped to obtain the necessary intelligence and to conduct the necessary operations in support of resistance groups, the President created the Office of Strategic Services and placed it under the jurisdiction of the Joint U. S. Chiefs of Staff. OSS is therefore not a part of either the Army or Navy but is responsible solely to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the execution of its activities.

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The intelligence functions of OSS are carried out by the following branches which operate under a Deputy Director - Intelligence.

1. SI - This branch is engaged in the acquisition of secret intelligence in all areas except the western hemisphere. Intelligence is evaluated and disseminated to the Army and Navy and other appropriate Government agencies.
2. Research and Analysis - An organization of scholars and research specialists who possess unusual language qualifications and have expert knowledge on particular geographic areas.
3. X-2 - This branch is responsible for counter-espionage intelligence.
4. Foreign Nationalities - This branch supplies intelligence concerning the activities of Foreign Nationalities groups within the United States with respect to issues concerning their homelands or otherwise relating to the war.
5. CD - This branch deals with radio, censorship and documentary intelligence.

Under a Deputy Director - Operations, there are four main operational branches.

1. SO - This branch is responsible for the conduct of special operations, including sabotage and the organization and supply of resistance groups.
2. OG - Operational groups are foreign language speaking units composed of highly trained officers and men capable of attacking special targets behind enemy lines and of providing the operational nuclei for guerrilla warfare.
3. MU - Maritime Unit engages in Naval sabotage against enemy shipping and is responsible for the planning and execution of the maritime phase of operations undertaken by other branches.
4. MO - Morale Operations are directed against the enemy's mind and are primarily non-violent. Black propaganda, clandestine radios and other forms of morale subversion are planned and executed.

To assist and service the intelligence and operational activities carried on by the branches outlined above, the following offices and branches have been established:

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1. The Planning Group

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The Planning Group composed of representatives of the State Department, Army, Navy and OSS, studies and develops plans for over-all OSS operations.

2. The Planning Staff

The Planning Staff which operates under the supervision of the Planning Group does the preliminary work in connection with planning, preparing and submitting recommendations to the Planning Group.

3. The Secretariat

The Secretariat is the channel for all papers requiring the approval of the Director and Assistant Director.. It maintains the files of the Director's Office, handles the distribution of cables and prepares reports for the Director.

4. Office of the General Counsel

The General Counsel is responsible for all legal matters pertaining to OSS activity.

5. Research and Development

This office originates and develops special weapons and equipment.

6. Communications

Communications is responsible for development and supplying radio sets and for maintaining OSS communication facilities.

7. Services

Under Services which is responsible for the administrative management of OSS, there are branches for the operation of fiscal, budget and procedures systems, procurement and transportation of supplies, reproduction, civilian personnel and such office services as mail, messenger, courier and civilian motor pool.

8. Security Office

This office is responsible for the physical security of OSS property and for the security of all OSS personnel

9. Schools and Training

This branch provides and operates facilities for the training of OSS personnel.

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10. Theater Officer

The OSS Theater Officer assisted by Theater Officers for different geographic areas coordinates all OSS matters in Washington pertaining to the various theaters and procures overseas transportation for OSS personnel.

11. Special Relations Office

This office maintains liaison with other Government departments and agencies.

12. Field Photographic Branch

The Field Photographic Branch produces motion pictures of OSS activities in the field.

13. Headquarters Detachment

Headquarters Detachment is responsible for all administrative matters in connection with commissioned and enlisted personnel of the Army assigned to OSS.

14. Naval Command

Naval Command handles all administrative matters in connection with Naval personnel assigned to OSS.

15. Personnel Procurement Branch

This branch recruits personnel whether military, Naval or civilian for service with OSS.

16. Medical Services Office

This office provides medical supplies and personnel for OSS activities.

17. Special Funds

This branch is responsible to the Director for the custody, use of and accounting for special funds.

18. Presentation Branch

The Presentation Branch is an organization of skilled technicians capable of making pictorial presentations by chart, graph, and other visual means exclusive of motion pictures.

