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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section

3 March 1948

Proposed War Guilt Information Program (Third Phase)

I. PURPOSES

1. To counter current and/or suspected attitudes on the part of certain Japanese which indicate that they are construing the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as atrocities, and that American rehabilitation projects in Hiroshima should be undertaken in a spirit of atonement.

2. To interpret correctly the Tojo role and the fallacious thinking behind the growing feeling of justification for the Japanese nation's policy of aggression.

3. To help obviate the possible emergence of ultra-nationalist thinking which would, at the termination of the Occupation, negate democratic progress made during the Occupation.

II. CONSIDERATIONS BASIC TO PLANNING

1. Extreme caution is indicated on the grounds that a direct, frontal attack information program might act as a boomerang, and be the means of inciting and solidifying the majority of public opinion whereas present available documentation points to "ultra-nationalist" and "atrocities" thinking being confined to a minority.

2. The question of whether there is a conflict in policy also must be considered in relation to an all-out information program. Present policy indicates that Japan is to be re-built economically, and that a quick peace treaty is desirable. In instituting a "frontal-attack" program on these subjects, the Occupation tacitly admits to the American people that the Japanese are not to be trusted and that therefore, economic assistance is debatable, and a peace treaty is undesirable.

3. It is the consensus that the Tojo trials and the Hiroshima-Nagasaki "atrocities" properly should be considered as coming under the heading of a "war guilt" program. Treatment, however, may vary in specific methods as outlined in the following plan.

III. GENERAL METHODS TO BE EMPLOYED

1. Strong emphasis on political information and education as an antidote for ultra-nationalism. (This has and is being covered to a large extent, but an even more concentrated program has been evolved and is now awaiting approval).

2. Full coverage to be given in the expose of any concrete movements which show resurgence of ultra-nationalistic movements, the fallacious thinking in

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back of such movements, and the inevitable consequences of such movements.

3. Constant liaison with influential editors and leaders in the fields of labor, agriculture, education, government, etc., wherein the virtues of a free society versus a totalitarian state would be emphasized.

4. Encouragement of the development of progressive, liberal groups.

IV. SPECIFIC AGENCIES AND MEDIA TO BE UTILIZED

1. The Press:

a. The Press and Publications Unit, CIE, has appointed a special press officer whose sole duty is to maintain liaison with Japanese editors, and endeavor to impress upon them not only the ideologies expressed in Tab G, but also to attempt to encourage objective editorial comment and news coverage on the summation and verdict of the Tojo and other war criminal trials, as well as news items on Hiroshima projects.

b. The Press and Publications liaison officer at the INTFE (Tab G), will continue informational activities on the objectives and duties of a free press, with special emphasis during the Tojo summation and verdict phases.

c. Press and Publications Unit will send a press representative to the dedication ceremonies scheduled for April, 1948 at Hiroshima to encourage correct interpretation by the Japanese press.

d. Appropriate material for news releases will be requested from interested SCAP sections on both the Tojo and Hiroshima phases, which will help to counteract impressions mentioned previously. (A statement from General MacArthur would be of great assistance).

2. Radio:

a. CIE Radio Unit will continue to stress the "war guilt" theme in regularly scheduled programs as outlined in Tab H for the duration of the war crime trials, and will continue constantly to refer to this subject in other programs as outlined in Tab H.

b. Major coverage will be given the summation and verdict of the Tojo phase of the trials.

c. A special CIE radio representative, who will counsel and guide Japanese radio people in correct interpretation, will be sent to Hiroshima for the April dedication ceremonies.

3. Exhibits:

a. CIE Exhibits Unit has already prepared in rough outline form a

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series (13) of posters on War Crimes Trials, subject to the approval of interested SCAP sections, with themes based on why war trials are held..... how a minority group threw the nation and the world into chaos.....the average citizen did not have a true voice in management of his own life..... consequences of accepting false information.....money spent on warships, planes, ammunition in relation to what could have been spent in peaceful pursuits, viz., new housing, power, modernization, etc.....lessons to be learned from war trials.

4. Publications:

a. Serious consideration should be given to the feasibility of bringing to Japan, as a CIS consultant, a competent and recognized American historian to write a new history of the Pacific War, which would include War Crimes Trials and Occupation objectives. The purpose would be to turn the manuscript over to a Japanese publisher, without cost, and permit him to publish this new history as a commercial venture.

b. Serious consideration should also be given to the possibility of an article being published in a leading American magazine covering a recapitulation of Hiroshima, the main theme of which would be Japanese atonement and the steps being taken in reconstruction, peaceful, cultural activities, etc., to prove to a skeptical world that the Japanese are aware of the causes of their present plight and are trying to help themselves and their nation. A suggested method of inspiring such an article would be to make private arrangements with Brig. Gen. Banner F. Feller (USA, Ret.), now in Washington, D. C.

c. Encouragement will be given to Asahi Shimbun or another likely publisher to publish the entire text of the Prosecution's summation at the War Crimes Tribunal, to augment Chief Counsel Keenan's statement already being published by Asahi (Tabs J-2 and J-3).

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