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The United States' Psychological Strategy Board and Operations Coordinating Board: National
Assessments and the Middle East, 1951 - 1958

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the American intelligence community (IC) and the national security planning and coordination elements tasked with developing strategy and policy for the Middle East from the end of the Second World War to the invasion of Lebanon in 1958. While the history of American-Middle East foreign policy has been covered in the literature extensively, what has yet to receive the proper attention has been the role of special ‘planning and coordination elements’ established within the American intelligence and national security architecture after the Second World War. This study focuses on two of these elements: specifically, the Psychological Strategy Board (1951-1953) and the Operations Coordinating Board (1953-1961). This study asks the questions: can newly declassified archival material now available on the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board be used to provide greater context and new insights into America’s Cold War policy in the Middle East from (1951 – 1958)? What were these two coordination boards and what were the strategy and policy impacts that they had on American foreign policy to the Middle East? In the process, this study provides a comprehensive history of these two under-studied (and significant) boards adding substantially to our understanding of the American national security and intelligence history.

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GLOSSARY

AFME -	American Friends of the Middle East
ASRP -	Arab Socialist Resurrection Party
CIA -	Central Intelligence Agency
CID -	Criminal Investigation Division
CIG -	Central Intelligence Group
DDEL -	Dwight David Eisenhower Library
DOD -	Department of Defense
DOS -	Department of State
FOA -	Foreign Operations Administration
FRUS -	Foreign Relations of the United States
FTC -	Federal Trade Commission
IAB -	Intelligence Advisory Board
IIA -	International Information Administration
JCS -	Joint Chiefs of Staff
MCIA -	Marine Corps Intelligence Activity
MCU -	Marine Corps University
MEC -	Middle East Command
MEDO -	Middle East Defense Organization
NACP -	National Archives College Park
NARA -	National Archives and Records Administration
NIA -	National Intelligence Authority
NIC -	National Intelligence Council
NIE -	National Intelligence Estimate

NSA -	National Security Act
NSC -	National Security Council
NSC PB -	National Security Council Planning Board
NPSB -	National Psychological Strategy Board
OCB -	Operations Coordinating Board
OPC -	Office of Policy Coordination
PCG -	Policy Coordination Group
PSB -	Psychological Strategy Board
SANACC -	State Army Navy Air Force Coordinating Committee
SNIE -	Special National Intelligence Estimate
UAR -	United Arab Republic

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the American national security planning and coordination elements tasked with developing strategy and policy for the Middle East from the end of the Second World War to the invasion of Lebanon in 1958. While the history of American-Middle East foreign policy has been covered in the literature extensively, what has yet to receive the proper attention has been the role of specific ‘planning and coordination elements’ established within the American intelligence and national security architecture after the Second World War. This study focuses on two of these elements: the Psychological Strategy Board (1951-1953) and the Operations Coordinating Board (1953-1961). By way of new and exciting archival sources becoming available through the Central Intelligence Agency’s CREST Archives, the National Security Archives, and the National Declassification Center, the records of the PSB and OCB shed new light on American Cold War history and the US government’s attempts to centralize and formalize the areas of military, intelligence, and foreign policy into an enterprise that recognized, debated, and addressed the highest order national security issues facing the United States government.

The current literature on US national security policy formulation during the early Cold War has relied heavily on the records of the National Security Council itself (national security) and the US Department of State (foreign policy). This has resulted in an incomplete picture of national security policy development and architecture, the role of the intelligence community, and possible impacts on US executive decision making in the late 1940s and 1950s. This thesis argues that the work of two understudied policy and coordination boards of the US National Security Council Staff – the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) and its successor the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) – reframe US Cold War national security policy architecture, presenting a more nuanced, fuller picture. This is an original contribution to the academic field. This thesis is tested using untapped, recently declassified US government archival records. The ‘national assessments’ derived from the combined policy and intelligence elements of the PSB and the OCB test another thesis: that we cannot understand the execution of US Middle East policy in the 1950s without the novel and unique insight into regional policy development and executive decision making afforded by the PSB and OCB records. This significant study of the PSB and OCB argues that these organizations deserve a place in the history of US policy development and execution, and while the OCB was abolished in 1961, the

work begun under the PSB and the OCB (including psychological strategy and covert operations) carried on and helps us to understand US policy today.

Tracking the US-Middle East policies from the PSB to the OCB, we follow the development of a regional policy through the national security architecture and across administrations. In so doing, we craft a new understanding of Cold War national security policy history; presenting the argument that the PSB and the OCB were uniquely placed to influence foreign policy (in this example) of the Middle East. Not only does this study leverage new primary sources to provide greater context to the histories of these boards, but it also provides an example of how this material can be used to view foreign policy events from another angle, one that is positioned uniquely in both the worlds of intelligence and policy, offering exciting new opportunities for future research.

This study offers an example of the “new institutionalist theory” of US national security agencies. Described by Amy Zegart in *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*, “Government consists of a tangled web bureaucratic agencies, each with its own interests, capabilities, perspectives, and leaders.”¹ Stalemates (resulting from national security agency competition) had stalled the development of coherent and effective government-wide strategies. Nationally-minded presidents (Truman and Eisenhower) were dissatisfied with the government’s individualized approach and lack of progress toward national security policy to confront the Soviet Union in the expanding Cold War. As a result, Truman (and later Eisenhower) would establish the modern American national security system, purposefully creating the PSB and the OCB to provide a “whole of government” approach (military, diplomacy, and intelligence) to inform the National Security Council (NSC) and the chief executive on key issues. The premier policy-making body in the US government, the National Security Council, needed coordinating elements to bring the competitive players together. NSC staff elements (the PSB and the OCB) were created to harness together diffuse and independent government agencies; the aim being a national security strategy and policy process adherent to the national priorities of the President of the United States. This study uses the PSB and OCB records to provide greater context and new insight into the understanding of national security policy architecture during the Cold War as well as regional policy decisions, such as the conflict in Lebanon. The national assessments of the PSB and OCB, on both soft and hard power approaches to the Middle East, allow us to track the

¹Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2009) p. 20.

development of a regional policy that impacted presidential decision-making resulting in the invasion of Lebanon in 1958. An operation undertaken to save a failing policy and protect Western access to the natural resources that made the region so valuable to the world.

Using the PSB and OCB records this study explores the history from new vantage points and offering new context to view the “how’s” and “why’s” of regional policy decisions that promoted certain strategies (defence arrangements) over others (socio-economic development). Using the PSB 1952 *Staff Study on the Middle East*, we will show that the PSB recognized both the socio-economic problems and military weakness facing the region; recommending to the NSC a dual approach promoting Western-aligned military defence arrangements and implementing longer-term economic programmes to undercut Soviet influence. As the US worked to encourage Middle Eastern countries to join Western supported defence relationships (first with the Middle East Command, and later the Middle East Defense Organization) the PSB recommended focus be placed on the Northern Tier countries of Turkey and Iran, whose geographic location and socio-economic stability could provide defensive buffers between the Soviet Union and the Middle East. This “Northern Tier Concept” was later adopted by the US government and used to anchor the defence arrangements of the Soviet border-states and the Arab states of the Middle East through Baghdad. Ultimately, the PSB and the OCB allow us inside access into the debates, assessments, and recommendation surrounding regional defence relationships; a fundamental pillar of US foreign policy to the Middle East and a catalyst to US reliance on Iraq. Importantly, this study will show how PSB recommendations were adopted by the NSC (precursors to the NSC 5428 Middle East Strategy), approved by the president, and tasked to the OCB. Thus illustrating the impacts these boards had on national security policy development. In addition, the PSB and OCB records are used to contextualize and gain insight into “how” Washington was caught off guard with the Iraqi coup of 1958, and “why” Eisenhower perceived Lebanon as important enough to commit US troops to the battlefield.

Particularly, the OCB’s 1290-d reports and internal security analysis offer the modern researcher a picture of the Middle East as Washington understood it, exposing the over-reliance the US placed on the stability and security of the Iraqi government and Prime Minister Nuri Al-Said (a failure of both intelligence and policy resident in the OCB). Additionally, we will use the OCB 5428 Working Group (Middle East) reports to illustrate how Lebanon was seen as a supporting countermeasure (in addition to Iraq) against the destabilizing effect of Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, Arab nationalism,

and Soviet communism. In the years leading up to the invasion of 1958, the OCB was consistent in its warnings to the NSC and the president that should Lebanon fail, Iraq's position would be in jeopardy, and America's regional policy would be at risk. Using these sources and tracking the evolution of the US-Middle East policy we are given a more complete understanding of Eisenhower's decision to use US forces to secure Lebanon in an effort to save what was left of America's policy in the region following the coup in Iraq.

Interestingly, it is the apparent failures of the PSB and the OCB that grant us a more complete picture of US national security architecture and policy development. The PSB's struggles to establish itself within the psychological space of national security helped signal to Eisenhower that change was needed, ushering in a more efficient and centralized policy architecture in the OCB and NSC. Additionally, the OCB's failure to warn decision-makers of the scope and depth of instability in Iraq and Lebanon grants us greater insight into the operational policy decisions following the 1958 coup. This study shows that with the inclusion of the declassified records of the PSB and the OCB, historians are offered new perspectives to: analyse processes and decisions; reengage the historical record with new information; and add substantial value to the academic literature of American Cold War history.

To understand the roles played by the PSB and the OCB during this time, we must first address the national security architecture itself and the environment that required their creation. Therefore, we begin by turning to the historical record to provide the context of America's early national security and intelligence community. This is not a study of the national security system itself or the intelligence community; rather, we use these elements as a contextual framework against which we explore the impact of the PSB and the OCB on Middle East foreign policy.

With the records of the PSB and the OCB, we are better suited to explore Zegart's 'tangled web' of bureaucracy and argue two points: (I) the recently declassified and untapped records of two understudied policy and coordination boards of the NSC Staff (the PSB and its successor the OCB) reframe US Cold War national security policy architecture, presenting a more nuanced, fuller picture of the history; and (II) the "national assessments" derived from the combined policy and intelligence elements of the PSB and the OCB grant us unique access to understand the development and execution of the US-Middle East policy in the 1950s. This novel insight into regional policy development and executive decision making afforded by these records is not found in the existing

literature, and shows that the PSB and the OCB deserve a place in the history of US national security policy development and decision-making. This study brings to light the fact that these boards were intimately involved within the policy cycle - formulating, proposing, and recommending policies (through their national assessments) to the highest level of American government.

As noted in the literature review to follow, there is a chasm in the academic body with respect to the PSB and the OCB, resulting in a historical record that, to date, remains incomplete. This study re-engages the primary record by examining recently declassified material and reviewing a substantial collection of records of two seemingly obscure, yet significant, coordination and planning organizations in the form of the PSB and the OCB. As stated, by engaging the historical records of the PSB and the OCB, this study provides a unique and original addition to the academic record; granting an opportunity for greater insight into national security decision-makers' perspectives regarding the Middle East and illustrating that the PSB and the OCB can be a valuable source for national security history and foreign policy analysis.

In the chapters to follow we begin with contextualizing the American national security and intelligence environments following the conclusion of the Second World War, the landscape into which the PSB and OCB crystalized. We then illustrate key developments of the 1947 National Security Act, which established both the United States National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). This allows us to structure our understanding around both national security strategy and policy, as well as the necessity for more formal and centralized state intelligence organizations. Created to prescribe a whole of government approach to psychological strategy and policy development and coordination, the PSB and the OCB were tasked with assessing premier national security issues of the day. This study focuses on two key aspects – psychological strategy and foreign state stability of the Middle East. The combination of policy and intelligence under the PSB and the OCB is uncharacteristic in the American system, and was unique for this time. This combination resulted in “government assessments,” or “appreciations” of the Middle East region. These government assessments, where the policy and intelligence departments were integrated alongside each other created a “national assessment” product that Dr. Stephen Marrin, the Director of the Intelligence Analysis programme at James Madison University and Dr. Philip H.J. Davies, the Director of the Brunel Centre for Intelligence and Security Studies argue is more akin to the traditional British system, as opposed to the American system where analytic isolation from policy has followed the ‘traditionalist

perspective' of the intelligence (writ large).² However, before addressing this dynamic, it is first necessary to explain *what* the PSB and the OCB were and *who* they supported in the National Security Council.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

The National Security Act of 1947 created the National Security Council as a centralized policy advisory body whose purpose was to advise the chief executive (the US President) on military matters, foreign and domestic security policy, and intelligence assessments related to the national security. This study explores the creation of the NSC within the American national security enterprise of two presidential administrations: Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower. This study examines the development of the NSC, particularly the PSB and OCB roles therein, from an ad hoc and intermittent advisory group that lacked focus and direction under Truman into the more centralized, efficient, and purposeful council that existed under Eisenhower. The development and history of the NSC is well covered in the literature, the originality of this study comes from the examination of its sub-elements in the PSB and OCB. As the United States' national security issues and global responsibilities increased following the Second World War, so did the portfolio of issues facing the National Security Council. This required the expansion of national security staff support elements in the PSB and the OCB. The NSC staff's responsibilities were expansive: assessing and appraising the objectives, commitments, and risks of US national security policy relating to actual and potential military power; as well as analysing national security issues that fell short of conflict. As the demand signal grew for coherent psychological strategy and policy and operations coordination, sub-elements of the council staff (the PSB and OCB) were established to meet the need. These organizations were part of, and held audience with, the National Security Council and the President of the United States, and this placement and access allowed the PSB and OCB to engage key decision-makers regarding US policy to the vital region of the Middle East.

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD AND OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD

The PSB and the OCB reviewed and assessed national security policy and provided national assessments that included both intelligence and policy recommendations. These boards served as a

² Stephen Marrin and Philip H.J. Davies, "National Assessment by the National Security Council Staff: 1968-1980: An American Experiment in a British Style of Analysis?" *Intelligence and National Security*, 24:5 (October 2009) p. 644.

first attempt to bridge the intelligence-policy divide (discussed shortly) at the national level, within a new system and national security architecture. The PSB and the OCB are important because they served as a repository for information, including intelligence, from across government. They analysed that information against existing national security policy and provided reports and policy recommendations to the US government's high-level offices directly through the National Security Council. The formation of the PSB and the OCB (examined in the following chapters) falls into what Amy Zegart calls the "new institutionalist theories of American politics." Zegart, a former National Security Council staff member and US intelligence and national security expert describes the "new institutionalist theory" as it relates to national security agencies, from the perspective that "government agencies [are] ineffective, inefficient, and incapable of serving any broadly based national interest..." because "...they are constructed and shaped by competing interest groups that are out for themselves."³ As will be covered in this thesis, the PSB (and by matter of succession the OCB), a collection of competing interests, were born out of a conflict between the departments of State and Defense. This history fits with the new institutionalist view that national security agencies arise and develop "out of battles between self-interested bureaucrats and nationally minded presidents."⁴ The creation of the Psychological Strategy Board was the result of a conflict between State and Defense, where State sought to capitalize on the emerging psychological warfare battlespace, concerning the Department of Defense (DOD) over the apparent State Department driven power-grab. Truman, needing a cohesive national response for psychological warfare, established the PSB to settle the score and move the national interest forward. In national security affairs, organizations cannot and do not operate in isolation, as Zegart explains:

...their activities inherently overlap and intersect. Diplomatic negotiations have serious consequences for military action and vice versa. Intelligence is intimately connected to grand strategy, military power, and diplomacy. To do their jobs, national security officials must concern themselves with other agencies.⁵

³ Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2009) p. 13.

⁴ Ibid. p. 13.

⁵ Ibid. p. 37.

Truman understood this, and in recognizing the standstill created by self-interested bureaucracies that threatened to impede his national prerogative for taking the Cold War into the psychological future, he created a group that gathered together the overlapping forces of diplomacy, military, and intelligence and fused them together with the Psychological Strategy Board. This was a significant moment. The effort was meant to break the gridlock and enable the government to move forward. At this point, we may reflect on Zegart's description of government as:

...a tangled web of bureaucratic agencies, each with its own capabilities, perspectives, and leaders. How international situations are perceived, what information gets relayed to top decision makers, how policies are implemented – all of these things are determined by a process of conflict and coalition building, by the pulling and hauling among political players situated in different government organizations.⁶

In many ways this describes the PSB and the OCB: a tangled web of diplomacy, military, and intelligence woven together to assess international situations, frame them against national security policy, and provide assessments and recommendations to top decision-makers through the National Security Council. Presidential policy, which dictates national security policy, is the prerogative of one man; however, the president cannot dictate, plan, organize, coordinate, and execute that policy on his own. Instead, he is “forced to rely on a network of others – on intelligence officers, on diplomats, on military strategists, on policy advisers,” to take the nation forward and provide him with the information necessary to make difficult policy choices.⁷ The PSB and the OCB were two organizations that provided the president with this type of information, necessary to make decisions.

Beginning with the Psychological Strategy Board: following the National Security Act of 1947, the United States national security enterprise experienced rapid growth and expansion. This growth and expansion came with costs; newly created elements with overlapping priorities, resulted in confusion and redundancy. A lack of doctrinal clarity, not fulfilled by executive intent, created conflicts and roadblocks over important policy issues such as authorities, responsibilities, and mandates. The Psychological Strategy Board offers us an example of this. Fractured and disparate strategic and

⁶ Ibid. p. 20.

⁷ Ibid. p. 47.

national policy regarding the burgeoning field of psychological warfare prompted President Truman to create a psychological coordinating element on the periphery of the National Security Council, tasked to organize, coordinate, develop, and review national psychological strategy across government.

Psychological warfare offered a prime environment for confusion and disorganization. Following the conclusion of the Second World War and the inception of the Cold War between the West and the Soviet Union, psychological warfare and psychological operations were equally recognized as important weapons, yet poorly defined. Psychological concepts and definitions varied from agency to agency, causing confusion and misunderstanding, inhibiting the ability to bring the government's collected effort to the fight. Confusion and competition seeded conflict as independent agencies and departments vied for power over the psychological sphere. The infighting was so pervasive, particularly between the Department of State (DOS) and the Department of Defense, that it was seen by some as bordering on sabotage. Truman, nationally focused on the threat, created the PSB to coordinate psychological strategy and policy between the warring factions so as to foster a more effective mechanism for responding to the growing Soviet threat.

However, this paper is not a study on psychological warfare, as the literature on this topic is wide and vast; instead, the focus here is placed on the PSB's involvement in assessing the psychological character and developing a psychological strategy for the Middle East. This study shows that the PSB's Middle East reports formed the structural underpinnings of what would become the National Security Council's strategy for the region, the policy reference used by the Operations Coordinating Board to: review and assess regional policy, determine regional state stability, and recommend policy courses of action to the National Security Council and the President of the United States.

Established by the Chief Executive in April 1951, the PSB was created to break the impasse resulting from competing interests at the Departments of State and Defense inhibiting progress. The PSB was meant to enable more effective planning and coordination for conducting psychological operations within the framework of approved national policies by bringing together the three major elements sharing the psychological operations space.⁸ The PSB consisted of members of the executive cabinet at the Undersecretary and Deputy-secretary levels for the Department of State, the Department of

⁸ Harry S. Truman, Executive Directive (Psychological Strategy Board), Washington D.C., April 1951, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731003300180062-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

Defense, as well as the Director of Central Intelligence and a fulltime board director and staff. The PSB was to formulate and promulgate guidance to departments and agencies responsible for psychological operations. This included guiding the over-all national psychological effort, in particular the objectives, policies, and programmes that would amount to the nation's strategic psychological strategy; and coordinating and evaluating the policies shaping the nation's approach. As will be discussed in this study, despite the breadth of coverage expected of the PSB, loosely assigned responsibilities and authorities necessary to prosecute the mission did little to curb competition or promote collaboration. President Truman envisioned a psychological strategy foreman, overseeing the construction and development of the national psychological warfare effort. What he received was much different, supporting Zegart's argument that President's rarely get what they want out of their national security agencies. Finally, the PSB suffered from being a sub-element of an underutilized National Security Council. In this study we will examine the NSC dynamic under both presidents, but the point here is that the NSC did not have the reach or influence under Truman that it would come to enjoy under Eisenhower, restricting the PSB's ability to conduct its mission effectively. When Dwight Eisenhower came to office, not only did he re-envision and restructure the National Security Council, but also its policy and coordinating staffs, leading to the creation of the OCB.

Turning to the Operations Coordinating Board: the limited role of the National Security Council during the Truman administration, the PSB's lack of authority granted to direct the coordinated psychological effort across government (described in greater detail in Chapter Five), and ill-defined doctrine regarding the scope of psychological warfare, all contributed to rendering the Psychological Strategy Board ineffective. When Eisenhower succeeded Truman, he sought to change the chief executive's relationship with the National Security Council and its sub-elements, from a soft and unfocused advisory board (the PSB) that had been limited in its policymaking effectiveness to a regimented and centralized node for policy debate and development, geared toward impacting the executive decision-making process. For the Psychological Strategy Board, the new administration's mission to streamline and institutionalize the NSC system put them in the crosshairs for change.

Eisenhower required more than the coordination and development of psychological strategy within national policy. Therefore, the president abolished the PSB and established the Operations Coordinating Board in its place. The OCB was tasked to evaluate and coordinate all national security policy within the national security system. This does not mean that the OCB ignored the psychological

aspect of national security policy, rather the psychological concepts were integrated into the larger national strategy. The OCB served as the coordinating and integrating arm of the National Security Council for the complete implementation of national security policy. Eisenhower's focus was to develop a new process of policy formulation with the National Security Council as the nucleus, and the OCB providing coordination, review, and recommendations for policy to the NSC. The OCB, like the PSB before it, consisted of the Undersecretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Director of Central Intelligence, with the addition of the Director of the Foreign Operations Administration (FOA) and the President's Special Assistant for Psychological Warfare as members. Additionally, the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs and the Director of the United States Information Agency (USIA) were regular attendees. The board worked to bridge the gap between policy and operations, serving as an important working extension of the National Security Council, an integral part of the system where the PSB had been the outsider looking in. The OCB, like the PSB, was in the position to represent the interests of the three major stake holders in US national security and foreign policy, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

The OCB incorporated relevant intelligence and policy assessments, and based on those findings, enumerated policy recommendations to decision-makers. Zegart describes the OCB as an operational linchpin, "charged with translating policy recommendations into specific guidance, the OCB coordinated a multitude of interdepartmental working groups – typically, 35 - 40 at any given time - and often took as long as six months to determine an operational plan."⁹ The Board's policy review and advisory function to the NSC (which connected the intelligence analyst and policy analyst) resulting in national assessments, meant that the OCB existed within a grey area of the policy-intelligence divide, uncommon in the American system. In this role, the OCB working groups not only coordinated the implementation of NSC policies assigned by the President and the National Security Council, but also informed policy through its reviews and recommendations, the focus of this study being the US policy to the Middle East.

⁹ Zegart, p. 81.

INTELLIGENCE AND POLICY

Although outside the scope of this study, an area worthy of mention and discussion is where the PSB and the OCB fell on the intelligence-policy spectrum (or divide). The PSB and OCB combination of intelligence and policy analysts remains an outlier in the American system (although not the only time this was attempted). The American tradition of separating intelligence from policy is covered by Davies (2012), Marrin (2007), Zegart (1999), Betts (2007), Davis (1992), and Hulnick (1986) among others.¹⁰ In particular, Marrin argues that the US has made effort to maintain an “intelligence-policy proximity” where:

The United States’ national security decision making culture is both hierarchical and adversarial. This tends to keep all-source intelligence analysts at arm’s length from national decision-makers. American intelligence culture emphasizes the importance of its ‘separation’ from decision-making. This ultimately affects the capability to effectively integrate intelligence analysis into the policy process.¹¹

The concept surrounding intelligence-policy proximity can help illustrate how the PSB and specifically the OCB were established within an environment to foster direct engagement with top policy makers. When speaking of ‘policy-makers’ we use former CIA officer and intelligence expert Arthur Hulnick’s description as “those officials with the executive or legislative branches of government who formulate, choose, and implement policy. They may be relatively junior officials (desk officers) or cabinet officials.”¹² In many ways this describes the National Security Council and its staff elements. The participation of the Director of Central Intelligence and the assignment of CIA analysts to the boards’

¹⁰ For more on this topic see -Philip H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States: A Comparative Perspective*, (Oxford: Praeger Security International, 2012); Stephen Marrin, “At Arm’s Length or At the Elbow?: Explaining the Distance between Analysts and Decision makers,” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, 20:3 (2007) pp. 401-414; Richard K. Betts, *Enemies of Intelligence: Knowledge and Power in American National Security*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Jack Davis, “The Kent-Kendall Debate of 1949,” *Studies in Intelligence*, (1992) pp. 91-103; and Arthur S. Hulnick, “The Intelligence Producer – Policy Consumer Linkage: A Theoretical Approach,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 1:2 (1986) pp. 212-233.

¹¹ Stephen Marrin, “At Arms’ Length or At the Elbow?: Explaining the Distance between Analysts and Decision makers,” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, 20:3 (2007) p. 401.

¹² Arthur S. Hulnick, “The Intelligence Producer – Policy Consumer Linkage: A Theoretical Approach,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 1:2 (1986) p. 212.

working groups provided an avenue for intelligence to coexist with policy. This dynamic, while more commonplace in intelligence apparatuses abroad, remains the exception in the American system. This supports a main premise of this study: that the records of the PSB and OCB are worthy of greater academic attention as they shed light on the national security system and policy process from unique perspectives. Marrin and Davies addressed the issue of intelligence and policy sharing real estate in their article “National Assessment by the National Security Council Staff 1968 – 80: An American Experiment in a British Style of Analysis?”¹³ The authors assess that the American production of ‘National Assessments’ produced through the National Security Council Staff from 1968 through 1980 presented new problems for the US government as they attempted to cross the intelligence policy divide in the post national security act era.¹⁴ However, both the PSB and the OCB predate 1968 and the National Security Study Memoranda (NSSM) explored by Marrin and Davies. Therefore, there remains an opportunity for future research to determine whether the PSB and the OCB were the initial attempts to wed policy and intelligence in the NSC system, or whether the PSB and OCB reports were distinct enough from the NSSM and the Presidential Review Memorandum (PRM) to warrant their own category. In either case, this study will use “national assessment,” to describe the reports provided by the PSB and the OCB. National assessments differ from traditional intelligence analysis and products in that they do not separate the intelligence and policy departments. Instead, these assessments incorporate both the intelligence and policy elements to assess “the strategic impact of the policies of the governing administration.”¹⁵ In the US system this has not been the norm, as many have feared that such a scenario puts the intelligence analyst in a position to question the wisdom and consequences of decisions made by policy-makers as opposed to simply informing them. Which leads us to the question: what is the purpose of intelligence?

FUNCTION OF INTELLIGENCE IN POLICY-MAKING

Former Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Loch K. Johnson argues that “the main purpose of intelligence is to provide information to policymakers that may help illuminate their decision options.”¹⁶ Citing former Director of National Intelligence, James

¹³ Stephen Marrin & Philip H.J. Davies, “National Assessment by the National Security Council Staff 1968-80: An American Experiment in a British Style of Analysis?” *Intelligence and National Security*, 24:5 (2009) pp. 644-673.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 662.

¹⁵ Marrin and Davies, “National Assessment by the National Security Council Staff,” p. 645.

¹⁶ Loch K. Johnson, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of National Security Intelligence*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) p. 5.

Clapper, Johnson argues that the role of national security intelligence is one of “eliminating or reducing uncertainty for government decision-makers.”¹⁷ If we accept this as the general case we can then look at the positions regarding ‘how’ intelligence should inform policy-makers.

Arthur Hulnick explains that intelligence, both the raw information, and the finished analysis, “must be close to policy so that it can provide the informational base necessary for decision-making, but if it is [too] close to policy, it may become corrupted by the very process it seeks to serve.”¹⁸ Therefore, where is the proper place for intelligence to exist in the policy process? While this paper does not attempt to answer this question specifically; instead, we will examine the general positions taken regarding the role of intelligence in the policy process from the American perspective. These are not the only positions or views, of course, but they are the standard ends of the spectrum, and we use them to illustrate where the PSB and the OCB operated regarding their relationship to intelligence and policy. Two general concepts for the function of intelligence to policy-making can be found in the 1949 writings between US intelligence experts Sherman Kent and Willmoore Kendall. Their individual positions and beliefs on the proper use of intelligence frame the American debate regarding the intelligence and policy process prior to the establishment of the PSB and the OCB. While not an exhaustive description of all positions regarding the function of intelligence and policy (as the literature is better served through the writing of Marrin, Davies, Johnson, Zegart, Davis and others) and as this paper does not seek to address the functions of intelligence in this manner, we engage the debate in order better to understand the general theoretical architecture behind the US approach to intelligence and policy.

Former CIA analyst and National Intelligence Officer, Jack Davis, wrote on the positions and perspectives of Kent and Kendall in his article “The Kent-Kendall Debate of 1949” in *Studies in Intelligence* (1992). Davis describes how these men’s perspectives have shaped the US government’s use of its intelligence organizations to inform policy, and we will rely heavily on Davis and Hulnick for this section. Hulnick categorizes the positions expressed by Kent and Kendall as the ‘traditionalist belief’ and the ‘activist belief’ to intelligence’s role in policy. Kent’s traditionalist approach draws a clear line between the intelligence analyst and the policy-maker, separating the two and focusing on the analyst adhering to scholarly objectivity, and benefitting from institutional independence. For

¹⁷ James Clapper cited in Johnson, *The Oxford Handbook of National Security Intelligence*, p. 6.

¹⁸ Hulnick, “The Intelligence Producer-Policy Consumer,” p. 213.

Kent, the “function of the intelligence unit was to provide expert knowledge of the external world, on the basis of which sound policy would then be made by those with expert knowledge of US politics.”¹⁹ In this scenario there was a very real distinction between the producers and consumers of intelligence, and that distinction and independence was purposeful and by design. For Kent, intelligence was distinct from the other elements of state and policy, as “Intelligence is not the formulator of objectives... [the] drafter of policy... [the] maker of plans... [or the] carrier out of operations.”²⁰ Kent’s separation was born out of fear and concern that should intelligence analysts work directly for policy makers, they would be inundated with policy issues outside their expertise, and their primary purpose, intense regional research and expertise, would suffer. Kent believed that a balance could be struck where intelligence could be close enough to policy plans and operations (thereby benefitting from access to guidance), but still separated enough so not to lose its “objectivity and integrity of judgement.”²¹ Hulnick describes this view as requiring that “intelligence must distance itself from policymaking, reach independent judgements about world events, and avoid tailoring intelligence judgements to satisfy the ideological drives or policy preferences of decision makers.”²² To the traditionalist mind, the policy process is a prescribed “sequence of events into which the intelligence producer fed a major, but isolated input – descriptive factual background and collected secrets – from which policy makers would draw implications.”²³ This position is supported by the belief that “intelligence should initiate, not direct interaction with consumers,” outside of responding to requests for data and analysis.²⁴ From these descriptions we see an environment where intelligence (and the intelligence analyst) are separated from the policy process (and the policy-maker) in order to maintain an objective stance on information provided up the chain. The point was to provide the most objective, and theoretically accurate, information to those with the policy expertise necessary to turn it into action.

In comparison, a more inclusive intelligence-policy dynamic is advocated for in what Hulnick calls the “activist belief.” This perspective argues that there exists a “kind of symbiotic relationship between

¹⁹ Jack Davis, “The Kent-Kendall Debate of 1949,” *Studies in Intelligence*, (1992) pp. 92-93.

²⁰ Ibid. pp. 92-93. The Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board crossed many of these boundaries by design.

²¹ Ibid. p. 93.

²² Hulnick, “The Intelligence Producer-Policy Consumer,” p. 213.

²³ Ibid. p. 214.

²⁴ Ibid.

intelligence and policy and they were, and should, be closely tied together.”²⁵ A major proponent of this position was Willmoore Kendall. Kendall felt that Kent and the traditionalists had a misguided view of the function of intelligence to begin with. To his mind, Kendall felt that the intense research required under Kent and the traditionalists diverted attention from supporting the “big job – the carving out of [the] United States’ destiny in the world as a whole,” a concept that put policy front and centre.²⁶ For Kendall, the primary intelligence function was to assist policymakers to “influence the course of events by helping them understand the operative factors on which the US can have impact.”²⁷ At face value, this does not seem all that different from Kent’s assertion that the primary function of intelligence was to use an expert knowledge of the external world to inform those with expertise in policy. However, the true difference lay in interaction between the intelligence analyst and the policy-maker. While Kent believed that intelligence analysts should remain separated from the policy process, save for brief interactions to gain guidance or clarity from above (i.e. the policy-maker), Kendall felt intelligence officials needed regular access to top level audiences within the policy sphere. This view falls in line with what Davis describes as Kendall’s inherently “anti-bureaucratic” view of government, which saw policy-makers as being less than forthcoming with guidance unless intelligence analysts were included in the policy conversation.²⁸

A model closely resembling Kendall’s concept are the regional and functional directors of the National Security Council Staff. Davis makes clear that President Eisenhower’s “administrative style for national security affairs – regularly planned NSC meetings to discuss if not to decide policy – provided an orderly place for the scholarship of intelligence.”²⁹ Therefore, is it possible to argue that the PSB and the OCB, sub-elements of the National Security Council (which brought intelligence and policy together to study national security issues), were an attempted realization of what Kendall believed the way forward should be? In this author’s view, the answer is yes. Writing of the modern system, former Vice-Chairman of the National Intelligence Council, Dr. Gregory Treverton points out in his book, *Reshaping National Intelligence for the Information Age* that the natural connection between

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Davis, “The Kent-Kendall Debate of 1949,” p. 95.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 96.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 97.

intelligence and policy remains the National Security Council Staff.³⁰ Treverton argues for a more activist approach, pointing out that the physical separation of intelligence professionals from the policy agencies can no longer be allowed to compound the difficulty of intelligence analysts connecting to policy.³¹ In order to address more specific problems, most effectively, a “band of analysts, close to and empowered by a relevant policy agency,” that can make the case for the findings of the group is needed.³² The PSB and the OCB served this function. The boards’ working groups consisted of elements from the DOS, DOD, and CIA, allowing the board to make findings known to the policy elements of their home agency, but also to the NSC and the White House. In his article “At Arm’s Length or Elbow,” Stephen Marrin cites former CIA director Robert Gates, stating:

....the intelligence community has to be right next to the policymaker, that [the officer] has to be at his elbow – that he has to understand what is on his mind. He has to understand some of the initiatives that he is thinking about taking. He has to be willing to ask the policymaker what he’s working on, or what came out of his last conversation with a world leader so that the intelligence can be made relevant.³³

Traverton, Marrin, and Davis are, in their prescriptions for intelligence reform in the future, also describing a scenario that existed before the NSSM and PRM as discussed by Marrin and Davies in “National Assessments at the National Security Council Staff.” These authors call for an intelligence-policy environment similar to that existing with the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board. These organizations brought analysts, both intelligence and policy, together and relayed their findings and assessments to the premier policy organ of the US government in the National Security Council. Therefore, it is important to be clear: this examination does not argue that the PSB or the OCB were intelligence boards supporting policymakers; rather, they were policy boards of the NSC that incorporated intelligence and policy into their assessments presented to the highest levels in the United States Government. This particular aspect is not adequately addressed in the literature. Davies and Marrin have suggested that the first use of this dynamic was the PRM and NSSM

³⁰ Gregory F. Treverton, *Reshaping National Intelligence for an Age of Information*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p. 2616 (note: these page numbers refer to the electronic pagination for the Kindle Edition of this publication. They differ from the standard pagination found in the hard-copy publication).

³¹ Ibid. p. 337.

³² Ibid. p. 377.

³³ Stephen Marrin, “At Arms’ Length or At the Elbow?” p. 650.

processes of the late 1960s to 1980. As the PSB and the OCB predated this, there is an opportunity for future study to determine the PSB and OCB station regarding national assessments and the intelligence-policy divide. In the meantime, for this thesis, we move forward, arguing that both boards provided something that was not traditional intelligence analysis, nor strict policy analysis. In which case, what did the PSB and the OCB provide? Looking again to Marrin and Davies, we may be coming close to an answer.

The Psychological Strategy Board's and the Operations Coordinating Board's reviews, recommendations, and studies gathered the combined information from across government (e.g. DOS, DOD, etc.) and through CIA analysts assigned to the staff and working groups, incorporated relevant intelligence. Therefore, the policy recommendations, which accompanied the reports, move the PSB and OCB products into something more accurately described as government or national assessment. By not separating the intelligence and policy departments, and instead incorporating both, the PSB and the OCB assessed what Marrin and Davies describe as "the strategic impact of the policies of the governing administration."³⁴ The boards assessed national security policy in light of both established policy and current intelligence, before providing national assessments to the National Security Council and the President of the United States. Wedding intelligence with policy required coordination and collaboration. The early construction of the national security and intelligence systems did not lend itself to either. Even after specific bodies (the PSB and the OCB) were established solely for the purposes of planning and coordination, bureaucracies and turf-wars inhibited an efficient 'whole of government' approach to the issues of the day. Specifically, as it relates to the Middle East, the lack of a cohesive effort, prone to fits and starts, as well as bureaucratic competition, meant that the American government had to build a regional strategy from the ground up. Perceived as being at a loss (particularly as it related to the psychological effort against the Soviet Union) meant that the PSB, NSC, and the OCB had to prioritize efforts to establish influence with the Middle East regional governments in the hopes of securing the area's natural resources for the West. A strategy developed that emphasized regional defence and internal security over social change and cultural understanding. This resulted in policy recommendations that were late in recognizing the extent of Middle East regional instability at the strategic state level in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon; generating regional unrest and threatening Western influence in this strategically important area.

³⁴ Marrin and Davies, "National Assessment by the National Security Council Staff," p. 645.

While more accurately defined as national assessments (as opposed to intelligence assessments), we should still establish an introductory baseline for our understanding of intelligence. For this purpose, this study uses Sherman Kent's categorization of intelligence being an organization, an activity (process), or knowledge (product). Sherman Kent (already mentioned in this introduction), arguably the seminal figure in modern American intelligence analysis, describes in his 1949 work, *Strategic Intelligence: For American World Policy*, that intelligence could be considered in three ways: first as a product, resulting from the knowledge of its practitioners; second as an organization such as the Central Intelligence Agency or the National Security Council; or third as an activity or process, the avenue by which intelligence assessments arrive.³⁵ This thesis focuses on two of the three, namely the organization and the product. Specifically, this study investigates the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board within the organizational construct, both as diverse meta-organizations as well as individual corporate entities, unified in message (message being the policy assessment product itself). What now follows is an introduction to the concept of intelligence and the pitfalls present in the American government in the 1950s. By providing the background and context to the modern American intelligence system the reader is better served toward understanding the administrative histories of the PSB and OCB in the chapters to follow. We will then analyse the strategic and operational picture of the Middle East informed by the PSB and OCB assessments; a unique lens to view the history of American national security policy.

This study uses the 'broad' definition of intelligence which affords the use of any and all information available, as opposed to the 'narrow' definition of intelligence which refers to the covert collection of information in what is not publicly available.³⁶ National Intelligence Council officer Mark Lowenthal defines intelligence, in part, as "the process by which specific types of information important to national security are requested, collected, analysed, and provided to policy-makers."³⁷ Of course this definition is not specific or descriptive enough for a detailed and comprehensive study on the concepts

³⁵ Sherman Kent, *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966). This categorization is also described in Timothy Walton, *Challenges in Intelligence Analysis: Lessons from 1300 BCE to the Present*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) p. 1; and David N. Wilson, *The Eisenhower Doctrine and its Implementation in Lebanon - 1958*, M.A. Thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 2002.

³⁶ Marrin and Davies, p. 644.

³⁷ Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2002 [second edition]) p. 8.

or theories of intelligence. This paper claims to be neither, and for this reason we have chosen to use the more inclusive broad definition of intelligence in this study. Whether broad or narrow, intelligence has four main functions: collection, analysis, covert action, and counterintelligence. When we are talking about an intelligence assessment (falling within the analysis function) it is categorized by the intended audience (strategic, operational, and tactical). However, regardless of the level, the underlying purpose of intelligence is to provide insight into problem sets. As a matter of course, intelligence, the process, the product, and the practitioner, exists within a world of intangibles and unknowns.³⁸ The purpose, therefore, is to collect, synthesize, and analyse information from disparate sources and craft reason out of chaos.³⁹ This is not meant to suggest that there are no accepted truths within intelligence, far from it; however, the active practices of denial and deception that are commonplace in intelligence work tend to colour ‘facts’ into shades of grey or proximate realities. In a sense, intelligence is borne out of uncertainty, and within the context of this thesis, the intelligence (product) is geared toward national level policy makers. Due to the very real ‘life or death’ consequences of military and wartime decision-making, commanders and leaders seek the greatest levels of certainty in the information that they receive.⁴⁰ Therefore, intelligence attempts to meet the demand for absolutes where few exist.⁴¹ For this reason, there can be an unrealistic requirement placed upon intelligence to be ‘fact’ rather than ‘assessment’ and a misconception of the two at the strategic level can be especially damaging due to the role this level has upon shaping the others (operational and tactical).⁴²

Before moving forward, we have highlighted what intelligence is and what it is meant to do, but how does this apply to the American government of the 1950s? Tim Weiner argues in *Legacy of Ashes: The*

³⁸ In this sense ‘practitioner’ is being used synonymous with ‘organization.’

³⁹ Robert M. Clark, *Intelligence Analysis: A Target Centric Approach*, (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2004) pp. 12-27.

⁴⁰ David Thomas, “U.S. Military Intelligence Analysis: Old and New Challenges,” in *Analyzing Intelligence: Origins, Obstacles, and Innovations*, eds. Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce, (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2008) pp. 138-154.

⁴¹ James B. Bruce, “Making Analysis More Reliable: Why Epistemology Matter to Intelligence,” in *Analyzing Intelligence: Origins, Obstacles, and Innovations*, eds. Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce, (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2008) pp. 171-190.

⁴² Jack Davis, “Why Bad Things Happen to Good Analysts,” in *Analyzing Intelligence: Origins, Obstacles, and Innovations*, eds. Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce, (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2008) pp. 157-170; and Thomas Fingar, *Reducing Uncertainty: Intelligence Analysis and National Security*, Stanford Security Studies, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011) pp. 50-66.

History of the CIA, that during this time, intelligence officials in Washington were operating under the perception that it was the Soviets who were in fact pulling all the strings, and that the United States was in a constant state of ‘catch-up,’ perilously close to losing ground to communism at every turn. Specifically, “by the end of 1958, [the US] had constructed a picture of the USSR, and whatever happened had to be made to fit into that picture. Intelligence estimates can hardly commit a more abominable sin.”⁴³ In fact, former CIA analyst and intelligence advisor to the Secretary of Defense, Timothy Walton, goes further in his book, *Challenges in Intelligence Analysis: Lessons learned from 1300 BCE to the Present*, and states that intelligence analysis during the time in question (1947-1958) was plagued by multiple cognitive shortcomings, especially in the areas of predictive analysis and forecasting.⁴⁴ Walton finds that the Intelligence Community’s inability to accurately assess the near term geo-political environments resulted from faulty analytic practices such as “...mirror imaging and the use of rational actor model, both of which were based on Western values and procedures. There were also examples of the confirmation bias, which involves ignoring or devaluing accurate reports that do not fit one’s preconceptions, and the framing bias, which occurs when information is presented in such a way that it leads to a preferred conclusion.”⁴⁵ Essentially, the early American intelligence community was suffering from what today would be termed ‘groupthink.’

In 1972, Yale psychologist Irving L. Janis introduced the theory of groupthink in his study, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascos*. In this study, Janis explored the “process by which individuals are propelled toward consensual mistakes by peer group influences.”⁴⁶ Janis describes groupthink as positive beliefs about the decision-group itself and the protection of these beliefs against internal or external dissidence. In turn, these convictions led to relatively rapid agreement on action or inaction. Similarly, the American intelligence and national security entities (represented by the collective PSB and OCB) tasked with providing guidance on the Middle East in the 1950s, found themselves committing to ‘legacy’ assessments that focused on Egypt and Syria as the regional hotspots for Arab Nationalism and Soviet Communism as Western-allied

⁴³ Timothy Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2007) pp. 140 & 154.

⁴⁴ Timothy Walton, *Challenges in Intelligence Analysis: Lessons from 1300 BCE to the Present*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) pp. 113-172.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 127.

⁴⁶ Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascos*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972) p. 1.

Iraq and Lebanon descended into instability and revolution. This examination argues that the records of the PSB and the OCB can be used to better understand this history from sources not often considered in the academic conversation on US-Middle East Cold War policy. The PSB and OCB records show that the US focused on strengthening states over social and economic change, failing to recognize the dynamically changing region, instead relying on established narratives that resulted in ‘policy blinders’ that led the US President to undertake a military operation (Lebanon 1958) to rescue a failed regional policy. Reviewing previously unavailable source material in concert with the existing academic record, we track the impact and influence of PSB and OCB national assessments across the levels of government and examine US-Middle East foreign policy through a new lens, providing new insights for the academic record.

Nations confront each other not as living historic entities, with all of their complexities, but as rational abstractions after the model of “Economic Man” – playing games of military and diplomatic chess according to the rational calculus that exists nowhere but in the theoretician’s mind.⁴⁷

How does Hans Morgenthau’s quotation on foreign policy and international relations apply toward the stratification of national intelligence (described in the following section), or possibly, the dangers of groupthink? Intelligence is meant to provide insight and contextualize complex situations to policy makers in order for them to make informed decisions. As the United States assessed global changes following the Second World War, American leaders looked to their burgeoning intelligence and national security system for clarity in the discord of a world ravaged by war. Concerned that the rich resources of the Middle East could fall to the Soviets, the West set about securing the energy and fuel necessary to maintain and rebuild Western international strength. For the United States, the task placed upon the American intelligence and national security systems was immense. Lacking the historical experience (enjoyed by European colonial powers) with the Middle East, the United States found itself in a precarious predicament as intelligence analysis (and the analysts who conducted it) suffered the same pitfalls of applying the ‘rational calculus’ facing Morgenthau’s ‘political theoretician.’

⁴⁷ Hans J. Morgenthau cited in Alda B. Bozeman, “War and the Clash of Ideas,” *Strategic Intelligence and Statecraft*, (1992) p. 53.

Intelligence specialists are granted access to confidential sources and increasing amounts of data; but instead of being able to arrive at the ‘truth’ they can suffer information over-load and become more insular, pushed to depend on their constructed rational calculus despite evidence that may contraindicate their beliefs. CIA veteran Richards J. Heuer, Jr. writes in his article, “Do You Really Need More Information?” that experimental psychologists have indicated there exists a relationship between “the amount of information available to the experts, the accuracy of judgements they make based on this information, and the experts’ confidence in the accuracy of these judgments.”⁴⁸ The results indicate that despite an analyst’s experience level, once the analyst “has the minimum information necessary to make an informed judgment, obtaining additional information generally does not improve the accuracy of his or her estimates.”⁴⁹ To the contrary, additional information may in many cases lead the analyst to become more confident in his judgement, sometimes to the point of overconfidence. Ironically, despite this danger, the pursuit of *more* information is at the heart of the ‘Mosaic Theory of Intelligence Gathering,’ still the primary operating principle in intelligence collection and analysis. Columbia Law School Vice Dean, David E. Pozen describes the Mosaic Theory in his article “The Mosaic Theory, National Security, and the Freedom of Information Act,” for *The Yale Law Journal*, as essentially, “a theory of informational synergy,” through the process of intelligence collection, combination, and compilation seemingly disparate pieces of information assemble a coherent picture.⁵⁰ However, instead of analysts using various pieces of information to create a picture greater than the sum of its parts, analysts will often form a picture first and then select the pieces that fit. In this reality, situations are simplified into more basic ‘black and white’ or ‘good and bad’ thinking and policy is often constructed around such misconceptions.⁵¹ The danger therefore is that intelligence is often sought to shape the world into limited categories, especially in the ‘big picture’ policy environment of strategic intelligence. Unfortunately, the attempt to use intelligence to

⁴⁸ Richard J. Heuer, Jr., “Do You Really Need More Information?” *Studies in Intelligence*, 32:1 (Spring 1979) pp. 15-25. An edited version of this article can be found in Richards J. Heuer, Jr., “Psychology of Intelligence Analysis,” *Center for the Study of Intelligence*, Central Intelligence Agency (Publication Date Omitted) p. 51.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 52.

⁵⁰ David E. Pozen, “The Mosaic Theory, National Security, and the Freedom of Information Act,” *The Yale Law Journal*, (December 2005) pp. 628 - 679.

⁵¹ Morgenthau emphasized this fallacy of moral ‘black and white’ approaches to foreign policy in the January 1958 Volume of the Naval War College Review. Hans Morgenthau, “Realism in International Politics,” *Naval War College Review*, X: 5 (January 1958) pp. 16-25.

justify a simplified world view is not only common, but dangerous. The PSB and OCB records show the national security enterprise of the US government had determined which countries fell into the good, and which fell into the bad, and seemed reluctant or unable to see a dangerously evolving situation in the Middle East (particularly in Iraq and Lebanon). The remainder of this introduction describes the role of strategic intelligence before moving on to the literature review.

STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE

In this study the declassified archival records (discussed at the end of this introduction and again in the literature review) of the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board are reviewed in order to provide a unique view of the strategic picture facing American policy makers relating to the Middle East. As this study progresses, we will view this regional strategy through the prisms of psychological strategy and state stability, key problem sets for the PSB and the OCB. Before delving into that information specifically, first we must establish an understanding of strategic intelligence at the outset. The Central Intelligence Agency runs what is referred to as the ‘CIA University,’ more specifically, it is the agency’s training programme for educating the analytic workforce instrumental in the organization’s operations. A cornerstone of the CIA University is the Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis.⁵² Sherman Kent, the building’s namesake, was a twentieth-century Yale University history professor who joined the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during the Second World War and went on to serve as the Central Intelligence Agency Chief of the Office of National Estimates (ONE) for close to two decades. Kent’s focus and passion were to formalize the methodologies and tradecraft of intelligence analysis, within the developing literature on the subject (much of which is still taught in the US intelligence community today). Often seen as the father of [American] intelligence analysis, Kent published a number of works that came to be used as doctrine for intelligence analysis over the years. Particularly, Kent’s writings on strategic intelligence as “high-level foreign positive intelligence,” and in his view, the “most important faction” of the intelligence enterprise serves as the starting point for our review of the levels of intelligence.⁵³ Kent viewed strategic intelligence as:

⁵² Bob Drogin, “At CIA School, Data Outweigh Derring-Do,” *Los Angeles Times*, (27 August 2000).

⁵³ Sherman Kent, *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy*, (USA: Princeton University Press, 1966) p. 3.

The knowledge a state must possess regarding other states in order to assure itself that its cause will not suffer nor its undertakings fail because its statesmen and soldiers plan and act in ignorance. This is the knowledge upon which we base our high-level national policy toward the other states of the world.⁵⁴

In other words, strategic intelligence is the information necessary for a state to pursue and protect its national interests on the global scale. It is the root of national policy by which states interact with the world, and is indispensable to maintain a state's welfare and security.⁵⁵ The importance that Sherman Kent applies to strategic intelligence is especially relevant to this thesis. This study endeavours to analyse the strategic picture, after first assessing the organization and key players in the American intelligence community (IC) and national security system in the next chapter, thereby establishing the proper context for relating to the PSB and OCB. Before moving on to that analysis, the other levels of intelligence (operational and tactical) merit mention at this time.

Military historian and professor at the United States Army Command and General Staff College, Jonathan M. House, writes in *Military Intelligence, 1870 – 1991: A Research Guide*, the category of intelligence is determined by the level of the intended audience. Therefore, operational intelligence is an intermediate level, in which a theatre, field army, air force, or corps/naval battle group commander seeks intelligence that will affect the campaign plan or contingency plan intended to accomplish strategic or national objectives. Examples of operational intelligence include the location, capabilities, missions and movements of major enemy units – division or corps, air wings, or naval task

⁵⁴ Ibid p. 3 - For more information on Sherman Kent's influence on the study of the intelligence, see – Sherman Kent, "Words of Estimative Probability," *Studies in Intelligence*, 3:29:1 (Fall 1964) National Archives and Records Administration, NACP, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, 1894 – 2002, Record Group 263; Sherman Kent, "The Law and Custom of the National Intelligence Estimate," Office of National Estimates (1965) NACP, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, 1946 – 1993, Textual Records, Record Group 263.5; and Sherman Kent, "The Making of an NIE," *Sherman Kent and the Board of National Estimates: Collected Essays*, (Washington: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2007).

⁵⁵ In some cases, authors in the field of Intelligence study will differentiate between Intelligence and Military Intelligence. There is both Strategic Intelligence and Strategic Military Intelligence, and while they both operate at the executive level of policy making, definitions of Strategic Military Intelligence's focus are sometimes limited solely to the analysis of enemy force capabilities and how the military operates with the national system, and excludes much of the corollary information necessary to develop a more complete picture of a foreign state and its decision making process as defined by Kent.

forces.⁵⁶ Consequently tactical intelligence – or combat intelligence, is the traditional focus of military intelligence studies. Tactical intelligence seeks to understand the composition, disposition, doctrine, and if possible, the intentions of enemy units that immediately threaten friendly combat units. Commanders need to know about the enemy units, weather, and terrain that define the situation in which they will fight. Tactical intelligence takes place ‘on the ground’ and in a military setting that means it is being conducted (the majority of the time) by service members as opposed to civilian intelligence specialists who figure heavily in the strategic and operational levels. Because service members are tasked at this level, the intelligence that they are asked to collect will differ depending on the service conducting the operation. In some cases, such service parochialisms can create competition between services.⁵⁷ Therefore this study will engage the practice of intelligence from a perspective not unlike the post Second World War American intelligence pioneers, tasked with bringing modern American intelligence out of the foxhole and into the boardroom. Before delving into *how* the PSB and the OCB influenced Middle East policy, we must first engage *what* the PSB and OCB were within the intelligence and national security environment of the 1950s, discussed in the next chapter.

It is important to reemphasize here that this study presents a unique opportunity to enhance the academic corpus. This study takes advantage of the growing declassified records of the PSB, OCB, CIA, NSC, and State Department reports to approach three goals: 1. to show the placement of these boards in the greater architecture of the national security system; 2. to highlight the contribution of intelligence (broad definition) to, through, and from these boards toward national assessments that influenced developing Middle East foreign policy; and 3. to show that the records of the PSB and the OCB (now becoming more available through the CIA CREST Archives, the National Security Archives, and the National Declassification Center) offer the historian an opportunity to view more established Cold War histories from a different perspective (providing valuable insights to the academic record). Therefore, this study is uniquely positioned to explore the influence and reach of

⁵⁶ Johnathan M. House, *Military Intelligence, 1870-1991*, (London: Greenwood Press, 1993) p. 3.

⁵⁷ Information is anything that can be known, regardless of how it is discovered. Intelligence refers to information that meets the stated or understood needs of policy makers and has been collected, processed, and narrowed to meet those needs. Intelligence is a subset of the broader category of information. Intelligence and the entire process by which it is identified, obtained, and analysed responds to the needs of policy makers. All intelligence is information; not all information is intelligence.

these boards within the modern American intelligence and national security system itself; as well as the American government's perceptions of the Middle East (Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon) in the lead up to the coup in Iraq and the invasion of Lebanon in 1958. The Lebanese invasion is used as a bookend to this study because it marks the point when policy shifted to military action. While this is not a study on the Lebanese invasion or military operations, the invasion provides a valuable benchmark and highlights the greater impact of this study; showcasing that the records of the PSB and the OCB can provide greater insight into the historical record of American policy to the Middle East that, up to this point, has not been undertaken.

This thesis then follows the following path: first, we will engage in understanding the United States' history with respect to intelligence and the work toward structuring a national security enterprise following the Second World War. This is likely to be the most 'tread-upon' area of this study as the history of the American national security and intelligence communities is well covered in existing academia. However, a discussion of this history is none-the-less necessary in order to construct the foundational understanding that the rest of the paper is built upon. This is not meant to say that this section of the paper offers nothing substantial; instead, this section incorporates the use of recently declassified material from the Central Intelligence Agency, the early iterations of the National Security Council, and key engineers within the executive sphere that further supports our understanding of this transitional time from the actors involved.

Taking proper note of the initial systemic confusion over authorities, the lack of coordination, and the recognized need to be at the forefront developing 'psychological strategies' to engage the world, we then will explore the second focus area: the strategy and policy impacts of the planning and coordination elements of the national security enterprise (the PSB and the OCB). Heavily leveraging the primary record of declassified material from the PSB, the OCB, and the NSC (now becoming available), this examination will analyse the trials and tribulations of these boards as they struggled for purchase, existing in the sphere of the National Security Council. This part of the study will also discuss in detail the policy recommendations and approaches that were tasked to, developed by, and proposed to policy-makers for American relations with the Middle East. While the topic of Cold War Middle East foreign policy is well established in the literature, what is not sufficiently covered is how the regional strategy was developed from a psychological strategy approach. We will show how the Psychological Strategy Board was influential in its construction, and the NSC and the Operations

Coordinating Board were instrumental in shaping the strategic picture by way of their national assessments. Again, drawing from previously declassified primary sources: we will explore the difficulties the PSB had in coordinating the policy organs of government; and the OCB's assessments of internal security and state stability in the Middle East, particularly as they related to the move from policy to action.

This study focuses on the impacts that the PSB and OCB had on national security and foreign policy relating to the Middle East, with specific attention paid to the deteriorating situations in Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. The lack of a cohesive effort, prone to fits and starts, as well as bureaucratic competition, meant that the American government had to build a regional strategy from the ground up. Internally perceived as lagging behind the Soviet Union in the psychological realm, the PSB, OCB, and NSC efforts resulted in the development of a near-term strategy that emphasized regional defence and internal security over social change and cultural understanding. Because of the emphasis on these areas, and possible group think regarding political stability, the OCB national assessments were late to recognize the extent of Middle East regional instability at the strategic level in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon; threatening the US influence in the region. Tracking the strategies recommended by the PSB, the policies adopted by the NSC (based on this strategy), and the national assessments produced by the OCB (based on those policies), we use the records of these boards to assess the strategic picture presented to policy-makers (by way of these boards' placement and access in the system) to provide a new and unique view of American foreign policy during this time.

COVERT ACTION

Any study of the PSB and the OCB would be negligent if it did not give some mention to covert action (CA); as propaganda and psychological strategy are often included as elements of CA. To understand this better we first assert what we mean by covert action. Former CIA and Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) historian, Michael Warner, describes covert action as “the secret supplement to war and diplomacy, employed at the margins of conflict to shift patterns of trust and allegiance.”⁵⁸ Former CIA officer and covert action policy expert Dr. William J. Daugherty describes covert action as “in its simplest terms ... influence. It is a program of multiple, subordinate,

⁵⁸ Michael Warner, “Secret, Small, Deniable - A Matter of Trust: Covert Action Reconsidered,” *Studies in Intelligence*, 63:4 (December 2019) p. 33.

coordinated, interlocking intelligence operations, usually managed over a long period of time, intended to influence a target audience to do something or to refrain from doing something, or to influence opinion.”⁵⁹ In Executive Order 12333 covert action is defined as:

Special activities conducted in support of national foreign policy objectives abroad which are planned and executed so that the role of the United States Government is not apparent or acknowledged publicly.⁶⁰

In other words - deniable intelligence operations that seek to influence foreign audiences in support of US foreign policy. An example of (non-military) covert action is propaganda, which Daugherty defines as the:

Systematic dissemination of specific doctrines, viewpoints, or messages to a chosen audience. Usually it is employed to foster the acceptance, by the chosen target audience, of a particular policy position or opinion, although at times propaganda may be used simply to denigrate or undermine a belief or position held by a foreign audience without advocating an alternative.⁶¹

The similarities are striking, and one way of thinking of it is that propaganda is the tool used in covert action to meet the aims for both. Therefore propaganda, as a substantial element of covert action as well as psychological warfare, is important to contextualize the history of the PSB as it worked to develop psychological strategies in pursuit of America’s national security interests. In the article, “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States, 1951-1961,” military and intelligence historian, Kristian Gustafson examines both the US government’s history regarding covert operations following the Second World War, and the coordination and management of covert action undertaken by the PSB and the OCB.⁶² Some of what is covered by Gustafson follows shortly

⁵⁹ William Daugherty, *Executive Secrets: Covert Action and the Presidency*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2004) p. 12.

⁶⁰ The Provision of Executive Order No. 12333 of December 4, 1981, appears at 46 FR 59941, 3 C.F.R., 1981 Comp. p. 200.

⁶¹ Daugherty, *Executive Secrets*, p. 72.

⁶² Kristian Gustafson, “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States, 1951-1961,” *Public Policy and Administration*, 28:2 (2012) pp. 144-160.

in the section on covert action, and in the following literature review. However, it is important to make the distinction clear, this dissertation is not a study of the PSB's or OCB's relationship to covert action specifically; rather, this thesis makes note of the covert action connection through the PSB's responsibilities for developing psychological strategies and its relationship to propaganda. Chapters Two and Five discuss the PSB's connection to propaganda, being seen as synonymous with psychological warfare by many in the US government. Back to the point, in psychological warfare the aim is to use psychological operations to influence foreign audiences, their perceptions, and subsequent behaviour, in support of US government policy and military objectives.⁶³ In a 1951 PSB report, *Concept of the Organization to Provide Dynamic Psychological Operations in the Cold War*, the board recognized that the term "psychological operations" included a "wide spectrum of overt and covert activities – from propagation of truthful foreign information to subversive operations of both a moral and physical character."⁶⁴

Propaganda and covert action can often times be subtle, aiding in the cover and deniability for the US government. The PSB leveraged this by recommending the use of propaganda to influence a country's elites, with intelligence services attempting to recruit respected scholars, political, and other public figures who would then work to publish articles in scholarly journals or commentary magazines that subtly supported the US government policies.⁶⁵ As Gustafson writes in *Hostile Intent: US Covert Operations in Chile, 1964 -1974*, the CIA established a workshop to:

...write articles and general editorial pieces for all three media (TV, print, and radio). Simultaneously, the Agency maintained several correspondents, editors, and freelance journalists as its own media "stringers"... they would take the CIA media product (and, presumably, money) and place the pieces on a wire service for pickup by unwitting media outlets throughout Chile. Other such assets would place CIA editorials in editorial pages of papers and magazines or place them over the airwaves via radio.⁶⁶

⁶³ Joint Publication 3-13.2, *Psychological Operations*, (Washington D.C.: Government Publication Office, 2010) pp. VII –VIII.

⁶⁴ The Psychological Strategy Board, *Concept of the Organization to Provide Dynamic Psychological Operations in the Cold War*, Washington D.C., may 1951, pp. 1-9, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010029-7, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁶⁵ Daugherty, *Executive Secrets*, p. 76.

⁶⁶ Kristian Gustafson, *Hostile Intent: US Covert Operations in Chile, 1964-1974*, (Washington: Potomac Books, 2007) p. 71.

Gustafson notes that these CIA efforts to influence the 1969 Chilean elections were deemed “to have a significant force-multiplying effect on its target audience. Accordingly, propaganda took a major role in the 1969 election campaign.”⁶⁷ While the PSB did recommend the use of similar tactics to influence perception, the extent and the impact cannot be ascertained at this time owing to the limited sources currently available. Therefore, the length to which this paper can address covert action is also limited but it will always seek to understand this useful dimension where possible.⁶⁸ Ultimately, from the material that has been released, we can say that both boards recommended approaches to the Middle East emphasizing “the deliberate and planned involvement in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation, seeking to influence (or less often, coerce) a change of state policy.”⁶⁹ The records indicate that the purpose of these efforts were to highlight the benefits of relationships with the West and to emphasize the dangers of aligning with the Soviet Union, a trend in the region that Washington feared could jeopardize access to vital natural resources. Psychological strategy, psychological operations, and propaganda can all be connected to covert action, but these are not the only links to the PSB and the OCB.

THE PSB, THE OCB, AND COVERT ACTION

In Chapter Three we discuss that while establishing the Psychological Strategy Board, a dispute was taking place in Washington over the roles and responsibilities for covert operations. By 1951, CIA Director Walter Bedell Smith (1950-1953) had become concerned that the CIA’s Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), the element engaged in covert operations, was stretching the agency’s budget and leaving little room for the CIA to engage its other intelligence functions. Petitioning the NSC,

⁶⁷ Gustafson, *Hostile Intent*, p. 69.

⁶⁸ For other reading of the PSB and the OCB connections to propaganda see – Shawn J. Perry-Giles, “Camouflaged Propaganda: The Truman and Eisenhower Administrations’ Covert Manipulation of News,” *Western Journal of Communication*, 60:2 (Spring 1996) pp. 1-23; Shawn J. Perry Giles, “The Eisenhower Administration’s Conceptualization of the USIA: The Development of Overt and Covert Propaganda Strategies,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 24:2 (Spring 1994) pp. 263-276; James Marchio, “The Planning Coordination Group: Bureaucratic Casualty in the Cold War Campaign to Exploit Soviet-Bloc Vulnerabilities,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 4:4 (Fall 2002) pp. 3-28; and Gabrielle Kemmis, “Uncovering the Metaphysics of Psychological Warfare: The Social Science behind the Psychological Strategy Board’s Operations Planning, 1951-1953,” *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 56:3 (Summer 2020) pp. 186-200.

⁶⁹ Daugherty, *Executive Secrets*, p. 18.

Smith had hoped a review of CA responsibilities could help divest his agency from what had become an all-consuming leviathan of agency resources and finances. In fact, the CIA had gone so far as to begin the turn-over of the agency's psychological warfare programme to the PSB, before the State Department stepped in to block the move. Unfortunately for Smith, the NSC special committee recommended to President Truman that the CIA be formally given the responsibility for covert operations. Interestingly, while the CIA was granted control over covert operations, the PSB was assigned the responsibility for developing psychological strategies, which were seen as an element of covert action. Additionally, the PSB was included in the NSC 10/5 panel (an approval body for covert operations), for a short time before being relegated outside of panel's processes with the CIA taking both operational and planning control of covert operations (the PSB would serve in an advisory role when requested).⁷⁰ After the PSB was replaced by the OCB in the Eisenhower administration, NSC 5412 designated the OCB (for a short time) as the normal channel for coordinating support for covert operations among State, Defense, and the CIA.⁷¹ Later in March 1955, in NSC 5412/1 the OCB's Planning Coordination Group (PCG) was designated the coordinating element for covert operations. This remained, until December 1955 when the NSC 5412/2 Special Group took control.

In "The Planning Coordination Group: Bureaucratic Casualty in the Cold War Campaign to Exploit Soviet-Bloc Vulnerabilities," Dr. James Marchio, the Associate Dean at the National Intelligence University, focus on the PCG, the covert action element of the OCB.⁷² "By establishing the PCG within the framework of the OCB and requiring that it provide periodic reports to the president through the NSC," the PCG was to inform the highest levels of American government, and through its member representation, address concerns regarding duplicative efforts and unclear responsibilities.⁷³ The group was to "aid in developing planning in both overt and covert fields," contributing greatly to the dynamism and effectiveness of coordinated agency planning.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Office of the Historian, "Note on U.S. Covert Actions," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XII, Western Europe*, p. XXXIII.

⁷¹ William M. Leary, ed., *The Central Intelligence Agency: History and Documents*, (Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1984) p. 63.

⁷² James Marchio, "The Planning Coordination Group: Bureaucratic Casualty in the Cold War Campaign to Exploit Soviet-Bloc Vulnerabilities," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, (September 2002) pp. 3-28.

⁷³ *Ibid.* p. 9.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* p. 10.

Unfortunately, Marchio notes, the extent of the PCG (and OCB) in advising and channelling support to major covert programmes remains “unclear given the continuing limitation of access to classified memoranda.”⁷⁵ The available information suggests that the PCG, similar to the PSB, likely failed due to a lack of a clear mission (accepted by all parties), concerns regarding the PCG competing against the entrenched agencies, and a lack of the necessary structure or resources to accomplish their mission. According to Under Secretary of State Herbert Hoover Jr. the PCG had failed to provide a single report to the chairman of the OCB and had not yet submitted any papers, outlines, or reports (as of October 1955).⁷⁶ Historian Douglas Little writes about US-Syrian relations in his article “Cold War and Covert Action: The United States and Syria, 1945 – 1948,” and while Little does mention the role of the OCB reports in informing the US government of the deteriorating situation in Syria, the coverage is limited.⁷⁷

While much of their recommendations could be argued to fall within the scope of covert action, at the same time, the use of official US government channels and agencies (like the DOS, or representatives of the DOD) would suggest against these being true covert action and more closely aligned to official state business. This distinction is important, as Gustafson notes in describing covert and clandestine action, particularly for American audiences where the two are often used interchangeably. In covert action the attempt is made to conceal the identity of the sponsor (for our purposes in this study, the American government) the action itself is not necessarily masked. For clandestine action the activities of both are meant to be concealed.⁷⁸ With respect to the primary source declassified material used in this study, much of what the PSB and OCB put forward to the NSC and the president, neither the action nor the source was concealed. Therefore, what we can assess is that the PSB and the OCB are relevant to the history of US covert operations, especially their approval and coordination, and that the extent and depth of their involvement is an opportunity for future study. This is likely to be exploited in the case of Indochina where the OCB developed a

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 13.

⁷⁶ Untitled Note by Herbert Hoover Jr., 5 October 1955, NA, File “PCG,” RG 59, RRS DPINSC, Entry 1586, Lot 66D148, Box 127.

⁷⁷ Douglas Little, “Cold War and Covert Action: The United States and Syria, 1945-1958,” *Middle East Journal*, 44:1 (Winter 1990) pp. 51-75.

⁷⁸ Gustafson, “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action” p. 147.

detailed contingency plan for information and psychological warfare activities.⁷⁹ The point here is not to distance the PSB and the OCB from covert operations, far from it – in this study we recognize that covert action, propaganda, etc. are important elements of the PSB and OCB story – but this falls outside the scope of this paper (using the archival records of the PSB and OCB to view US-Middle East policy), and is better served by the works of several authors including Gustafson (2012), Mitrovich (2002), Long (2008), Prados (1996), Marchio (2002) and Lucas (1999) among others, discussed in the following literature review.⁸⁰

Ultimately, the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board existed within the sphere of covert action where recommendations were designed to shape or change foreign state policy, in pursuit of American national security goals. This study instead focuses on what is truly unique and not covered in the existing literature: the national assessments of the Middle East region. National assessments, where policy and intelligence departments were integrated alongside each other, created national assessments that Marrin and Davies argue is more akin to the British system, as opposed to the traditional American system where analytic isolation from policy has followed the ‘traditionalist perspective’ separating intelligence from policy (writ large).⁸¹

ARCHIVES

Turning now to the primary sources used to build the detailed examination to follow (the secondary literature will be explored in the literature review), this study make use of a new and exciting

⁷⁹ Operations Coordinating Board, “Report on NSC 59/1 and NSC 127/1,” Washington D.C., 21 July 1954, p. 509, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950-1955, The Intelligence Community, 1950-1955, Report on NSC 59/1 and NSC 127/1, 21 July 1954. Doc. 183.* The OCB then informed the NSC that they would not continue this practice unless specifically directed.

⁸⁰ For other reading of the PSB and the OCB connections to propaganda see – Shawn J. Perry-Giles, “Camouflaged Propaganda: The Truman and Eisenhower Administrations’ Covert Manipulation of News,” *Western Journal of Communication*, 60:2 (Spring 1996) pp. 1-23; Shawn J. Perry Giles, “The Eisenhower Administration’s Conceptualization of the USIA: The Development of Overt and Covert Propaganda Strategies,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 24:2, (Spring 1994) pp. 263-276; James Marchio, “The Planning Coordination Group: Bureaucratic Casualty in the Cold War Campaign to Exploit Soviet-Bloc Vulnerabilities,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 4:4 (Fall 2002) pp. 3-28; and Gabrielle Kemmis, “Uncovering the Metaphysics of Psychological Warfare: The Social Science behind the Psychological Strategy Board’s Operations Planning, 1951-1953,” *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 56:3 (Summer 2020) pp. 186-200.

⁸¹ Marrin and Davies, “National Assessment by the National Security Council Staff,” p. 644.

declassified source base. From these sources (PSB, OCB, NSC, CIA, DOD, DOS, etc.), this paper highlights the involvement of the PSB and OCB in informing the highest level decision-makers of the US government developing US strategy for a fluid and dynamic environment of the Middle East. These sources show both the direct and indirect avenues (within the national security enterprise) granted to the PSB and OCB that allowed them to engage US heads of state, particularly the National Security Council and the president. In the future, as more of the PSB and OCB records become available through declassification, historians will be presented with more opportunities to analyse the history of American national security, intelligence, and foreign policy from a new and unique vantage point during a key era of American expansion.

CREST ARCHIVES

However, awareness of, and/or access to, previously classified information can be difficult as we are talking about national security state secrets. Due to the fact that this thesis focuses on the Middle East, declassification of records has not necessarily been automatic. The United States remains heavily invested in the region, and releasing documents that may indicate or expose overt or covert American influence could possibly affect current US policies. Therefore, as is the case with dated classified material dealing with other 'hot button' issues (like nuclear weapons for example), the declassification and release of these records can take time and undergo several review processes.

To add to this, declassification, the first step to gaining access and assessing information, is not always a linear event. Declassifications often happen in dumps and bursts, with heavily redacted content, pieces of a story, told in whispers. For the researcher and historian this can be both a rewarding and frustrating experience. Newly declassified documents that hold promise and yet reveal little, while other seemingly innocuous releases finally providing the missing piece or context that ties things together. It is a slow process with ups and downs, but in recent years appears to be trending in a beneficial direction for researchers. The US government has been working to make good on its promise of Executive Order (EO) 13526 (formerly EO 12958). EO 13526 is the Presidential order on classified national security information.⁸² The IC focuses heavily on parts 1 and 2 of 13526 which deal with original and derivative classification, or the 'who' can classify information and 'how'

⁸² Presidential Executive Order 13526, Classified National Security Information, 19 December 2009, Available online at – www.archives.gov/isoo/policy-documents/cnsi-eo.html.

information is classified. For this study we are interested in part 3 - Declassification and Downgrading. In brief, each agency with original classification authority, or has originated classified information, is required under 13526 to undertake systematic and mandatory declassification reviews of their records. This is how we gain access to the information. Once the records are reviewed for content and protected information, the original classifier (or the agency designated for the original classifier) can choose to release documents in whole or in part after first meeting a designated time line (in many cases 25 years).

CREST: 25-YEAR PROGRAMME

The automatic declassification provisions of EO 13526 require the declassification of non-exempt historically valuable records 25 years or older. The Central Intelligence Agency established an automatic 25-year declassification programme to be conducted out of the CIA Declassification Center. The centre reviews documents for declassification prior to reaching the 25-year deadline. Beginning in 2000 and for the majority of the life of this study, the CIA Records Search Tool (CREST) system was maintained at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland (often referred to as NARA II). Prior to January 2017, the CREST Archives were only directly accessible via in person trips to NARA II. This study, which the author began in December 2010, required regular trips to College Park to view the CREST holdings. Many of the CIA, PSB, and OCB reports used in this paper were reviewed and collected during these trips. Fortunately (and unfortunately) beginning in January 2017 the CIA began publishing these records through the CREST collection online. This is fortunate because as has just been pointed out, declassifications happen in document dumps, and records may be re-released at later dates with less redactions. It is only unfortunate on a personal note as the vast majority of the CREST archives, and other archival research was completed well before January 2017 leaving this author unable to benefit from it during the majority of this study. With that aside, the reality is the online database has been extremely valuable to stay on top of newer releases, and possibly more important, re-releases of previously redacted files. As an example, *The Functions and Organization of the Operations Coordinating Board*, (also referred to as The Operations Coordinating Board Handbook), cited later in this study, had two relevant publications in 1955 and 1958. Both versions were declassified, often in bits and pieces, with re-releases and redactions at different times from 2000 – 2016. By leveraging the electronic CREST collection online this author was able to piece together the various releases, especially those that incorporated less redactions to

unlock a more complete picture of the information. The benefit of this capability, without the necessity of making continuous trips to College Park to examine the holdings since the last review, was particularly valuable when on travel for work or more specifically, during the pandemic when all in person visits to archives were prohibited. This is just one example of many to show not only the fluidity of content when researching declassified records, but also some of the more recent additions to the historian's tool-bag that played a small part in this study, but is likely to pay dividends down the road for future researchers.

Other archives, particularly the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas and the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri house not only the PSB and OCB central file series, invaluable to this study, but also the US National Security Council intelligence files that helped to better understand the PSB and OCB role in the policy-intelligence environment. The NARA II archives, particularly the Record Group (RG) 59 Department of State series were important to understanding much of the State/Foreign Policy aspect of this thesis, not only regarding developments in the Middle East, but also how State fit into the PSB and OCB dynamic alongside DOD and CIA. The National Security Archives at George Washington University in Washington DC, provided NSC and DOS records illustrating how the US Government viewed the Middle East in the lead up to establishing the PSB. Those perceptions arguably influenced the PSB perspectives when developing a psychological strategy for the region. Finally, the Marine Corps University Archives (MCU), and the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity Archives (MCIA) were particularly helpful regarding research into the military plans and operations in the Middle East during this time. Ultimately, much of this research was cut from the final product as the scope of this paper was narrowed down, however, the archivists at both the MCU and MCIA were instrumental in attaining declassified studies and documents related to the Middle East (more specifically Lebanon) that will be extremely valuable for future writing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review examines the relevant intelligence and national security histories currently available in the academic corpus. We will show that there exists a gap regarding the PSB and OCB in relation to their influence on national security policy and foreign policy of the Middle East (our study heavily leverages the PSB Middle East strategy reports and the OCB 1290-d and country reports). Key to our story is the fact that the PSB and the OCB straddled the line between intelligence and policy, having functions of, and providing contributions to both. In the case of intelligence, not only was the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) a board member to both the PSB and the OCB; but the CIA provided agency personnel to the boards' working groups, contributing to the reviews and reports. Additionally, the PSB and the OCB reports combined intelligence input and policy recommendations to the NSC in their national assessments. The combination of these elements could allow for one to argue that the PSB and the OCB deserve a place in the intelligence history (being relatively excluded from the current literature). At the same time, the PSB and the OCB are unquestionably rooted in American national security history as official sub boards of the National Security Council. While the literature regarding national security history is more inclusive of the PSB and the OCB, that coverage is lacking in both depth and substance. The point of this thesis is to show that the emerging declassified archival sources can be used to provide insight into both, and, equally important, a novel and unique lens to view US Middle East foreign policy. Therefore, a proper study of the PSB and the OCB requires a review of both histories to establish our foundation.

PRIMARY SOURCES

The primary source materials for this study come in the form of publicly available official, military, and agency reports, telegrams, letters, notes, memoranda, briefing papers, and handbooks associated with the American government, intelligence community, and national security enterprise after the Second World War. In particular, this study draws heavily from the primary record (the declassified records) of the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board, much of which was previously unavailable to scholars (a great number having only been declassified within the last two decades). As a result, this thesis leverages both conventional primary sources of American history such as the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) series (a wonderful resource and a tome of information regarding United States government history) as well as other, lesser-known archives such

as the CREST and National Security Archives. In particular, the CREST General CIA Records (which includes PSB and OCB records and reports, as well as National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs), National Security Council, National Intelligence Authority, Central Intelligence Group documents etc.) are heavily leveraged in this study. The National Security Archive is located at the Gelman Library of George Washington University in Washington D.C., the world's largest non-governmental collection of declassified US government documents, including several of the National Security Council and State Department reports used in this thesis. The author was able to review the archives at the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity (MCIA) Library in Quantico, VA, which provided a wealth of information on US intelligence history and study. These archives of intelligence documents and declassified material provide greater context and new insights into the historical record that has in large part been dominated by FRUS.

Additional primary source material used in this study is available at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library (DDEL), in Abilene, Kansas. The DDEL contains the Operations Coordinating Board Central File Series, the Robert Cutler Papers (Eisenhower's Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs), and the Edward P. Lilly Papers (Lilly served on the National Security Council, the PSB, and the OCB). These three sources were invaluable to the research providing primary accounts and reports not available elsewhere. In particular, Lilly's *The Development of American Psychological Operations 1945-1951*, was extremely valuable in informing this study on the US approach to psychological operations prior to the establishment of the Psychological Strategy Board.⁸³ In addition to the DDEL, the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri holds the collection of Psychological Strategy Board files which includes the chronological and personnel files of Gordon Gray (the first Director of the Psychological Strategy Board) and key PSB figures such as Dr. Raymond B. Allen, Tracy C. Barnes, and Colonel Byron K. Enyart (all of which are referenced in this study). The United States Marine Corps Archives at the Gray Research Center in Quantico, Virginia was reviewed to establish a greater understanding of the politico-military dynamics at play during this time

⁸³ Edward P. Lilly served on the staff of the National Security Council, was a strategic planner for the Psychological Strategy Board, and was Deputy Executive Assistant of the Operations Coordinating Board. His works offer unique insight into the development of American psychological strategy from a unique perspective. Edward P. Lilly, "The Development of American Psychological Operations, 1945 - 1951," The Psychological Strategy Board, Washington D.C., 19 December 1951, CIA General Records, CIA-RDP86B00269R000900020001-9, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, (NACP), CREST Archives.

period, and the effect of divergent executive approaches towards American national security. Period-specific intelligence doctrine for military operations and logistics for the Lebanese Operation were reviewed. Finally, the Oman Library of the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C.; the Marine Corps University (MCU) Library in Quantico, Virginia; the United States Library of Congress (LOC) in Washington, D.C.; and NARA II (to include the classified reading rooms) were used to gather primary sources of information regarding the Middle East during the time period of this study.

SECONDARY SOURCES

The secondary source material regarding the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board has been limited by classification restrictions accessing the primary records, and also by misconceptions which have camouflaged the PSB and the OCB from greater academic study. First, the PSB and the OCB had relatively short operational life spans (1951-1961 combined) earmarking them as inconsequential in comparison to the larger, more enduring, elements of American intelligence history such as the CIA, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the National Security Agency (NSA). Second, these boards were established as facilitators within the national security and intelligence community policy cycle, causing many to view these boards solely as support elements with limited influence. This is contrary to the evidence found in the declassified record and presented in this study.

Of the more complete works detailing the histories of the PSB and OCB, the tendency has been to focus primarily on their organization and general procedural descriptions (i.e. a review element for policy approved by the National Security Council) as opposed to a collective element of intelligence and policy that provided national assessments to the highest level of decision-making in the US government. This literature review engages the published works regarding the PSB and OCB resident in the histories of the US IC and the NSC system. Therefore, the literature review of secondary sources will go as follows: first reviewing the limited coverage of the PSB and the OCB in the IC history, particularly the focus paid to covert action (CA); then a review of works that discuss the intelligence-policy divide in the American system as the PSB and the OCB straddled the gap between intelligence and policy, providing national assessments that combined both; and finally moving to the

literature of the NSC history where the PSB and OCB gain the most attention, yet, in a limited and general manner focusing mostly on its organization and processes.

INTELLIGENCE HISTORY

The PSB and the OCB had intelligence personnel on their staffs and working groups, and the DCI was a permanent member to both boards. Therefore, we can safely argue that the PSB and OCB had intelligence elements as part of its makeup, however, we cannot say they were official intelligence entities themselves: i.e., a military intelligence unit or a clandestine arm of the Central Intelligence Agency, although this has been incorrectly assumed by some authors. In his article “Re-enacting the Story of Tantalus,” for the *Journal of Cold War Studies*, State Department historian Chris Tudda states that the OCB was a sub-element of the CIA.⁸⁴ This is not supported by the archival records and emphasizes the greater point that the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board are not well understood regarding their relationship to the IC. This is not the same as saying that the PSB and the OCB are *never* mentioned within the intelligence literature, rather that much of the focus has been centred on the PSB and OCB support to an intelligence function, namely covert action. The responsibility for covert action falls to the CIA (a result of several factors addressed later in this study), and it is possible that this may be the reason for some to assert that the PSB and OCB relationship to covert action had them fall under the CIA as well. The fact that the DCI was also a permanent member to the boards may have appeared to support this assumption. So while the PSB and OCB never were CIA entities or sub-elements, they were linked to a CIA mission set in covert action. The PSB and OCB involvement in covert action falls outside the scope of this paper, and is better served by the works of several authors including Gustafson (2012), Mitrovich (2002), Long (2008), Prados (1996), Marchio (2002), and Lucas (1999) among others.⁸⁵ In order to provide a well-

⁸⁴ Chris Tudda, “Re-enacting the Story of Tantalus,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 7:4 (Fall 2005) p. 13.

⁸⁵ Kristian Gustafson, “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States, 1951-1961,” *Public Policy and Administration*, 28:2 (2012) pp. 144-160; Gregory Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin: America’s Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947 – 1956*, (London: Cornell University Press, 2000); S.R. Joey Long, “Winning Hearts and Minds: U.S. Psychological Warfare Operations in Singapore, 1955 – 1961,” *Diplomatic History*, 32:5 (November 2008) pp. 899-930; James Marchio, “The Planning Coordination Group: Bureaucratic Casualty in the Cold War Campaign to Exploit Soviet-Bloc Vulnerabilities,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 4:4 (Fall 2002) pp. 3-28; John Prados, *Presidents’ Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations from World War II through the Persian Gulf* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996) pp. 84-87; Scott Lucas,

rounded assessment of the wider literature of the PSB and the OCB, we discuss several of these works here. As they offer a tangible direction for future research on this topic using the same archival sources, and highlighting their utility for studies to come.

COVERT ACTION

Historian Kristian Gustafson’s “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States,” and Gregory Mitrovich’s, *Undermining the Kremlin: America’s Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947-1956*, offer some of the more complete treatments of the histories of the PSB and OCB and their relationships to intelligence.⁸⁶ Gustafson’s work is important as it highlights the relationship of the PSB and the OCB to US covert action, a key function of intelligence (the others being collection, analysis, and counterintelligence). As stated, CA falls outside of the scope of this paper but remains a relevant topic as part of the overall background understanding of these boards.

The extent of the PSB and OCB involvement in covert action is difficult to determine at this time, owing to the fact that many of these records remain classified. In light of this, Gustafson’s work remains the most comprehensive on the topic showcasing the role played by the PSB and the OCB as interagency coordinating mechanisms for covert action. Gustafson (2012) argues that the PSB served as the first attempt to institute a covert action management system in the government’s “quest to link covert action to policy.”⁸⁷ The competition and confusion over CA responsibility generally, and psychological strategy specifically, is addressed in this study. Gustafson’s account of that struggle, and competition, between the DOS, DOD, and CIA provided some of the foundational pillars in understanding the environment that created the PSB initially. Using the archival material in this study,

Freedom’s War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union (1945-1956), (New York: NYU Press, 1999); For other reading of the PSB and the OCB connections to propaganda see – Shawn J. Perry-Giles, “Camouflaged Propaganda: The Truman and Eisenhower Administrations’ Covert Manipulation of News,” *Western Journal of Communication*, 60:2 (Spring 1996) pp. 1-23; Shawn J. Perry Giles, “The Eisenhower Administration’s Conceptualization of the USIA: The Development of Overt and Covert Propaganda Strategies,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 24:2 (Spring 1994) pp. 263-276; and Gabrielle Kemmis, “Uncovering the Metaphysics of Psychological Warfare: The Social Science behind the Psychological Strategy Board’s Operations Planning, 1951-1953,” *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 56:3 (Summer 2020) pp. 186-200.

⁸⁶ Kristian Gustafson, “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action,” pp. 144-160; and Gregory Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin*.

⁸⁷ Gustafson, “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States, 1951-1961,” p. 145.

we are able to provide additional (and valuable) context to the debate taking place, particularly as the PSB struggled to support its mission. Mitrovich (2000), evaluates America's covert action policies to overturn the regime in the Kremlin (under both Truman and Eisenhower).⁸⁸ In this work Mitrovich provides a detailed assessment of the intelligence that drove aspects of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations' Soviet policy, with particular focus paid to their failures resulting from the lack of coordination and interdepartmental rivalries. While useful in scoping the importance of intelligence and covert action in American-Soviet policy (particularly the roles played by the PSB and the OCB), Mitrovich almost excludes the Middle East entirely, leaving a gap regarding the PSB and OCB influence on Middle East policy, which fell under the Soviet umbrella. Gustafson and Mitrovich provide some of the more complete histories of the PSB and the OCB, and most importantly, set them within the context of CA. Both Gustafson and Mitrovich focus on the divisions and schisms that hindered the PSB from achieving marked success. These themes are present in historian John Prados' work as well.

Prados discusses in *Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Operations from World War II through the Persian Gulf*, the environment of propaganda and psychological warfare that the PSB was thrust into. Particularly, Prados notes the bureaucratic fighting that the PSB faced, exposing its inadequacies and being overshadowed by the CIA, eventually resulting in its replacement by the OCB.⁸⁹ Overall, the attention paid to the PSB and OCB is limited, with Prados spending considerably less effort on the OCB. Prados describes the OCB as an interagency subgroup of the NSC that Eisenhower established to help oversee NSC 5412, the national strategy for covert operations, but whose effectiveness was minimized by competing group interests in the Planning Coordination Group (PCG).⁹⁰ While factually correct (the PCG was later subsumed by the OCB), these oversimplified descriptions of these boards are replete in the literature. In his book, *The Hidden Hand: a Brief History of the CIA*, Richard H. Immerman discusses many of the same issues covered in this study, particularly the initial DCIs' relationships to covert operations and psychological warfare, but interestingly fails to mention the Psychological Strategy Board even though the Central Intelligence Agency was in the process of turning over all covert operations, known as 'the packet,' to the PSB in 1952, before the State

⁸⁸ Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin*.

⁸⁹ John Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations from World War II through the Persian Gulf*, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996) pp. 84-87.

⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 12.

Department stepped in and blocked the move.⁹¹ Additionally, Immerman makes only brief mention of the OCB, and then, simply to make the case that it lacked the efficient functioning that the executive had hoped for, failing to adequately evaluate the CIA's covert programmes.⁹² It should be noted that Immerman does devote more attention to the Operations Coordinating Board in an earlier article for *Political Science Quarterly*, titled, "Effective National Security Advising: Recovering the Eisenhower Legacy," where he delves more into the policy impact of the board, yet still only skimming the surface.⁹³

For a more focused view of the covert action coordination 'element' of the OCB itself, Marchio (2002) evaluates the Planning Coordination Group.⁹⁴ The OCB's innate covert action coordinating mechanism, the PCG, gave the OCB unique opportunities to streamline the government effort, and inform decision-makers. Marchio argues that "by establishing the PCG within the framework of the OCB and requiring that it provide periodic reports to the president through the NSC," the PCG was meant to address concerns regarding duplicative and overlapping responsibilities across agencies in the CA field.⁹⁵ The PCG was meant to assist the development of both overt and covert plans across government, coordinating the various pieces necessary for agency planning.⁹⁶ Unfortunately, the full breadth of the PCG (and OCB) involvement supporting major covert programmes is unclear, as access into many of the classified sources regarding CA remain restricted.⁹⁷ However, it is hoped that this study will showcase the efficacy of re-examining the archival sources of the PSB and OCB, to provide

⁹¹ Scott Lucas, *Freedom's War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union (1945-1956)*, (New York: NYU Press, 1999); C. Tracy Barnes, *Interim Approval of the "Packet,"* Washington D.C., 30 May 1952, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300080006-6, NACP, CREST Archives; and Hans V. Tofte, *PSB Interim Approval of the "CIA Packet,"* Washington D.C., 30 June 1952, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300080002-0, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁹² Richard H. Immerman, *The Hidden Hand: A Brief History of the CIA*, (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2015) pp. 38-44.

⁹³ Fred I. Greenstein and Richard H. Immerman, "Effective national Security Advising: Recovering the Eisenhower Legacy," *Political Science Quarterly*, 115:3 (autumn 2000) pp. 335-345.

⁹⁴ James Marchio, "The Planning Coordination Group: Bureaucratic Casualty in the Cold War Campaign to Exploit Soviet-Bloc Vulnerabilities," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, (September 2002) pp. 3-28.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 9.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 10.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 13.

future opportunities to fill the gaps and shed new light on the roles they had in the realm of covert action.⁹⁸

Outside of the CA sphere, the PSB and OCB treatment in the general intelligence community history is sparse, roughly being equated to NSC support elements, if they are mentioned at all. There are reasons for this of course, neither the PSB nor the OCB were intelligence bodies in and of themselves. They are more accurately considered policy bodies to the National Security Council staff. They had relatively short life spans (10 years combined), and were overshadowed by the much larger entities that contributed to their makeup (CIA, DOD, DOS). Therefore, the point here is not to belabour that the PSB and the OCB are absent with respect to the intelligence community history. But rather to mention that in the intelligence literature (outside of covert action mentioned above) the focus remains on the National Security Council in general. Intelligence historian Jeffrey T. Richelson, whose books *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the Twentieth Century*, and *The U.S. Intelligence Community* (often on the reading lists for new analysts on-boarding with intelligence agencies) cover the background on the organization of the national intelligence community; the PSB and the OCB are absent from the record.⁹⁹ Similarly, in his work *Secret World: A History of Intelligence*, former Official Historian of British Security Service MI5, Christopher Andrew gives only tacit mention to the National Security Council and no mention at all to the PSB or the OCB.¹⁰⁰ These are but a few examples, but they represent the large body of literature on the IC, specifically, the focus is the National Security Council, with limited attention travelling to the sub-elements of the council itself. Nathan Miller, in *Spying for America: The Hidden History of U.S. Intelligence*, provides a decent background on the Central Intelligence Group (CIG), the National Intelligence Authority (NIA), and the National Security Act (all discussed

⁹⁸ For additional reading on the topic of covert action see – Roy Godson, *Dirty Tricks or Trump Cards: U.S. Covert Action and Counterintelligence*, (London: Routledge, 1995); Gregory F. Treverton, *Covert Action: The CIA and the Limits of American Intervention in the Post War World*, (London: I.B. Taurus, 1998), William Daugherty, *Executive Secrets: Covert Action and the Presidency*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2004); Loch K. Johnson, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of National Security Intelligence*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala, 1953 – 1954*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); and Rory Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny: Spies, Special Forces, and Secret Pursuit of British Foreign Policy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁹⁹ Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the 20th Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); and Jeffrey T. Richelson, *The US Intelligence Community (Sixth Edition)* (New York: Westview Press, 2011).

¹⁰⁰ Christopher Andrew, *The Secret World: A History of Intelligence*, (London: Yale University Press, 2018).

in this paper), yet there is no mention of the PSB or the OCB.¹⁰¹ As this study is not a study on the American intelligence community, these few brief mentions are not meant to provide an extensive coverage of the literature of the intelligence history; however, it is used to highlight that mention of the PSB and OCB are mainly relegated to the discussion centred on Cold War propaganda or psychological operations, and when they are mentioned, the descriptions and study remain cursory and shallow at that.¹⁰² The most complete studies of the PSB and the OCB are found in the works dealing with covert action, yet as mentioned, expanding those works is limited by the access to classified information. While the new archival sources may offer opportunity to build upon these works in the future, this study aims to wed the intelligence and policy impacts of the PSB and the OCB, by looking at their national assessments and providing a unique lens to reengage the history through the schema of American policy to the Middle East. The explanation for why the national assessments of the PSB and the OCB are actually unique in the American system is covered in the previous introduction, however, a mention of the relevant sources behind the intelligence-policy proximity issues is worthwhile here; and remains an important subject within the larger intelligence academic body.

INTELLIGENCE – POLICY PROXIMITY

The combination of intelligence and policy analysts within the PSB and OCB, is uncommon in the American system where policy and intelligence tends to be clearly separated and independent. As

¹⁰¹ Nathan Miller, *Spying for America: The Hidden History of U.S. Intelligence*, (New York: Marlowe & Company, 1997) pp. 308-340.

¹⁰² For other reading on the intelligence community see – Philip H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and government in Britain and the United States: A Comparative Perspective*, (Oxford: Praeger, 2012); Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the 20th Century* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1995); Jeffrey T. Richelson, *The US Intelligence Community (Sixth Edition)* (Westview Press: New York, 2011); Timothy Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2007); Scott D. Breckinridge, *The CIA and the US Intelligence System*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986); Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, (Washington: CQ Press, 2009); Mark M. Lowenthal, *U.S. Intelligence: Evolution and Anatomy*, (Westport: Praeger, 1992); Michael J. Sulick, *Spying in America: Espionage from the Revolutionary War to the Dawn of the Cold War* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2014); Allen W. Dulles, *The Craft of Intelligence: America's Legendary Spymaster on the Fundamentals of Intelligence Gathering for a Free World*, (New York: Lyons Press, 2006); Amos A. Jordan et al, *American National Security*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); and Nathan Miller, *Spying for America: The Hidden History of US Intelligence*, (New York: Marlowe & Company, 1997).

discussed in the introduction, the American tradition of separating intelligence from policy is covered by Davies (2012), Marrin (2007), Zegart (1999), Betts (2007), Davis (1992), and Hulnick (1986), among others.¹⁰³ The distance, Marrin (2007) argues, is a result of keeping intelligence analysts “at arm’s length” from national decision-makers, pursued in an effort to keep intelligence information ‘pure’ and untainted from the desires of policy-makers.¹⁰⁴ While that has been the norm for the majority of the modern American intelligence community, the PSB and the OCB offer an example of the first time where an environment was fostered to allow for the direct engagement between intelligence analysts and top policy-makers, or those that former CIA officer and intelligence expert Arthur Hulnick described as government officials who “formulate, choose, and implement policy.”¹⁰⁵ This description would include the National Security Council and its staff elements. The involvement of the DCI and CIA analysts assigned to the boards created an environment for intelligence and policy to coexist. This dynamic, is noted by Marrin and Davies in “National Assessment by the National Security Council Staff 1968 – 80: An American Experiment in a British Style of Analysis,” as being more common in foreign intelligence systems, remaining the exception in the American system.¹⁰⁶ Thus supporting a main premise of this study: that the records of the PSB and OCB can offer insight into the national security system and policy process from unique perspectives. As discussed previously, Marrin and Davies assessed that the American production of ‘National Assessments’ produced through the NSC Staff (from 1968 through 1980) presented new issues for the US government attempting to bridge the intelligence policy divide.¹⁰⁷ However, the PSB and the OCB predate 1968 and the National Security Study Memoranda explored by Marrin and Davies. Therefore, an opportunity remains for future research to determine whether the boards’ process of wedding policy and intelligence in the NSC system was the first effort to do so, or whether the PSB and OCB national

¹⁰³ For more on this topic see -Philip H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States: A Comparative Perspective*, (Oxford: Praeger Security International, 2012); Stephen Marrin, “At Arm’s Length or At the Elbow?: Explaining the Distance between Analysts and Decision makers,” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, 20:3 (2007), pp. 401-414; Richard K. Betts, *Enemies of Intelligence: Knowledge and Power in American National Security*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Jack Davis, “The Kent-Kendall Debate of 1949,” *Studies in Intelligence*, (1992), pp. 91-103; and Arthur S. Hulnick, “The Intelligence Producer – Policy Consumer Linkage: A Theoretical Approach,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 1:2 (1986) pp 212-233.

¹⁰⁴ Stephen Marrin, “At Arms’ Length or At the Elbow?” p. 401.

¹⁰⁵ Arthur S. Hulnick, “The Intelligence Producer – Policy Consumer,” p. 212.

¹⁰⁶ Marrin and Davies, “National Assessment by the National Security Council Staff,” pp. 644-673.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p. 662.

assessments were distinct enough from the NSSM and the Presidential Review Memorandum to warrant their own category. The PSB and the OCB national assessments considered “the strategic impact of the policies of the governing administration,” which placed those intelligence analysts in a position to question the wisdom of policy-makers vice simply informing them.¹⁰⁸ The concern that intelligence analysts could be distracted from their primary intelligence functions by being inundated with policy issues has been at the heart of the American intelligence-policy divide.

This is rooted in the foundational belief, as Johnson (2010) argues, that “the main purpose of intelligence is to provide information to policymakers that may help illuminate their decision options.”¹⁰⁹ If intelligence analysts were to be more concerned over influencing policy as opposed to providing objective information, the theory goes, they would be unable to meet the true demands of the job. Hulnick (1986) explains that intelligence need be close enough to policy to inform decision-makers, but warns that should it be too close, it runs the risk of being corrupted “by the very process it seeks to serve.”¹¹⁰ Davis (1992) describes the two major perspectives regarding the relationship between intelligence and policy according to the positions argued by intelligence experts and practitioners Sherman Kent and Willmoore Kendall, whose views have shaped the US government’s use of its intelligence organizations to inform policy.¹¹¹ This paper relied heavily on Davis and Hulnick for establishing a grounded understanding regarding the purpose of intelligence and the American position of segregation with respect to intelligence and policy.

Hulnick (1986) categorizes the major positions regarding the role of intelligence to policy as the ‘traditionalist belief’ and the ‘activist belief.’ The details have been covered in the introduction, but relevant to our purposes here, the PSB and the OCB seem to have fallen more in line with Kendall’s activist belief as opposed to Kent’s traditionalist approach. The PSB and the OCB crossed the traditionalist lines that drew very real distinctions between the producers and consumers of intelligence. Kent believed that intelligence was not, and should not be “the formulator of

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p. 645.

¹⁰⁹ Loch K. Johnson, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of National Security Intelligence*, p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Hulnick, “The Intelligence Producer-Policy Consumer Linkage,” p. 213.

¹¹¹ Jack Davis, “The Kent-Kendall Debate of 1949,” pp. 91-103.

objectives... [the] drafter of policy... [the] maker of plans... [or the] carrier out of operations.”¹¹² As we will discuss in this thesis, the PSB and the OCB blended many of these areas and offered the ability for intelligence and policy to perform more in the activist belief advocated for by Kendall. This perspective argues that there exists a “kind of symbiotic relationship between intelligence and policy and they were, and should, be closely tied together.”¹¹³ Treverton (2003), who argues for a more activist approach in the modern intelligence system states that the natural connection between intelligence and policy remains the National Security Council Staff.¹¹⁴ Relating back to our topic, Davis (1992) points out that President Eisenhower’s “administrative style for national security affairs – regularly planned NSC meetings to discuss if not to decide policy – provided an orderly place for the scholarship of intelligence.”¹¹⁵ The PSB and the OCB, sub-elements of the National Security Council (which brought intelligence and policy together to study national security issues), can be seen as the activist realization of intelligence and policy, used together, to inform policymakers. Treverton’s argument that in order to address specific problems, most effectively, there needs to be a “band of analysts, close to and empowered by a relevant policy agency,” that can make the case for the findings of the group, a function served by the PSB and the OCB.¹¹⁶ Consisting of elements from the DOS, DOD, and CIA; the boards’ working groups had the ‘reach-back’ necessary to put their findings before the policy elements and decision-makers in of their home agencies, as well as the NSC and the White House. Marrin (2007) argues that the IC may benefit from adopting a close proximity system where intelligence is closer to policy in order to better integrate its intelligence into the decision-making process.¹¹⁷

Traverton, Marrin, and Davis are in their prescriptions for intelligence reform in the future, also describing a scenario that existed before the NSSM and PRM. These authors call for an intelligence-policy environment similar to that existing with the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board. These organizations brought analysts, both intelligence and policy, together and

¹¹² Ibid. pp. 92-93. The Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board crossed many of these boundaries by design.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Gregory F. Treverton, *Reshaping National Intelligence for an Age of Information*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p. 2616.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. p. 97.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. p. 377.

¹¹⁷ Marrin, “At Arms’ Length or At the Elbow?” p 402.

relayed their findings and assessments to the premier policy organ of the US government in the National Security Council.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SYSTEM

The last section of our literature review deals with the history of the National Security Council and the national security system following the Second World War. This area of the literature is where the PSB and OCB figure most predominantly in comparison to the others. However, the coverage of the boards overwhelmingly focus on the process and membership of the boards as opposed to their production or impact. To this point, much of the coverage of the PSB and OCB ends at inception. The tendency is for authors, discussing the history and evolution of the National Security Council after the Second World War, to give mention to the PSB and the OCB; but only so far as a description of what they were designed to accomplish, spending little effort beyond a brief statement of purpose. This is the case with Alfred D. Sander's, *Eisenhower's Executive Office: Contributions in Political Science*; Roy M. Melbourne's, *Conflict and Crises: A Foreign Service Story*; Anna Kasten Nelson's, "President Truman and the Evolution of the National Security Council;" Charles P. Ries' "How Did the National Security System Evolve?" and R. Gordon Hoxie's "The National Security Council," who do not cover the PSB or the OCB past initial inception, focusing instead on the primary mechanisms of their establishment through discussions of the Bureau of Budget and Jackson reports (covered later in this study).¹¹⁸ Similar treatment is given by Fred I. Greenstein and Richard H. Immerman in their article "Effective National Security Advising: Recovering the Eisenhower Legacy," for *Political Science Quarterly*. Greenstein and Immerman describe the OCB as a creation for assuring the coordinated execution of national security policies. They even mention the important role the OCB had in transmitting regular reports to the NSC, summarizing actions taken to execute policies, and evaluating those policies based

¹¹⁸ Alfred D. Sander, *Eisenhower's Executive Office*, (Boulder: Praeger, 1999); Roy M. Melbourne, *Conflict and Crises: A Foreign Service Story*, (New York: University Press of America, 1997); Anna Kasten Nelson, "President Truman and the Evolution of the National Security Council," *The Journal of American History*, 72:2 (September 1985) pp. 360-378; Charles P. Ries, "How Did the National Security System Evolve?" *Improving Decision-making in a Turbulent World*, (Washington: RAND, 2016) pp. 11-22; and R. Gordon Hoxie, "The National Security Council," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 12:1 (Winter 1982) pp. 108-113.

upon effectiveness, timeliness, and applicability, carrying the literature a step further.¹¹⁹ The net is not cast much wider, and unfortunately, this represents the scope of the majority of the literature available on the PSB and the OCB in the academic literature of the NSC.

In “The National Security Council as a Device for Interdepartmental Coordination: An Interpretation and Appraisal,” for *The American Political Science Review*, author Paul Y. Hammond analyses the National Security Council as a coordinating device in and of itself with some attention paid to the sub-elements established for that specific purpose; however, Hammond focuses almost entirely on the NSC Planning Board with little to no attention paid to the OCB, relegating it to merely a follow-up mechanism for reporting and monitoring; conspicuously spending little time addressing the coordinating function of the OCB in a piece about the need for interdepartmental coordination.¹²⁰ This view of the OCB is particularly common and owes much of its popularity to Robert Cutler’s April 1956 *Foreign Affairs* article, “The Development of the National Security Council,” which describes the importance of the policy formulating up-side of the National Security Council’s ‘policy-hill’ (the Planning Board) while simplifying the coordinating and execution downside of the slope (the OCB) as merely a review function of existing policy.¹²¹ In this study, we will argue that Cutler’s description of the policy process is misleading, however, for our purposes here, Robert Cutler’s position within the national security architecture during this time has led numerous authors to take that description at face value, diminishing further study of the Operations Coordinating Board in particular. In any case, Hammond and other authors following a strict reading of Cutler’s 1956 article, leaving out the OCB’s mechanism as both a direct and indirect avenue to inform the President, through the policy *cycle* as opposed to the *bill*, an aspect this study makes clear.

Predominately, the literature treats the PSB and the OCB as an afterthought in the national security policy arena. However, there have been authors who challenge this view, and this study builds on those positions. Historian Stanley L. Falk in his article “the National Security Council Under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy,” for *Political Science Quarterly*, describes the Psychological Strategy Board as

¹¹⁹ Fred I. Greenstein and Richard H. Immerman, “Effective National Security Advising: Recovering the Eisenhower Legacy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 115:3 (autumn 2000) pp. 342-343.

¹²⁰ Paul Y. Hammond, “The National Security Council as a Device for Interdepartmental Coordination: An Interpretation and Appraisal,” *The American Political Science Review*, 54:4 (December 1960) pp. 899-910.

¹²¹ Robert Cutler, “The Development of the National Security Council,” *Foreign Affairs*, 34:3 (April 1956) pp. 441-458.

the first attempt to assemble a national psychological planning and operations group, tasked to supervise the Cold War against the unorthodox psychological methods of the Soviets.¹²² After the PSB was replaced with the OCB, Falk argues that the new organization was responsible for not only coordinating and integrating psychological strategy with national strategy, but also, and more importantly, function as the coordinating and integrating arm for all aspects of national security policy with the agencies responsible for execution.¹²³ Falk is also one of the few authors to recognize the boards' importance in the review and reporting phase to initiate recommendations for new proposals to policy, highlighting that the actual policy *cycle* did not end on the down-slope of Cutler's policy hill.

Where Falk endeavoured to break the mould, foreign policy specialist Scott Lucas carried the torch further. Lucas' "Campaigns of Truth: the Psychological Strategy Board and American Ideology, 1951-1953," provides one of the more complete stories available on the PSB from idea to inception. Lucas recounts the troubles that the US government had attaining a consensus for the term 'psychological' in psychological strategy, and how this was a foundational problem limiting the PSB's success under the Truman administration (which had hoped that the PSB could service all things psychological). Using the archival records, this study supports Lucas' view that the PSB was granted all the responsibility without any of the power, and without established doctrine or policy to rely on, the PSB became a casualty of a crowded government bureaucracy vying for influence on the psychological battlefield. The archival records not only support this position, but also Zegart's assertion that national security agencies "are caught in a web of competing, crosscutting, and often conflicting interests ..." that have "... important consequences for agency development."¹²⁴ Lucas' work goes beyond many others as it shows the PSB to have actual policy impact and influence within the national security structure; unfortunately there is little attention paid to the Middle East other than a brief mention of the PSB's assessment of progress in various regions of the world.¹²⁵ Lucas tackles the topic again in *Freedom's War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union (1945-1956)*, which goes into greater detail about how the CIA was on the verge of turning over the agency's psychological warfare

¹²² Stanley L. Falk, "The National Security Council under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy," *Political Science Quarterly*, 79:3 (1964) pp. 403-434.

¹²³ *Ibid.* p. 422.

¹²⁴ Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, p. 43.

¹²⁵ Scott Lucas, "Campaigns of Truth: The Psychological Strategy Board and American Ideology, 1951 – 1953," *The International History Review*, 18:2 (May 1996) pp. 279-302.

programme, known as “the Packet,” to the PSB in 1952 (supporting the argument that the PSB, and later the OCB, were more than simply policy review boards outside the scope of impact).¹²⁶ In a similar vein, other authors have attempted to peel back the veil further and address the problems facing the boards. Former Office of Strategic Services (OSS) agent, Franklin A. Lindsay’s *Foreign Affairs* article, “Program Planning: the Missing Element,” references the OCB’s responsibility for agency coordination and operational planning in the execution of NSC policies. Lindsay’s cursory assessment makes clear that the need for planning was recognized throughout government leadership, however, establishing key elements to bring those responsibilities to bear often fell short.¹²⁷ While not mentioning the Psychological Strategy Board or the Operations Coordinating Board specifically, former diplomat and instructor at the US Naval War College, Robert F. Delaney discusses in “The Psychological Dimension in National Security Planning” that the confusion over psychological warfare and psychological operations within the US government (a major impediment to the PSB) was a persistent threat to national security.¹²⁸

The confusion and complications that arose from the bureaucratic pit fights in a developing intelligence and national security environment, are an important aspect of our story, and a common feature of national security agencies. Former National Security Council staff member and Stanford University professor, Amy B. Zegart, highlights in *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*, where particularly in the area of foreign policy “government agencies must constantly contend with the possibility that another agency may be working against them.”¹²⁹ We rely heavily on the archival sources to provide insight into this dynamic as it related to the PSB and OCB, however, an interesting observation found in the literature is worthy of mention here. The position is that the review and monitoring functions of the boards, that other researchers have deemed inconsequential, were in effect a control mechanism reigning in the nascent bureaucracy. This argument is put forward by former National Security Advisor to President Carter, Zbigniew Brzezinski in “The NSC’s Midlife Crisis,” and defence policy experts Andrew F. Krepinevich and Barry D. Watts in, “Lost at the NSC,” noting that the coordinating sub-elements of the National Security Council (PSB and OCB) were used

¹²⁶ Scott Lucas, *Freedom’s War: The American Crusade against the Soviet Union (1945-1956)*, (New York: NYU Press, 1999).

¹²⁷ Franklin A. Lindsay, “Program Planning: the Missing Element,” *Foreign Affairs*, 39:2 (January 1961) pp. 279-290.

¹²⁸ Robert. F. Delaney, “The Psychological Dimension in National Security Planning,” *Naval War College Review*, 25:3 (January-February 1973) pp. 53-59.

¹²⁹ Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, p. 38.

as a device to hold bureaucracy in check. The point being that the review and monitoring function generated large paper trails that granted a tracking mechanism if necessary, and was used to fight ‘mission creep’ by keeping the individual agencies in line and not off chasing individual agendas.¹³⁰ This review and control aspect is not explored in this study, however, a review of the archival material may unearth future opportunities to examine these arguments.

As discussed, there exists a mosaic of works in the literature ranging from basic and simplistic descriptions of operational and policy processes to more detailed examinations into areas like covert action. However, in all of the examples, the connecting theme of Middle East policy is all but absent (save for Christopher Gunn’s work which mentions the OCB’s impact on informing Washington surrounding the Turkish Coup of 1960), making this study unique in that regard alone. If we were to begin with the simplistic understanding of the PSB and the OCB, Gerald L. Stiebel’s article “Call it Propaganda,” for *Challenge*, offers an example where the only mention of the OCB is noting its functions was to ensure “all government units speak alike when they speak,” a propaganda element as opposed to a coordination and planning entity informing high level decision-makers in Washington D.C.¹³¹ While there does exist a handful of publications and materiel that address the PSB and OCB at some length, most fall short of moving beyond a basic description. As a result, the academic literature leaves the picture of the PSB and OCB vague and incomplete. One primary reason for this is that the existing literature is disparate, acknowledging the boards (usually individually, rather than in concert) in various contexts, rarely drawing the connections between them. This study aims to pull many of those elements together while also adding another dynamic (Middle East policy), to provide a more complete picture that is unique in approach and original in view.

While this study stands alone regarding the Psychological Strategy Board’s and Operations Coordinating Board’s influence on the developing US-Middle East policy (heavily leveraging the PSB Middle East strategy reports and the OCB 1290-d and country reports), there remain a handful of authors who have investigated the relationship of the boards (mostly the OCB) to situations that have similarities to that which is examined in this study. In his *Journal of Cold War Studies* article, “The 1960

¹³⁰ Zbigniew Brzezinski, “The NSC’s Midlife Crisis,” *Foreign Policy*, 69 (Winter 1987-1988) p. 84; and Andrew F. Krepinevich and Barry D. Watts, “Lost at the NSC,” *The National Interest*, 99 (January/February 2009) p. 71.

¹³¹ Gerald L. Stiebel “Call it Propaganda,” *Challenge*, 7:9 (June 1959) p. 55.

Coup in Turkey,” author Christopher Gunn provides an account of the US involvement in the 1960 Turkish Coup. In the article, Gunn presents the OCB as a meaningful contributor shaping the US perception of the Turkish situation, particularly the importance of the OCB internal security and political assessments.¹³² Although Gunn does not cite the OCB 1290-d programme reports (something this study leverages in the later chapters), he does illustrate the impact that the OCB had informing policy makers of the situation as it developed in Turkey. Although the study of the OCB is limited in this article, it is worth noting that Gunn draws similar correlations to the OCB being more than a review element on the back end of Cutler’s policy hill. Similarly, in *Securing Tyrants or Fostering Reform? U.S. Internal Security Assistance to Repressive and Transitioning Regimes*, the authors take note of the OCB’s assessments on the foreign internal security and police forces as “critical, since they have primary responsibility for the detection, apprehension and confinement of individual subversives and small groups of subversives,” in the global ideological battle against communism.¹³³ In the article “Winning Hearts and Minds: U.S. Psychological Warfare Operations in Singapore, 1955-1961,” for *Diplomatic History*, author S.R. Joey Long goes farther than most, calling attention not only to the OCB involvement in psychological operations, but also highlighting where the OCB provided direct guidance to psychological operations in Singapore. This is important because it gives further examples of how the OCB existed outside of a simple review mechanism and was instead instrumental in shaping operations.¹³⁴ Overwhelmingly, in the examples given, the PSB and the OCB were smaller elements of a larger focus on the US National Security Council or national security strategy; they were not a primary effort. Additionally, while many of these authors did refer to some of the primary records of these boards, whether by availability or classification, the larger body of the declassified record remained unused.

This study endeavours to showcase the impacts of the PSB and the OCB beyond the strict contexts with which they are often constrained, offering an additional observation on the history. While there are always exceptions, in review of the intelligence history, the PSB and the OCB are overwhelmingly

¹³² Christopher Gunn, “The 1960 Coup in Turkey,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 17:2 (Spring 2015) pp. 103-139.

¹³³ Seth G. Jones, Olga Oliker, Peter Chalk, C. Christine Fair, Rollie Lal, and James Dobbins, “The Historical Context,” *Securing Tyrants or Fostering Reform? U.S. Internal Security Assistance to Repressive and Transitioning Regimes*, (Washington: RAND, 2006) p. 16.

¹³⁴ S.R. Joey Long, “Winning Hearts and Minds: U.S. Psychological Warfare Operations in Singapore, 1955 – 1961,” *Diplomatic History*, 32:5 (November 2008) p. 908.

discussed within the greater context of Cold War propaganda and psychological warfare, and even then, the literature is quite limited. With respect to national security history, the focus is largely on the organization and processes of the PSB and OCB. There remains a chasm of information examining the impacts of the PSB and OCB on strategy and policy, and in particular Middle East foreign policy. With these shortcomings and limitations identified, we are now able to turn to newly available resources in the primary record and leverage them to provide a unique perspective on this understudied area of research.

CHAPTER ONE: THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE, SECURITY AND COORDINATION

This chapter will set the groundwork of this study by contextualizing the United States' intelligence and national security communities, and their coordinating issues, before examining the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board directly in the following chapters. We will explore the post Second World War American security enterprise as it struggled to mobilize the aspects of military, intelligence, and diplomacy in concert toward developing sound national security policy akin to the national aims of the President of the United States. This chapter assesses the early consolidation attempts that would ultimately find form in the National Security Council, and the creation of a direct policy line to the president. Understanding how the United States approached the issues of intelligence and policy here at the beginning, will grant us the context necessary to appreciate the creation of national security council coordination and policy boards (The PSB and the OCB) and their apparent function within an activist approach to the policy proximity divide, uncommon in the American system. America's lack of experience in conducting streamlined national assessments incorporating intelligence (off the battlefield) found the United States ill-prepared to engage and carry out the new policy directives to compete with the Soviet Union in the burgeoning Cold War. In his work, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States* (2012), Philip H.J. Davies argues that "one of the most persistent and fraught aspects of intelligence in any government in any country is almost always the effective melding together of diverse individual intelligence agencies into a coherent national intelligence community."¹³⁵ This was most definitely true for the United States whose specific efforts to streamline intelligence priorities and responsibilities within the greater national security system were fraught with errors and early missteps, highlighting the real problems of coordination. Later attempts sought to force efficiency through the creation of 'coordination' boards to organize and manage clandestine service with national policy efforts across various agencies. This study will focus on two of these boards, generally overlooked in the literature, the Psychological Strategy Board, and its successor, the Operations Coordinating Board and the pivotal roles that they played in informing American Middle East foreign policy. In doing this, this study will add to the scholarship by exploiting a wealth of recently declassified primary material detailing the early struggles

¹³⁵ Philip H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States: A Comparative Analysis*, (Oxford: Praeger, 2012) p. 1.

coordinating America's clandestine and national security systems, and its attempts to establish a Middle East policy to thwart Soviet expansion. Both the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board have, to date, been understudied in the available histories with Gustafson noting, "Very little current scholarship deals with inter-agency bodies in the U.S. context..."¹³⁶ We will explore the role the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board played in United States' intelligence and national security history, as well as policy development by leveraging the recently declassified records, previously unavailable to researchers.¹³⁷

Before addressing the coordinating boards directly, it is first necessary to understand the environment that required their creation. To do this, this chapter reengages with the early construction of the US intelligence and national security system. While not unique, as it has been studied before, this history is necessary background for framing the original study of the coordination boards presented here; including the problems of America's modern national security enterprise. This chapter establishes the American intelligence system within what Adam D.M. Svendsen refers to as a 'System of Systems' (or federated systems) where a collection of task-oriented or dedicated systems pool their resources and capabilities together to create a new more complex system which offers more functionality and performance than simply the sum of the constituent parts.¹³⁸ However, it is not enough to state that the American intelligence machine was complex; instead, our understanding, similar to the management of large, complicated organizations, first requires deconstruction. This deconstruction of the intelligence system within a 'System of Systems' or SOS framework has been explored by Svendsen (2013), as well as Davies (2012), and Gustafson (2012) who emphasize that the management of large, complicated organizations, requires first the deconstruction of the whole into subordinate systems based upon function and responsibilities.¹³⁹ This study builds upon these works as it relates to the PSB and OCB, focusing on their 'coordinating elements' thrust into managing the diverse

¹³⁶ Kristian Gustafson, "Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States, 1951-1961," *Public Policy and Administration*, 28:2 (2012) pp. 144-162.

¹³⁷ The literature review provides an in-depth review of the various archives and record holdings leveraged for this study.

¹³⁸ Adam D.M. Svendsen, "An Approach to Semantic Interoperability in Federations of Systems," *International Journal of Systems of Systems Engineering*, 4:1 (January 2013) pp. 79-97; and Adam D.M. Svendsen, "Advancing "Defence in Depth": Intelligence and Systems Dynamics," *Defence and Security Analysis*, 31:1 (2015) pp. 58-73.

¹³⁹ Philip H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and Government*; Kristian Gustafson, "Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action," 144-162; Adam D.M. Svendsen, "Advancing "Defence in Depth" pp. 58-73.

elements of US national security policy. This chapter will touch on the history and the structure of the US IC from the American Revolutionary War through to the creation of the National Security Council before focusing on the original analysis of the coordinating boards in the chapters to come.

Therefore, while the majority of this study concerns itself with the post-Second World War establishment of its national security apparatus, we must at the outset go back further. At this point it should be made clear: the author is not arguing that America had no agency devoted toward intelligence or national security prior to the Second World War. In fact, American clandestine activity dates back to its founding. On November 29, 1775 the Continental Congress created the “Committee of Secret Correspondence” to gather foreign intelligence from people in England, Ireland, and elsewhere on the European continent to help in the prosecution of the American Revolutionary war.¹⁴⁰ Notably, committee member Benjamin Franklin, a scientist, diplomat, and intellectual honed his covert skills to secure America’s alliance with the French, spreading propaganda among the Hanoverian forces aiding the British, and coordinating paramilitary operations directed out of European ports.¹⁴¹ Indeed, America’s first spymaster, George Washington, established his own spy ring, the “Culper Ring,” to inform him specifically on the British in New York (1778-1783) and proving influential in Washington’s prosecution of the war effort. Washington’s intimate involvement with the Culper Ring and his conduct regarding other intelligence functions and security operations during the Revolutionary War are often credited with the success of the colonies against the economic and technological superiority of the British crown.¹⁴² Despite these early intelligence successes, the United States did not have established intelligence organizations and covert services outside of a conflict. The first formal American intelligence agency would not be established until the states turned against each other in the American Civil War (1861-1865), when Union Major General Joseph Hooker

¹⁴⁰ Information regarding the Committee of Secret Correspondence can be found on the CIA website at: <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/2011-featured-story-archive/intelligence-and-the-committee-of-secret-correspondence.html>.

¹⁴¹ Central Intelligence Agency, online article available at - <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/benjamin-franklin.html>.

¹⁴² For more on intelligence during the Revolutionary War see – Brian Kilmeade and Don Yaeger, *George Washington’s Secret Six: The Spy Ring that Saved the American Revolution*, (New York: Penguin Group, 2014); Alexander Rose, *Washington’s Spies: The Story of America’s First Spy Ring*, (New York: Bantam Books, 2006); and; John A. Nagy, *Spies in the Continental Capital: Espionage Across Pennsylvania During the American Revolution*, (Westholme; Yardley, 2011); and Benjamin Tallmadge, *Memoir of Colonel Benjamin Tallmadge*, (New York: Gilliss Press, 1858).

established the Bureau of Military Information in January 1863. The Bureau was disbanded at the conclusion of the war in 1865, and while the United States Navy set up the Office of Naval Intelligence in March 1882, and the United States Army established the Military Intelligence Division in 1885, these organizations were focused on military intelligence that did not receive much attention outside of conflict. The short life-spans of functioning intelligence apparatus were detrimental to the establishment of a modern intelligence community, and as House (1993) states, “even such rudimentary organizations often atrophied in peacetime, leaving military intelligence to the individual initiative and experience of field commanders.”¹⁴³ It was not until the American experiences in the First and Second World Wars, where the United States was forced to depend upon allied intelligence initially, that Washington D.C. was faced with the operational deficit of not prioritizing intelligence as part of a greater national security structure during peacetime. The ad-hoc nature of American intelligence did not lend itself to the efficient coordination of effort and resulted in a number of successive groups established to coordinate and oversee the enterprise. This chapter will now track the development of this enterprise from the National Intelligence Authority (NIA) and Central Intelligence Group (precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency) to the National Security Council.¹⁴⁴

America’s relative inexperience with respect to its new global status at the end of the Second World War led policy makers to demand more from its new intelligence community than it was equipped to handle. This was compounded by the reality that historical American familiarity with national intelligence (outside of war) was practically non-existent. As Roger Z. George and Harvey Rishikof state in *The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labyrinth*, “the United States embarked on a fundamentally new way of formulating its foreign and defence policies. It no longer had the luxury of mobilizing the country and its political, military, and economic power to counter threats once war had occurred. Rather, it needed a permanent national security policy framework to identify, deter, and

¹⁴³ Johnathan M. House, *Military Intelligence, 1870-1991: A Research Guide*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1993) p. 12.

¹⁴⁴ The two key coordinating bodies, the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) and the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB), will be covered in the following chapters. These boards existed behind the scenes of executive-level strategy and policy development, were instrumental in analysing intelligence and guiding national policy, and have remained relatively obscure in the current academic literature on the American Intelligence Community generally, and the Middle East specifically.

if necessary defend against international threats to the nation.”¹⁴⁵ In *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power*, David Rothkopf notes that during this new era for the United States, “of particular importance was learning from the experiences of the Second World War to ensure that we could balance our political and diplomatic interests and capabilities with our military and intelligence interests and capabilities.”¹⁴⁶ Following the Second World War, the United States began construction of a national security enterprise, with intelligence at its core.

AMERICA AND THE “NEW WORLD”

Coordination, the vehicle by which to usher in change and modernization, was wholly absent in the new American intelligence system. Dr. Edward P. Lilly noted in his 1951 classified report, *The Development of American Psychological Operations 1945-1951*, that uncertainties regarding each agency’s responsibilities resulted in the innumerable jurisdictional conflicts among all the agencies that delayed effective planning and cooperation.¹⁴⁷ Government policy-makers looked to their intelligence community to assess the threat, inform policy, and identify areas for exploitation in furtherance of American security interests. Unfortunately, the lack of experience in, and exposure to, conducting national intelligence (outside of the battlefield) found the United States ill-prepared to inform, engage, and execute the processes necessary to compete against the Soviet Union in the burgeoning Cold War. As Gustafson relates, the United States found itself in a position, globally, for which it had “neither experience nor mechanisms in government with which to cope.”¹⁴⁸ The United States was not the only country struggling to adapt to the new global landscape, the following quotation from Jack Shulimson’s *Marines in Lebanon: 1958*, serves well to frame the global context:

¹⁴⁵ Roger Z. George and Harvey Rishikof, *The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labyrinth*, (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2011) p. 1.

¹⁴⁶ David Rothkopf, *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2004) p. 29. Additionally, for more on this topic please see Philip H.J. Davies’ *Intelligence and Government*, pp. 190-212.

¹⁴⁷ Edward P. Lilly, *The Development of American Psychological Operations 1945-1951*, Washington D.C., December 1951, p. 11, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP86B00269R000900020001-9, CREST Archives, NACP.

¹⁴⁸ Kristian Gustafson, “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action,” p. 148.

The waning British and French influence in the Middle East after World War II gave rise to constant strife in this area of the world. The region was not only stirred by the growth of local nationalism but also the conflict between the East and West in the Cold War. Crisis followed crisis as the newly independent states attempted to adjust to the post-war world.¹⁴⁹

Shulimson's quotation emphasizes the fact that the United States was entering into the post-Second World War international arena during a time of great change. European colonial power was waning and new 'super-powers' were ascending. Independence and nationalism, in a region of empires, bred uncertainty, distrust, and fear. The United States would attempt to deploy its new national security and intelligence community against problem sets in a search for answers and a way ahead.¹⁵⁰ Before the CIA became a household name and a common Hollywood plot (following the revelations of the United States Senate Church Committee investigations in 1976),¹⁵¹ the agency existed in what Leo G. Carroll's character explained to Cary Grant as 'the alphabet soup' of American intelligence organizations in Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* (1959). In reality, Hitchcock was not far off the mark, the American intelligence community experienced a whirl-wind of changes in its early years, not dissimilar to the changing arrangements of letters with each spoonful.

The growth of United States' national intelligence architecture evolved concurrently with American foreign policy and national security policy, subjecting it to the dynamic and highly fluid environments of US opposition to the Soviet Union, and developing US relationships in the Middle East. Add to this the unique approaches of the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations in securing America's position in this resource-rich region of the world and we can understand that 'flux' was the only constant.¹⁵² The following sections review the various actors within the American national intelligence

¹⁴⁹ Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon: 1958*, (Washington: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, 1966) p. 1.

¹⁵⁰ For excellent reading on the history of the CIA see - Tim Weiner's *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*, (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2008); Scott D. Breckinridge's *The CIA and the US Intelligence System*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986); and John Prados' *Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations From World War II Through the Persian Gulf*, (Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, 1996).

¹⁵¹ The Church Committee was the United States Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities (1975 -1976). The Church committee brought to public awareness a number of CIA and NSA covert activities and resulted in executive orders to limit the scope and reach of the intelligence organizations.

¹⁵² For more on the different administrative approaches to national security and the Middle East during this time see: Theodore, Wagner, *Analysis of the Employment of United States Troops in Lebanon in 1958*, MA Thesis, Army War College,

framework and depict a fluid environment of government agencies searching for purchase in the post-war reorganization of the American system. The web created by these new entities required coordination and organization that was altogether absent at the end of the Second World War and necessitated the creation of specific groups for this purpose: the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board. The tradition of national intelligence and security policy, common among America's European allies, was all but non-existent when the United States entered the Second World War following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Prior to the war, America's intelligence capabilities existed almost exclusively within the military (the Army and the Navy) under the Secretary of War. Soon after the war's conclusion in 1945, the administrations in Washington began construction of a national security architecture tasked to ensure maintenance of the United States' post-war gains. The first step then became the crafting of legislation to delegate national security strategies and policies among various bodies and agencies to chart America's course into the new world.¹⁵³

Carlisle P.A., November 1971 [Unpublished]; David N. Wilson, *The Eisenhower Doctrine and its Implementation in Lebanon – 1958*, M.A. Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2002 [Unpublished]; J.F. Ponzio, *The New Look: The Eisenhower Doctrine and American Intervention*, MA Thesis, Naval War College, 1991 [Unpublished]; Agnes G. Korbani, *U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982: Presidential Decision-making*, (New York: Praeger, 1991); Claudia Wright, "The Turn of the Screw: The Lebanon War and American Policy," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 11:4 – 12:1, Special Issues: The War in Lebanon (Summer – Autumn, 1982) pp. 3-22; and David Lesch and Mark L. Haas, *The Middle East and the United States: A Historical Perspective* (New York: Westview Press, 2007). In particular this researcher felt Thomas Dell's study, *America and the Containment of Arab Radical Nationalism: The Eisenhower Years*, MA Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1994 [Unpublished]; and Samir, Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon: A History of the Internationalization of Communal Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) were informative on this topic.

¹⁵³ For more on the establishment of the modern American national security architecture see: Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the 20th Century*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Jeffrey T. Richelson, *The US Intelligence Community (Sixth Edition)*, (New York: Westview Press, 2011); Timothy Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2007); Scott D. Breckinridge, *The CIA and the US Intelligence System*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986); Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, (Washington: CQ Press, 2009); Mark M. Lowenthal, *U.S. Intelligence: Evolution and Anatomy* (Westport: Praeger, 1992); Michael J. Sulick, *Spying in America: Espionage from the Revolutionary War to the Dawn of the Cold War*, (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2014); Allen W. Dulles, *The Craft of Intelligence: America's Legendary Spymaster on the Fundamentals of Intelligence Gathering for a Free World*, (New York: Lyons Press, 2006); Amos A. Jordan et al, *American National Security* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); and Nathan Miller, *Spying for America: The Hidden History of US Intelligence*, (New York: Marlowe & Company, 1997).

As stated, the American national security enterprise and intelligence community would go through a cascading series of changes during this time (1946-1954). Organizations, agencies, groups, and boards would be established to meet a perceived need in the community, only then to be disbanded, merged, or renamed for mission redundancy or lack of success. This will be explored in greater detail as it relates to the Psychological Strategy Board and Operations Coordinating Board, but here some clarification is needed. The National Intelligence Authority, the Central Intelligence Group (CIG), the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Director of Central Intelligence are discussed in the following sections and can be confused with one another as the ‘alphabet soup’ of agencies continued to grow. In a short period of time, power players were born and consumed by the infant bureaucracy in Washington, as the demand for a modern, efficient, and coordinated national security enterprise grew.

What is arguably more amazing than how fast it was changing was how far it had come. Prior to the United States’ involvement in the Second World War, America was both a benefactor and a victim of its isolation. The same separation from events that had saved the US from the devastation inflicted upon Europe during the Second World War had ill-equipped the country to integrate intelligence and national security into its post-war existence. This is aptly described in a previously classified, May 1947 Central Intelligence Agency conference report, which states:

The American intelligence shortcoming has not been aversion to espionage; rather, it has been a supreme indifference to the whole intelligence problem, based on a feeling of secure isolation. This delusion formerly caused a chronic failure to maintain an efficient intelligence system in peacetime. The start of each war has caught us unprepared, and brought a last-minute effort to create an intelligence system overnight. Initial results were invariably inefficient.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *Frankfort Speech: Organization and Functions of the Central Intelligence Group*, paper presented at the Second Frankfort Conference, Frankfort, Germany, May 1947, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R001400140008-8, CREST Archives, NACP; For more on the founding and structure of the CIG see - Arthur B. Darling, *The Central Intelligence Agency: An Instrument of Government, to 1950*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990); Thomas F. Troy, *Donovan and the CIA: A History of the Establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency* (Washington: CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1981); Ludwell Lee Montague, *General Walter Bedell Smith as Director of Central Intelligence: October 1950- February 1953* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 15-35;

In January 1948, DCI Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, requested that an agency representative give a presentation on the organization and structure of the CIA at the “Second Latin American Intelligence Conference.” This presentation, declassified in 2003, describes the state of the American intelligence community upon entering the Second World War as existing in an “impoverished state and almost wholly dependent on our allies for the intelligence required to conduct global war.”¹⁵⁵ This quotation emphasizes that America had entered the war with its military intelligence services not fully prepared, “either in its accumulation of intelligence or the means of producing and disseminating it.”¹⁵⁶ Confronting these realities meant facing the lack of coordination among elements, and in January 1946 President Harry S. Truman issued his *Directive on Coordination of Foreign Intelligence Activities*, making clear his desire that “all federal foreign intelligence activities be planned, developed and coordinated so as to assure the most effective accomplishment of the intelligence mission related to the national security.”¹⁵⁷ Truman designated the National Intelligence Authority specifically to accomplish this purpose. The NIA’s role in the developing national security structure is described shortly, but it is important to mention here that the die had been cast and the order given, centralized national intelligence was to replace departmental intelligence fiefdoms. Therefore, intelligence (the organization) was to transcend current events and become an established element of American national security. To realize the full potential of centralized intelligence, the United States had to move away from separate and discrete intelligence organizations and introduce the power of coordination into the new state paradigm. These coordination entities were expected to be granted both authority and influence in the new security enterprise, and while the combination of the two was thought the

Bradley F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors: OSS and the Origins of the CIA* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); and B. Nelson MacPherson, “CIA Origins as Viewed from Within,” *Intelligence and National Security*, (10 April 1995), pp. 353- 359.

¹⁵⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, *Organization and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*, paper presented at the Second Latin American Intelligence Conference, Quarry Heights, Canal Zone, 1948, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R001400140008-8, CREST Archives, NACP.

¹⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *Growth and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*, paper presented at the Conference of Pacifica and Far East Military Attaches, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1947, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R001400140001-5, CREST Archives, NACP.

¹⁵⁷ Harry S. Truman, *Directive on Coordination of Foreign Intelligence Activities*, *Public Papers*, Washington D.C., 22 January 1946, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP90-00610R00010014011-0, CREST Archives, NACP; Also available online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12478> pp. 88-89.

recipe for success, piecemeal implementation of these inputs would condemn early iterations to bureaucratic cannibalization.

Wartime intelligence services such as the Office of the Coordinator of Information (July 1941 - June 1942) and the Office of Strategic Services (June 1942 – October 1945) performed important operating functions in some theatres, but they were not coordinating agencies, and their “activities considerably duplicated those of the armed forces.”¹⁵⁸ In addition, these offices served to bloat the size of the federal service and provided redundancy rather than expertise with overlapping missions and functions. Serious efforts were made to avoid uncoordinated duplicity of effort by forming joint committees to streamline both disparate operations as well as intelligence policy. Unfortunately, these attempts suffered from the lack of infrastructure and organizational machinery necessary to steer such initiatives to success. The necessary architecture had not evolved during the war period, and resulted in unanimous consent among the services “that intelligence should be conducted in an overall coordination that would provide for all contingencies of national security.”¹⁵⁹ Transforming from a purely military architecture to a civilian enterprise capable of operating outside times of war required a top-down restructuring. As mentioned, President Truman began the process by executing a complete overhaul and repurposing for a permanent American intelligence establishment with the creation of the NIA to plan, develop, and coordinate all federal foreign intelligence activities related to national security.¹⁶⁰ The remainder of this chapter will be spent on the evolution of the American intelligence and national security systems from the NIA to the NSC. These developments will show the size and breadth of the new system that necessitated the creation of specific coordinating elements such as the Psychological Strategy Board and later the Operations Coordinating Board.

¹⁵⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, *Growth and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*, (1947).

¹⁵⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Organization and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*, (1948).

¹⁶⁰ Harry S. Truman, *Directive on Coordination of Foreign Intelligence Activities*, (1946). For more on this process, see Jeffrey T. Richelson’s works - *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the 20th Century*, and *The US Intelligence Community*, and *The US Intelligence Community (Sixth Edition)* which serve as a standard introduction to the United States’ Intelligence Community.

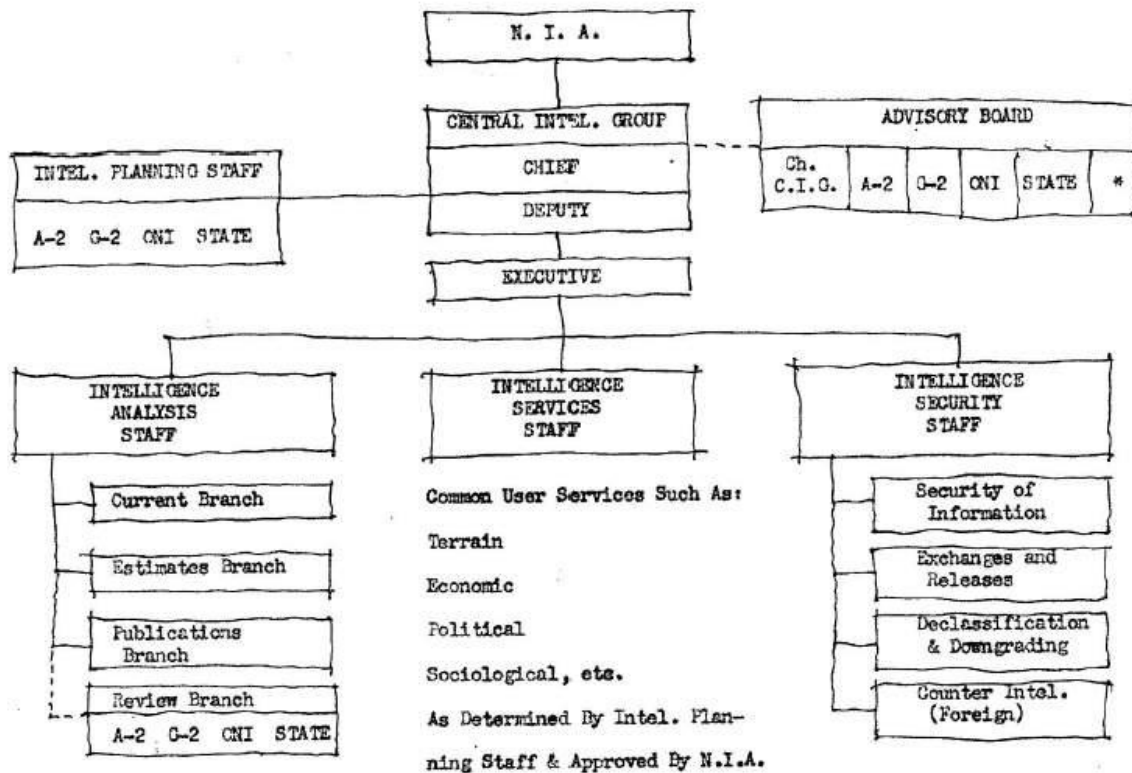
NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE AUTHORITY AND THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

The NIA was created to operate as the nucleus of America's foreign intelligence activities outside of war. The chart below provides the initial structure of the NIA, envisioned as the permanent 'peacetime' intelligence organization; allowing us 'architectural insight' into how the NIA was supposed to function. Based on declassified memoranda from DCI Rear Admiral Sidney W. Souers and agency directives, as envisioned, the NIA would assign representatives from their agencies to constitute the Central Intelligence Group under the direction of the Director of Central Intelligence (the Central Intelligence Group would soon become the Central Intelligence Agency).¹⁶¹ This group, the CIG, would then be responsible for carrying out the directives of the National Intelligence Authority through three key initiatives: the intelligence analysis staff, the intelligence services staff, and the intelligence security staff.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ Sydney W. Souers, *Director Central Intelligence, memo re: Progress Report on the Central Intelligence Group*, Washington D.C., June 1946, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP83-01034R000200170009-3, CREST Archives, NACP. This document is also found in the *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1945-1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment, eds. Glenn W. LaFantasie, C. Thomas Thorne, Jr., and David S. Patterson (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1996), Document 154; and National Intelligence Authority, *N.I.A. Directive No. 5: Directions of the Director of Central Intelligence*, Washington D.C., July 1946, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP85S00362R000700180023-0, CREST Archives, NACP. This document can also be found in the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Leahy Papers, RG 218, No. 132.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

Approved For Release 2006/11/08 : CIA-RDP85S00362R000700010034-6



Declassified in 2006, the chart above shows that in order to accomplish the many responsibilities afforded to him, the Director of Central Intelligence was granted immense control and oversight. Under this structure, the DCI oversaw an expansive bureaucracy with a planning staff and advisory board made up of representatives of the armed services and the DOS, as well as dedicated analysis, services, and security staffs. According to Central Intelligence Agency records declassified in 2006, a number of conditions were listed as being necessary to enable the Director of Central Intelligence to operate effectively.¹⁶³ These records, until recently only available in the classified reading rooms of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), reveal early community recommendations for the DCI to have direct “access, not only to all necessary departmental intelligence, but also to all information about the policies, actions, capabilities and intentions of the

¹⁶³ James S. Lay, *Conditions Required by the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency*, Washington, D.C., January 1946, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP85S00362R000700010034-6, CREST Archives, NACP, p. 1.

United States with respect to other nations which he required, [in order] to produce accurate, timely and relevant intelligence and to conduct [his] operations effectively.”¹⁶⁴ The DCI was expected to utilize the three designated staffs at his disposal to implement and maintain control and oversight in coordinating all intelligence activities and policies.

To provide the director the information necessary to conduct operations, the NIA activated the Central Intelligence Group under *National Intelligence Authority Directive No. 2*.¹⁶⁵ At the Second Latin American Intelligence Conference in 1948, the CIA representative described the formation of the NIA and the CIG as the culmination of “various plans for a central organization with a strong coordinating authority.”¹⁶⁶ The CIG was therefore the director’s active element conducting, collecting, and communicating intelligence. As the central authority for the nation’s intelligence, the DCI was required to operate from a position of strength and independence. As a result, particular effort was taken to insulate the office from undue influence. To ensure that a ‘whole of government’ approach from across the community was pursued, the NIA selected representatives of those departments and agencies, and assembled them into an advisory council reporting to the Director of Central Intelligence.¹⁶⁷ The Intelligence Advisory Board was recommended to serve as a purely advisory element, limiting the capability of the members thereof to impose their will upon the director, while still affording him the vast expertise spanning the bureaucracy.¹⁶⁸ The individual interests of the various departments and agencies were thought to be better served through liaison officers on the staff of the CIG, and the DCI was to be awarded “complete operating and administrative control over the personnel ... including the right to reject individuals offered to him by the departments or agencies.”¹⁶⁹ In effect, the DCI was to be an autonomous figure resistant to coercion and influence from inside and outside the enterprise. A secret 1946 NIA report entitled, *Proposed Organization of the General Intelligence Group*, provides a description of the role and influence of the DCI and the responsibilities of his staffs:

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ National Intelligence Authority, *NIA Directive No. 2: Organization and Functions of the Central Intelligence Group*, Washington D.C., February 1946, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP85S00362R0007000150001-7, CREST Archives, NACP.

¹⁶⁶ CIA, *Organization and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*, (1948) pp. 1-9.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Lay memo, *Conditions required by the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency*, (1946) p. 1.

The Director of Central Intelligence is to manage a number of staff offices regarding national intelligence in support of the national security. The Service Staff conducts studies of common interest (Economic, Terrain, Political, and Sociological) that support the intelligence responsibilities of various elements of government and strengthen national security efforts. The Analysis Staff provides specific intelligence production (Presidential Daily Brief, Weekly Intelligence Summaries, Intelligence Estimates) in order to inform government decision-makers constructing plans, programs, and policies promoting the national security. The Planning Staff conducts continuous intelligence publication reviews assessing the products for adequacy, duplication, efficiency, and mission focus; in addition to coordinating the intelligence activities and responsibilities of the government and recommends of the national intelligence missions to promote the national security. The Security Staff is responsible for: safeguarding, classifying, and disseminating intelligence relating to intelligence plans, programs, and policies promoting the national security.¹⁷⁰

As can be seen, the President envisioned the DCI as *the* position instrumental to American national intelligence with vast powers of oversight, control, and coordination. For the first DCI, Truman chose United States Navy Rear Admiral Sidney Williams Souers who had served as both the Assistant Director, and Deputy Chief of Naval Intelligence. CIA historian Michael Warner states in *Salvage and Liquidation: The Creation of the Central Intelligence Group*, that Souers' experience had been leveraged previously by Truman, as he had advised the White House on various intelligence matters prior to his directorship, for the President, Souers was a trusted and known commodity.¹⁷¹ On 24 January 1946 President Truman presented Souers with a black cloak, a black hat, and a wooden dagger, while humorously discussing his duties as Director of the "Cloak and Dagger Group of Snoopers."¹⁷² Aside from the brevity of this event, Truman had entrusted to the DCI control and authority over the CIG, whose tasks included strategic warning and the coordination of clandestine activities abroad, key issues in the growing intelligence debate in Washington. From the start, it was evident that DCI Souers considered the coordination of intelligence and cooperation of agencies as part of his primary

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Michael Warner, "Salvage and Liquidation: The Creation of the Central Intelligence Group," *Studies in Intelligence*, (Fall 1995) pp. 111-120.

¹⁷² Ibid.

responsibilities.¹⁷³ In fact, later in 1948 Souers (then the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council), and United States Navy Rear Admiral Roscoe Henry Hillenkoetter (then the third Director for Central Intelligence) both recognized warning and coordination as serious national security priorities and expressed those opinions in the classified *Eberstadt Report*, a congressional task force for the ‘Committee on National Security Organization.’¹⁷⁴ However, despite conceptual recognition of its importance, Warner notes that the absence of established centralized intelligence bureaucracy plagued the new agency which had neither an independent budget nor a statutory mandate. Additionally, with staffers ‘on-loan’ from the various departments, an environment of interdepartmental rivalries (particularly that of the Departments of State and War) was fostered that would prevent the group from performing up to expectations.¹⁷⁵ The dynamic between the NIA and the DCI was explained in a Central Intelligence Agency brief at the Conference of Pacific and Far East Military Attaches in 1947 titled, *The Growth and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*. In the conference briefing, the Central Intelligence Agency representative described:

The National Intelligence Authority stated that recommendations approved would, where applicable, govern the intelligence activities of the several Departments represented therein. Therefore, a directive by the National Intelligence Authority bound each of the three Departments, and the chain of command was carefully and fully observed. In view of these relationships, the Director of Central Intelligence had to understand the viewpoints of the Departmental Intelligence Agencies and also how they would be affected by directives of the National Intelligence Authority.¹⁷⁶

For better understanding, the NIA was established by President Truman (in 1946) to centralize and coordinate the nation’s intelligence operations; the NIA would provide representatives from across the government to make up the Central Intelligence Group, which would conduct the nation’s intelligence operations under the direction of the DCI (a member of the NIA). With the passage of

¹⁷³ Sydney W. Souers, “Letter to F.J. Bailey,” Washington, D.C., 29 March 1946, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP58S00362R000700160001-6, CREST Archives, NACP.

¹⁷⁴ Sydney W. Souers, “Letter to F. Eberstadt,” Washington D.C., 2 June 1948, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP86B00269R000200010022-4, CREST Archives, NACP.

¹⁷⁵ This is discussed in greater detail in the later chapters of the PSB and OCB of this paper.

¹⁷⁶ CIA, *Growth and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*, (1947).

the National Security Act of 1947, a National Security Council was established to centralize national policy, including military, foreign, and domestic security policy and intelligence. Therefore, in 1947 the NSC replaced the NIA and expanded its role into security and policy; the CIG would become the CIA; and the Director for Central Intelligence would continue as the agency's director serving as the intelligence element of the NSC. This background is important because it presents the early foundation for American intelligence organizational leadership as Davies (2012) recounts, the DCI was 'dual-hatted' as both the director of the CIA, but also of the intelligence community machinery.¹⁷⁷ This presents a picture of the Director of Central Intelligence as both a member of a government assembly in the National Intelligence Authority (and later the NSC), but also responsible for the coordination of the intelligence machinery.¹⁷⁸ "The CIA was originally envisioned as the national intelligence coordinating mechanism," however, according to Davies, it was a role never truly fulfilled.¹⁷⁹ Davies provides an excellent summarization of the US experience as being characterized by a preference for "lead officials and agencies" and the grudging and unhappy acceptance of necessary "collective coordinating bodies (coupled with repeated efforts to do away with those bodies)."¹⁸⁰ Davies is specifically speaking about the coordinating elements within the US intelligence community, however, the description also holds true for the coordinating elements within the national security sphere as well. As will be discussed, the PSB and the OCB were established as coordinating elements for the national security system (which included intelligence from the CIA), they were conceived out of necessity, yet viewed with suspicion, and particularly with the case of the PSB, became dissolved and replaced. In his central leadership role, the DCI was required to know and guide the intelligence missions of the government through the various staffs under the operational control of the Central Intelligence Group. The CIG (and its evolution into the CIA) was proposed to be the sole source of intelligence for all interdepartmental activities, including the State-War-Navy

¹⁷⁷ Davies, *Intelligence and Government*, p. 29.

¹⁷⁸ NIA, *Action by the Intelligence Advisory Board on Matters Submitted to the National Intelligence Authority, Central Intelligence Group*, Washington D.C., March 1947, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Central Intelligence Agency Historical Files, HS/HC-276. 3AW.

¹⁷⁹ Davies, *Intelligence and Government*, p. 29.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 22-23.

Coordinating Committee and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.¹⁸¹ However, this would require wholesale government coordination and it was within this atmosphere that smaller, influential coordinating organizations would serve important intelligence and policy functions. In his examination of the PSB and OCB roles in covert action, Gustafson states, “much focus has been put on the CIA’s role in covert action execution, and there has been a significant amount of writing on intelligence coordination, but few writers have dealt with the bodies that coordinate rather than the active agencies themselves.”¹⁸² Again, while Gustafson is speaking specifically of intelligence coordination, the same perspective applies to the coordinating bodies of the national security system that would develop under the National Security Council, relating to the PSB and the OCB. As discussed in the introduction and the literature review, the majority of the academic attention has been paid to the ‘active agencies’ such as the CIA, DOS, DOD, and even the larger element in the NSC itself. The coordinating bodies of the PSB and the OCB have remained largely unaddressed. In the American system, centralization had to come first before coordination could dutifully begin. With the seemingly chaotic early start to America’s intelligence and national security system, one could wonder if the United States was up to the task. A turning point came with the passage of the National Security Act of 1947 which set the foundations of a permanent security and intelligence enterprise that required cooperation and coordination, breathing life into the modern American intelligence and national security system.

THE CIA AND THE NSC AFTER THE NATIONAL SECURITY ACT OF 1947

The National Security Act of 1947, arguably the most important piece of American legislation with respect to the United States’ national security policy, structure, and purpose, served to recognize formally the importance of intelligence within the national security infrastructure. The act was both the roadmap, and the courier, directing the United States’ foreign, domestic, and security policies into the twentieth century. The ambivalence that had plagued the NIA and the CIG was addressed in the National Security Act which established the central roles of the National Security Council and the

¹⁸¹ NIA, *Proposed Organization of the General Intelligence Group*, (1946); Additionally, Scott D. Breckinridge’s *The CIA and the US Intelligence System*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986); and Mark M. Lowenthal’s *U.S. Intelligence: Evolution and Anatomy*, (Westport: Praeger, 1992) do a considerable job of covering this transitional time.

¹⁸² Gustafson, “Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action,” p. 146.

CIA. Conceived in the National Security Act of 1947, the original concept of the National Security Council charter tasked the council with streamlining government cooperation in matters involving national security, paying particular attention to the military services. Approved by President Harry S. Truman on July 26, 1947, the National Security Act established:

...the function of the Council shall be to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving national security.¹⁸³

Under the National Security Act, the NSC replaced the NIA and central intelligence was significantly increased in both role and scope. In assuming *direction* of national intelligence efforts, the NSC continued previous NIA directives while supplanting them with directives of the council's own devising.¹⁸⁴ According to a 1948 Central Intelligence Agency presentation, "the National Security Council [was] designed to act in a much broader field than the National Intelligence Authority. It [was] therefore expected that the coordination of national intelligence [would] benefit accordingly and that the improvements made to the old National Intelligence Authority directives [were to] be followed by other important developments."¹⁸⁵ The National Security Council was to be the central body, not only for national security policy, but also for intelligence direction. Additionally, and to be covered in greater detail later in this study, the NSC would serve as the President's personal forum for national security and foreign policy. The PSB's and the OCB's placement within this new system would allow them to leverage placement and access to America's foremost policy maker, the Commander in Chief. The NSC, modelled after the British 'combined committees,' was to correlate the foreign policy of the United States of America with its 'military and economic capabilities.'¹⁸⁶ As authors Lay and Johnson note:

¹⁸³ Ibid. p. 7.

¹⁸⁴ CIA, *Organization and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*, (1948).

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ferdinand Eberstadt, *Unification of the War and Navy departments and post-war organization for national security: Report to Hon. James Forrestal*, Committee on Naval Affairs, United States Senate, 79th Congress, First Session, (1945) pp. 7-8, 55.

The United States participants [in the war] became familiar with British development and use of committees and committee secretariats. In the course of their collaboration with the British, United States officials also became familiar with the British Committee of Imperial Defence which had been established in 1904 as a means of assuring high-level coordination of national security matters.¹⁸⁷

The National Security Act dictated the central role for the council by establishing that the NSC¹⁸⁸ assess and appraise the objectives, commitments, and risks “of the United States in relation to our actual and potential military power,” and for the purpose of “making recommendations to the President in connection therewith.”¹⁸⁹ Both objectives benefited greatly from access to, and the use of, intelligence, and in the first National Security Council directives the NSC outlined the role for the Director of Central Intelligence, his duty to advise the National Security Council, and make recommendations for the coordination of intelligence activities.¹⁹⁰ While the National Security Act and the National Security Council both cemented the central role of the CIA in legislation and responsibility, there remained the need for intangibles such as the personal will and ambition required to steer central intelligence into the future. Unfortunately the course required blazing a new path, one that traversed the new and unknown territories of psychological and covert operations (outside of war). Relevant to our story of the PSB and the OCB, complications arose over the management, responsibility, and coordination for American psychological strategy and covert operations from the beginning.

The mantle of CIA leadership first fell to Rear-Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter (USN), who in December 1947 became the first director of the Central Intelligence Agency. While Hillenkoetter had

¹⁸⁷ James S. Lay, Jr. and Robert H. Johnson, *An Organizational History of the National Security Council*, Committee on Government Operations, (Washington D.C., June 1960) p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ In 1949 President Truman approved amendments to the National Security Act that established the Department of Defence as a cabinet level executive agency. In effect this strengthened the role of the United States Secretary of Defence, and removed the service secretaries from the National Security Council. These amendments also made the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) advisers to the council, with the chairman of that body attendant to the council.

¹⁸⁹ US Congress, *National Security Act 1947*, Public Law 253, 80th Congress; Chapter 343, 1st Session; S. 758, 26 July 1947.

¹⁹⁰ National Security Council, *National Security Council Intelligence Directive No. 13: Exploitation of Soviet and Satellite Defectors Outside the United States*, Washington D.C., January 1950, NARA, RG 59, S/S–NSC (Miscellaneous) Files: Lot 66 D 95, NSCIDs.

the pedigree and experience thought necessary for the job, his leadership philosophy appears to have been at odds with the confrontational demeanour necessary to challenge the other services into subordination. Hillenkoetter had ‘cut his teeth’ on intelligence during the Second World War. He had been serving as the executive officer aboard the U.S.S. *West Virginia* in December 1941, dressing in his cabin as the ship was hit by Japanese naval warplanes and began to sink; after recovering, he became the chief intelligence officer of the US Pacific Fleet Staff until 1943.¹⁹¹ Hillenkoetter had first-hand experience with the devastation at Pearl Harbor, an intelligence failure resulting from fragmented intelligence elements in the US military inability or willingness to share and pass information.¹⁹² National Security Agency Historian, Tom Johnson, writes in his article “What Every Cryptologist Should Know about Pearl Harbor,” declassified in 2007 that Pearl Harbor resulted from a failure in both intelligence analysis and communication.¹⁹³ Hillenkoetter, justifiably so, was therefore hesitant for the Central Intelligence Agency to take responsibility for covert operations, a key cog for centralized authority in the intelligence battlespace, yet one that Hillenkoetter worried would “adversely affect the CIA’s collection and analysis of data.”¹⁹⁴ Hillenkoetter’s reservations put him at odds with Frank Wisner, an OSS veteran and head of the new covert department of the CIA, the Office of Policy Coordination. As Davies (2012) argues, Hillenkoetter instead opted to avoid conflict with the subordinate agencies by relinquishing the power consolidated under the DCI. Hillenkoetter’s approach saw the rise of ‘turf-wars’ that became commonplace during his tenure, allowing strong personalities like Frank Wisner to carve away at the DCI’s power.¹⁹⁵ In fact, Hillenkoetter and Wisner’s differing interpretations of the CIA’s power under the National Security Act would carry over to Hillenkoetter’s successor, General William Bedell Smith (1950-1953). Smith and Wisner also had differing views regarding the CIA’s responsibility for covert and psychological operations. However, unlike Hillenkoetter, Smith did not shy away from confrontation and actually sought the National

¹⁹¹ Hillenkoetter is credited by author John Prados with creating the Pacific Command Joint Intelligence Centre for the Pacific Theatre. John Prados, *Presidents’ Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations from World War II through the Persian Gulf*, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996) pp. 80-82.

¹⁹² Tom Johnson, “What Every Cryptologist Should Know about Pearl Harbor,” *Cryptologic Quarterly*, 6:2 (1987) p. 64.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Roy Godson, *Dirty Tricks or Trump Cards: U.S. Covert Action and Counterintelligence*, (London: Transaction Publishers, 2001) p. 30.

¹⁹⁵ Davies, *Intelligence and Government*, pp. 190-199.

Security Council's judgement to put the matter to rest.¹⁹⁶ How the US government viewed psychological operations and covert operations, as well as the results of the council's decision are covered in the next chapter, but the important thing to take away at this point is to recognize that the result of the National Security Act of 1947 was the creation and authorization of new actors, chiefly the CIA and NSC, within a 'whole of government' security enterprise responsible with empowering the executive through advice and recommendation (the dynamic by which the PSB and the OCB could inform the President).¹⁹⁷ In this atmosphere, where information is power, the National Security Council was envisioned to direct the activities, and possibly more important to this study, the *coordination* of the modern American intelligence enterprise.¹⁹⁸ Issues, such as control and responsibility over covert action and psychological operations, would fuel divisions within government as well as emphasize the need to consolidate the warring factions to move forward, as will be discussed the PSB was such an attempt.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the American intelligence structures prior to the Second World War existed almost exclusively within the military organizations and in such cases only saw focus and growth during times of war. The Second World War forced the United States to bring its intelligence community out of the military-specific shadows into a modern context, requiring the constant stare of national policy. The National Security Council was to be the vehicle guiding policy development that bridged the civilian-military divide. As author Christopher Shoemaker states in *The National Security Council Staff: Structure and Functions*, the NSC was cognisant of the "need for an institutional body to

¹⁹⁶ For more on General Smith's tenure as DCI see - Ludwell Lee Montague, *General Walter Bedell Smith as Director of Central Intelligence: October 1950- February 1953*, (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1992).

¹⁹⁷ CIA, *Organization and Development of the Central Intelligence Agency*, (1948). pp. 1-9.

¹⁹⁸ The following analysis relies heavily on the works of James S. Lay, Jr. and Robert H. Johnson, *An Organizational History of the National Security Council*, Committee on Government Operations, (Washington D.C., June 1960), as well as Christopher C. Shoemaker, "The National Security Council Staff: Structure and Functions," *The Institute of Land Warfare*, (1989) pp. 1-72; Robert Cutler, "The Development of the National Security Council," *Foreign Affairs*, 34:3 (April 1956) pp. 441-458; Alfred D. Sander, *Eisenhower's Executive Office: Contributions in Political Science* (Boulder: Praeger, 1999); Kristian Gustafson, "Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States, 1951-1961," *Public Policy and Administration*, 28:2 (2012) pp. 142-162; Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); and Philip H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States, Volume 1: Evolution of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, (Oxford: Praeger, 2012) were instrumental in helping form the analysis for this section.

deal with overarching elements of national policy that transcended the responsibilities of individual departments.”¹⁹⁹ The National Security Council’s purview covering overarching elements of national policies would require sub-elements of the council to be established in order to assist and support the growing burdens of psychological strategy and coordinating operations. Two such sub-elements, the Psychological Strategy Board and later the Operations Coordinating Board, were established to assist the NSC with bringing the civilian and military leadership together under the new intelligence and security enterprise. These boards were collaboration and coordination facilitators meant to assist the NSC with its workload; what we will find is that these boards combined intelligence and policy, and these national assessments would impact American international policy. As may be obvious, the impacts of the PSB and OCB (discussed further in the following chapters) were only possible because of the reach of the National Security Council itself; and it was their relation to the NSC that allowed them to have both direct and indirect impact on policy. While the position of the National Security Council within the executive branch provided a direct line to the president, it did not guarantee an audience or action. Instead, the reach and power of the NSC would develop slowly and was dependent upon the man in the White House.²⁰⁰

THE COUNCIL APPROACH: TRUMAN, EISENHOWER, AND THE APPETITE FOR INTELLIGENCE

Despite the broad charter of the National Security Council, it was dependent upon the chief executive to either wither or flourish. Interestingly, under the administration that sought its creation, the National Security Council did not amount to a very powerful body. President Harry S. Truman’s weariness of competition to his executive authority saw the President explicitly limit the potential power of the council.²⁰¹ Truman adamantly decreed that the National Security Council be no more than an advisory body for the President, in which case he could keep a check on their influence and

¹⁹⁹ Christopher C. Shoemaker, “The National Security Council Staff: Structure and Functions,” *The Institute of Land Warfare*, (1989) p. 3

²⁰⁰ In addition to Lay and Johnson, Bowie and Immerman discuss in *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy*, that Truman and Eisenhower’s position on the National Security Council and the focus for intelligence differed greatly.

²⁰¹ Lay and Johnson, “An Organizational History of the National Security Council,” pp. 5-27.

reach.²⁰² Former NSC officials and intelligence experts, James S. Lay and Robert H. Johnson have proposed that President Truman opted to remove himself from the regular operations of the National Security Council in an effort to retain the objectivity of the Council's recommendations.²⁰³ To his mind, Truman was concerned that if he were to become more intimately involved in the proceedings of the National Security Council he might unwillingly steer the organization's findings should debate and discussion be hindered were his views to be expressed too early. Whether through design or unintended consequences, Truman's absence from the processes of the National Security Council limited the group from reaching the deliberative and directive power it later found under the succeeding administration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Mr. Robert Cutler, a former Psychological Strategy Board advisor and the first United States National Security Advisor (1953 -1955),²⁰⁴ commented in his 1956 *Foreign Affairs* article, "The Development of the National Security Council," that "Mr. Truman and General Eisenhower availed themselves of its [National Security Council] convenience in very different ways."²⁰⁵ Specifically, Eisenhower was very open about his desires to elevate the role of the National Security Council in his administration. As Cutler recollects, during Eisenhower's campaign for office, he proposed to give vital significance to its operations, using it as a principal mechanism for aiding the chief executive in making decisions on matters of high and necessarily secret policy.²⁰⁶ Interestingly, while Cutler credits Eisenhower with re-imagining the NSC, it was actually Cutler himself, serving as an Eisenhower campaign speech writer, who drafted the candidate's speeches critical of the council based upon his own experiences serving on the PSB. Cutler's influence aside, the incoming president would enter office with an agenda to revamp the NSC. In a letter to Admiral Charles M. Cooke in February 1953 the President remarked, "I look upon the Council as the most important single agency in the Executive Department and ... do not believe it has had the staff and prestige to do its job in the past."²⁰⁷ Eisenhower put great thought into the direction and personnel to "head the senior staff and who would have the stature,

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Cutler would serve a second time as National Security Advisor (1957-1958).

²⁰⁵ Robert Cutler, "The Development of the National Security Council," *Foreign Affairs*, 34:3 (April 1956) p. 443.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Eisenhower to Admiral Charles M. Cooke, (18 February 1953), *NSC Organization and Functions*, referenced in Alfred Dick Sandler, *Eisenhower's Executive Office*, (London: Greenwood Press, 1999) p. 76.

experience and ability to energize the operation and command the respect and cooperation of the Cabinet and military services.”²⁰⁸ Specifically, Eisenhower was speaking of Cutler, who he saw as his champion to bring the NSC to the height of government. To illustrate Eisenhower’s devotion to establishing the National Security Council as a fundamental element of his administration, the President immediately called for a review of all previous national security policies dating back to the council’s inception. Inderfurth and Johnson (2004) account in *Fateful Decisions: Inside the National Security Council*, that this high-paced effort which saw 115 meetings in as many weeks (many of which Eisenhower personally presided over) only slowed when the President fell ill from his first heart attack in office, rendering him unable to attend any council gathering in person while he recovered.²⁰⁹

Lay and Johnson (1960) describe the National Security Council as an organization that had “transformed from a brief statement of purposes in the National Security Act of 1947 in to a well-established part of the governmental machinery.”²¹⁰ However, despite being a well-established part of the government machine, the organization was also fluid and subject to the desires of the President himself. In particular, “the organization and procedures of the Council have been adjusted to meet the individual needs and desires of each of the Presidents who have presided over it as well as the requirements of a changing world situation.”²¹¹ Therefore, the focus of the National Security Council, or rather, the involvement of the National Security Council in executive policy, may shift from president to president, noted in the differences between Truman and Eisenhower, and in the changing tides of international foreign policy. In fact, the great majority of policies considered by the NSC dealt with “particular foreign countries or larger geographical regions which presented problems of critical significance at the time.”²¹² To deal with this, a process was constructed whereby the council issued general policy directives: first, to gain insight into the organization and coordination of foreign activities; then the task was to be federated throughout the national security establishment based upon its relationship to the national security mission. This approach required the NSC to serve as a coordination element itself, or as it later developed, for the NSC to designate planning and

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Karl F. Inderfurth and Loch K. Johnson, *Fateful Decisions: Inside the National Security Council*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) pp. 35-46.

²¹⁰ Lay and Johnson, “An Organizational History of the National Security Council,” (1960) p. 4.

²¹¹ Ibid. p. 1.

²¹² Ibid. p. 12.

coordination boards to undertake studies on the issues at hand and make recommendations to the council. In this scenario, staff members of the council (through specifically designated sub-boards) were informed of individual agency assessments and contributions, integrated by a designated executive officer, within a larger comprehensive report that provided policy critiques and recommendations. This process had been designed by Cutler, as he wrote to the President in March 1953, the council, as the top mechanism in formulating policy should:

...be exercised through the Council itself, composed of the highest security advisers of the President, and through a Planning Board (now called "Senior Staff") composed of top-flight personnel to be appointed by the President from the departments and agencies. The President should appoint on his White House staff a "Special Assistant for National Security Affairs", who would insure that the President's views as to policy-planning are carried out, would act as executive officer at Council Meetings, and would preside over the Planning Board.²¹³

As authors Bowie and Immerman state in *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy*, "The Planning Board's importance to the policy making process cannot be exaggerated."²¹⁴ Not only was the Planning Board the arbiter for disputes over proposed policy, but it also served as "the channel for drawing on and integrating into the policy process relevant expertise, intelligence data, and experience from the rest of the government."²¹⁵ As could be expected, the task was daunting, especially as it related to the use of intelligence. Charles E. Bohlen wrote to the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Paul Nitze) in May 1952, "the proposed section on a survey of the major areas of the world has been dropped," explained Bohlen, "because it was considered that this sort of thing lies more in the realm of intelligence estimates."²¹⁶ When pressed for conclusions Bohlen freely admitted to Nitze, "I have not wanted to send anything in writing over there on this most ticklish subject...."

²¹³ Robert Cutler, "Memorandum for the President by the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs," Washington D.C., 16 March 1953, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1952-1954*, Volume II, Part 1, National Security Affairs (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1979) Document 49; also available at NARA, S/S-NSC (Miscellaneous) files, lot 66 D 95.

²¹⁴ Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy*, (1998) p. 91.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Charles E. Bohlen, *Memorandum by the Counselor (Bohlen) to the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Nitze)*, Washington D.C., 13 May 1952, NARA, Policy Planning Staff Files, lot 64, D 563.

as it was his understanding that “no attempt has been made by any of the participating departments to obtain clearances.”²¹⁷ While Bohlen’s refusal to submit final conclusions up the chain was not based solely on access to the classified material, it does highlight that an important part of the NSC process was wedded with an appetite for intelligence. In fact, the council’s desire for, and consumption of, intelligence required an investment in a separate line of intelligence products which the DCI and his staffs would provide. As Lay and Johnson note, some of those products found audience with the NSC for a time as “certain regular reports were a standing feature of the Council agendas in the first year; a written current intelligence report was regularly placed on the agenda for the Council’s information. Subsequently this report was submitted and scheduled monthly.”²¹⁸ With the need for intelligence established, access was to become currency, and in this scenario the DCI held the keys to the kingdom.

In the early years of the NSC, the Director of Central Intelligence would call attention to intelligence relevant to council papers or policy. This began as a regular and formal event with the DCI submitting papers to the council agenda. However, by 1950 the current intelligence report was dropped altogether as a standing agenda item and was followed with less formal, situation dependent, council notification from the DCI. This did not mean that intelligence was no longer primary; rather, this practice of informal notification of intelligence during council deliberation required the DCI attendance at council meetings; part of a deliberate effort by the director to stay intimately involved in council processes and operations. It is difficult to ascertain exactly how often the DCI interjected agency intelligence into the discussions, as the National Security Council did not keep minutes of their meetings in an effort to encourage discussion; for this reason, the record regarding council deliberations during this time is thin or altogether missing. However, the evolving sub-boards of the NSC were not restricted by this practice and while these boards did keep records, declassification restrictions and processes for the release of classified material have largely kept this information from public consumption, until recently. Much of the available material has been approved for release only within the last two decades and presents the opportunity for researchers to conduct modern studies from a vantage point not adequately addressed in the existing academic record. Along with other recently declassified primary material, the records of two key organizations, the Psychological Strategy Board and Operations

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Lay and Johnson, p. 15.

Coordinating Board, highlight both the importance applied to coordination in national policy and insight into the issues that found discussion with the NSC. These sub-boards, which crossed the intelligence-policy divide, prepared and submitted reviews, assessments, and recommendations to the National Security Council; access to this information offers an intimate look into the issues being deliberated at the highest levels of the American government from a new and unique perspective.

This chapter lays the contextual foundation for the rest of this study. The post Second World War American security enterprise struggled to find a centralized and uniform path for bringing intelligence and policy closer together. Complicating efforts to develop sound national security policy in line with the president's vision to confront the Soviets. Importantly, this chapter takes us through the early iterations attempting to consolidate national security into what would become the National Security Council; the national security policy element established to directly advise the president on the most pressing issues facing the nation. With a better understanding of how the United States wrestled with the issues of intelligence and policy at the outset gives us the context necessary to appreciate the creation of coordination and policy boards; bringing together intelligence and policy toward an activist approach, uncommon in the American system. We will discuss the creation and operation of the PSB and OCB in the following chapters, exploring the role in the policy and decision-making cycle. Their position and responsibilities within the council architecture would not only allow them influence in American foreign policy, but also gives the modern reader another lens by which to view the decisions made by government leaders in American security policy to the Middle East. Tracking the evolution of these 'hubs' of national security policy affords us the context to understand the position they came to hold at the apex of American national security.

CHAPTER TWO: PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE COORDINATION AND THE CREATION OF THE PSB

Having looked at the major pieces of the new American intelligence and national security community in the last chapter, this chapter narrows the focus to the first of two boards covered in this study, the Psychological Strategy Board. This chapter will assess the PSB within the ‘meta-organization’ of the American national security enterprise. Additionally, this chapter explores the primary record of recently declassified reports to highlight the issues of coordination that befell the PSB and were further compounded by the divergent views of psychological warfare and psychological strategy. We will show that the Psychological Strategy Board was ill-equipped to coordinate the meta-organization. Ultimately, lacking clear authorities and clarity of purpose, the PSB never amounted to the efficient arbiter of national psychological strategy that some had envisioned; nor was it able to function as an effective coordinating mechanism for the National Security Council. However, the PSB’s existence was not without consequence; the PSB served as a germinating agent, as the seeds of strategy and policy developed through the PSB would bloom under its successors, and its impacts would be felt half a world away.

As indicated in the last chapter, the American intelligence and national security environments were growing with organizations branching off and splintering from their saplings. Such rapid growth resulted in redundancy and overlap, and more critically, authorities, responsibilities, and mandates became less clear with each new root. Calls for greater coordination were often given lip service across the community, but how was the government to put this into action? Davies (2012) notes that the literature concentrates heavily on the individual agencies within the IC and their mutual relationships, while “systematic discussion of the community machinery that is supposed to integrate them into a national whole has tended to languish unexamined.”²¹⁹ Again, this observation remains an apt description of the national security elements as well, where organizations and agencies were established to lead but coordination was infrequent and haphazard.²²⁰ Truman’s White House Council, Clark M. Clifford, found that the early attempts to address coordination and authority

²¹⁹ Philip H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States, Volume 1: Evolution of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, (Oxford: Praeger, 2012) p. 27.

²²⁰ Central Intelligence Group, *Coordination of Federal Foreign Intelligence Activities*, Washington D.C., October 1946, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R001400150013-1, NACP, CREST Archives.

through the NIA and the CIG had left much to be desired, forcing the President to seek out new efforts to reimagine the system.²²¹ This study fills the academic gap called out by Davies, by analysing Truman's PSB and later Eisenhower's OCB, initial coordinating gears in the community machinery.

META-ORGANIZATION

First, before delving into the PSB itself, it is necessary to define what we are referring to in the 'meta-organization' of American national security. For this study the term is used to refer to the conglomerate entity of the United States' security, intelligence, and defence organizations which included (but was not limited to): the National Intelligence Authority and its successor the National Security Council; the Central Intelligence Group and its successor the CIA; the Departments of State and Defense; and the Executive Office of the President. This meta-organization was tasked to develop American national policy and monitor and coordinate intelligence and security activities towards that end. Previously classified reports of the CIG support assertions in the literature that the American national security arena had been defined by the Second World War. Reflecting on the years preceding the attack on Pearl Harbor, as well as the years following the war's conclusion, the United States' lack of federally coordinated national security and intelligence machinery outside of conflict was exposed.²²² The infrequent and haphazard approaches toward collaboration were compounded by the various vestiges of state and defence operating in silos or within the narrow lanes of service-specific (Army, Navy, Air Force, etc.) intelligence. Prior to the war, there existed an environment where "each department was conducting unilateral intelligence activities, using primarily its own sources and based upon its own departmental viewpoint and interests"; disorganization was central and security was elusive, with disastrous results as the attack on Pearl Harbor illustrated.²²³ Ultimately, even at the war's conclusion, the lack of responsible agencies for coordinating activities resulted in fractured strategic

²²¹ George M. Elsey, "No. 197 Memorandum For the File," Washington, D.C., July 1946, in Glenn W. LaFantasie, C. Thomas Thorne, Jr., and David S. Patterson (eds), *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1945-1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1996); a copy of this document can also be found at the Truman Library, Independence, MO., Papers of Clark M. Clifford, National Military Establishment: CIA. The complete collection of the Clark M. Clifford Papers is located at the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., with the intelligence and classified files found in Boxes CL 1-CL 2.

²²² Central Intelligence Group, *Coordination of Federal Foreign Intelligence Activities*, (1946).

²²³ Ibid.

and national policy production.²²⁴ Recognizing national security could not be attained without coordination, an effort to streamline intelligence priorities and responsibilities after the war's end was undertaken by President Truman. Truman directed the creation of collective elements to organize and coordinate national intelligence and security efforts across the various organs of government. As if coordinating the meta-organization was not difficult enough, the United States was also entering the murky territory of 'psychological warfare.'

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

Psychological warfare (PSYWAR) seeks to turn the mind into a weapon influencing the enemy. The aim is to use Psychological Operations (PSYOPs) to influence foreign audiences, their perceptions, and subsequent behaviour, in support of US Government policy and military objectives.²²⁵ While today this is the generally accepted meaning of PSYOPs, at least in the American sense, in the early Cold War psychological operations and psychological warfare were ill-defined and often misunderstood from agency to agency. We will cover more of this in the following chapters, but for our purposes here at the outset, lacking a common consensus did not detract away from its near universal acceptance that the ideological battlefield would be the arena of the Cold War. As such, national agencies vying for power in the psychological battle-space would view each other as cannibalistic threats to their existence. As Zegart (1999) notes, "government agencies must constantly contend with the possibility that another agency may be working against them."²²⁶ In particular, during the twilight of the 1940s, the United States' departments of State and Defense engaged in a bureaucratic turf-war over the country's direction of the psychological warfare effort. As Trevor Barnes notes in his 1982 article for *The Historical Journal*, "The Secret Cold War: The C.I.A. and American Foreign Policy in Europe 1946 – 1956. Part II"; special assistant to President Eisenhower, C.D. Jackson wrote to the chief executive in December 1952 that the infighting between the State Department, Department of Defense, and the C.I.A. was so intense that it bordered on sabotage.²²⁷

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Joint Publication 3-13.2, *Psychological Operations*, (Washington: Government Publication Office, 2010) pp. VII – VIII.

²²⁶ Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999) p. 38.

²²⁷ Trevor Barnes, "The Secret Cold War: The C.I.A. and American Foreign Policy in Europe 1946-1956, Part II," *The Historical Journal*, 25:3 (September 1982) pp. 649-670.

Establishing psychological warfare as part of a cohesive global campaign would require a complete ‘reimagining’ of the problem from definition to operation.

In this chapter we will track along those lines by first approaching psychological warfare, the umbrella term often used synonymously with ‘psychological strategy,’ the target of the PSB. America’s first coordinating committee of the post Second World War, the State-Army-Navy-Air Force-Coordinating Committee, saw psychological warfare as:

...the coordination and implementation of, all foreign information measures of the US Government designed to influence attitudes in foreign countries in a direction favourable to the attainment of US objectives and to counter anti-US propaganda.²²⁸

In fact, the declassified record reveals that this committee recognized that the coordination for PSYOPS was an ill-defined trouble area, lacking an entity to police the:

...adequate provision for coordination between (1) current information activities and planning for wartime programs, (2) planning for foreign and for domestic wartime information programs, (3) planning of wartime information programs and activities.²²⁹

Interestingly, the SANACC reports contained recommendations for outlining early concepts of what would soon become the Psychological Strategy Board, as well as recognition of the future contest between the DOS and the DOD over PSYOPS discussed later in this chapter. For now we note that the SANACC recommended the establishment of a psychological warfare organization with a working nucleus deliberately staffed for planning and coordination, in order to “prepare for the coordinated conduct of foreign and domestic information programs and overt psychological operations abroad in

²²⁸ State Army Navy Air Force Coordinating Committee, *Draft Report to the National Security Council on Plans and Preparations for Wartime Information Programs and Related Activities*, Washington D.C., November 1948, General CIA Records: CIA RDP80R01731R003500200003-3, NACP, CREST Archives; and State Army Navy Air Force Coordinating Committee, *Memorandum for the Chairman, Subcommittee for Special Studies and Evaluations*, Washington D.C., August 1948, General CIA Records: CIA RDP80R01731R003500200015-0, NACP, CREST Archives.

²²⁹ SANACC, *Draft Report to the National Security Council on Plans and Preparations for Wartime Information Programs and Related Activities*, (1948).

the event of war or threat of war as determined by the President.”²³⁰ Ultimately this recommendation, like the committee that fostered it, was subsumed into the new NSC and remained a task for action and topic of high-level discussion.²³¹

Discussing the oppositional positions of the Department of State and the Department of Defence, author Gregory Mitrovich argues in *Undermining the Kremlin: America's Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947-1956*, that the conflict between the two departments “during 1948 and 1949 resulted in the inability of the various agencies to coordinate their psychological warfare activities and respond effectively to the growing virulence of Soviet propaganda campaigns.”²³² Mitrovich’s view is shared by author Alfred H. Paddock, Jr. in *U.S. Special Warfare: Its Origins*, which covers the dysfunction within the DOD in great detail and notes that the task of delineating agency responsibilities for PSYWAR was surprisingly difficult, remarking that even when concessions were reached they only remained for short periods of time.²³³ As evidenced when the SANACC put forward recommendations that “all propaganda – both covert and overt – should be a function of the State Department in consultation with the CIA,” and it was upon this recommendation that President Truman assigned psychological warfare coordination to the Secretary of State, only to have that order reversed within three weeks.²³⁴ Ultimately, the various departments and agencies across government had recognized that psychological warfare was the chosen ‘way forward’ in American diplomacy and policy. In order to protect their individual rice bowls, these groups engaged one another in a bureaucratic dance to

²³⁰ Ibid. Of particular note, the SANACC report recommended the new organization be placed under the auspices of the Department of State. This seems perplexing due to the ‘turf-wars’ taking place between the Departments of State and Defense during this time, however, the SANACC was configured to integrate diplomatic and military concerns for effective planning of unified national security policy following the Second World War. Understanding this, it can then be accepted that the SANACC could recommend a symbiosis of effort under the primary task of diplomacy.

²³¹ Office of Policy Coordination, *Additional Suggestions for Agenda of Meeting of National Psychological Strategy Board*, Washington D.C., 7 May 1951, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP83-00036R001100090026-2, NACP, CREST Archives; National Psychological Strategy Board, *Preliminary Staff Meeting*, Washington D.C., 8 May 1951, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010035-8, NACP, CREST Archives; and State Department, *Dulles Memo to General Smith*, Washington D.C., 2 May 1951, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R001300270052-6, NACP, CREST Archives.

²³² Gregory Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin: America's Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947-1956*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2000) p. 61.

²³³ Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., *U.S Army Special Warfare: Its Origins*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002) pp. 51-58.

²³⁴ Ibid. p. 50.

establish themselves as the *authority* in the new psychological environment, while at the same time trying to sever ties to the real-world *responsibility* that came along with it.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

As elements became more entrenched in their positions, progress toward realizing an enterprise-wide psychological strategy ground to a halt. The gridlock continued even after President Truman took steps to bridge the impasse by establishing the Psychological Strategy Board by Executive Directive in April 1951. In his directive, meant to break the stalemate and to provide a representative, yet independent council, the Truman's classified directive called for a Psychological Strategy Board that would enable "more effective planning, coordination and conduct, within the framework of approved national policies, of psychological operations."²³⁵ The Board was established to 'guide' the formulation and promulgation of policies to the "departments and agencies responsible for psychological operations, of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and for the coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort."²³⁶ What Truman intended was a psychological strategy foreman, overseeing the construction of the national psychological warfare enterprise. The problem lay in the very real distinction between the power to 'guide' and the power to 'direct.' This was noted in one of the first staff meetings of the State Department's National Psychological Strategy Board (NPSB), not to be confused with the PSB, when Assistant Secretary Barrett noted that the existing directive suffered from a lack of clarity of purpose, specifically: where had authority actually been granted? Barrett remarked that "there has been a great deal of fuzzy thinking in this....both from the State Department side and the White House side. There are some awfully unclear positions, and some surprising differences..."²³⁷ What was remarkably clear, from the outset it appears, was the consensus that the new board, "the machinery, and the rest of it ... is a coordinating job."²³⁸ Therefore what we can say is that the board was envisioned as an apparatus to

²³⁵ Harry S. Truman, *Executive Directive (Psychological Strategy Board)*, Washington D.C., April 1951, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731003300180062-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ National Psychological Strategy Board, *Memorandum for the Record - Preliminary Staff Meeting National Psychological Strategy Board*, Washington D.C., May 1951, p. 5, General CIA Records: CIA RDP80R01731R003400010035-0 NACP, CREST Archives.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

coordinate national psychological strategy, but what did that entail? In an effort to accurately depict the problems the board would face, we must revisit our SANACC concept of psychological warfare. SANACC's definition of psychological warfare as the coordination of 'all foreign information measures' is incomplete as it stands. Many will argue it appears to leave out important elements of psychological campaigns. Does 'all information measures' include military operations (Department of Defense), civilian operations (Department of State), and intelligence operations (Central Intelligence Agency)? Are they conducted during wartime, peacetime, or both? While this may be considered semantic issues, these are important questions.

This study does not aim to redefine psychological warfare as the existing literature is wide and vast.²³⁹ Rather, the goal is simply to highlight the variety of issues facing the PSB. In 1955, William E. Daugherty of the United States Army's Operations Research Office, along with Morris Janowitz compiled, *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*, in which he offers at the outset:

Each successive year, during the past decade, new and valuable additions have been made to the expanding bookshelf set apart for the books on this subject (psychological warfare). However, when one closely examines these books he discovers there is anything but unanimity of view on what to call the general subject matter discussed.²⁴⁰

The importance being that the diversity resident within the growing field of PSYWAR had naturally resulted in differing views on what psychological warfare actually was. Daugherty states, "official

²³⁹ For additional information on the subject of psychological warfare please see – Frank L. Goldstein, *Psychological Operations: Principles and Case Studies*, (Alabama: Air University Press, 1996); Steve A. Fondacaro, *A Strategic Analysis of U.S. Special Operations During the Korean Conflict 1950-1953*, (Kansas: Fort Leavenworth Press, 1988); Ron D. Mclaren, ed., *Military Propaganda: Psychological Warfare and Operations*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982); Elliot Harris, *The 'Un-American Weapon: Psychological Warfare*, (New York: M.W. Lads Publishing Co., 1967); Christopher Paul, *Information Operations Doctrine and Practice: A Reference Handbook*, (London: Praeger Security International, 2008); Robert J. Kadosky, *Psychological Operations American Style: The Joint United States Public Affairs Office, Vietnam and Beyond*, (New York: Lexington Books, 2007); and Carnes Lord and Frank R. Barnett, eds., *Political Warfare and Psychological Operations: Rethinking the U.S. Approach*, (Washington: National Defense University Press, 1989).

²⁴⁰ William E. Daugherty and Morris Janowitz, *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1958) p. 1.

sources and publicists are in lack of agreement on the proper terminology and scope of ‘psychological warfare.’²⁴¹

In fact, between 1948 and 1955, the United States Army alone published four definitions for the term psychological warfare, differing in scope from solely ‘non-lethal’ means that targeted any group for ‘specific military purposes,’ to ‘propaganda’ used ‘against an enemy,’ to the ‘planned use’ during ‘times of war or declared emergency’ against ‘enemy, neutral, or friendly foreign groups.’²⁴² The US Army did not hold the monopoly on diverse thought and interpretation in relation to PSYWAR; rather, the same issues of interpretation held true in academia as well. Johns Hopkins University professor, and former US Army intelligence officer, Paul M.A. Linebarger argued in his book *Psychological Warfare*, that the definition of psychological warfare “is an open game,” only accurately understood under the concept of ‘propaganda,’ and that through the specific use of propaganda “psychological warfare seeks to win military gains without military force.”²⁴³ Similarly, Brigadier Cyril Nelson Barclay focused on the aspect of propaganda in PSYWAR in his book *The New Warfare*,²⁴⁴ and Dr. Bela Szunyogh saw psychological warfare simply as an expression of propaganda warfare attributing “any action which is practiced mainly by psychological methods with the aim of evoking a planned psychological reaction in other people,” in his book *Psychological Warfare: An Introduction to Ideological Propaganda and the Techniques of Psychological Warfare*.²⁴⁵ As stated, our purpose is not to redefine the term, but rather to show that the US government’s approach to the problem set mirrored the diverse concepts of PSYWAR present at the time. For the purposes of this study we will adhere to the more inclusive understanding of psychological warfare defined by Daugherty as “the planned use of propaganda and other actions designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, and behaviour of enemy, neutral, and friendly foreign groups in such a way as to support the accomplishment of national aims and objectives.”²⁴⁶ By including a more encompassing definition, we are better able to grasp the various issues facing the organizations and elements tasked against the umbrella of PSYWAR. Specifically, definitions

²⁴¹ Ibid. p. 12.

²⁴² Ibid. p. 55.

²⁴³ Paul M.A. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare*, (Washington: Combat Forces Press, 1955) p. 37.

²⁴⁴ Cyril Nelson Barclay, *The New Warfare*, (New York: Philosophical Library Inc., 1954) p. 16.

²⁴⁵ Bela Szunyogh, *Psychological Warfare: An Introduction to Ideological Propaganda and the Techniques of Psychological Warfare*, (New York: The William–Frederick Press, 1955) p. 13.

²⁴⁶ Daugherty and Janowitz, *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*, p. 2.

notwithstanding, coordination elements such as the PSB were tasked against developing psychological strategy and policy that included any and all connotations.

COORDINATING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BUREAUCRACY

Preceding Truman's April 1951 directive, the president enlisted the services of the Bureau of Budget to make recommendations aimed at containing the growing bureaucratic impasse. In January 1951 President Truman requested that the bureau conduct a study enumerating the specific problems encountered when attempting to fold psychological warfare into the infant national security enterprise and provide recommendations for a way forward. A Bureau of Budget memo the following year (1952), declassified and approved for release in 2005, reflected that during consideration of proposals to prosecute a more vigorous psychological effort, the National Security Council was confronted by the same organizational issues and wide divergence of views in concept and policy (of psychological warfare) just outlined. Truman's effort to push forward without first establishing consensus did little to solve the problem, and instead resulted in these disparate views reappearing without correction within the Psychological Strategy Board.²⁴⁷

As discussed previously, the burgeoning national security industry provided ample seed ground for turf-wars from both established stakeholders (DOS and DOD) and the growing field of new-comers (i.e. CIA, NSC, PSB, etc.). In particular, the State Department saw the field of psychological warfare as an opportunity to consolidate its policy power and to extend its influence into the battlefield and covert operations. In fact, the DOS went so far as to submit a proposal for consideration with the National Security Council, *NSC 74 Plan for National Psychological Warfare*, that would have placed the State Department's NPSB at the helm of the war effort and, had it been approved, would have concentrated all peacetime and wartime planning in the hands of the Secretary of State.²⁴⁸ The DOD

²⁴⁷ Assistant Director Bureau of Budget, *The Psychological Strategy Board Selected Aspects of its Concept, Organization and Operations*, Washington D.C., April 1952, pp. 1-18, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300180062-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

²⁴⁸ Memorandum from the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay) to the National Security Council, "The Foreign Information Program and Psychological Warfare Planning," (15 March 1955) *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1950-1955, The Intelligence Community, eds. Douglas Kean, Michael Warner, (Government Printing Office: Washington, 2007) Document 213.

and the Joint Chiefs of Staff seemingly recognized the State Department's power play and set about supporting alternative elements (such as the CIA) to offset the DOS effort, while also securing resources and protecting their traditional leadership role in wartime and military operations. This will be discussed in more detail shortly, but roadblocks and infighting between DOS and DOD that were stalling Truman's vision of a modern national security system, led the president to direct his administration, and the Bureau of Budget in particular, to review the situation. They were tasked to identify the impingements and bottle-necks, and recommend a way ahead. After the review period, the bureau lobbied for a policy development and coordinating body to bridge the divide between the two departments, as well as coordinate operations among the growing ranks of the national security enterprise.

Within five months of ordering the assessment, President Truman issued Presidential Directive 128, *Establishing the Psychological Strategy Board*, in June of 1951.²⁴⁹ This directive established a basic membership of the PSB consisting of: the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and a fulltime board director and staff. The PSB was given the responsibility for the "formulation and promulgation, as guidance to the departments and agencies responsible for psychological operations, of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and for the coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort."²⁵⁰ Unfortunately, the directive loosely assigned responsibilities, without delegating the necessary authorities to successfully prosecute its mission (this is discussed further in the remainder of this chapter). What this meant was that the PSB was envisioned as the policy and strategic bridge between two warring factions in hopes of coordinating and facilitating coordination, however, the PSB was never granted the authority to manage or hold accountable either side. The result was a national strategy arbiter incapable of enforcement and therefore not positioned to effect the change desired in Washington. The tentative organization of the Psychological Strategy Board is visualized in the chart below and shows how the PSB was configured with the three competing elements (DOS, DOD, and CIA) as its leadership nucleus. Absent the necessary authorities to direct and task, the PSB presented more fuel for increased competition rather than collaboration. This is supported by the fact that not

²⁴⁹ Harry S. Truman, *Directive Establishing the Psychological Strategy Board*, (June 1951). Available online Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13808>. This is the official document that succeeded the classified (April 1951) Executive Directive referred to earlier in this chapter.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

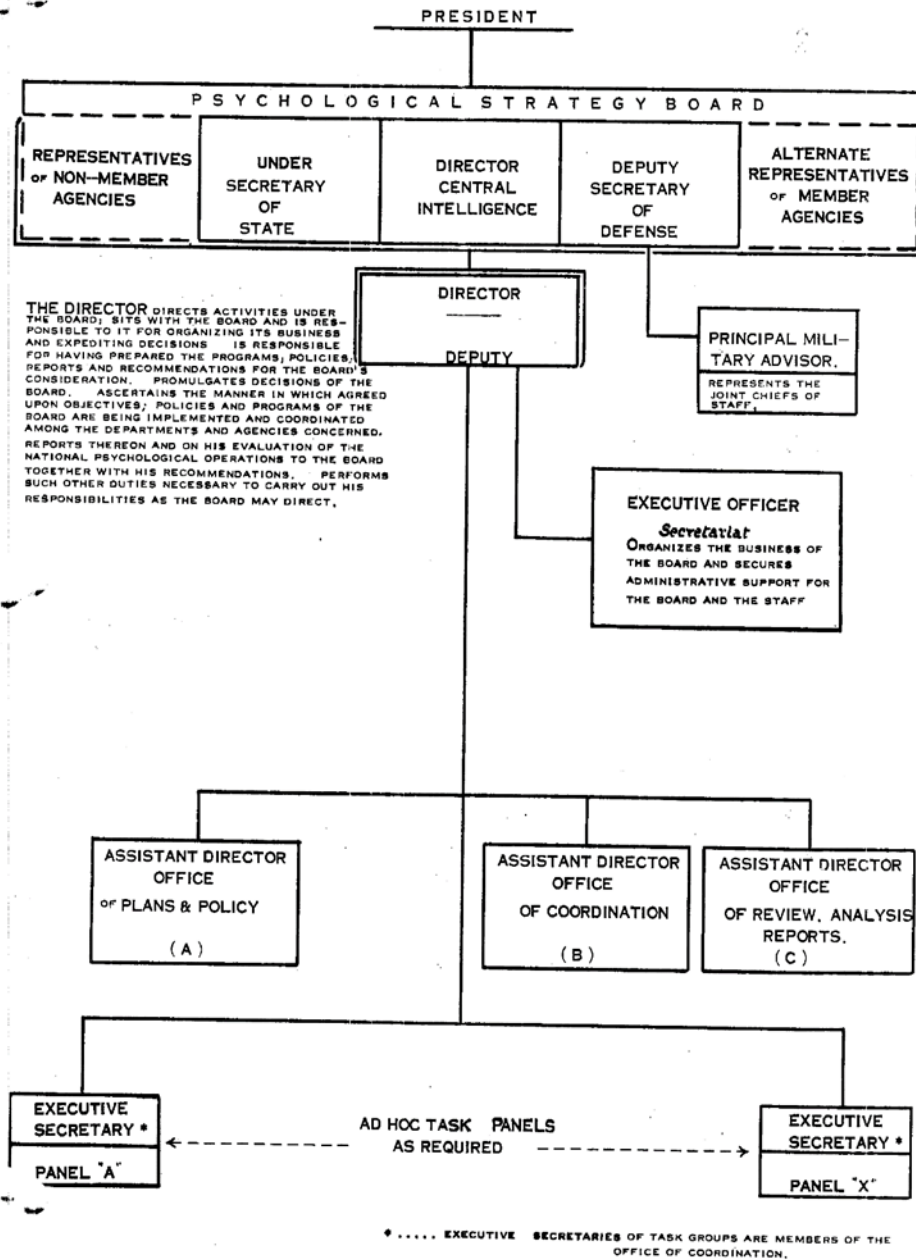
only had the State Department proposed the NPSB under its leadership, but that they were simultaneously conducting discussions with America's European allies, particularly the British Embassy, regarding the coordination of psychological operations targeting the Arab States and Iran (just three months prior to Truman's Presidential Directive 128).²⁵¹ Even after the PSB was established, the State Department continued to view the new body suspiciously as a competitor rather than a partner, and for the final two years of the Truman administration the PSB would be embroiled in competition first with the DOS, and later, with the Central Intelligence Agency.

²⁵¹ Shepard Jones, *Anglo-American Cooperation in the Psychological Field in the Arab States and Iran*, Washington, D.C., March 1951, p. 2, National Security Archives, George Washington University, NSAE78.

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TENTATIVE ORGANIZATION

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD STAFF



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In Scott Lucas' article "Campaigns of Truth: The Psychological Strategy Board and American Ideology, 1951-1953," for *The International History Review*, Lucas uses *NSC 68 United States Objectives and Programs for National Security* (1950), to set the context for the PSB within the greater Cold War

environment.²⁵² NSC 68 details the Truman administration's approach to foreign policy and national strategy on the premise that:

Practical and ideological considerations...both impel us to the conclusion that we have no choice but to demonstrate the superiority of the idea of freedom by its constructive application, and to attempt to change the world situation by means short of war in such a way to frustrate the Kremlin design and hasten the decay of the Soviet system.²⁵³

The national psychological effort viewed the Cold War as a contest of ideologies, and charged the spearheading of such a campaign with the Psychological Strategy Board. By Presidential decree, the PSB was assigned the responsibilities of “co-ordinating the policies of the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the military services, and other government agencies.”²⁵⁴

As illustrated in the previous chart, in addition to the permanent “named” members (secretaries of DOS, DOD, and the DCI), the PSB also included representatives of non-membered agencies. The idea was for the board to function as an independent filter for the NSC, in effect taking broad principles and policies (generated in the council) and setting specific and practical objectives to drive the various agencies to meet and remain consistent with them (a roadblock to “mission creep” noted in the literature review). It was envisioned that the PSB would approve lines of action and programmes assigning workable and coordinated tasks to the operating agencies.²⁵⁵ Based on the discussions and recommendations from the board, the director and his staffs would conduct research,

²⁵² NSC 68 is considered by many in the intelligence community as the ‘Rosetta Stone’ of American policy during the Cold War.

²⁵³ State Department and Department of Defense Report, (7 April 1950) cited in Scott Lucas, “Campaigns of Truth: The Psychological Strategy Board and American Ideology, 1951-1953,” *The International History Review*, 18:2 (May 1996) p. 280; Additionally, National Security Council, *United States Objectives and Programs for National Security NSC 68*, (April 1950) is available through the Truman Library online at - https://web.archive.org/web/20090530110830/http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/10-1.pdf.

²⁵⁴ Lucas, “Campaigns of Truth: The Psychological Strategy Board and American Ideology, 1951-1953,” *The International History Review*, 18:2 (1996) p. 280.

²⁵⁵ Psychological Strategy Board, *Concept of the Organization to Provide Dynamic Psychological Operations in the Cold War*, Washington D.C., May 1951, CIA General Records - CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010029-7, NACP, CREST Archives.

prepare reports, and review findings for the PSB to take to the National Security Council. We will cover how the board performed as the coordinating element of the national security meta-organization in the next chapter.

While the PSB was a newcomer to the scene, the problems it was tasked to address were not. Lay and Johnson (1960) note that the National Security Council “had, virtually since its inception, regularly considered problems relating to the organization of psychological (including foreign information) activities.”²⁵⁶ This is evidenced by the CIG and SANACC reports already mentioned in this chapter, and further supported by an early National Intelligence Authority memo from 15 April 1947 on the subject of psychological warfare. Declassified in 2001, the memo discusses coordination between government agencies on the materials to be used in PSYOPS, to ensure efficiency and harmony with other national security plans.²⁵⁷ Therefore, the Psychological Strategy Board went forward, lacking an accepted definition for psychological warfare, tasked to coordinate an organizational behemoth in the American national security enterprise, and finding themselves in hostile territory as various elements of the juggernaut saw the PSB as a threat and a competitor.

For an initial understanding of how the PSB was meant to fit into the puzzle we are able to turn to one of the PSB’s first reports, declassified in 2005. This report sheds light on the perceived purposes and responsibilities as seen from inside the group. Interestingly, in the PSB’s May 1951 report (roughly a month after Truman’s executive directive), *Concept of the Organization to Provide Dynamic Psychological Operations in the Cold War*, the board reflected upon their reason d’être (the presidential directive) and concluded that “the Directive creates no new operating agency. It results from a general sense of need for harnessing the disparate resources of existing departments and agencies responsible for executing various psychological operations and intensifying the national effort.”²⁵⁸ The PSB was therefore a

²⁵⁶ James S. Lay, Jr. and Robert H. Johnson, *An Organizational History of the National Security Council*, Committee on Government Operations, (Washington: Government Printing Office, June 1960) p. 26.

²⁵⁷ National Intelligence Authority, *Psychological Warfare re: N.I.A. 7(SWNCC 304/1)*, Washington D.C., April 1947, Creating Global Intelligence Records – 50dde102993247d4d83920d7, NACP, CREST Archives; and cited in Gregory Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin: America’s Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947-1956*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2000) pp. 60-62.

²⁵⁸ Psychological Strategy Board, *Concept of the Organization to Provide Dynamic Psychological Operations in the Cold War*, Washington D.C., May 1951, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010029-7, NACP, CREST Archives.

conglomerate with real constraints, being a ‘coordination and steering’ committee for other organizations that actually conducted psychological operations. Explained further:

The Board does not perform psychological operations; its responsibility to give impetus to an intensified psychological effort implies considerable power of decision in the initiation and control of major projects. Likewise, while the psychological operating units within the departments and agencies cannot be directed by the Board to carry out its programs, the individual members of the Board ex-officio are of such prestige as to create the presumption that the executing agencies will consider guidance approved by the members as being in effect mandatory.²⁵⁹

Therefore, the PSB’s true power was to lie in the influence of its members, or its *implied* authority. In practice it was envisioned that the PSB would take general policy developed through the National Security Council and then approve “lines of action and programs which assign workable and coordinated tasks to the operating agencies.”²⁶⁰ Ultimately, the Psychological Strategy Board was established to craft coordinated policy for America’s national psychological strategy. While bureaucratic infighting, turf-wars, and ill-defined authorities would impede the Psychological Strategy Board from reaching its full impact, the mission and priorities of the board were not inconsequential; and although limited, the role the board played in bringing the importance of psychological strategy to the national level, and the impact it had on shaping the intelligence environment and the influence of its successor are both important and worthy of study.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE: THE PSB AND THE META-ORGANIZATION

In the previous chapter we learned that there was little about psychological strategy that was uncontested. Differing views and definitions from agency to agency complicated the picture for the group that was tasked to coordinate it all. This chapter will look at the problems the PSB faced coordinating the meta-organization of the American national security enterprise. In many ways, the Psychological Strategy Board was created to be referee, or a warden, coordinating psychological strategy among individual factions in accordance with national policy. However, for the PSB to be successful in this position there needed to be community ‘buy-in,’ or acceptance for the position held by the board. While the concept of psychological warfare was roundly accepted as the future of the battlefield (expressed in the previous chapter) there was little cohesion around the belief that the PSB held the mantle of responsibility in this regard. This chapter makes particular use of the records of the PSB to shed light onto the difficulties the board experienced: specifically, this chapter draws heavily from the Bureau of the Budget report commissioned by President Truman to review the PSB after its first year in operation. This report, declassified in 2005, makes clear that the board, for a number of reasons, had yet to live up to its coordinating purpose and as a result had not reached its full potential. In addition to the PSB documents, this chapter includes information gleaned from the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) series, which serves as the official documentary historical record of major US foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity.

PLANNING AND COORDINATION

A review of declassified NIA reports reveal that from inception ‘planning for psychological warfare,’ and the coordination of information measures for psychological operations, were assumed to be in the purview of the DCI.²⁶¹ Therefore, at the outset, it was extremely important for the responsibilities

²⁶¹ Sidney W. Souers, *Progress Report on the Central Intelligence Group*, Washington D.C., June 1946, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP83-01034R000200170009-3 National Archives College Park, CREST Archives; also available through the CREST Archives are earlier declassified versions of this report CIA-RDP84-00951R000400020083-7 and CIA-RDP80R01731R001400110001-8 these versions are more heavily redacted; and National Intelligence Authority, *Psychological Warfare re: N.I.A. 7(SWNCC 304/1)*, Washington D.C., April 1947, Creating Global Intelligence Records – 50dde102993247d4d83920d7, NACP, CREST Archives.

of the new board (the PSB) to be defined and established as specifically as possible, owing to the fact that the scope of their problem brought the board into competition with other organizations over areas of responsibility and bureaucratic territory. Admittedly, this issue had been recognized early on and recorded in an early concept report for the Psychological Strategy Board. This report, declassified in 2005, highlights that the directive establishing the board failed to create a new operating agency. Without an operational mandate guiding its direction, the board existed instead upon:

...a general sense of need for harnessing the disparate resources of existing departments and agencies responsible for executing various psychological operations and intensifying the national effort. It includes under the term “psychological operations” a wide spectrum of overt and covert activities – from propagation of truthful foreign information to subversive operations of both a moral and physical character.²⁶²

Unfortunately, a ‘general sense of need’ for coordination is not the same thing as being given the authority to coordinate efforts. Without the expressed authority to oversee the coordination of the psychological effort, the PSB lacked an accepted and unified vision for the way ahead, and instead, the board struggled from the outset to define its own existence. We see this conflict expressed in the May 1952 Bureau of the Budget report, *Organization of the Psychological Strategy Board*, which called to attention the fact that instead of consensus of direction, the board pivoted between two trending views. The first view saw the board as ‘the headquarters for the Cold War where the Board’s priority concern was embracing any or all major policies, programs or activities of the government, and to ensure that “psychological considerations were brought to bear in the shaping of all, except purely domestic, national policies and programs.”²⁶³ Under this function the board would be given discretion to decide whether “psychological considerations” were the determining factors in a policy or programme, and if so, the PSB would exercise independence in presenting its view in the top councils of the US government (though the NSC and the executive). Obviously, for such a concept to be realized, it required extensive organizational independence for its personnel and director, in addition

²⁶² The Psychological Strategy Board, *Concept of the Organization to Provide Dynamic Psychological Operations in the Cold War*, Washington D.C., May 1951, pp. 1-9, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010029-7, NACP, CREST Archives.

²⁶³ Bureau of Budget, *Organization of the Psychological Strategy Board*, Washington D.C., May 1952, p. 7, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300180062-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

to unfettered access to the president and NSC.²⁶⁴ The second trending view saw the Psychological Strategy Board as an extension of the intensity of psychological operations already being carried out. More limited under this concept the board was to be concerned:

...only with programs specifically identified as psychological operations, such as propaganda and the like, and the Board's concern therefore was the support or implementation through such psychological operations of national objectives, policies and programs developed through other mechanisms without the participation or contribution of the Board.²⁶⁵

Organizationally, therefore, the board would provide, primarily, for an elevation of mechanisms already existing to coordinate operations. Its staff would be wholly borrowed from operators engaged in the conduct or planning of psychological programmes. Instead of operating independently, as envisioned under the alternative trend, "the Board would provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information, a committee type structure for the coordination of psychological plans. Its director would serve as a secretary and staff officer of the Board itself and neither he nor the Board would have any pattern or relationships except that provided through the member departments."²⁶⁶

RESPONSIBILITY, AUTHORITY, AND COMPETITION

Reflecting upon the previous chapter, we know that the 'psychological warfare' operating space, encompassed more than any one entity was designed to handle. Add to this the general designation of the PSB as its champion, and you have a recipe for dynamic mission sets bleeding across agencies and positioning the PSB in a cannibalistic environment for resources. Ultimately, the PSB was designated responsible for the formulation and promulgation of national psychological objectives, the policies and programmes developed to accomplish them, and the responsibility to coordinate and evaluate the national psychological effort. The board was responsible for all this without the benefit of a common ground: no accepted definition for psychological warfare, and two prevailing

²⁶⁴ Assistant Director Bureau of Budget, *The Psychological Strategy Board Selected Aspects of its Concept, Organization and Operations*, Washington D.C., April 1952, p. 7, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300180062-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

philosophical operating trends competing for existence. As discussed, the reality was the PSB had all the responsibility without any of the necessary authority. This was further complicated by the PSB's inability to consider efforts that stepped outside of the psychological setting. While the definition and reach of psychological warfare was vast, its designation was not. That power was granted to the National Security Council and the Executive Office of the President. Therefore, if something was not categorized as psychological warfare at the strategic level, the board had no rights to effect its coordination. To highlight this point, should the NSC or the executive approve a policy or programme for action, unless that specific policy or programme be designated a psychological effort, the individual agencies of the CIA, DOS, and DOD could be tasked with elements of it, but their collective group in the PSB would have no claim to its coordination.

In addition to the limitations placed upon the PSB with psychological labelling, coordination suffered from two other factors: the board's 'independence' from the National Security Council, and the reluctance for the board to become involved in 'current issues.' In an effort to preserve independence, Truman established the PSB outside of the National Security Council structure, technically. While the board was directed to report to the council, and the director of the board was invited to attend council meetings, the PSB was not fully integrated into the processes of the NSC. Instead of serving as a strength for the PSB, its bureaucratic independence likely fostered opposition within its own ranks.²⁶⁷ Viewed as competitor rather than compatriot, the State Department, Department of Defense, and the Central Intelligence Agency actively sought avenues to restrict one another's growth into the PSYWAR landscape. To clarify, the PSB was constructed within an existing bureaucratic power vacuum. Three key players had been vying for power in the conduct of psychological warfare: the Department of State, the Department of Defence, and the CIA. Early on, the DOD and the CIA had championed the PSB to be the psychological lynch-pin of the Cold War. In a case of 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend,' the DOD and CIA saw the PSB as the counterweight to the State Department's attempts to control the war effort (briefly mentioned in the previous chapter). However, other bureaucratic 'pit-fighting' would complicate the issue further, and ultimately the PSB would find itself without an ally.

²⁶⁷ Accounts of the interrelations of the PSB and the NSC from Mr. Gordon Gray (former director of PSB) and Mr. Robert Cutler (PSB advisor to the senior staff), both of whom later served as Special Assistants to the President for National Security Affairs, are covered in chapter 5 detailing the issues of disconnect and competition.

By 1951 the CIA and the JCS had come to an impasse over the agency's role in covert operations. As Davies notes, "Almost more than anything else, turf wars became the defining feature of the management of covert action during this period."²⁶⁸ The JCS felt that the CIA should leverage more of its assets to support the overall war effort, believing that the agency needed to focus its efforts on paramilitary covert operations that would impede the Soviets in the case of global war. On the other hand, General Walter Bedell Smith (US Army Ret.), Director of Central Intelligence (1950-1953), was concerned that his Office of Policy Coordination, the CIA's covert psychological operations and paramilitary action organization, was already stretching the agency's resources too thin (by 1952 the OPC would control 75% of the agency's budget) and was leaving the CIA incapable of accomplishing its other intelligence functions.²⁶⁹ Smith believed that the "growing magnitude of covert operations would divert an ever increasing share of the time and attention of key CIA personnel from the basic intelligence mission of the agency, with the attendant risk that such missions will not be adequately accomplished."²⁷⁰ The General's concerns were shared by Truman, whose creation of the PSB sought to recast psychological warfare (particularly covert activities in the ongoing Korean War), outside of the CIA OPC and balanced under the PSB.²⁷¹ Unfortunately for the PSB, the war had entered a relative stalemate period (1951-1953) and deprived the Psychological Strategy Board the opportunity to establish itself. Smith's desire to alleviate the burden on his agency was not abated. Declassified PSB documents (released in 2003) support author Scott Lucas' account in *Freedom's War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union (1945-1956)*, that the CIA was actually in the process of turning over the agency's psychological warfare programme, known as "the Packet," to the PSB in 1952, before

²⁶⁸ Davies, *Intelligence and Government*, pg. 198.

²⁶⁹ Athan G. Theoharis and Richard H. Immerman [et al.], *The Central Intelligence Agency: Security Under Scrutiny*, (London: Greenwood Press, 2006) p. 21; for more reading on this period of CIA history is see - Richard Immerman's, *The Hidden Hand: A Brief History of the CIA*, (West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2014).

²⁷⁰ Gregory Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin: America's Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947-1956*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2000) p. 64.

²⁷¹ National Security Council, "10/5 - Scope and Pace of Covert Operations," Washington D.C., October, 1951, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1950-1955, The Intelligence Community, eds. Douglas Kean, Michael Warner, (Washington D.C., GPO, 2007) Document 90; and in Michael Warner, Ed, *The CIA Under Harry Truman* (Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, 1994) pp. 437-439.

the State Department blocked the move.²⁷² Prior to that, in early 1951 General Smith had petitioned the National Security Council to review the policies and formalize the responsibility for covert actions. Unfortunately for Smith, who was attempting to untether his organization from the growing colossus of covert action, on 27 June 1951 the NSC special committee presented its response committing covert operations under the auspices of the CIA. This recommendation was approved by Truman on 23 October 1951.²⁷³ Interestingly, while the CIA was granted the authority over covert affairs against the Soviets, the council's ruling had not given the agency carte blanche over all things psychological. Instead, they had attempted to separate, or branch apart, the aspects of intelligence and strategy as it related to psychological operations. Under the National Security Council's recommendation, the CIA remained responsible for intelligence collection and dissemination (in line with the agency's intelligence charter), however, the NSC then bifurcated the effort, assigning the Psychological Strategy Board the development for psychological strategy and charging the CIA with conducting the operation.

The complications of such a stratification of effort were recognized that same month, when James Q. Reber, the Assistant Director for Intelligence Coordination, submitted a memo to the Director of Central Intelligence regarding *Intelligence Support for Psychological Operations*. This memo, declassified in 2003, states:

...a large proportion of all the foreign intelligence collected or produced by the United States agencies is of value in planning or executing psychological operations. Most of this information was being produced for military or political purposes long before there was general recognition of the importance of psychological warfare and propaganda.²⁷⁴

²⁷² Scott Lucas, *Freedom's War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union (1945-1956)*, (New York: NYU Press, 1999); C. Tracy Barnes, *Interim Approval of the "Packet,"* Washington D.C., 30 May 1952, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300080006-6, NACP, CREST Archives; and Hans V. Tofte, *PSB Interim Approval of the "CIA Packet,"* Washington D.C., 30 June 1952, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300080002-0, NACP, CREST Archives.

²⁷³ NSC 10/5, "*Scope and Pace of Covert Operations*," (1951).

²⁷⁴ James Q. Reber, *Intelligence Support for Psychological Operations*, Washington D.C., June 1951, p. 6, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010018-9, NACP, CREST Archives.

Reber acknowledges the natural rift already in existence between intelligence and psychological operations (prior to the PSB's establishment), arguing that for the production of intelligence needed to support the PSB mission, closer relationships between planners, operators, and their intelligence counterparts must be established. While the PSB had crossed the intelligence-policy divide, operational planning remained disconnected. Reber's conclusion was not his alone, having been recognized by the PSB's initial obstructionist (the State Department) earlier that year when the DOS had promoted itself to be headquarters for America's psychological effort.

In a draft directive from January 1951 (prior to the PSB) the Director of the Executive Secretariat, Department of State, William J. McWilliams circulated an internal Department of State memorandum arguing for a National Psychological Strategy Board (first mentioned in the previous chapter) to be run by State that was:

...responsible at the national level for psychological policy formulation within the framework of approved national policies, and for coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort, including authority to issue policy guidance to all departments and agencies of the Government executing major portions of the psychological effort abroad.²⁷⁵

This draft directive highlighted the fundamental flaw of separating psychological efforts from intelligence (bifurcating covert action and psychological operations between the CIA and PSB), and more importantly, calling for the board to be granted the necessary authority to issue policy to other departments and agencies within the government. Having identified this gap early would benefit the State Department, as having foreknowledge of the coordinating problems the PSB would face allowed them to play spoiler to its perceived competition.²⁷⁶

In either case, the NSC's decision on psychological operations, parsing out psychological strategy and policy from the intelligence realm, would find the Director of Central Intelligence questioning not

²⁷⁵ William J. McWilliams, *Memorandum to the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration (Humelsine), Draft Directive on the National Psychological Effort*, Department of State, 18 January 1951, National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, P Files: Lot 52 D 432.

²⁷⁶ John H. Ferguson, *Memorandum of Conversation: Functions of the PSB*, Department of State, 26 March 1952, National Archives and Records Administration, National Declassification Centre, R Files, 30-168.

only the purpose of the new group (the PSB), but also his ability to do the job assigned to him via the National Security Act.²⁷⁷ This conflict was compounded by the differing approaches favoured by Director Smith (who had sought to lessen CIA's footprint in covert action) and his deputy Frank Wisner who led the OPC and was a 'true believer' in the power of black operations to promote national strategy.

TRUE BELIEVERS

Wisner's unwavering belief in the capability of covert and psychological operations to further strategic security policies initiated one of the United States' more colourful periods of involvement in PSYOPS. Wisner's OPC found early success with the CIA involvement in ending the Filipino Hukbalahap "Huk" Rebellion (1942-1954). Using Filipino mythology as the backdrop, the CIA conducted a psychological campaign that targeted native superstitions regarding the 'Aswang' or Filipino vampire. Under the direction of United States Air Force Major General (and CIA officer) Edward Lansdale, the operation consisted of spreading rumours among the population of an Aswang feeding in the area of the Huk camps. After they were satisfied that the stories had spread by word of mouth, CIA operatives went about kidnapping Huk soldiers on night patrols, puncturing their bodies and draining the blood from the corpses. The ex-sanguinated remains would then be placed in a location certain to be found by the local Huk forces. Once convinced that an Aswang was stalking their camps, the Huks moved out of their protected mountain strongholds and without freedom of movement, the Huks' ability to conduct operations against the government was neutralized and the rebellion was put down.²⁷⁸ Additionally, Frank Wisner is also attributed with spearheading psychological operations that met with far less success, such as the CIA's attempts to discredit or remove Indonesian President Sukarno (1945-1967) from power. Author William Blum cites Frank Wisner as stating "I think it is time we put Sukarno's feet to the fire" in autumn 1956. This began a series of operations, led by the CIA, which enlisted the Los Angeles Police Force in identifying pornographic actors to pass as Sukarno (with the aid of facial prosthetics) during illicit filming with ethnically Russian actresses.²⁷⁹ The images were to be used to depict Sukarno as having fallen for, and controlled by, a Russian

²⁷⁷ This issue is addressed in the Reber Memo (June 1951).

²⁷⁸ Nathan Miller, *Spying for America: The Hidden History of U.S. Intelligence*, (New York: Marlowe and Company, 1997); and Edward Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars: An American's Mission to Southeast Asia*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 1991).

²⁷⁹ Joseph Burkholder Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1976) p. 205.

agent.²⁸⁰ The plan would backfire as public perception would instead gravitate toward Sukarno's machismo with Russian females, rather than the intended perception of a weak leader held under foreign sway.²⁸¹ In addition to directing the OPC, Wisner ran Operation Mockingbird, a CIA programme to use American journalists to promote the CIA's propaganda in foreign countries; he was intimately involved in anti-communist programmes in the Soviet satellite states and Asia. Years of covert operations, secrecy campaigns, and foreign involvement (which involved working with Soviet spy Kim Philby, and a rumoured affair with daughter of a Romanian princess and suspected soviet agent) would bring Wisner under the eyes of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and United States Senator Joseph McCarthy, who both worked to discredit Wisner and his office.²⁸² While Wisner's devotion to covert and psychological operations saw their expanded use by the agency (despite reservations from the DCI), mounting failures crowned by the complete disaster of the CIA supported Hungarian Uprising of 1956 proved too much for Wisner. When combined with the stress of his many operations, the job would take their toll, with Wisner suffering a mental breakdown and being committed for a short time before being forced to retire from the CIA in 1962 and committing suicide in 1965.²⁸³

TROUBLE AHEAD

Disagreements over the role of covert operations and intelligence were not simply a difference of opinions between CIA director Smith and Frank Wisner. The new Psychological Strategy Board was lost in the sway as well. Compounding the lack of true managerial authority and competitive self-preservation from its members, was the inability for the PSB to define its mission and as a result, found itself excluded from key processes. The interdepartmental working group (headed by James Reber) tasked to outline the functions of the Psychological Strategy Board met in May 1951 to discuss

²⁸⁰ William Blum, *Killing Hope: The U.S. Military and CIA Interventions since World War II*, (Washington: Common Courage Press, 2004).

²⁸¹ Both the Huk Rebellion and the Sukarno affair are described in Nathan Miller's, *Spying for America: The Hidden History of U.S. Intelligence*, (New York: Marlowe and Company, 1997).

²⁸² Evan Thomas, *The Very Best Men: The Four Who Dared the Early Years of the CIA*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995) pp. 138 -139.

²⁸³ For more on Frank Wisner's role in the OSS and the CIA, see Tim Weiner's *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (New York: Anchor Books, 2008).

the report being submitted. This memorandum, declassified in 2003, shows that representatives of the DOS, DOD, and CIA agreed that the PSB should not become involved in detailed planning. Additionally, they agreed the PSB should only be active in areas that were not currently covered by another agency. In the meeting, future DCI Allen Dulles even recommended against the PSB establishing regional specialists “since they would be in competition with existing agencies.”²⁸⁴ The bureaucratic competition resulted in the PSB being incapable of actually fitting into its role. A declassified State Department memorandum from 1952 recounts a conversation between representatives of the State Department and the Deputy Director of the PSB Tracy Barnes, where Barnes admitted to John Ferguson of the State Department that regarding the ‘psychological’ aspect of the board’s work, that even he was “not sure what was meant by the word ‘psychological’; that the problem had to be looked at in a broad way and the psychological aspect could not be isolated.”²⁸⁵ What was troublesome for Barnes was that such a broad problem scope was unavailable to the PSB, and that “many decisions, involving several agencies, were made about which the Psychological Strategy Board knows nothing,” and for reasons of exclusion, the Psychological Strategy Board was failing to live up to its potential.²⁸⁶ Indeed at another staff meeting in March 1952, Deputy Director Barnes proposed that the PSB be integrated further into the NSC discussions on current operations. Looking to members of the staff for their input, Barnes received urges for “caution on the PSB getting into current issues,” as their role in those operations would be limited to the psychological aspect.²⁸⁷ Specifically John Sherman of the PSB reflected that the “agencies come to the PSB for support on their operational positions,” as opposed to the PSB informing the positions and policies for the agency.²⁸⁸ Barnes could tell that the PSB was not accomplishing its mission and knew that the board

²⁸⁴ James Q. Reber, *Memorandum of Conversation*, Psychological Strategy Board, 22 May 1951, pp. 1-9, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010025-1, NACP, CREST Archives.

²⁸⁵ John H. Ferguson, “Memorandum of Conversation: Functions of the PSB,” (1952).

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ Psychological Strategy Board, *PSB, Staff Meeting, 19 March 1952*, Washington D.C., March 1952, pp. 1-3, Harry S. Truman Papers, Staff Member and Office Files: Psychological Strategy Board Files, Box 24, Series 337, Truman Presidential Library.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

itself was in danger. These issues were highlighted in the first progress report of the Psychological Strategy Board, approved for release in 2006.²⁸⁹ The major finding from this report stated that:

To be fully effective, psychological planning at the strategic level should be based on an agreed over-all strategic concept for the national psychological effort. The development of such a concept, in turn, can take place only in conjunction with a corresponding development and clarification of basic national policy, which may not be possible for some time.²⁹⁰

The progress report also states that the United States was “not making significant progress toward the objective of reduction and retraction of Soviet power.”²⁹¹ This failure lay in the absence of fully developed plans for the implementation of national policy, and “in the time required to develop the necessary capabilities.”²⁹² The Psychological Strategy Board’s inability to coordinate successfully across organizations impinged its effectiveness in evaluating policy, two of its primary duties expressed in Presidential Directive 128.²⁹³ Such an effort would require the greater inclusion of intelligence in the PSB process than was granted under the NSC review and is one of the reasons that Frank Wisner and the CIA were able to dominate the operational psychological battle space almost to the exclusion of the PSB. Despite lacking the authority to force coordination or the gravitas to persuade the CIA and the State Department to fall in line *under* the PSB, the board benefited from being tasked against the premier issues of the day, psychological strategies against the Soviet Union. While coordination of the day-to-day enterprise was littered with roadblocks, egos, and bureaucracies, the board was still able to produce against one issue that was ascending in Washington, the Middle East (or Near East) in the Cold War against the Soviet Union. The remainder of this paper will focus on the development of the US – Middle East strategy (through the new and unique lens of the PSB and its successor the OCB) in the run up to the Iraqi coup and Lebanese invasion of 1958. As this last chapter exemplifies, the study exposes both the highs and lows of these boards in order to accurately portray their impact

²⁸⁹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Status Report on the National Psychological Effort and First Progress Report of the Psychological Strategy Board*, Washington D.C., 1 August 1952, pp. 1-56, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003200050002-4, NACP, CREST Archives.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ President Harry S. Truman, *Executive Directive 128: Establishing the Psychological Strategy Board*, (June 20, 1951).

on policy and policy-makers. However, before jumping too far ahead we will conclude this chapter by examining the major findings from a 1951 classified conference of the US government's Middle East Chiefs of Mission in Istanbul, Turkey.²⁹⁴ The declassified conference report reflected the conclusions and the findings of key members of the Department of State, the national military establishment, and field officers operating in the region. While the Psychological Strategy Board did not officially present itself in the cast of characters, (this conference took place while the PSB was still being established) the relevance cannot be overstated: these findings represented by some of the stakeholders that would form the PSB, offers insight into how the community (and soon the PSB), would view the Middle East. This will be made clear in the following chapter as we reflect on the several aspects of this report that found continuity with the PSB's Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East.

CHIEFS OF THE MIDDLE EAST: PRECURSOR TO STRATEGY - PSYCHOLOGICAL OR OTHERWISE

The 1951 Istanbul conference was a gathering of key personnel from across the American government tasked with assessing the Middle East region and the nascent US approach to it. This conference was one of a series of such meetings held periodically by American diplomatic officers in various regions of the world. The conclusions from this conference, developed by individuals who would continue to shape Middle East policy going forward, made clear that the United States had several military and political objectives for the Middle East. Foremost on that list was the mobilization of strength for the containment of communism. One of the three State Department representatives at the conference was William M. Rountree, the then Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs. Rountree will figure again later in this study when we examine the US efforts to stabilize and strengthen Lebanon prior to the invasion in 1958. Rountree and others recognized that existing collective security arrangements with respect to the Middle East were insufficient to guarantee the US positions of strength against the Soviet threat. Dating back to the 1937 Treaty of Saadabad (or the Saadabad Pact), a non-aggression pact signed between Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Afghanistan marking

²⁹⁴ Department of State, *Conference of the Middle East Chiefs of Mission: Agreed Conclusions and Recommendations*, (Istanbul, February 14-21, 1951), Documentation on Early Cold War U.S. Propaganda Activities in the Middle East, Document 20, George Washington University, National Security Archive, Washington D.C.

the “first attempt to set up a Middle Eastern security pact confined to states indigenous to the area,” the US had been unable to capitalize on existing shared security.²⁹⁵ Despite the noble origins of this pact, perceived as the regional independent states embarking “on the hazardous process of modernization and westernization,” the conference chiefs found it to have negligible current interest in securing American interests.²⁹⁶ While the Arab League (formed in 1945) presented a fundamentally stronger body which actually included a collective security pact amongst its members, the conference felt the league offered “little if any basis for Arab-Allied military collaboration.”²⁹⁷ Even the Tripartite Declaration of 1950, promulgated between the US, the UK, and France (recognized as having utility in stabilizing the region) was deemed by the conference attendees as being of little importance “in the field of military and strategic consideration.”²⁹⁸

Despite such downcast assessments for American potential to establish greater military power through the existing regional agreements, the conference was not down-hearted regarding the overall regional situation. In fact some could argue that the conference attendees were overly optimistic citing that “all Middle Eastern states are, if not already working in cooperation with the West, moving in that direction.”²⁹⁹ As such, it was believed there would be opportunities to restore and/or strengthen confidence in the West on the part of the Middle East states, a key element of later PSB and OCB strategies. In later chapters we will cover the US attempts to establish security agreements in the region using PSB and OCB reports to provide new context to understanding this problem. Additionally, the conference also delved into the internal security and stability of the Middle Eastern states with a primary emphasis on those forces’ abilities to control communist influence. As will be covered in this study as well, these issues brought up by the conference were carried forward by both the PSB and OCB, with the latter tasked by the National Security Council to assess the internal security and stability situations of countries under Soviet threat. That would come later as the region began to devolve away from western designs; for our purposes here we take note that the conference members asserted in 1951, that “basic defects of the economic and social structure in the Arab States”

²⁹⁵ Uriel Dann, ed., *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1919-1939*, (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1988) p. 333.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 333; and Department of State, *Conference of the Middle East Chiefs of Mission: Agreed Conclusions and Recommendations*, (Istanbul, February 14-21, 1951).

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Department of State, *Conference of the Middle East Chiefs of Mission: Agreed Conclusions and Recommendations*, (1951).

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

were responsible for the comparatively large communist potential in that area, a recurring theme in both the PSB and OCB reports.³⁰⁰ The Chiefs of Mission did take solace in their perception that the region's state police and security forces, active in rooting out dissension and opposition, had also in the short term succeeded in keeping the communist influence "under fairly effective control."³⁰¹ While it was recommended that "full consideration should be given to the need for the correction of economic and social defects as an indispensable element in efforts to control the spread of communism," the conference concluded that "Middle Eastern governments should be encouraged to maintain and strengthen their police controls as well."³⁰²

Those 'social defects' of the corrupted economic and political systems all too prevalent in the Arab states (according to the conference members), confronted America with the "high responsibility and a delicate political role to perform," when engaging various governments seeded with danger.³⁰³ Particularly the conference noted:

There is the danger of trying to change ancient habits overnight; the danger of building up a living standard which cannot be maintained in the long run on the basis of local resources; the danger of carrying reforms to their logical extremes before the intermediate steps have been assimilated; the danger of assuming such wide responsibility that the local authorities and population lose initiative and relax into total dependence.³⁰⁴

Although the conference recommended caution in carrying out programmes meant to shape or mould domestic realities, there is still evidence that the Chiefs of Mission thought it possible that "with Americans working side by side with the nationals of the recipient country, there is an opportunity to infuse our spirit into the people," with such a grass roots programme enabling a positive and constructive approach to meeting "one of the greatest needs of the area, namely broadening the base of contact between the United States and the people of the Middle East."³⁰⁵ As will be shown in

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

following chapters, the PSB and OCB developed their psychological strategy and operational plans for the Middle East along lines first proposed by the Chiefs of Mission. While the conclusions were not always the same the key concepts of observing the developing economic and political trends and how they may play to strengthen or disrupt communist designs figure prominently (as one might expect) as America sought to solidify its approach to the region.

CHAPTER FOUR: SEEKING CONSENSUS WITH LIMITED RESOURCES: PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS AND MICRO V. MACRO PROBLEMS IN THE STRATEGIC MIDDLE EAST

WHAT WAS THE MIDDLE EAST?

Neither this chapter, nor this study, aims to craft a novel or alternative understanding of overall United States' Cold War policy. However, this study does seek to examine the strategic intelligence picture of the Middle East, crafted within the American national security and intelligence community and viewed through a new prism found in the records of the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board, previously classified and now becoming available to researchers. The American government's understanding of the Middle East was constructed from available academia, the United States' limited experience in the region during and after the Second World War, and by still-developing Cold War policies. As has been covered in the previous chapters, the makeup of the PSB (and later the OCB), being a conglomeration of executive departments, allowed for opinions and perspectives from across the government to be resident in a single group. The records of these boards offer us insight into the dynamic assessments of US' global and Middle East policies, previously unavailable. Additionally, the position of these boards within the sphere and structure of the National Security Council (the president's personal policy forum), granted the boards the opportunity to influence and shape the foreign policy of the United States – particularly as it relates to this study, the Middle East regional policy. A brief summation of the regional environment is warranted to set the context for a better understanding of how the PSB (and later the OCB) saw the world. In order to provide an accurate picture of the boards' inputs and perceptions, the following description of the Middle East is drawn from contemporary works. These views are reflected in the boards' discussions and assessments, and we will call particular attention to the Psychological Strategy Board's: *Staff Study; 11th Meeting*; and *Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, for examples. First, we must make clear that many of the assertions regarding isolated, single-minded, and anti-foreign regional populations of the Middle East are likely to appear too simplistic and limited against the modern understanding. The goal here is not to try and validate or negate these positions: rather, the point is to present a representative understanding of the region that is reflected in the declassified record.

Reviewing American Middle East policy in his book, *Imagining the Middle East: The Building of an American Foreign Policy, 1918 – 1967*, Matthew F. Jacobs argues that the record reveals “a fundamental contradiction in how U.S. policymakers and other experts imagined the Middle East in the late 1950s.”³⁰⁶ The pivotal issue concerning Washington was whether Islam fostered an environment susceptible to Soviet communism, or as US intelligence officer Dr. William Alfred Eddy asked in private correspondence to journalist Dorothy Thompson - could there be appetite in Washington for a “possible strategy for the Christian democratic West joining with the Muslim world in a common moral front to communism?”³⁰⁷ A review of the literature reveals that at times, leading experts on the subject appeared to take both sides of the issue. Speaking to the first meeting of the Harvard Muslim Society in 1956, Harvard associate professor of Middle Eastern Studies, Richard N. Frye, stated “I do not see how Islam can survive,” in the face of communist programmes to discredit religion.³⁰⁸ Despite his dire outlook, that same year (1956) Frye expressed his belief that “[Islam....alone] could stop communism in the Middle East.”³⁰⁹ Frye was far from being the exception and US government analysts would struggle to find consensus on the role Islam would play in the spread of international communism. Ultimately, US policy with respect to the Middle East would result in attempts to approach the region on ‘parallel tracks’ as US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Raymond Hare, put it: “it would be best to keep politics and religion on separate but parallel tracks leading to the same destination,” a secular, stable, pro-Western Middle East.³¹⁰ This chapter explores the development of America’s strategic policy toward the Middle East by way of one of its initial architects, the Psychological Strategy Board. Additionally, the question is raised as to whether a lack of consensus on the issue of Islam and communism contributed to the apparent hyper-focus on Arab nationalism.

³⁰⁶ Matthew F. Jacobs, *Imagining the Middle East: The Building of an American Foreign Policy, 1918-1967*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011) p. 89.

³⁰⁷ William Alfred Eddy, *Private correspondence, W.A. Eddy to Miss Dorothy Thompson*, (7 JUN 1951). Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University, New York, Incoming Correspondence, Friends of the Middle East, Box 2. A copy is also available the George Washington University, National Security Archive, Washington D.C., National Archives Electronic Briefing Book, NEABB78, Propaganda, 20026, online at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB78/propaganda%20026.pdf>.

³⁰⁸ No Author Attributed, “Frye Pessimistic About Survival of Islam Culture and Traditions: Russia Discredits Religion,” *Harvard Crimson*, 19 December 1956. A copy is available online at <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1956/12/19/frye-pessimistic-about-survival-of-islam/>.

³⁰⁹ Jacobs, *Imagining the Middle East*, p.82.

³¹⁰ Ambassador Raymond Hare quoted in - Jacobs, *Imagining the Middle East*, p. 86.

More than a decade after the end of the Second World War, western perceptions of the Middle East and its ascending nationalist movements continued to be coloured by the Arab response to the Allies during the war, largely seen as negative and in some cases even hostile. In his book, *A Short Political Guide to the Arab World*, author and historian Peter D. Partner framed the Arab perception of the West's involvement in the war as one of cynical dismissal, where "the defence of democracy meant little in countries where so called democratic institutions were mere props for corruption. Radical Arab nationalism was almost everywhere pro-Axis..."³¹¹ In Partner's view little changed following the war's conclusion and, in fact, the region witnessed political shifts more extreme than those occurring after the end of the First World War. "In the inter-war period extreme nationalism had tended to look to fascism for support, if not for a model, on the principle that the enemies of the colonial powers must be the Arabs' friends."³¹² Seemingly supported by intelligence regarding German influence with key Arab leaders in support of Axis forces, served only to reinforce some American intelligence beliefs that the Arabs were more than idle bystanders, and in fact were willing collaborators with the Nazis.³¹³ The question of the Arab relationship to Nazi fascism set aside, the Second World War changed the psychological conditions of the Arab attitudes towards the left (communism). Partner states that "at the end of the war left wing socialism became fashionable in nationalist circles in an entirely new manner," and this, understandably was a concern for the Psychological Strategy Board in developing a psychological strategy for the region.³¹⁴ For the American policy-maker, the picture was bleak. Despite the Allied victory in the war, Europe's dominance had been shattered. The emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as the world's two super-powers signalled the end of colonialism in the Arab world.³¹⁵ Britain and France were forced to scale back their efforts

³¹¹ Peter Partner, *A Short Political Guide to the Arab World*, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960) p. 47; for more contemporary literature on the Arab – Axis relationship during the Second World War see - Meir Litvak and Esther Webman's, *From Empathy to Denial: Arab Response to the Holocaust*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Elhanan Yakira's, *Post-Zionism, Post-Holocaust: Three Essays on Denial, Forgetting, and the Delegation of Israel*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); and Jeffrey Herf's, *Nazi Propaganda and the Arab World*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

³¹² Partner, *A Short Political Guide to the Arab World*, (1960) p. 51.

³¹³ Richard Breitman and Norman J.W. Goda, *Hitler's Shadow: Nazi War Criminals, U.S. Intelligence, and the Cold War*, (Washington: National Archives, 2012) pp. 17-33.

³¹⁴ Partner, *A Short Political Guide to the Arab World*, p. 51.

³¹⁵ Hisham B. Sharabi, *Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World*, (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1966) pp. 9-10.

around the globe leaving a political/ideological vacuum in the Middle East, one that Washington feared could prove ample seed ground for the USSR.³¹⁶ The region's resources (oil, gas, and other key minerals) elevated the stakes and without the Allied presence to support Western interests, the political ambitions and trajectories of nascent countries half a world away, became national security issues for the United States (this is explored by the PSB and the OCB in the following chapters). For US policy and regional specialists, an increasingly hostile and polarizing Arab/Israeli situation coupled with the growing popularity of Arab nationalism signified trouble ahead.³¹⁷ When wedded with the anti-colonial sentiment heavily rooted in the region, the political and diplomatic roadmap for United States to capitalize on the region's energy resources offered few paths to success.³¹⁸

A strategic regional approach, necessary to combat Soviet expansion and protect Western access to energy, would require entertaining and supporting contrasting actors and interests in the form of: regional governments; religious and ethnic groups; and power players vying for influence. Later in this chapter we will begin to see how the Psychological Strategy Board's assessments of the character and psychology of the region fell in line with the contemporary literature asserting that American efforts to establish the dialogues and relationships necessary, were hindered by predominantly negative perceptions of US/Western involvement in the Middle East. In many ways the US was seen as simply the newest face of an old foe in the eyes of the Arab populations where, "widespread and strong as the desire was to shake off the colonial domination of the British, French, and Russians, there was too much fear of merely exchanging the old masters for a new one. The great majority of the Moslems therefore preferred to look on passively and await the outcome."³¹⁹ Without active engagement from the targeted stakeholders, the US regional strategy would be difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish. Within this context, the Lebanese state (a varied combination of demography and geography organised with a confessional political system to reflect the mosaic of communities) was set apart from its neighbours. Demographically, Lebanon existed as the sole ethnically Arab country where Christians

³¹⁶ Ray Takeyh, *The Origins of the Eisenhower Doctrine: the US, Britain and Nasser's Egypt 1953-1957*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 2000) p. 10.

³¹⁷ Partner, *A Short Political Guide to the Arab World*, p. 47.

³¹⁸ M.J. Steiner, *Inside Pan-Arabia*, (Chicago: Packard and Company, 1947) pp. 32-89.

³¹⁹ F. W. Fernau, *Moslems on the March: People and Politics in the World of Islam*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954) p. 98 and John C. Campbell, *Defence of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960) p. 124.

were recorded in the majority.³²⁰ This coupled with the Lebanese confessional system of government, which decreed state offices were to be established along religious party membership, allowed for a state structure more amenable to relationships with the West (in comparison with the other Arab countries).³²¹ In addition to enjoying a relatively free market system for trade and commerce (this is examined more closely through the OCB reports in chapter eight), Lebanon geographically benefited from its land borders and sea ports that allowed it to maintain a prosperous ‘merchant economy’ (lasting until the 1975 Lebanese civil war); again differentiating itself from its Arab neighbours who at different times in the post-Second World War period experimented with various forms of socialism.³²² This may be the reason that Lebanon does not figure as prominently as some of its neighbours in early assessments of the PSB and the OCB regarding both nationalist and communist developments in the Middle East (1947-1955). Absent a ‘high priority’ designation, Lebanon did not factor into the available early reports of the PSB and the OCB; this is also the case regarding the available records of other elements of the national security enterprise. It is important to note that the State Department serves as an obvious exception, as cables between Washington and Beirut covering various topics of diplomacy is available through the *FRUS* series and the Record Group (RG) 59 records at NARA. However, a review of these records supports an assessment that Lebanon was considered stable and Western-leaning; and as a result, in the early days of regional policy development, Lebanon saw itself overlooked by the PSB and the OCB.

Lebanon did not fit the mould, shaped by scholarly Western literature (at least the positions that are reflected in the declassified record) generalizing the people of the Middle East as anti-foreign, suspicious of the west, and anti-colonial/imperial.³²³ These academic perceptions were supported by the belief that the first Arab-Israeli War of 1948 had left the Arabs with “a standing grievance against

³²⁰ A result of the first, and last, Lebanese census (1932) that recorded Christians as 51 percent of the population. Sir Reader Bullard, ed., “The Middle East: A Political and Economic Survey,” *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1958) pp. 351-354.

³²¹ *Ibid.*

³²² David E. Long, Bernard Reich, and Mark Gasiorowski, eds., *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa (Sixth Edition)*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 2011) pp. 241-245.

³²³ For more on the Western perceptions of the Arab people see: Sir Reader Bullard, ed., *The Middle East: A Political and Economic Survey*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, (London: Oxford University Press, 1958); Nejla Izzeddin, *The Arab World: Past, Present, and Future*, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953); and F. W. Fernau, *Moslems on the March: People and Politics in the World of Islam*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954).

Israel, and against the two Western states held to be responsible for its creation: Britain and the United States.”³²⁴ As F.W. Fernau noted, “In the unrest of the Islamic peoples there are three main currents: nationalism, a renaissance of Islam, and the demand for a change in social conditions....The bourgeois nationalist, the Islamic puritans, and the social reformers and revolutionaries of every shade have one thing in common: their determined opposition to foreign rule and foreign influence.”³²⁵ As mentioned earlier, the difficulty in determining the role of Islam informing American regional policy seems to have resulted in the general adoption of Ambassador Hare’s recommendation to separate Islam, distinct from Arab nationalism and Soviet communism. To be clear, the assertion here is not that Islam was absent in American policy efforts, rather, that the United States chose to pursue each independently. In his address at Chatham House on 6 October 1953, author and historian Bernard Lewis argued that the West would be at a loss if it focussed on the Islamic and religious element to oppose communism as:

...there is not a great deal that we can do about it. Our own public and political morality is undoubtedly better than that of the Communists, but the difference is apparently not large enough or striking enough to make any notable impression on the rest of the world,” and that “we of the West can do much to promote the material well-being and raise the material standards of the lands of Islam. We can also perhaps do something to encourage – and that means to justify – a more positive attitude towards ourselves, our ideas, and our aspirations; but the present crisis, it is from within that Islam must find the moral strength and spiritual resources to resist the greater secular heresy of our time. We can do no more that refrain from offering impediments.”³²⁶

Moving forward, what should the reader take away from this? The Psychological Strategy Board entered onto the scene lacking a defined US policy for the Middle East. Charged with establishing US strategy to the region they found limited consensus assessing the resilience or susceptibility of Islam to the threat of communism. Instead, the information available to them depicted an Arab world that was resistant to modernity, politically unstable, and systematically too corrupt to apply Western

³²⁴ Bullard, ed., *The Middle East*, p. 27; Izzeddin, *The Arab World: Past, Present, and Future*, pp. 314-374; and Partner, *A Short Political Guide to the Arab World*, p. 63.

³²⁵ Fernau, *Moslems on the March*, p. 279.

³²⁶ Bernard Lewis, “Communism and Islam,” *International Affairs*, 30:1 (January 1954) pp. 1-12.

democracy.³²⁷ The one existing unifying element in the equation, Islam, was a political unknown, and the increasing support for Arab nationalism (and its apparent sympathies to both fascism and communism) served to emphasize concern over America's ability to protect its vital resources in the region.³²⁸

Generally during this time period, the American IC would assess the countries of the Middle East as suffering constant crises of legitimacy following the conclusion of the Second World War, with disparities in the socio-political, economic, and military spheres (explored further in the PSB staff study). The United States' attempts toward a strategic regional approach (customarily the territory for state-to-state diplomacy) required targeting the populations through native governments that were assessed as unpopular, corrupt, incompetent, and unstable. We will delve into these assessments in the following chapters and analyse the strategic recommendations proposed by the PSB to show how the US-Middle East regional strategy was beset by competing interests and complex relationships; guided by a national intelligence and security system unable to unify disparities; force conformity; or formulate consensus outside of the western mind-set. In order to present the national level strategic intelligence picture, this chapter will now turn to the assessments and reports of the Psychological Strategy Board. The declassified reports of the PSB provide a level of insight into both the intelligence and policy communities' initial struggles between perceptions and reality that is scarce (or altogether missing) in the current literature. We will use this information to establish the foundations that determined the US perception of the region and US-Middle East policy in the lead-up to the Iraqi coup and Lebanese invasion (1958), and in so doing we will have a wider understanding of the influence on US policy formulation.

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS

Psychological Operations are identified today in United States Army Publication FM 3-05.30 1-1 as operations designed to "induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behaviour favourable to United States' national objectives. PSYOPs are characteristically delivered as information for effect, used

³²⁷ Department of State, *Problems and Attitudes in the Arab World: Their Implication for US Psychological Strategy*, Washington D.C., 19 May 1952, pp. 1-22, Department of State, Office of Intelligence Research, LR Records, 097.3, 21092, No. 5914.

³²⁸ Ibid.

during peacetime and conflict, to inform and influence.”³²⁹ Due to the requirement for PSYOPs to ‘get inside the head of the enemy,’ they are often conducted at the operational and tactical levels where the attitudes and behaviours of a specific group can be better segmented and targeted. However, such psychological operations are usually conducted against strategic objectives in support of high-level decision makers (the President and/or Secretary of Defence and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) and national policy.³³⁰ The Psychological Strategy Board was concerned primarily with the latter and served to assist these elements in psychological planning at the national level.³³¹ After covering the mission, make-up, and influence of the Psychological Strategy Board in the previous chapter, this chapter on the PSB and the following chapters on the Operations Coordinating Board will present the development of national assessments regarding the strategic picture of the region, and of the states therein. An examination of these assessments will show that the American focus on troubled states (Egypt and Syria), and overconfidence in its assessment of stable states (Iraq and Lebanon) saw the US caught by surprise when Iraq fell and Lebanon appeared on the brink, resulting in a decision to engage military forces to save a failed policy.

The perception of an expanding Soviet threat necessitated that the United States devote attention and resources to the realm of psychological strategy as it was assumed that the struggle between East and West would be leveraged through proxy conflicts and foreign forces engendered to either cause. Indeed, dependence upon traditional military operations and conventional concepts in prosecuting the Cold War was noted early by the PSB as a dilemma in concept and faulty in practice.³³² One of the first reports of the Psychological Strategy Board, *Concept of the Organization to Provide Dynamic Psychological Operations in the Cold War* (1951), found that “Soviet Russia and the satellites employ every instrumentality of government, orthodox and unorthodox, in fighting the Cold War.”³³³ The board recognized that the Soviets’ acceptance and embrace of all elements of influence nullified the United States conventional planning for a future declared war. The PSB felt that without a shift, or capacity

³²⁹ United States Army, *Psychological Operations*, FM 3-05.30 (April 2005) p 1-1.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Harry S. Truman, *Directive Establishing the Psychological Strategy Board*, (June 20, 1951). Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13808>.

³³² Psychological Strategy Board, *Concept of Organization to Provide Dynamic Psychological Operations in the Cold War*, Washington D.C., 21 May 1951, pp. 2-9, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300130030-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

³³³ Ibid.

toward exploring unorthodox avenues of warfare, the United States and its political goals would be confused, unrealistic, and consistently thrown off balance.³³⁴

In conventional concepts of warfare which required longer planning and preparation, in addition to being financially costly, America would either suffer from inadequate preparation against the unconventional Soviet operations or would be devastated economically from the long drawn-out over-mobilization required to field a conventional force against all possible contingencies. Therefore, the primacy placed upon developing psychological strategies as the way forward in the larger struggle with the Soviet Union should not be overlooked. Recognizing the threat, the United States opted to fight the new war by shaping and leveraging operations against the psychology of the enemy as opposed to its fielded forces. Leading the effort would be the PSB, and the roadmap would be their staff study on the Middle East. Before the PSB could develop the strategy, they first had to study the problem. As discussed in the previous chapter, after being established by President Truman the board spent much of its first year focused on clarifying its mission and responsibilities.³³⁵ While the PSB was searching for its identity, the Middle East was establishing its own half a world away. In Washington, the National Security Council increasingly came to view the Middle East as vital to America's national security ambitions, particularly with respect to its oil reserves. Following the Second World War, the United States' oil output had failed to keep up with domestic demand, becoming a net importer of oil by 1948.³³⁶ Understandably, from that point, US interest in the petroleum reserves of the Middle East only increased and by autumn 1952, American companies controlled about two-thirds of the extraction of Arabian oil.³³⁷

At a general staff meeting on 25 January 1952, PSB director Dr. Raymond B. Allen PhD., M.D., recommended that the board begin drafting a propaganda plan for the Middle East. This plan was designed to assess the drivers for conflict and instability and supported a developing framework for future US national strategy to the region. Allen, an educator and a medical general practitioner, approached the issue much as he had academia and medicine, with research and symptom assessment.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ For information on the mission, constituency, and governmental relationships of the Psychological Strategy Board, see the Psychological Strategy Board section of the previous chapter, *American Intelligence and the Brave New World*.

³³⁶ Bullard, ed., *The Middle East*, pp. 58-59.

³³⁷ Fernau, *Moslems on the March*, pp. 264.

As president of the University of Washington, Seattle, Allen had conducted investigations into the effects of Marxist faculty in American higher education. Published in 1949, Allen's paper "Communists should not teach in American Colleges," asserted that the issue of 'socialist thought' in the education system had not been properly vetted and upon a re-examination of Marxist philosophy, his study had argued the incompatibility of communism with 'free teaching and research.'³³⁸ Seeing the Middle East similarly as an unknown (also with dire consequences) Allen directed the board to investigate the situation and the drivers for conflict and instability as, in his opinion, insufficient attention had been given to underlying issues of the Middle East problem.³³⁹ While this early PSB task did not result in as definitive an answer as he had enjoyed in the 1949 education study, his request for a regional strategy regarding the Middle East is important. It offers an example of how the PSB was subject to tasking (preserving American interests against the Soviets) that were constrained within pre-existing conditions that would undoubtedly shape the analysis. Basically, the PSB was tasked to discover the cultural underpinnings of a diverse region; a region that we just covered was not necessarily well understood to begin with, by people likely without the knowledge or expertise to understand the nuances of culture across states. This is not negative in and of itself, in fact it is a rational approach to a broad problem set. However, this study asks if the planners demand for a 'regional policy,' forced the PSB to operate within an oversimplified global context? In taking the various states/groups/actors of the Middle East and addressing them as a uniform collective, had the board begun their effort by oversimplifying the problem to an environment, like Morgenthau's theoretical politician in the introduction, that was not represented in reality? While this may seem an overt criticism, it is not. In order to address large problems on grand scales it is necessary, and natural, to attempt to break those scenarios down into smaller, or more manageable problem sets. Therefore, instead of addressing each regional country or group individually (a time consuming and intense effort), the plan to find commonalities among them and begin the process there is logical. Did the initial requirement for a regional strategy with respect to the Middle East expose high level policy makers' desired solution? Author Mark Lowenthal argues that rather than being abstract concepts, intelligence requirements are the policy makers' agenda, and often they want information to support

³³⁸ Raymond B. Allen, PhD, M.D. "Communists Should Not Teach in American Colleges," *Educational Forum*, 13:4 (May 1949) pp. 443-440.

³³⁹ Psychological Strategy Board, *General Staff Meeting*, Washington D.C., 25 January 52, Papers of Harry S. Truman Psychological Strategy Board. <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpaper/physc.htm>.

certain policies and outcomes that suit their preferences.³⁴⁰ Referencing back to the introduction, these concerns align themselves with the traditionalist belief promoted by Kent and the concern that analysts, to close to the policy-maker, may be influenced by policy demands that could impact impartial information. Was the PSB searching for regional solutions to state problems? As will be discussed in the following sections, the PSB approached the issue on both fronts, larger (macro) regional issues, and local (micro) issues as well.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE MIDDLE EAST V. REALITY

The geography and the resources of the region were of great strategic value to both the West and the Soviet Union. In March 1952 the PSB began drafting their *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, to determine strategic planning tasks and practicable techniques for leveraging political power by supporting the “preservation and strengthening of the orientation of the nations in the area toward the United States and its partners.”³⁴¹ Ultimately, the PSB would identify *both* local (micro) and larger (macro) issues complicating the implementation of a regional strategic approach. While the task from Director Allen’s request for information, sought a macro regional focus, reality warranted the inclusion and assessments of micro issues (such as individual countries, leaders, religious sects, specific populations, etc.) as well. Consequently, this resulted in a disjointed effort in the early attempts as some macro (regional) options were put forward despite contradicting micro (local) realities, particularly a preference given to hard power state stability over soft power socio-economic development. Unfortunately this initial trajectory of US priorities resulted in follow-on assessments over the next six years that failed to recognize the breadth and speed of the region’s deterioration.

A PROBLEM OF SCALE

From the outset the PSB was confronted with a problem (Middle East policy) of both macro-level and micro-level proportions. Generally, the macro level approach tends to deal with broad aspects of society while micro level approaches tend to focus more on smaller scale social phenomena.

³⁴⁰ Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, (Washington: CQ Press, 2009) pp. 187-190.

³⁴¹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, Washington D.C., 18 March 1952, pp. 1-2, NARA, RG 59, S/S–NSC Files: Lot 62 D 333, PSB Files.

Identifying which level approach should be used for which level scenario was problematic, as University of Hartford professor and communications expert Dr. Donald G. Ellis, notes: “It must be clear that the micro-macro distinction is one of scale and ratio. The distinction should be considered a continuous variable that does not lend itself to rigid categorization.”³⁴² Ellis’ point is that it is incorrect to view the micro versus macro issue as strictly deterministic (one or the other), in the environment of ‘problems and solutions,’ (of which the Board was tasked to operate) the pitfalls of mismatching issues and approaches against an already defined target (desired policy) could set the trajectory of analysis and assessments resulting in policy blinders that fail to see negative ramifications.

In the case of the Psychological Strategy Board, early emphasis on a macro approach focused on the creation of regional political stability. Initially, the idea was to identify regional countries that when targeted, could serve as lynchpins for the stability of the Middle East as a whole (this is explored in depth in the final chapters of this study). This concept, was the bedrock for US-Middle East policy that emphasized defensive arrangements (Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization) later becoming the platform of the ‘Northern Tier’ concept, which promoted leveraging western support to increase the indigenous defensive capabilities of targeted countries against the Soviets.³⁴³ Under this strategy the United States sought the rights to:

deploy, base, and, upon the threat of and during general hostilities, to operate, forces in the territories of the nations of the area and to lay the political groundwork for the United States to regain access to the territories of the nations of the area in event of their loss during general hostilities; and to provide a correlated approach to the individual countries of the area with the purpose of reducing rivalries and furthering acceptances of a spirit of mutuality of interest among all of the countries concerned.³⁴⁴

³⁴² Donald G. Ellis, *Research on Language and Social Interactions*, (Mawhah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999) pp. 31-40.

³⁴³ The Northern Tier strategy sought to secure and empower Middle East countries that shared a border with the Soviet Union. The hope was to provide a wall against soviet expansion into the energy rich interior of the Middle East. The Northern Tier and the other Middle East defensive arrangements are covered in chapter seven of this study.

³⁴⁴ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) pp. 1-2; in this document the PSB also references - National Security Council, *The Arab States and Israel (NSC 47/5)*, Washington D.C., 14 March 1951, National Archives, RG59, S/S – NSC Files: Lot 63 D351: NSC 47 Series.

The United States was motivated by the region's geo-strategic importance, stemming from its geographic location on the map as well as the presence of its natural resources, namely its main economic resource, oil.³⁴⁵ Unfortunately for the West, the geography and the resources were in proximity of the expanding Soviet Union and the danger of either, or both, falling under communist influence jeopardized the increasing oil requirements of Allied forces. As noted in a March 1952 PSB report:

The operation of naval forces east of the Suez, the maintenance of an industrial capacity of high order in Western Europe, and the desirability of the United States preserving its strategic oil reserves for war time, all depend upon assuring the uninterrupted flow of oil from the Middle East to the forces of the free world. We cannot afford loss of the area, nor can we afford political instability in the area which might deny us or the British an uninterrupted flow of oil for any length of time.³⁴⁶

Enhancing the threat was the reality that United States had yet to conceive a plan for the coordinated and comprehensive security of the Middle East. Washington's call for targeting individual countries within a comprehensive regional plan was due to the perception of the inherent instability of the Arab states. The concept of the unstable, insecure, and transient Arab state (marked by multiple coup attempts and regime changes) broadly accepted in academia at the time, and the records of the Psychological Strategy Board, particularly their 1953 *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East* offered little to contrast this understanding.^{347, 348} Decades later, researcher and author Giacomo Luciani illustrated the prevailing perceptions of the 1950s in his publication *The Arab State*, presenting the notional Arab state as a "weak, artificial creation; designed and implemented by the West, and was

³⁴⁵ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) pp. 1-13.

³⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 4.

³⁴⁷ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East-PSB D-22 Annex A*, Washington, D.C., 8 January 1953, p. 3, NARA, RG 59, S/S-NSC Files: Lot 62 D 333, PSB Files.

³⁴⁸ Such views were expressed and can be studied in the works of Manfred Halpern, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1963); Michael C. Hudson, *Arab Politics: the Search for Legitimacy*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Hisham B. Sharabi, *Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World*, (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1966); and Hisham B. Sharabi, *Government and Politics in the Middle East in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1962).

a naturally evolving social entity existing within the larger ‘Arab nation’ rather than a stable being itself.”³⁴⁹ Additionally, Luciani notes that the Arab state was thought to “exist as a dependent artifice at the whim and tolerance of socio-political interactions across its borders.”³⁵⁰ In this context we can see how developing a regional strategy (macro) against diffuse and fluid states (micro) would present problems as the US sought a strategy moving forward.

In order to construct a thorough security strategy for the region, the Psychology Strategy Board set about identifying aspects that could support western efforts against the Soviet Union. As we noted earlier in this chapter, one of the primary concerns was determining whether the religious and cultural makeup of the Islamic world fostered populations that could be dependably anti-communist. Echoing Richard Frye’s *Harvard Crimson* article, the PSB assumed that while the conservative and traditional societies of the Middle East were unlikely to identify with the ‘godless’ existence of Soviet communism, the people were inherently more concerned with their individual self-interest than political philosophy.³⁵¹ Therefore, under a real or perceived individual threat, it was understood that communism could overcome the region’s aversion to atheistic ideologies. In addition, offsetting what would seemingly be a natural alliance between Islamic communities and Western religious tolerance were the region’s deep seeded anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism tendencies.³⁵² Efforts geared toward creating stability in the regional-macro context would unlikely be successful if solely pursued by emphasizing cultural similarities with the West (or dissimilarities with the Soviets). The Psychological Strategy Board reported to the National Security Council that it would be necessary to appeal to individual (micro-level) economic and social issues, seen as the impetus for political instability and anti-Western sentiment.³⁵³ Such manipulation of attitudes, through economic and social development, aimed to undercut the drivers behind surging Arab nationalism and negative attitudes toward relationships with the West. Specifically, recommendations put forward by the PSB incorporated both the micro and macro development of the economic and political systems in the Middle East, with the goal of encouraging skilled and educated members of the population to improve their social status through participation in business and government (aligned with the West). For this

³⁴⁹ Giacomo Luciani, ed., *The Arab State*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) pp. xvii –xxii.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) pp. 3-13.

³⁵² Fernau, *Moslems on the March*.

³⁵³ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) pp. 11-13.

strategy to work, the PSB identified critical factors that required attention, and brought to light the conundrum the United States was beginning to realize existed in the region, especially within a mix-matched, macro and micro, problem and solution set. The remainder of this chapter addresses these issues in greater detail before turning to the development of the actual strategy in the next chapter.

THE KEYS TO A MIDDLE EAST STRATEGY

PSB recommendations made to the National Security Council regarding the psychological strategy for the Middle East enumerated several factors instrumental to the success or failure of America's policy in the region. The PSB argued that the US would have to negotiate key issues surrounding the region's natural resources (and access to them); strategic and military geography; increasing anti-western nationalism; Arab-Israeli tensions; and the involvement of legacy colonial powers. Following the PSB Middle East staff study report to the council, the NSC outlined the US position in *NSC Directive 129: United States Objectives and Policies with respect to the Arab States and Israel*, specifically:

The area comprising the Arab States and Israel has great political and strategic importance. It lies at the land, sea and air crossroads of three continents, contains important sites for Western military bases, has natural defensive barriers in its mountains and deserts, and lies close to Soviet centres of industry, population and oil resources. More than a third of the world's known oil reserves are located in the Arab States alone. Continued availability of oil from these sources is of great importance in peace and war.³⁵⁴

The access to, or denial of, the energy resources of the region (namely oil) was *the* key strategic issue underpinning the entire American national strategic interest. Protecting this resource was second to none and the PSB felt that leveraging the geography was the first step in establishing effective defences and deterring Soviet hostility. Greater detail will follow regarding the United States' geographic calculus, particularly chapter seven, where we will examine the US attempts to establish defence

³⁵⁴ National Security Council, *United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Arab States and Israel: Annex to National Security Council Directive 129*, Washington D.C., 7 APR 1952, pp. 2-20, this document is available at the National Security Archives at George Washington University Archives, a copy of which can be found online at <https://nasr.archive2.gwu.edu//NSAEBB/NSAEBB78/propaganda%20059.pdf>.

agreements in the region. However, from the outset the Psychological Strategy Board staff identified Turkey and Iran as the chief elements of Western regional defence against the Soviets.

Both Turkey and Iran served as physical geographic buffer zones between the Soviet Union and the resources of the Middle East; and due to the "lack of leverage for immediate social and economic manipulation in the area, and in view of the key relationship of adequate living standards to the whole problem of maintenance of political, economic, and military strength, it might appear that the short range planning possibilities are limited," placed Turkish and Iranian forces at the forefront via necessity rather than choice.³⁵⁵ Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and Iraq would become elements of the United States "Northern Tier Concept" to combat the spread of Soviet communism into the region. This defensive line would later unofficially incorporate Lebanon and as the decade would progress, taking on increasing importance as John C. Campbell suggests in *Defence of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy*, that "the United States government, much concerned over the danger that if Lebanon fell to [Egypt's] Abdel Nasser the rest of the Arab world would follow and the northern tier would be undermined."³⁵⁶

In an effort to strengthen the region against such a domino-calamity, the PSB advised the NSC that continued access to the resources of the region would require the intense development of infrastructure to support a Western presence in the larger area. This included the "development of ports, cement plants, waste-gas conversion industries, machine shops, air craft repair facilities, and similar industrial bases necessary to a communications zone."³⁵⁷ The PSB believed these developments would also serve to address some of the micro social and economic problems previously mentioned; the impact of which offered an opportunity to transform temporary benefits into 'pump primers' to spur more permanent economic modernization measures and increased relations with the West. The board felt that such programmes, through sheer numbers and diversity, had the potential to shorten the time required to affect significantly the internal economic structures of the Middle East. However, while there existed the chance to strike at the heart of regional influence through economic development, unforeseen political problems and change resulting from disruptions to the social strata

³⁵⁵ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 8.

³⁵⁶ John C. Campbell, *Defence of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960) p. 140.

³⁵⁷ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 9.

were likely; and the PSB felt that establishing macro-regional defence measures first, would provide security against large-scale disruption with opportunities for controlled social and economic manipulation to follow. This shows how intertwined the micro and macro level problems were; and serves to emphasize how “unbalanced” the US approach was, highlighting how the initial regionally focused tasking, required undertaking programmes administered by the existing systems. Bluntly, the board had to recommend changing the very systems they were dependent upon for initiating them, the existing governing structures.

Many of the governments in question suffered crises of legitimacy from their populations, a result of micro-social/cultural practices. The PSB sought to target “the average Arab,” who often identified as a member of a particular social group according to ethnic, religious, cultural, or tribal ties, as opposed to the macro-level national affiliation. The larger social context, such as the state, was seen as little more than an abstraction. Patterns of social organization remained essentially feudal, and parochial units lacked any concentric order or general scope contributing to a universal awareness of common interests on a national level.³⁵⁸ What is interesting to note is that while national identity (on a state level) was weak when compared to more localized identities; there was a strong and increasing identity movement building across the region represented by the growth of Arab nationalist and anti-foreign movements following the Second World War.³⁵⁹ Therefore, the PSB regional focus had to contend with true regional dynamism in Arab nationalism.

The problem for the United States was that Arab nationalism in the Middle East was based on a duality of purpose. Arab nationalism was both geographic as well as demographic, unified under the banners of “Pan-Islam,” and “Pan-Arabism.”³⁶⁰ The Second World War had provided the Arab states exposure to the West, where material and secular orientations (to include ethnic and geographic factors), came into direct conflict with the traditional and historic Islamic concepts of religious universality, political theocracy, and exclusive sovereignty. The concepts of Islam as a religion, a state,

³⁵⁸ Hazem Z. Nuseibeh, *The Ideas of Arab Nationalism*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1956) pp. 34-77; Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, (New York: University of Michigan Press, 1960) pp. 113-123; Europa, *The Middle East 1958*, (London: Europa Publications, 1958) pp. 2-6.

³⁵⁹ Martin Kramer, “Arab Nationalism: Mistaken Identity,” *Daedalus*, (Summer 1993) pp. 171-206.

³⁶⁰ Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Middle East*, 2nd ed., (London: Oxford University Press, 1954) pp. 5-50; Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 6th ed. (London: St. Martin’s Press, 1956) pp. 1-22, 145f.

and a culture (in addition to the ethnic and geographic individualities of the region) were all synthesized within Arab nationalism.³⁶¹ While the Psychological Strategy Board cited both nationalism and anti-foreign sentiment as threats to establishing the US presence in the region, it did not account for the amorphous properties of Arab nationalism that required context for its form and specificity. As historian Albert Hourani noted in his 1956 *Atlantic Monthly* article “Arabic Culture,” that “though the Arabs are in many fundamental respects a national unit, and vis-à-vis the non-Arab world are conscious of a national affinity with other Arabs, they are not by any mean a united people.”³⁶² In fact, “most of the Arab states were created and given their present form as an arbitrary expedient, either for foreign imperialist considerations or as a compromise with the internal complexities and conflicting interests of the inhabitants of various regions. Few have natural frontiers based on clear geographic, social, economic, or historical factors. The political divisions therefore tend to be artificial and unstable.”³⁶³ The point Hourani makes is that while the existence of Arab nations across the Middle East were fact, the Western concept of national identity did not apply and instead was eclipsed by the greater Arab identity. This meant that the representative of the various national identities, the state governments, were not seen by the native populations as particularly reflective of the body politic. Therefore, a US approach that focused on supporting individual states, and their governments per a Western concept, would not translate to much of the populations.

Therefore, while the recognition of economic and social disparities among the various populations was important to help identify sources of domestic instability: the underlying issues regarding ruling legitimacy (faced by several of these governments) were moved to the periphery by the PSB in order to develop regional programmes for action. The PSB did however advise policy-makers that the frailty of the individual government structures across the Middle East required the US to consider developing contingency plans in the event that the area was overrun by communist or nationalist forces before mutual defence agreements could be established. The Psychological Strategy Board hoped the US

³⁶¹ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 753ff; Stanley Andrew Morrison, *Middle East Survey: The Political Social and Religious Problems*, (London: SCM Press, 1954) pp. 93-128; Ruth A. Anshen, ed., *Mid-East: World Centre: Yesterday Today and Tomorrow*, (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1956) pp. 65-75.

³⁶² Albert Hourani, “Arabic Culture: Perspective of the Arab World,” *Atlantic Monthly*, Supplement (1956), pp. 5-11.

³⁶³ Hourani, “Arabic Culture,” pp. 5-11; these argument are also supported in: Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Middle East*, pp. 21-35; and George Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1952) pp. 84-116.

could model the area after occupied France during the Second World War, with the goal of establishing a time-bomb capable of harassing the Soviets in the same fashion as the French Resistance during the Second World War.³⁶⁴ Additionally, area experts considered Pan-Islam as a useless vehicle for the US to rally the masses due to the many intra-Muslim schisms, particularly those between the reformists and the reactionary or purist Muslim elements. As Phillip K. Hitti wrote in his 1956 book, *History of the Arabs*:

Religion is perhaps the most important factor militating against Arab unity. Confessional differences, felt intimately and intensely, have created serious cleavages not only between the puritanical Wahhabis of Arabia, for example, despise other Moslems for being decadent and lax in their faith, and in turn are criticized as primitive reactionaries. These religious loyalties often reach a point where they replace ethnic differences, so that a Shi'ah Moslem Arab considers a Sunni Moslem Arab an alien, and the Sunni looks upon a Maronite Christian Arab as a foreign enemy.³⁶⁵

Harking back to the beginning of this chapter, the PSB would support Ambassador Hare's recommendation to separate Islam from America's official policy approach. Viewing the complexity as too great to surmount, the United States opted to not engage the Muslim dynamic other than to highlight the difference between a religiously temperate West and atheistic communism. The PSB and the US were caught in a 'catch-22' situation: they required the state governments to support their regional policies, while recognizing that the state was a weak concept for the people of the region.

By the time of the board's report in 1952, another situation brewing in the region was causing concern. Arab-Israeli tensions over the state of Israel had not escalated to the level of regional relations that they do today; nonetheless, the issue did make the PSB's list of key concerns relevant to an American regional strategy. Interestingly, the PSB's concern over the ramifications of American involvement in Arab-Israeli tensions was seen largely as a global agitator to American designs within Central Africa. Addressing this aspect: the board noted concern over the effect of American influence in the Middle East among its Muslim population, and how it might translate to the Muslim populations in Africa

³⁶⁴ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 10.

³⁶⁵ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 138ff; Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, pp. 95-112.

and Indonesia, and vice versa.³⁶⁶ Developing Central Africa into an economic and military base was intimately tied to American interests in the Middle East, and while this falls outside the scope of this study, it does show that the PSB's larger charter was global in scale. Lastly, the board addressed the presence of the colonial powers particularly that of the British, in the changing landscape of the Middle East. While the power of the United Kingdom in the region was seen to be declining, the British remained America's strongest ally. The board assessed that "their long political experience in the area, the continued importance of British material interests, and the consequent maintenance of British military forces and bases, add up to the fact that British power is a major force in the Middle East. In the event of war the United Kingdom would probably play the primary role in the area."³⁶⁷ Faced with this reality, the US found itself straddling a thin line: the need to maintain its strong support and relationship with the UK in order to not undercut their power position in the region, while at the same time, guarding the United States from the loss of popular support in the area by being viewed too close with Britain's declining influence.

At the conclusion of the PSB staff study, the recommendation was made for a long-range psychological strategy plan for the area to be developed with particular focus paid to the key issues just mentioned in greater depth and with the proper attention. The board recommended that the strategy should entail "the application of the whole range of practicable techniques for developing political power."³⁶⁸ This included psychological operations requirements for the manipulation of both micro and macro elements such as social and economic forces, seen as the key to the long-range development of strength and freedom in the region. The macro versus micro problem facing the board forced them to realize the true scope of the issue, expanding beyond Dr. Allen's initial request for information. The table below is meant to cap the point of the previous section: the issues tasked to the board were amplified not only by the confusion inherent to the region (leadership/nationalism/colonialism etc.), but also in their attempts to determine the types of problems they were facing (micro/macro). Some examples included:

³⁶⁶ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 7

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 11.

Provisions for stable and progressive social development	(Micro)
Channelling economic forces in the interest of assuring orderly political and social growth	(Micro)
Utilizing the forces nationalism as well as the spiritual and religious character of the region in support of US policy objectives	(Macro)
Assessing the relationship of the Middle East approach to the planned development of Central Africa as an economic and military base	(Macro)
Surveys to determine how these regional policies are being implemented	(Micro/Macro)

In conclusion, after the Second World War, the United States (and the West) had become dependent upon the resources of the Middle East and these resources were being threatened by both the spread of Soviet communism and the growth anti-Western Arab nationalism. As a result, America turned to its new intelligence and national security communities to develop a strategic regional approach necessary to combat these threats. As the newly established Psychological Strategy Board set about conceptualizing the regional environment and highlighting the vehicles and inhibitors to success, they identified several pivot points for the Middle East. In the following chapter we explore the problems that faced the PSB as it endeavoured to produce against their charter; and the impact of a reorganization of the national security enterprise by the new administration in Washington saw the Psychological Strategy Board replaced with another entity in the Operations Coordinating Board. We then explore how the OCB's role within the National Security Council set it apart from its predecessor. We return to the topic of the Middle East in Chapter Seven – From the PSB to the OCB: The Strategy for the Middle East, for now we turn our attention to the Operations Coordinating Board.

CHAPTER FIVE: EISENHOWER, THE END OF THE PSB AND ESTABLISHING THE OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD:

In the opening chapters we discussed that the Psychological Strategy Board was established as a planning element for the National Security Council, charged with coordinating the “psychological” effort of national security policy. However, the Psychological Strategy Board was rendered ineffective due to a number of constraints, chief among them being: the limited role of the National Security Council in the Truman administration, and the lack of authority granted to the PSB to direct the coordination of government agencies.³⁶⁹ The PSB’s limited influence stemmed not only from lacking a mandate to direct other agencies, but also from ill-defined doctrine regarding the definition and scope of “psychological warfare,” and the attempts to segregate intelligence from the psychological effort mentioned in the last chapter. In addition to the PSB archival records, the following sections of this chapter will draw heavily from primary source material of Gordon Gray’s declassified letter to President Truman in February 1952; Tracy Barnes’ confidential March 1952 State Department memorandum; and the Bureau of Budget report of April 1952. Gray, the former director of the PSB, and Barnes, the Deputy Director of the PSB, were in unique positions to provide insight into the shortcomings of the board. Additionally, the Bureau of Budget report, commissioned by President Truman in January 1951, provides an objective review of the Psychological Strategy Board months before a new administration would bring about change in Washington. In this chapter we will discuss how the PSB’s limitations led the incoming president to enhance the role of the National Security Council, requiring a more effective coordinating and advisory element, which would take form in the Operations Coordinating Board.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL LTD.

As originally envisioned in the Eberstadt report, the National Security Council was recommended to be a “permanent vehicle for maintaining active, close, and continuous contact between the

³⁶⁹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, Washington D.C., 18 March 1952, pp. 1-2 National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, S/S–NSC Files: Lot 62 D 333, PSB Files; and Psychological Strategy Board, *Status Report on the National Psychological Effort and First Progress Report of the Psychological Strategy Board*, Washington D.C., 1 August 1952, pp. 1-56, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003200050002-4, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, (NACP), CREST Archives.

departments and agencies of our government responsible, respectively, for our foreign and military policies, and their implementation.”³⁷⁰ The intent was to establish a body responsible for integrating policies and procedures for the unified elements of government relating to national security. However, for organizations meant to lay the bedrock of such foundational issues as national security and psychological strategy, the PSB and the NSC were ever at the mercy of interpretation (admittedly more pronounced in the case of the PSB). In his 1949 article, “Policy Formulation for National Security,” in *The American Political Science Review*, Admiral Sydney W. Souers, former CIA director and NSC executive secretary, noted that the term “national security” was best understood as a point of view rather than a distinct area of governmental responsibility.³⁷¹ Souers’ point was that the concept of national security could change, quite drastically in fact, depending on the state of the nation, specifically in its relation to national policy. If national policy were viewed as a three-dimensional construct, during times of peace, national security would be best described as an input to, or an element of, the overall policy composite; however, during times of war, the input or element of national security could expand to encompass the entire construct. When taken into consideration, the existing environment of the Cold War, where traditional concepts of war and peace were fused into a new paradigm, we can appreciate how a dynamic relationship between security and policy could provide a ‘less-than-stable’ foundation for the body expected to bring the players in domestic, foreign, and military policy together. Additionally, as discussed in previous chapters, the NSC existed as an advisory board to the President of the United States, developing recommendations on national security issues for executive consideration. The NSC’s leverage in presenting recommendations directly to the president is quite remarkable in reaching the highest element of American state power, considering that under the US constitutional system the president is the sole arbiter of foreign and military policy. Keen to maintain that responsibility within his purview, President Truman worked to ensure the NSC did not extend its power over the executive. This resulted in Truman emphasizing the advisory nature of the council, establishing a relationship with the council based on caution and selectivity, and as Alfred D. Sander notes in his 1972 article “Truman and the National Security Council: 1945-1947,” for *The Journal of American History*, Truman “kept the executive secretary (of the

³⁷⁰ Ferdinand Eberstadt, *Unification of the War and Navy Departments and Post-war Organization for National Security: Report to Hon. James Forrestal*, Committee on Naval Affairs, United States Senate, 79th Congress, First Session, (1945) p. 7.

³⁷¹ Sydney W. Souers, “Policy formulation for National Security,” *The American Political Science Review*, 43:3 (June 1949) pp. 534-543.

NSC) and his staff at the periphery of his relationship with the other departments and agencies.”³⁷² Under Truman, the NSC process basically began with an NSC member proposing a topic for consideration to the executive secretary, who would then communicate the topic to the president. If Truman was interested in the topic, it would warrant further research and recommendations from the NSC, presented back to the president. Without the president’s expressed consent, the issue would die without further work being done. Harking back to Souers’ point in the *American Political Science Review* article, it was not until the United States became engaged in the Korean War, that President Truman asserted himself into a more direct role regarding the operations of the NSC. The transition from peace to war required greater coordination of military and diplomacy and forced Truman to order that he be involved in every policy matter concerning national security with the NSC (in many cases presiding over the meetings himself).³⁷³ The lack of established coordination processes, internal to the National Security Council, highlighted the disjointed nature of the NSC up to that point. This included Truman’s habit of seeking the advice and recommendations from various advisors and members of the NSC individually, as opposed to the collective council, diminishing the impact of the body overall.

Truman’s resistance to undue influence or interference from the National Security Council had resulted in NSC products failing to address focused issues of substance. Stanley L. Falk, in his 1964 article “The National Security Council under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy,” notes that “even the hundreds of policy papers produced by the Council failed to carry overriding weight,” often avoiding major issues or when they did so “lacked the precision and decisiveness necessary if they were to serve as guides to action.”³⁷⁴ Ultimately, serving to the letter as an advisor to the president, the NSC composed broad statements of principle, frequently overly general and lacking the specificity necessary to support true policy implementation. Walter Millis, author of *Arms and the State: Civil-Military elements in National Policy*, is quoted as arguing that:

³⁷² Alfred D. Sander, “Truman and the National Security Council: 1945-1947,” *The Journal of American History*, 59:2 (September 1972) pp. 369-388.

³⁷³ Anna Kasten Nelson, “President Truman and the Evolution of the National Security Council,” *Journal of American History*, 72:12 (September 1985) p. 373.

³⁷⁴ Stanley L. Falk, “The National Security Council under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 79:3 (September 1964) p. 412.

...the effect of NSC is not prominent; NSC no doubt considered that staff papers, debated policy and arrived at recommendations, but every glimpse we have been given of the actual policy-making process in this period shows Defense, State, the Budget Bureau, the White House, making the independent determinations-usually on a hasty if not extemporaneous basis-which really counted.³⁷⁵

Inefficient processes coupled with an almost ad-hoc approach to council business resulted in a National Security Council that was ill-prepared for the coordinating demands of wartime when the United States entered the conflict in Korea. Recognizing the deficiencies of the NSC process, Truman set about to reorganize the council to meet the needs of the developing crisis. Key steps undertaken by Truman were the normalization of a council meeting schedule (regularly meeting on Thursdays with the president in attendance); an attempt at the formalization of the recommendation process through the council (this proved ineffective in the long run due to Truman's habit of working outside the formal structure); and the establishment of the Psychological Strategy Board to coordinate efforts to counter the Soviets on the psychological battlefield. Despite being steps in the right direction, this reorganization process did more to tighten up existing practices as opposed to substantially changing procedures.³⁷⁶ The result was a council that was available to, but not necessary for, the president's development of national security policy.

Christopher C. Shoemaker notes in his 1989 article "The National Security Council Staff: Structure and Function," that President Truman fostered the ambiguity of the NSC as purely an advisory board with little policy-making or supervisory functions.³⁷⁷ This approach and use of the NSC process remained entirely consistent with his views of its purpose and value.³⁷⁸ Truman's efforts to strip the council of its ability to direct policy and conduct oversight as a countermeasure against it usurping power, also effectively rendered the National Security Council impotent as a policy coordinator.

³⁷⁵ Walter Millis, with Harvey C. Mansfield and Harold Stein, *Arms and the State: Civil-Military Elements in National Policy* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1958) p. 182; and also quoted in Falk, "The National Security Council under Truman," p. 412.

³⁷⁶ Falk, "The National Security Council under Truman," pp. 403-434.

³⁷⁷ Christopher C. Shoemaker, "The National Security Council Staff: Structure and Functions," *The Institute of Land Warfare*, (1989) p. 3.

³⁷⁸ Nelson, "President Truman and the Evolution of the National Security Council," pp. 360-378.

Under Truman: the president approved topics of interest to him; reviewed policy recommendations; approved those policies in line with his designs; designated the lead agency for implementation; and left it to the designee to coordinate efforts among the other primary actors as well as keep the remainder of the National Security Council apprised of the policy. The effect was an executive in unquestionable control, but a council viewed almost as an afterthought. Almost the opposite approach was applied down the ladder, specifically to the coordinating elements of the NSC in the Psychological Strategy Board. The NSC issued directives and policies (from the executive), and then left it to the PSB to coordinate the 'psychological' portion of the policy, with little to no council involvement. Absent the guidance from higher, the PSB was unable to capitalize on operating under the authority of the NSC, which remained a purely advisory element at the whim of the president.

General Dwight Eisenhower felt that the National Security Council under Truman had veered so far off course that it was too ineffectual to keep pace with the dynamic demands of the Cold War; the response times were simply too slow for a changing international scene.³⁷⁹ When Eisenhower succeeded Truman in the White house in 1953, the new president viewed Truman's NSC 'laissez-faire' tracking and coordination of policies as soft and unfocused, observing that the National Security Council existed as more of a shadow-agency than an effective policymaking body.³⁸⁰ Under Truman's system, the complete responsibility for security policy remained solely with the president and his Secretary of State. Once policy decisions were made (by the president), the NSC served solely to advise the president on matters requiring specific diplomatic, military, and intelligence coordination.³⁸¹ Eisenhower, instead, looked to institutionalize the role of the NSC and its coordinating elements. Put off by the council's haphazard approach and response to the Korean War, Eisenhower promised to elevate the council out of the shadows and put it to use as his administration's principal mechanism in developing national security policy. This purpose is key for our study as regarding the ability of the OCB to inform Eisenhower *through* the NSC. Falk notes that Eisenhower did this by "formalizing, developing, and expanding the structure and procedures of the NSC."³⁸² The effect was the creation

³⁷⁹ Drew Cramer & Grant Mullins, "Lessons Learned From Prior Attempts at National Security Reform," *The Project on National Security Reform: Overarching Issues Working Group*, (Williamsburg: The College of William & Mary, 2012).

³⁸⁰ Karl F. Inderfurth and Loch K. Johnson, *Fateful Decisions: Inside the National Security Council*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) p. 28.

³⁸¹ Nelson, "President Truman and the Evolution of the National Security Council," p. 377.

³⁸² Falk, "The National Security Council under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy," p. 418.

of a National Security Council system with the council itself serving as the primary, centralized node, supported by a grid of standardized processes carried out by support staff and interdepartmental subcommittees. The president set in motion what would become a highly complicated but smoothly operating machine geared toward impacting the executive decision-making process. Gone were the ad-hoc tasks and subjective procedures that focused on the pieces rather than the sum of their parts. In its place Eisenhower established a system which Lay and Johnson described as drawing its strength and influence from clear lines of authority and responsibility, and elaborate yet systematized staff work.³⁸³ For the Psychological Strategy Board, the new administration's mission to streamline and institutionalize the NSC system put them directly in the crosshairs for change.

LACK OF AUTHORITY

Drawing comparisons to the National Security Council under Truman, the Psychological Strategy Board also suffered from a lack of authority and clearly delineated mission. In previously classified, unofficial comments, submitted to the ad hoc committee charged with establishing the Psychological Strategy Board in June 1951, the inadequate roles and authority of the new board were called to the floor. James Q. Reber, the Assistant Director for Intelligence Coordination at the CIA argued that the purpose of the presidential directive establishing the PSB was to “authorize and provide for the more effective planning, coordination, and conduct, within the framework of approved national policies, of psychological operations.”³⁸⁴ However, as mentioned previously, the departments and agencies within government could not be directed by the board. Instead the board was to operate command functions through ‘guidance.’ If that sounds confusing, it was. The Psychological Strategy Board was limited to recommending actions, much in the same fashion as the National Security Council would make recommendations to Truman without the authority to execute policy. The PSB recommendations were made to the various agencies, in pursuit of national policy interests without the ability to enforce those recommendations. The intention was for the board to adopt specific and practicable objectives, relating to NSC directives, and ‘initiate’ the action to attain them. But again, without the power to direct, and only to recommend, how could the board truly initiate anything?

³⁸³ James S. Lay, Jr. and Robert H. Johnson, *An Organizational History of the National Security Council*, Committee on Government Operations, Washington D.C., (June 1960) pp. 23-52.

³⁸⁴ James Q. Reber, *Unofficial Comments and Suggestions of OPC Members of AD HOC Committee*, Washington, D.C., 1 June 1951, p. 1, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010024-2, NACP, CREST Archives.

LACK OF STRUCTURE

Knowing what we know about the lack of power granted to the NSC under Truman, it should come as little surprise that a sub-board of the council would also lack the authority necessary to oversee something as pervasive and vast as the United States' psychological strategy. Gustafson notes that the key factor restricting the PSB from functioning as hoped was that it reported to the NSC rather than being a part of it; without being a card-carrying member of the NSC, the PSB was without the necessary leverage to push their recommendations.³⁸⁵ This point is highlighted by Gray in his letter to the president, declassified in 2016, recommending that the PSB could be strengthened should the director "sit with the National Security Council when it considers matters of interest to the Board."³⁸⁶ The assertion here is that if the PSB was seen as a more organic and permanent member of the council itself, it would lend the necessary weight to the guidance given. It is important here to note that Gray's recommendation came after the start of the Korean War, at a time when the National Security Council was receiving new interest from the president. Therefore it could be argued that although the NSC was extremely limited under Truman, there was reason to suspect a larger role for the NSC was on the horizon, based on some of the changes taking place mentioned in the previous section. Under these circumstances, such a development as recommended by Gray, would mean that the Board would be more formally equipped to advise the council on psychological operations, as well as afford the PSB the gravitas of the National Security Council and be one step closer to more directly influencing policy.

Referring back to the organizational chart depicted in Chapter Two, we can take note that aside from the DCI being a member of the PSB, the remaining membership consisted of the undersecretaries for the various agencies. The undersecretaries were the next senior member of their agencies, second only to the secretaries themselves (who sat on the National Security Council). While this allowed them to leverage organizational authority, national security policy power was limited by the dislocation of the board from the council. In a unified system (the board as part of the council) board leadership

³⁸⁵ Kristian Gustafson, "Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States, 1951-1961," *Public Policy and Administration*, 28:2 (2012) p. 155.

³⁸⁶ Gordon Gray, *Letter to the President*, Washington D.C., 22 February 1952, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R0033001900091, NACP, CREST Archives.

and executive leadership could work in unison to direct the resources of the individual agencies. Deputy Director Barnes went so far as to tell John Ferguson that ultimately (under the current system) it was “a waste of time for the members of the PSB to make decisions on the psychological desirability of a policy or program if such decisions were not binding on their respective agencies.”³⁸⁷ One of the benefits that would later emerge from the OCB was the formal establishment of the board within the NSC construct. Outside of this high-level membership authority, the staff makeup of the board itself was problematic, not only for the reason just described, but also because there was a very limited pool from which to choose from. Gordon Gray illustrates the problem in his February 1952 letter to the president:

In recruiting the permanent staff the Director was handicapped at the start, not only by the normal difficulties of recruiting able men in the government, but also by the shortage of experts in the psychological strategy and operations. Within the government there were able administrators and specialists for the normal problems of peace. In the armed services could be found many able officers trained in the arts of war. But nowhere within the government – nor for that matter in the nation – was there any considerable number of men trained to cope with a situation which was “neither war nor peace.” As we Americans had never dreamed of forcing this kind of conflict upon the world, we had made no preparations for it.³⁸⁸

What this passage makes clear is that the PSB had been operating in a deficit from the start, lacking the authority to direct government elements on issues relating to psychological strategy, and without the necessary personnel with the proper experience to conduct national strategy during a ‘cold-war’. Adding to the trouble was that there existed little opportunity for the necessary people, once in the proper position, to gain the experience beneficial to help the board function. Again, part of the architecture developed under Truman was that board membership on the PSB was not a full-time position. Gray raised the concern that the Soviets “have people working on the problem set full time,” opposed to the PSB where the members were only expected to devote part time to their board responsibilities, that they still had ‘day jobs’ to get back to.³⁸⁹ Unfortunately, the lack of focus and

³⁸⁷ John H. Ferguson, *Memorandum of Conversation: Functions of the PSB*, Department of State, 26 March 1952, National Archives and Records Administration, National Declassification Centre, R Files, 30-168.

³⁸⁸ Gray, *Letter to the President*, (22 February 1952) pp. 8-9.

³⁸⁹ Gray, *Letter to the President*, (22 February 1952) p.17.

experience was compounded by the fact that the board was without a roadmap, in the form of clearly defined doctrine, to get them up to speed.

LACK OF DOCTRINE

In addition to structure and authority, the lack of doctrine was detrimental to the board's effectiveness. In fact, the disparate views on the role of the Psychological Strategy Board spanned the lexicon (evidenced by some of the positions outlined in the literature review), from serving simply as the public relations element of the government to the super-agency of US foreign policy. Decision makers were unaware of what constituted a "psychological strategy" and what approaches should be taken to secure one. Many felt the board should be relegated to conducting a 'word war,' summed up as "the activity of explaining – or explaining away – the decision or actions of our government in the foreign field," denying the board any play in the strategic decisions or actions of the government itself.³⁹⁰ Under such a system, the Board would have to wait until government action had already been taken and then play public relations. To illustrate this approach Gray explained that "The diplomats would make the political decisions, the military would make the military decisions, the economists would make the economic decisions – and the Board would make the best of it."³⁹¹

At the other extreme were those who believed PSYOPS were so all-encompassing to the business of government, especially foreign policy, that the board (overseer of all that was psychological) would "make foreign policy, develop strategic programs to influence other nations, carry out propaganda operations, and in general have command authority over all government agencies."³⁹² The Bureau of Budget report would describe this latter view as the Psychological Strategy Board being "the headquarters of the Cold War."³⁹³ The reality of the PSB's existence fell in the middle: they were tasked with the latter but without appropriate privileges they were finding themselves more in the former. Deputy Director Barnes admitted as much to John Ferguson of the State Department during a 1952

³⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 10.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Assistant Director Bureau of Budget, *The Psychological Strategy Board Selected Aspects of its Concept, Organization and Operations*, Executive Office of the President, April 1952, p. 3, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300180062-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

conversation regarding the Psychological Strategy Board's proposal for a planned study of the Middle East. When questioned about the scope of the proposal, "Mr. Barnes and Mr. Taylor (PSB) said that they were not sure what was meant by the word psychological," and the problem had to be applied in the broad sense as trying to isolate the psychological aspect would not work.³⁹⁴ This notion is supported by Cutler who wrote that the Psychological Strategy Board "had been premised on the fallacious concept of an independently existing psychological strategy."³⁹⁵

The seemingly aimless purpose and focus of the board found the PSB falling into a pattern of assuming the current projects of its member agencies, in some ways this could be argued as supporting the coordination goal of the board overall, however, the opposite proved to be the case. The Psychological Strategy Board would in effect - take on existing projects of an agency that had already been administratively assigned to the member department. That department would maintain operational control of the project, per the directive established by President Truman. Therefore, instead of crafting and coordinating an overall national psychological strategy, the PSB was picking up the pet projects already assigned to its members that it had no operational or administrative control over. In the findings of the Bureau of Budget, the PSB had been ineffective in establishing a programme, adequately staffed, to support psychological strategic planning.³⁹⁶

SEPARATING STRATEGY AND INTELLIGENCE

Another limitation on the Psychological Strategy Board were the effects of the NSC decision to separate psychological strategy from intelligence (as discussed earlier). The NSC ruling resulted in attempts from both within and outside the PSB to further segregate the board's work from intelligence. Reflecting on what Deputy Director Barnes experienced when suggesting the board have a larger presence in the debate on 'current problems' (covered in Chapter Two) and their access to intelligence, the belief existed even among board members, that access to intelligence could confuse the purpose of the board. Interestingly, in August 1952, the Psychological Strategy Board submitted

³⁹⁴ John H. Ferguson, *Memorandum of Conversation: Functions of the PSB*, Department of State, 26 March 1952, National Archives and Records Administration, National Declassification Centre, R Files, 30-168.

³⁹⁵ Robert Cutler, "The Development of the National Security Council," *Foreign Affairs*, (1956) p. 448.

³⁹⁶ Assistant Director Bureau of Budget, *The Psychological Strategy Board Selected Aspects of its Concept, Organization and Operations*, (1952) pp. 1-18.

a formal status and progress report, not only outlining the PSB activities towards planning national psychological strategies, but also reports of the individual member departments as well. In the CIA annex of this report, *Annex D: Summary of a Report from the Central Intelligence Agency*, the agency opened its summary by stating that the Psychological Strategy Board's progress towards achieving the national objectives "has been slow" owing in part to the "limited nature of available resources and capabilities," that could be leveraged against intelligence programs in such a short time.³⁹⁷ The take-away here is that the CIA is admitting the PSB's efforts were restricted by having neither the time nor the process to properly engage the intelligence necessary in developing a national psychological strategy. To be clear, this does not mean that the CIA was uninvolved in the PSB's psychological strategies, rather it is highlighting the difficulties experienced with fully integrating the agency into the board's work (part-time staff, clearances, and conceptions regarding the PSB's role). The CIA, and intelligence, were still incorporated into the PSB studies, however, different perspectives regarding the NSC's separation, inhibited a collaborative and efficient working environment. Prophetically in one of the final Psychological Strategy Board reports (three months prior to being disbanded), Trevanion Nesbitt of the State Department concluded his memorandum to PSB member Martin Merson with a reflection on the:

...broad general interest shown in psychological operations by the new [Eisenhower] administration and the numerous studies and reorganizations that are presently being conducted, it would seem desirable that immediate and affirmative steps now be taken to provide the machinery...to properly implement any orders received from the White House, the National Security Council or other properly constituted policy planning bodies.³⁹⁸

OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD

In order to stay in the race with the Soviets, change was required. The first step toward change came with the presidential election victory of Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower over Democrat Adlai Stevenson in November 1952. As will be discussed in the next chapter, Eisenhower campaigned on a

³⁹⁷ Psychological Strategy Board, *Annex D: Summary of a Report from the Central Intelligence Agency*, Washington D.C., 1 August 1952, p. 1, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003200050002-4, NACP, CREST Archives.

³⁹⁸ Trevanian Henry Earnst (T.H.E.) Nesbitt, *Coordination of Technical Planning for Psychological Operations*, Washington D.C., JUN 1953, p. 2, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80-0165A000600030010-8; NACP, CREST Archives.

strong National Security Council, one that was more deterministic and purposeful than had existed under Truman. It would follow that the new administration would make a more focused effort at coordination of the new National Security Council “system” as well. And so it was under this evolutionary atmosphere that the first generation Psychological Strategy Board would be replaced by Eisenhower’s Operations Coordinating Board, the OCB. As Robert Cutler, Eisenhower’s architect behind the new system, would put it: “The OCB arose like a phoenix out of the ashes of the old Psychological Strategy Board.”³⁹⁹ Eisenhower and Cutler had identified that the Psychological Strategy Board had been premised on the belief that psychological strategy could exist independent from the greater national policy and intelligence. The Eisenhower administration would attempt no such parsing, instead accepting that psychological strategy was an “integral part of an overall national security program and could not practically be separated.”⁴⁰⁰ The Operations Coordinating Board was established with the mission to coordinate and integrate the NSC system in its entirety. Falk describes the OCB’s role as coordinating and integrating the psychological with national strategy, as well as serving as the coordinating and integrating arm of the NSC for the complete implementation of national security policy.⁴⁰¹ Seemingly, this new board appeared designed to meet the need brought to light in the Nesbitt memorandum providing the machinery for proper implementation of any orders within the NSC system. In the following chapter we will explore how the Operations Coordinating Board differentiated itself from the Psychological Strategy Board specifically relating to intelligence and the policy cycle. This new positioning would allow the OCB to surpass the PSB in influence and reach.

The very nature of intelligence and the coordination and control over information, whose attempted separation helped doom the PSB, was apparently embraced by the OCB. By not being restricted to the ill-defined ‘psychological’ label, and instead being tethered to the rather encompassing ‘operations’ responsibility, the Operations Coordinating Board was able to leverage the agencies that constituted

³⁹⁹ Robert Cutler, “The Development of the National Security Council,” p. 447.

⁴⁰⁰ Stanley L. Falk, “The National Security Council under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 79:3 (September 1964) p. 420.

⁴⁰¹ Falk, “The National Security Council under Truman,” p. 418.

its membership,⁴⁰² while also exploiting its access to intelligence through the Director of Central Intelligence (and full-time CIA staff) and the Director of the United States Information Agency. This scenario would help the OCB through direct and indirect means to both construct and influence policy. A September 1953 agreement regarding *Assistance for the Operations Coordinating Board*, approved for release in 2006, solidified departmental and agency support that had eluded the PSB. In the agreement the “Departments of State and Defence, the Foreign Operations Administration, and the Central Intelligence Agency each agree to furnish assistance in the form of the advances of funds or contributions of personnel or administrative services to support the work of the Operations Coordinating Board, in accordance with this agreement...”⁴⁰³ The ability of the board to leverage both intelligence and policy more effectively to inform the National Security Council on issues of concern, enabled it to be more efficient than its predecessor at bridging the gaps and informing national policy. By more effectively leveraging its collective members, the OCB was able to serve as a conduit for policy, a vehicle for recommendations going up and coming down the policy hill of the National Security Council.

⁴⁰² Under Secretary of State, Special Assistant to the President, Deputy Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Director U.S. Information Agency, Director International Cooperation Administration, and Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

⁴⁰³ Central Intelligence Agency, *Assistance for the Operations Coordinating Board*, Washington D.C., 30 September 1953, pp. 1-3, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80B01676R002700040036-2, NACP, CREST Archives.

CHAPTER SIX: THE OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD

I have been forced to make decisions, many of them of a critical character, for a good many years, and I know of only one way in which you can be sure you have done your best to make a wise decision. That is to get all of the [responsible policy makers] with their different viewpoints in front of you, and listen to them debate. I do not believe in bringing them in one at a time, and therefore being more impressed by the most recent one you hear than the earlier ones. You must get courageous men of strong views, and let them debate and argue with each other. You listen, and see if there's anything been brought up, any idea, that changes your own view, or enriches your view or adds to it. Then you start studying. Sometimes the case becomes so simple that you can make a decision right then. Or you might wait if time is not of the essence. But you make it.⁴⁰⁴ (Eisenhower's philosophy quoted in Greene and Immerman)

As the above quotation illustrates General Eisenhower brought his unique experiences to the White House, and aimed to ensure that national security policy, under his administration, would be made through similar processes that had awarded him success on the battlefield. President Eisenhower set about to establish the National Security Council at the centre of a process Robert Cutler called the 'acid bath' for national security policy, where all points of view were represented, heard, explored, and contested.⁴⁰⁵ Ultimately, this process was a guarantee that the president would receive unvarnished information, as thorough and inclusive as could be hoped for in the high-stakes environment of national security.

Ultimately, our goal for the remainder of this study will be to use the new archival sources to view the influences of the OCB on national security and foreign policy to the Middle East, providing new insight into the role of the OCB within the National Security Council construct and garner a novel view of foreign policy from an unexpected source. We will examine the effect of Eisenhower's restructuring on the NSC to provide better context for the OCB's position and role than that currently

⁴⁰⁴ Fred I. Greenstein and Richard H. Immerman, "Effective National Security Advising: Recovering the Eisenhower Legacy," *Political Science Quarterly*, 115:3 (Fall 2000) p. 344.

⁴⁰⁵ Robert Cutler, "The Development of the National Security Council," p. 444.

existing in the literature. As the previous chapters have discussed, the PSB fell short of its mark and was replaced by the Operations Coordinating Board. But what was different? How could the OCB succeed where the PSB had failed? We begin this chapter by comparing their founding statements, and moving forward we explore evidence to illustrate that the OCB existed within the fabric (as opposed to the periphery) of the NSC and executive policy formulation and implementation. This chapter will serve to highlight how the OCB developed, before narrowing our target to show the OCB's impact on Middle East strategy and policy.

DIRECTIVES

The Psychological Strategy Board was established by Presidential Directive on 4 April 1951 (if one views this directive through the Harry S. Truman Library website, the date assigned to it is given as 20 June 1951; however the primary records of the PSB show the agencies referring to the directive of 4/4/51).⁴⁰⁶ This directive explains how the Psychological Strategy Board was established to:

Provide for the more effective planning, coordination and conduct, within the framework of approved national policies, of psychological operations, [and had responsibility] for the formulation and promulgation, as guidance to the departments and agencies responsible for psychological operations, of over-all national psychological objectives, policies and programs, and for the coordination and evaluation of the national psychological effort. The Board will report to the National Security Council on the Board's activities and on its evaluation of the national psychological operations, including implementation of approved objectives, policies, and programs by the departments and agencies concerned.⁴⁰⁷

Covered in greater detail in the previous chapter, the ambiguity assigned to the authorities of the PSB was a crutch that they could never overcome; and without the clear authority to direct action, the PSB never amounted to the coordinating element it was envisioned to be. Learning from this, the

⁴⁰⁶ Gordon Gray, *Memorandum: Psychological Strategy Board Meeting Minutes*, Washington D.C., 10 October 1951, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300160018-4, National Archives and Records Administration College Park, College Park, Maryland (NACP), CREST Archives.

⁴⁰⁷ Harry S. Truman, *Executive Directive (Psychological Strategy Board)*, Washington D.C., April 1951, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80R01731003300180062-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

Eisenhower administration set about to reconfigure the coordinating functions of the PSB under the Operations Coordinating Board. Thus, on September 2, 1953 President Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10483, formally abolishing the PSB and transferring its responsibilities to the OCB. The directive states:

In order to provide for the integrated implementation of national security policies by the several agencies, there is hereby established an Operations Coordinating Board, hereinafter referred to as the Board, which shall report to the National Security Council. [Further] The National Security Council having recommended a national security policy and the President having approved it, the Board shall (1) whenever the President shall hereafter so direct, advise with the agencies concerned as to (a) their detailed operational planning responsibilities respecting such policy, (b) the coordination of the interdepartmental aspects of the detailed operation plans developed by the agencies to carry out such policy, (c) the timely and coordinated execution of such policy and plans, and (d) the execution of each security action or project so that it shall make its full contribution to the attainment of national security objectives and to the particular climate of opinion the United States is seeking to achieve in the world, and (2) initiate new proposals for action within the framework of national security policies in response to opportunity and changes in the situation. The Board shall perform such other advisory functions as the President may assign to it and shall from time to time make reports to the National Security Council with respect to the carrying out of this order.⁴⁰⁸

While there is greater detail in the 1953 executive order, as compared to the 1951 directive, understanding the subtle (yet important) differences deserves closer inspection. The PSB was tasked with providing ‘guidance’ to the various agencies, while the OCB was granted responsibility to ‘advise’ the agencies concerned. The doctrinal or technical difference between ‘guiding’ and ‘advising’ is hardly definitive and merely a subjective effort akin to splitting hairs. Deriving a substantial delineation between the two is outside the scope of this study and, instead, we must look to the context rather than the action. What we mean is, while both *guiding* – to show or indicate the way – and *advising* – offering suggestions about the best course of action – are comparatively similar, the context or target of the action is vastly different. For the PSB it was to provide guidance to the agencies regarding the

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

psychological strategy outlined within the larger policy plan, therefore pigeonholing the Psychological Strategy Board within the confines of the psychological. On the other hand, the Operations Coordinating Board was tasked against a wider scope, to advise the various agencies on the entirety of the operational plan built to execute the overall security policy. This difference was highlighted early in discussions regarding the drafts of executive order 10483.

Nearly a month before the executive order was formally issued, Lawrence R. Houston, General Counsel for the Central Intelligence Agency, sent an 11 August 1953 memorandum to the acting director of the CIA, regarding the scope and the breadth of the new organization. In the declassified memorandum, Houston recounts that a number of established players in the national security enterprise to include Allen Dulles, Tracey Barnes, and Frank Wisner, were drawing attention to the OCB's reach into the actual programme and policy of proposed operations (something that the PSB had been separated from). In particular the question was raised as to whether 10483 should be amended "to assure that the Operations Coordinating Board does not get into the detailed execution and carrying out of plans?"⁴⁰⁹ An early indication that such proposed amendments were not included in the order, or in practice, is evident in the 30 September 1953 agreement among the DOS, DOD, the Foreign Operations Administration, and the CIA. Declassified in 2006, the agreement, which solidified each agency's requirement to furnish personnel, resources, and financial assistance to the Operations Coordinating Board, also made clear that the OCB Executive Officer would conduct reviews of outstanding contracts previously in support of the Psychological Strategy Board and would make decisions for them to be either retained by the OCB or terminated as the facts warranted.⁴¹⁰ While this alone does not show that the OCB was immediately engrossed in policy programme review and approval, it does suggest from the outset that the OCB was being granted access to existing contracts to review the provision of services being provided.

⁴⁰⁹ Lawrence R. Houston, *Memorandum for: Acting Director of Central Intelligence*, Washington D.C., 11 August 1953, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003300220003-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴¹⁰ C.D. Jackson, *Assistance for the Operations Coordinating Board: Agreement Among the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Foreign Operations Administration, and the Central Intelligence Agency*, Washington D.C., 30 September 1953, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80B01676R002700040036-2, NACP, CREST Archives.

IMPACT

For many years the OCB's impact on policy writ large has been viewed as quite limited in the literature and in fact, as Gustafson (2012) and Davies (2012) have argued, the coordinating entities of national security have not garnered the attention of the individual agencies they were established to represent.⁴¹¹ There exist few descriptions in the academic body that detail the OCB coordination within the policy process; and prior to 2006, when the a more complete version of Elmer B. Staats' 'Handbook for the Operations Coordinating Board' was approved for release, there was very little primary source material that provided insight into the processes of the OCB itself (additional versions with varying redactions to the handbook and its supporting documents have been released with the most recent being in 2016). In fact, the majority of the literature written on the history of the United States IC and the NSC tends to promote the view that the OCB's influence on policy came solely on the back end (policy implementation as opposed to policy creation) and by nature and process was removed from policy conceptualization and initiation. In an article for *Foreign Policy* entitled "The NSC's Midlife Crisis" and published in 1988, former presidential counsellor and National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, provides a history of the National Security Council during which he devotes only one mention to the Operations Coordinating Board as an interagency board, parallel to the National Security Council Planning Board, tasked to supervise policy implementation.⁴¹² The same treatment is given by author R. Gordon Hoxie in his 1982 article for *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, "The National Security Council." Hoxie, the then president of the Center for the Study of the Presidency, provides only the brief description of the Operations Coordinating Board as an "adjunct" of the National Security Council.⁴¹³ With few exceptions (discussed in the literature review), the prevailing view was described in Robert Cutler's *Foreign Affairs* article "The Development of the National Security Council" from 1956 where the OCB existed on the down-slope of a theoretical 'policy hill.'⁴¹⁴ Indeed,

⁴¹¹ Kristian Gustafson, "Early Stages in the Evolution of Covert Action Governance in the United States, 1951-1961," *Public Policy and Administration*, 28:2 (2012) pp. 144-162; and Philip H.J. Davies, *Intelligence and Government in Britain and the United States, Volume 1: Evolution of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, (Oxford: Praeger, 2012) p. 27.

⁴¹² Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The NSC's Midlife Crisis," *Foreign Policy*, 69 (Winter 1987-1988) pp. 80 – 99.

⁴¹³ R. Gordon Hoxie, "The National Security Council," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 12:1 (Winter 1982) pp. 108 – 113.

⁴¹⁴ Robert Cutler, "The Development of the National Security Council," *Foreign Affairs*, 34:3 (1956) pp. 441-458; Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Alfred D. Sander, *Eisenhower's Executive Office: Contributions in Political Science* (Boulder: Praeger,

it seems apparent that the prevailing thought on the policy impact of the OCB was likely shaped by Cutler's 1956 article as one of the few unclassified sources available to researchers. Stated at the beginning of this study, the result has been a myopic view of the role and impact of the Operations Coordinating Board; a view that this study argues is narrow and flawed. Falk described the OCB as having no authority to direct or control activities, rather it was limited to providing a means for the agencies to consult and cooperate with each other.⁴¹⁵ Falk cites Cutler directly in explaining his position that, "The Board's own operations were limited to advising, expediting, and following up..." where the whole "process for policy formulation and implementation has been described by Robert Cutler with a simple and arresting metaphor."⁴¹⁶ Falk is referring to the policy hill metaphor quoted below.⁴¹⁷ Even if Cutler's piece is not the underlying reason for academic inattention to OCB policy impacts, at the very least it can be used to summarize the prevailing thought. In the article, Cutler describes the following:

Assume that the National Security Council sits at the top of Policy Hill. On one side of this hill, *policy recommendations travel upward through the Planning Board to the Council*, where they are thrashed out and submitted to the President. When the President has approved a policy recommendation, it travels down the other side of Policy Hill to the departments and agencies responsible for its execution. Each department or agency with a function to perform under such approved policy must prepare its program to carry out its responsibility. Part way down this side of the hill is the Operations Coordinating Board, to which the President refers an approved national security policy as its authority to advise the relevant departments and agencies as to their detailed operational planning and as to coordinating the interdepartmental aspects of their respective programs. *In no sense is the O.C.B. concerned with the making of policy. While it cannot make or negate programs to carry out a policy, it may assist in developing them.* The Board is a coordinator and an expediter and a follower-up and a progress reporter. *It is also authorized*

1999); and Gregory Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin: America's Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947-1956*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2000).

⁴¹⁵ Stanley L. Falk, "The National Security Council under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy," *Political Science Quarterly*, 79:3 (September 1964) p. 422.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid. p. 412.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid. p. 412.

*to initiate new proposals for action within the framework of national security policies. The O.C.B. can assist, follow up, report; but it cannot initiate or change policy.*⁴¹⁸

In this statement, Cutler argues that the Operations Coordinating Board was limited to enforcing policy at the expense of shaping or initiating it. Writing for *The American Political Science Review* in December 1960, author Paul Y. Hammond of Yale University takes this limited scope even further stating that the “Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) is a follow-up mechanism to see that NSC decisions are executed. Since it is an interdepartmental committee, it is largely a reporting and monitoring device. (Technically, it is not a part of the NSC structure.)”⁴¹⁹ However, the primary documents provide a different perspective where the OCB was not as limited as Cutler and Hammond suggest. In Cutler’s defence, the process he described in his 1956 article was the process he had initially developed at the beginning of the Eisenhower administration. The reality, reflected in the primary source material, shows that the OCB had already grown and evolved from Cutler’s concept by 1956 (the Icelandic Defence, and Christmas East Balloon Drop are examples given in this chapter), from that of strictly a policy coordinator (depicted by Cutler and Hammond), to a policy developer within both the intelligence and national security spheres. It is also important to note that at the beginning of the OCB’s existence there remained a level of uncertainty about them. They were crafted to replace a failed organization. It would take some time for individual agencies, used to operating on their own and without impediment under the PSB construct, to acclimate to the more centralized and operationally focused OCB. The OCB needed to first establish itself as a working cog in the national security machinery before the process could truly be considered ‘working.’ We call this out here to provide context for how the OCB impact on policy was greater toward the second half of the decade, from a more unsettled existence in the wake of the PSB in 1953 to a more regimented and routine policy and operational hub by 1958. By the time of the Lebanese invasion of 1958, the OCB had become a permanent element within the system, and had established themselves outside of the narrow lane attributed to it under Cutler’s view. By 1958 the OCB was a known commodity to the National Security Council and the President of the United States. They had gained in stature and importance, and were tasked directly with larger issues surrounding foreign policy, particularly state stability in the

⁴¹⁸ Cutler, “The Development of the National Security Council,” pp. 448-449.

⁴¹⁹ Paul Y. Hammond, “The National Security Council as a Device for Interdepartmental Coordination: An Interpretation and Appraisal,” *The American Political Science Review*, 54:4 (December 1960) p. 903.

1290-d programme and the 5428 Middle East policy group (to be discussed in the following chapters). The point here is that the OCB was created different on purpose, but as with all things, there tends to be a learning curve, and the OCB's impact on policy and decision making would grow and increase from the limited environment they inherited from the PSB. We will explore this debate further throughout this chapter. The purpose here is to drill down more specifically on how the OCB was threaded into the fabric of the National Security Council. This allows us to identify how the Operations Coordinating Board differentiated itself from the Psychological Strategy Board, while also showing how the structure and processes of the OCB allowed it to operate beyond Cutler's policy hill.

The Operations Coordinating Board grew out of the inherent complications regarding implementation of policies across the agencies represented in the National Security Council. Greenstein and Immerman state that Eisenhower's primary focus upon taking office was developing a new process of policy formulation (with the NSC as the nucleus); but even before that Robert Cutler had targeted the "serious gap between the formulation of general objectives and the detailed actions required to give effect to them."⁴²⁰ In Washington, the failure of the Psychological Strategy Board had brought to the forefront the recognized need for a group (within the NSC structure) capable of the coordinated execution of national security policies. Under President Eisenhower, the mantle was taken up by the Operations Coordinating Board. In a similar construct to the PSB, the OCB consisted of top officials in the agencies responsible for national security. In replacing the Psychological Strategy Board, the Operations Coordinating Board was an attempt at establishing formal processes of carrying out national security policy across the whole of government: promoting institutionalization as an alternative to the ad-hoc nature of the previous administration. Cutler, Eisenhower's architect for the NSC restructuring, described the principal function of the new board, again consisting of agency representatives at the Under-Secretary level, as "the coordination and development by departments and agencies of detailed operational plans to carry out national security policies," undertaken in an effort to "...achieve better integrated direction of the program of the United States in the world struggle and to fill the gap which has existed in the past between the formulation of general objectives and the detailed actions needed to give effect to them."⁴²¹

⁴²⁰ Fred I. Greenstein and Richard H. Immerman, "Effective National Security Advising: Recovering the Eisenhower Legacy," *Political Science Quarterly*, 115:3 (Fall 2000) p. 343.

⁴²¹ Cutler, "The Development of the National Security Council," p. 447.

STRUCTURE

Similar to the Psychological Strategy Board, the Operations Coordinating Board was composed of the Undersecretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Director of Central Intelligence as permanent members. In addition, the OCB also included the Director of the Foreign Operations Administration and the President's Special Assistant for Psychological Warfare as members, and the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs and the Director of the United States Information Agency were regular attendees. The OCB's executive officer also attended the National Security Council Planning Board meetings (the planning and 'upslope' element of the NSC policy hill).⁴²² Just as the planning board drafted the policy papers deliberated on by the NSC, the OCB made plans for carrying out the policies that emerged from the NSC process. Therefore the OCB transmitted regular reports to the NSC, summarizing the actions it had taken to execute policies, and evaluated the policies' effectiveness, timeliness, and applicability.

As discussed, numerous times in this study, the PSB was established from the outset to adopt an ad-hoc approach to psychological strategy. This is clearly stated in a series of classified memoranda in May 1951, weeks after the creation of the Psychological Strategy Board. In these memoranda it is discussed that an interdepartmental working group tasked with developing a paper on the organization and the functions of the Psychological Strategy Board, agreed on the understanding that "the new PSB should not get into overly detailed planning," and was not expected to meet very often, reacting as the need should arise.⁴²³ Additionally, referring back to Gordon Gray's 1952 letter to the president, the PSB board members were only expected to devote a portion of their time to board duties. This contrasted quite drastically with the new Operations Coordinating Board, which met weekly on Wednesday afternoons at the State Department.⁴²⁴ These members were detailed to the OCB full-time,

⁴²² Greenstein and Immerman, "Effective National Security Advising: Recovering the Eisenhower Legacy," p. 343.

⁴²³ James Q. Reber, *Memorandum of conversation held in the CIA Conference Room Administration building, 22 May 1951, at 1130 hours*, Washington D.C., 22 May 1951, p. 1, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003400010025-1 NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴²⁴ Stanley L. Falk, "The National Security Council under Truman," p. 420.

having standardized production schedules for reports to the NSC and the executive.⁴²⁵ Much of what we detail in this chapter comes from recently declassified OCB records, arguably the most impactful being Elmer B. Staats' *Operations Coordinating Board Handbook*. Staats served as the Executive Officer for the OCB and this treasure trove of documents allows us a first-hand account of how the OCB worked from the inside. What is clear from the start is that “an important objective in establishing the OCB was to replace as many as possible of the ad hoc coordinating arrangements which previously existed.”⁴²⁶ Rather than being removed from the overly detailed planning of national security policy (as was the case with the PSB), the board was expected to bridge the gap between policy and operations. The OCB, and its subcommittees and working groups, consolidated and reviewed agency operating plans for “consistency, timing, and adequacy to achieve policy objectives,” which explicitly required involvement in the details.⁴²⁷ In fact, in March 1955 the president established a Planning Coordination Group *within* the framework of the OCB, in order to:

...infuse into plans and programs growing out of national security policies new ideas to diagnose precisely how best to meet the over-all problems of a given country or area, to bring into balance all aspects of a problem and all resources available to solve it, to find ways effectively to utilize U.S. private organizations and foreign individuals and groups and foreign public and private organizations.⁴²⁸

As designed, the board served as an important “working extension of the National Security Council,” a direct contradiction of Hammond’s assertion that the OCB was not a part of the NSC structure.⁴²⁹ Additionally, the indirect associations with the NSC arguably support the position for the increased influence the board had on the policy process. For example, the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs also chaired the National Security Council Planning Board (the policy

⁴²⁵ Elmer B. Staats, *Handbook Operations Coordinating Board: A descriptive statement of the organization, functions, and procedures of the OCB*, Washington D.C., September 1955, p. 5, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP86T00268R000900010047-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 1.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 1.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.* p. 3.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 3; and Paul Y. Hammond, “The National Security Council as a Device for Interdepartmental Coordination: An interpretation and Appraisal,” *The American Political Science Review*, 54:4 (December 1960) p. 903.

creating element of Cutler's policy hill). This individual was in regular attendance of the OCB meetings, as were the members of his staff. More directly, the OCB Deputy Executive Officer, served as an advisor to the NSC Planning Board and regularly briefed the group, keeping them abreast of OCB projects and progress reports. This bears some further explanation. The OCB Executive Officer was tasked with determining the individual agency responsibilities for each project, conducting continuous reviews for emerging issues and new interests that could affect the implementation of policy. Therefore, the Deputy Executive Officer assisted the Executive Officer by serving as a 'point man' on the policy formulating side in order to inform and prepare the policy implementation side.⁴³⁰ These distinctions and nuances of the interrelatedness of the board, its members, and the various other entities of the national security enterprise are often not detailed, or are too generalized in the current academic record.

Harking back to the beginning of this chapter, Executive Order 10483 speaks to the Operations Coordinating Board's potential for influencing policy:

...the Board shall (2) initiate new proposals for action within the framework of national security policies in response to opportunity and changes in the situation. The board shall perform such other advisory functions as the President may assign to it and shall from time to time make reports to the National Security Council with respect to the carrying out of this order.⁴³¹

While it is unclear (in the Executive Order) the process that such actions would take, there were two routes for the OCB to insert itself in the process. First, the Deputy Executive Officer relationship to the NSC Planning Board (just described) could arguably place OCB proposals and recommendations before the National Security Council; and second, the OCB's own Planning Coordination Group was seemingly established for just such purpose. The PCG was created to infuse into plans and programmes new ideas to diagnose problems of a given country or area, and to balance problems against the resources available to leverage against it. The OCB PCG was tasked to find and suggest

⁴³⁰ Staats, *Handbook for the Operations Coordinating Board: A descriptive statement of the organization, functions, and procedures of the OCB*, (1955) p. 3.

⁴³¹ President Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Executive Order 10483*, Washington D.C. (2 September 1953).

ways that effectively utilized US private organizations, foreign individuals and groups, and foreign public and private organizations in furtherance of national policy and selected special assignments.⁴³² Interestingly, we find that beginning in March 1955, the OCB's Planning Coordination Group required the DCI to consult the group on covert operations (for consistency with policy) and even for a short time (March 1955 – December 1955) served as the primary authorizing channel for policy approval of covert operations, before reverting back to the DCI, and the Secretaries of State and Defense as the normal channel. In his autumn 2000 article for *Political Science Quarterly*, author Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., calls attention to this period when covert operations "...once having been conceived, the final approval given to any project" was delivered during lunch meetings of the OCB special group.⁴³³

SCOPE

Importantly, OCB working groups, established to assist in "the coordinated implementation of NSC policies assigned by the President to the OCB, and for coordination, development, or study, of other projects which have been approved by the Board," were not limited to matters clearly authorized by existing policy, and were instead directed to consider all possible courses of action appropriate to the circumstances.⁴³⁴ These working groups were approved to submit proposals to the OCB at any time, identifying that the issues discussed were not clearly covered by existing policy.⁴³⁵ This reality is not reflected in the literature. In his 1961 *Foreign Affairs* article, author Franklin A. Lindsay (a former OSS operator and colleague of Frank Wisner) argued that the United States foreign policy was grossly negligent in its programme planning duties. Speaking directly of the Operations Coordinating Board, Lindsay states that while the OCB has "responsibility for coordinating the operational planning of the

⁴³² Staats, *Handbook for the Operations Coordinating Board: A descriptive statement of the organization, functions, and procedures of the OCB*, (1955) p. 3.

⁴³³ Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Effective National Security Advising: A Most Dubious Precedent," *Political Science Quarterly*, 115:3 (autumn, 2000) pp. 347 – 351.

⁴³⁴ Staats, *Handbook for the Operations Coordinating Board: A descriptive statement of the organization, functions, and procedures of the OCB*, (1955) p. 1.

⁴³⁵ Ibid. pp. 3 & 7; and specifically addressed again in Elmer B. Staats, *Memorandum to the Chairmen and Members of the Working Groups, Working Group Procedures*, Washington D.C., 20 July 1956, p. 1, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP78-01634R000300030009-7, NACP, CREST Archives.

departments, it lacks authority to direct such planning, it lacks an adequate staff, and it cannot concern itself with any problem that has not been specifically referred to it by the President.”⁴³⁶ Obviously this position is incongruent with part 2 section 2 of 10483, and the descriptions put forward in the OCB handbook just mentioned. The leeway for dynamism granted to the board challenges previous concepts of the OCB as divorced from policy formulation entirely (as noted by Cutler and Hammond) and illustrates that the OCB, unlike the PSB, was granted placement and access within the NSC structure that enabled it to surpass its predecessor in the policy arena, and as is next discussed, in the intelligence function as well.

We have covered that the PSB suffered from inconsistent access to the classified world. The operating concept under the Truman administration was that psychological strategy could, and should, remain separated from intelligence. In stark contrast, the Operations Coordinating Board leveraged its intelligence capabilities to enhance its impact on policy. In addition to the DCI being member to the board, the OCB was equipped with intelligence liaisons and a special projects staff that were responsible for dealing “directly with the Central Intelligence Agency and other appropriate intelligence centers in the Government that can provide the material to enable the working groups to function effectively.”⁴³⁷ The indication here is that unlike the PSB, the OCB recognized the necessity to be apprised of relevant intelligence regarding their tasking. As a result, the OCB working groups were provided intelligence support that the PSB was never privileged to (on a consistent basis), particularly with respect to requests for intelligence requiring extended time and research. Additional effort was made to ensure that it be required for working group members to undergo a full-scale background investigation and attain a Top Secret clearance. Again, this illustrates that the small, yet important, changes taking place were grounded in a fundamental understanding (and possibly an activist belief) that current information on sensitive policy issues required greater access to the classified material. As a result, the OCB was positioned to access and impact the intelligence shaping national security. In particular, the OCB was enabled to initiate new proposals for action that responded to opportunity and situational changes.”⁴³⁸ Having properly cleared members in the working groups allowed the intelligence liaisons and special projects staff to notify the OCB of

⁴³⁶ Franklin A. Lindsay, “Program Planning: The Missing Element,” *Foreign Affairs*, 39:2 (January 1961) pp. 279 – 290.

⁴³⁷ Charles E. Johnson, *Part II: Detailed Operating Procedures*, Washington D.C., 1 November 1956, p. 1, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP86T00268R000900010047-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.* p.1.

opportunities for exploitation based on the latest intelligence, and to allow the OCB to notify the NSC of the latest development in a dynamic situation (examples of this are found in Chapter Nine with the OCB daily intelligence notes, highlighting developments on the ground in the Middle East). Through the working groups, the OCB could then craft new proposals for action in an effort to exploit these targets, placing them for decision before the National Security Council.

Reminding ourselves that the Operations Coordinating Board was envisioned as a vehicle to “bridge the gap between policy and operational plans, primarily in the field of foreign operations,”⁴³⁹ we see that its very purpose would put it at odds with Cutler’s policy hill scenario. The Operations Coordinating Board, while theoretically living on the down-slope of the policy hill, was actually a key cog in the machinery on the upside as well, particularly through its relationship with the National Security Council and the President of the United States. As Staats notes, “The Board by Executive Order serves as an important working extension of the National Security Council machinery.”⁴⁴⁰

What we have shown at this point is that the OCB, through its representatives, working groups, and special staffs was constructed to regularly inform and brief the National Security Council Planning Board on its reports and recommendations, which would then be sent to the National Security Council for policy designation and action. In addition to the OCB’s ability to report to the NSC and the president directly (this will be explored further in the final chapters) clearly placed the Operations Coordinating Board into the policy recommendation and shaping realm on the up-slope of policy hill, at the very heart of the United States’ policy making apparatus (again showing that OCB crossed and existed within the intelligence-policy divide discussed in the introduction). Individual examples found in early Operations Coordinating Board reports also contradict Cutler’s description of the board’s existence. Found in the first semi-annual status report of the Operations Coordinating Board from April 1954 and declassified in 2003, we see specific examples where the board approved or negated programmes necessary to carry out policy. Highlighted in the April report is an Operations Coordinating Board programme under direction in Iceland, noting that “Increased communist activities and problems relating to the American military program in Iceland led the OCB to foster a

⁴³⁹ Staats, *Handbook for the Operations Coordinating Board: A descriptive statement of the organization, functions, and procedures of the OCB*, (1955) p. 5.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 7.

renewed emphasis on increasing American prestige in Iceland. The OCB undertook the development of a coordinated action program to accomplish political effects and to improve the climate of opinion.”⁴⁴¹

ICELAND – THE EXAMPLE TO THE NORTH

Under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the responsibility for the defence of Iceland was delegated to the United States. In May 1951 the United States and Iceland signed a defence agreement under which the US would station and develop military forces and facilities in Iceland. The National Security Council felt that such an agreement was necessary as Iceland had no armed forces of its own and a police force of only 320 men, an indigenous security force incapable of fending off a communist insurgency.⁴⁴² Negotiations continued between the United States and Iceland for three years through 1954, with additional US rights and facilities obtained through supplemental agreements. However, US defence activities in Iceland had produced considerable tension and dissatisfaction among Icelanders. The agreements had begun during the height of the Korean War, when the fear existed that the conflict in Asia might lead to general war.⁴⁴³ As that conflict drew to a close and Icelandic nationalism and neutrality reasserted itself, the stationing of foreign troops during peacetime became a source of tension.⁴⁴⁴ This is reflected in the OCB’s December 1953 interim report to the National Security Council:

The Icelandic public has never been markedly sympathetic to the presence of U.S. forces in Iceland. The Icelanders’ basic “anti-foreign army attitude” has received considerable impetus

⁴⁴¹ Operations Coordinating Board, *Activities of the Operations Coordinating Board: Status as of December 31, 1953*, Washington D.C., 24 March 1954, p. 7, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731 R003000170002-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴⁴² National Security Council, *Statement of Policy Proposed by the National Security Council on Iceland*, Washington D.C., 12 July 1954, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2, eds. David M. Baehler, Ronald D. Landa, Charles S. Sampson, John A. Bernbaum, Lesle A. Rose, and David H. Stauffer (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1986) Document 705. S/S–NSC files, lot 63 D 351, NSC 5426 Series

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Operations Coordinating Board, *Terms of Reference for Working Group on Coordination of NSC 5426 (Iceland)*, Washington D.C., 11 August 1954, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003000050008-0, NACP, CREST Archives; included in this report Walter Bedell Smith, *Letter to Mr. Streibert*, Washington D.C., 10 December 1953, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003000050008-0, NACP, CREST Archives.

from the Soviet “peace drive” which followed Stalin’s death and on which the Communists have capitalized. This drive has persuaded many Icelanders that the reasons for putting up with the “evil of a foreign army” have become less cogent. Complacency has set in to a rather alarming degree, based on a widespread impression that the Cold War is tapering off comfortably.⁴⁴⁵

Specifically the OCB recommended that the US should seek “to alleviate the tensions and the dissatisfactions between the Icelanders on the one hand, and the American civilian construction workers and the U.S. Forces stationed in Iceland, on the other hand.”⁴⁴⁶ These arguments regarding Icelandic dissatisfaction with foreign forces were repeated in the July 1954 NSC memoranda on the policy proposed for Iceland stating – “Icelanders have complained of the alleged disruption of their small community (150,000 population) by U.S. troops and construction workers and U.S. relations with local labor. Communists and neutralists have exploited these attitudes against the U.S.”⁴⁴⁷ The comparison is useful here to show that OCB assessments made to the NSC were then adopted and incorporated into follow on NSC reports. The Executive Secretary of the National Security Council also wrote:

Iceland is strategically important to the West as a base area for offensive operations in conjunction with NATO, for air and naval defense of the approaches to North America, and for staging aircraft and maintaining sea communications between the United States and Europe.⁴⁴⁸

The NSC made clear that Iceland’s membership in NATO enhanced NATO’s military capabilities in the North Atlantic and that conversely, Soviet control and use of Iceland as an air and submarine base would pose a threat to the North Atlantic defence system.⁴⁴⁹ Earlier in May 1954, the US Tariff

⁴⁴⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, *Interim Report – Iceland*, Washington D.C., 21 December 1953, p. 1, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731R003000050001-7, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 2.

⁴⁴⁷ National Security Council, *Statement of Policy Proposed by the National Security Council on Iceland*, (12 July 1954) Document 705, p.1.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Commission had recommended raising the tariff on Icelandic fish, according to the minutes of a 2 June 1954 OCB meeting, “the Tariff Commission’s recommendations to increase the tariff and impose an absolute quota on Icelandic fish were discussed and rejected by each member of the OCB.”⁴⁵⁰ Following the OCB recommendation that such an increase would damage US-Icelandic relations, President Eisenhower also rejected the Tariff commission’s proposal on 7 July 1954.⁴⁵¹ This small example shows how the OCB reports and recommendations could find purchase with the National Security Council, and even inform the decisions of the chief executive himself in areas of national security.

The NSC expressed clearly that it was “in the security interest of the United States and the North Atlantic area that facilities in Iceland be available for use in the event of emergency by the military forces of the United States and its allies, and that Iceland continue to be denied to unfriendly or potentially hostile forces.”⁴⁵² Interestingly, the OCB and the National Security Council will make a similar argument in the following chapters on the Middle East, and again the information and recommendations would reach audience with President Eisenhower as he considered military action after the Iraqi coup in 1958.

In another example, the Operations Coordinating Board reviewed a programme entitled “Christmas East,” which “proposed a balloon delivery of food and other supplies to the peoples of the European Satellites. OCB, in light of field advice and staff studies, rejected this plan and instead the Governments of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Rumania were requested to permit entry of duty-free food packages sponsored by CARE.”⁴⁵³ In each of these cases, we see an example where the Operations Coordinating Board acted directly either to promote or reject programmes in order to

⁴⁵⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, “OCB Consideration of Tariff Commission’s Recommendation on Groundfish Fillet Imports,” Washington D.C., 28 May 1954, p. 2, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954, Western Europe and Canada, Volume VI, Part 2*, eds. David M. Baehler, Ronald D. Landa, Charles S. Sampson, John A. Bernbaum, Lesle A. Rose, and David H. Stauffer (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1986) Document 704.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² National Security Council, *Statement of Policy Proposed by the National Security Council on Iceland*, (12 July 1954) Document 705.

⁴⁵³ Operations Coordinating Board, *Activities of the Operations Coordinating Board: Status as of December 31, 1953*, Washington D.C., 24 March 1954, p. 5, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP80R01731 R003000170002-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

accomplish policy, offering the reader real examples of how the OCB did exist outside of the down-slope of Cutler's policy hill.

A CYCLE RATHER THAN A HILL

Sander (1999) describes the extent of the OCB within the NSC, where for the first time it "had an institutionalized reality check on the feasibility of the policies it developed. Each policy had to be reduced to suggested actions by a working group composed of individuals who were knowledgeable about the geographic area or specialty involved in the policy. These suggestions were then considered and messaged by the board assistants before being forwarded to the OCB for final approval."⁴⁵⁴ The significance is not simply to point out where Cutler appears to have been misleading, but rather to assume that Cutler's article in *Foreign Affairs* was one of the few public studies to address the activities and roles of the Operations Coordinating Board. In the absence of the declassified record used in this study it is understandable that the depth and reach of the Operations Coordinating Board would be overlooked. Given Cutler's station and experience as both a Psychological Strategy Board advisor to the senior staff as well as a national security advisor to Eisenhower who oversaw the OCB, it is unlikely that he was unaware or misinformed regarding the Operations Coordinating Board: rather, Cutler was the original architect of the Planning Board to bring issues to the NSC, he was extremely tied to the 'process' he developed (policy hill), and remained true to this intent even if it was not merited out in practice (or changed over time). It is also possible that it was the board's intimate involvement in both national security policy and intelligence that warranted Cutler to downplay the role of the group in national security affairs.⁴⁵⁵

The truth remains that the Operations Coordinating Board was established to coordinate the operational activities of United States' government agencies by assisting integration and execution of operations (covert and overt) and providing a reporting mechanism to the two arbiters of United

⁴⁵⁴ Alfred D. Sander, *Eisenhower's Executive Office: Contributions in Political Science* (Boulder: Praeger, 1999) p. 147.

⁴⁵⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, *Memorandum For: CIA Members of OCB Working Groups*, Washington D.C, 6 February 1958, pp. 1-5, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP86T00268R000900010034-7, NACP, CREST Archives; and Staats, *Operations Coordinating Board: A Descriptive Statement of the Organization, Functions, and procedures of the OCB*, (September 1955) p. 7.

States' national security policy in the NSC and the president. At this point we are able to see where the OCB has already pulled away from the limitations that had hamstrung the Psychological Strategy Board. The 'operational' focus of the OCB provides an actionable difference for the functioning of the board that surpassed the 'psychological' rigidity that effectively nullified the PSB from being an impactful element of the National Security Council system. Counter to the policy hill description, the Operations Coordinating Board appears to have participated in both the formulation of operational guidance and assigning operational tasks. In order to meet the needs of the requesting authority, the Operations Coordinating Board functioned via task specific working groups that set about to study and assess the issues at hand. In these working groups, important emphasis was given to anticipating problems and devising means for overcoming them. Depending upon which side of Cutler's policy hill the working group was operating, it should now be understood that the OCB had both direct and indirect influence on national security policy. The OCB was responsible for a number of targeted product lines, including Outline Plans, Progress Reports, and Special Papers. To illustrate, each product allowed the OCB access to inform that National Security Council at each level of policy development.

OUTLINE PLAN(s): Prepared to facilitate interdepartmental coordination and forward planning of operations, the plan offered a catalogue of courses of action, agency responsibilities, and timing considerations for the implementation of National Security Council policy. Outline Plans were prepared for all NSC country policies assigned to the Operations Coordinating Board and granted the OCB input into policy recommendations and planning.

PROGRESS REPORT(s): Indicated the progress and effectiveness of operating programmes. Progress reports were used to inform the National Security Council of the operational effectiveness of approved policies, additionally; the board used these reports to advise the council whether or not a review of policy was recommended. Any recommended policy revision was prepared for council consideration by the Planning Board and this process allowed the OCB to indirectly initiate new policies and change existing ones.

SPECIAL PAPER(s): Prepared by the working groups to meet pressing needs for information or action to be provided by the Board or recommended to the National Security Council.

These products allowed the OCB special access to the NSC outside of the policy development process described and gave the Board access to inform current issues facing the council (something that was not an option for its predecessor, the PSB).

To illustrate, a special paper prepared by the working group on the PCG is listed here noting the recommendations made to the NSC and the president for policy changes including: for board representatives to replace the Planning Coordination Group regarding specific covert operations; and recommendations made to the president regarding the implementation of specific covert operations, highlighting the intimate role the Operations Coordinating Board played in the intelligence planning and policy realm as well. The working group memo to the OCB titled *Report for the Coordination Planning Group* dated December 1955 states:

The Planning Coordination Group was also given specific responsibilities for being advised of and channelling support to major covert programs (NSC 5412/1) and for being the coordinating agency for the statements of policy in NSC 5505/1 and NSC 5502/1. Respecting covert operations, the group recommends that the President approve that NSC 5412/1 be amended so as to substitute therein for the Planning Coordination Group the representative of the President on the OCB and the designated representative of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defence. Respecting the coordination of NSC 5505/1, the OCB has forwarded to the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs the group's recommendation that the policy statement (as well as the related policy statement in NSC 174) should be reviewed by the NSC Planning Board in the light of and subsequent to the pending revision of NSC 5501. By December 31, 1955, the Group will have submitted to the NSC a report on actions taken to implement NSC 5505/1 and an outline plan of operations to effect further integration of effort in this field. The Group recommends that the President designate the OCB as the coordinating agency for the statements of policy in NSC 5505/1 and NSC 174 effective December 31, 1955.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁶ Document: 246, "The Planning Coordination Group, Memorandum from the Chairman of the Planning Coordination Group (Rockefeller) to the Chairmen of the Operations Coordinating Board (Hoover): Report of the Planning Coordination Group," Washington D.C., 14 December 1955, in Douglas Kean, Michael Warner (Eds), *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1950-1955, The Intelligence Community*, (Washington D.C., GPO, 2007) pp. 1-8.

For more context: political operations had fallen under the umbrella of covert operations with NSC 10/5 on 23 October 1951. Under this concept CIA covert operations expanded beyond media related false publications and black radio to include “political warfare, economic warfare, and preventive direct actions (e.g., support for guerrillas, sabotage and front organizations.”⁴⁵⁷ In this structure, the OCB replaced the coordination group and was established within the ‘5412’ group, specifically designed to coordinate covert operations and review CIA political operations. Although Eisenhower would designate the ‘5412’ its own entity removed from the OCB (for projects of the highest classification), OCB leadership was retained in the group, maintaining the board’s insight and influence.⁴⁵⁸ The Icelandic defence, Christmas East operation, and PCG working group examples along with the covert operation context just mentioned, serve to highlight the evolution of the Operations Coordinating Board away from a strict policy review and coordination mechanism within the NSC process, to an influential policy development, strategic approving authority, and recommendation board. This likely had to do with a number of factors, but chief among them being the State Department chairmanship of the board and the senior level inclusion of the CIA. Having key actors in both the worlds of diplomacy and intelligence (along with a more centralized and established role) would foster an environment for the OCB to both inform the highest levels of the US government and exceed the impact of its predecessor in the Psychological Strategy Board.⁴⁵⁹

Looking back before moving forward, we can now see and understand how, through organizational roles, membership, and evolution, the OCB operated as an executive level body within the national security construct of the Eisenhower administration. Additionally, the OCB leveraged its access and placement with the IC to capitalize on its opportunities for influence. A declassified Operations Coordinating Board memorandum for CIA members to the working groups, shows the importance

⁴⁵⁷ United States Senate, *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities*, 94th Congress, 2d Session, Re: 94-755, Washington D.C., 26 April 1976, p. 49, (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1976).

⁴⁵⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, *Notes Prepared for HAK Senate Foreign Relations Committee Confirmation*, Washington D.C., September 1973, cited in Sander, *Eisenhower’s Executive Office: Contributions in Political Science*, p. 142.

⁴⁵⁹ Dean Acheson was the United States Secretary of State under President Truman (1949-1953) and John Foster Dulles was the United States Secretary of State under President Eisenhower (1953-1959). General Walter Bedell Smith was the State Department’s chairman of the OCB before being selected as the Director of Central Intelligence, and the inclusion of Robert Cutler and his successor national security advisors all member to the board.

both the board and the agency put toward collaboration. Agency employees were assigned to OCB working groups and were instructed to fully contribute to the preparation of papers concerned with operations (as all were recognized to have strong intelligence content) in order to bring to bear the full assets of the agency.⁴⁶⁰ Detailed in the memorandum were the expectations of the CIA members to “participate fully in the discussions of the Working Group as an officer informed on the area under consideration,” and that the CIA representative should attend all meetings “... except when absolutely unavoidable. In no case should meetings be skipped entirely.”⁴⁶¹ At this point, it is prudent to draw a comparison to a similar memorandum sent by PSB Acting Director, George A. Morgan, to the DCI in February 1953. This memo, declassified and approved for release in 2006, requested that the CIA designate Agency employees to support the Psychological Strategy Board in furtherance of developing psychological strategies. Of note in this memo is the assurance that meetings would occur “occasionally – only when circumstances require.”⁴⁶² Director Morgan goes further in his memorandum to state “It is my hope that insofar as practicable, the matters out-lined above [relating to the content of the meetings] will be dealt with by direct contact between the designated representatives of the member agencies and my staff, and that meetings will be kept to a minimum.”⁴⁶³ We should note here that neither instance is a directive, they both are memoranda from the respective board detailing the responsibilities for the CIA employees providing support. A strong argument can be made that the very different levels of commitment that the CIA was expected to leverage against the PSB and the OCB, are a reflection of change in intelligence roles as the Operations Coordinating Board, once again moved beyond the shadow of the PSB. Specifically, the Central Intelligence Agency members (who were selected as representatives of the DCI) were directed to concern themselves with accuracy, tone, connotations, and conformity; and not only were OCB reports to sync with Agency estimates, it was explained that the DCI wished to be fully informed on the operations in the particular geographic or functional area under consideration.⁴⁶⁴ Additionally, a classified annex was to be prepared to accompany either a progress report or an operations plan, meant specifically for the DCI

⁴⁶⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, *Memorandum For: CIA Members of OCB Working Groups*, (1958) pp. 1-5.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Psychological Strategy Board, *Memorandum For: The Honorable Allen W. Dulles: Implementation of PSB D-27*, Washington D.C., 25 February 1953, pp. 1-3, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP8001731R003300190002-8, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁴ Operations Coordinating Board, *Memorandum For: CIA Members of OCB Working Groups*, (1958) pp. 1-5.

himself.⁴⁶⁵ Similar to the National Intelligence Council (NIC) today,⁴⁶⁶ the OCB group served to assist the nascent NSC in crafting US national security policy and to foster the inclusion of the various aspects of the burgeoning US IC; consolidating the strands of intelligence into focused, coherent recommendations for the National Security Council and the President of the United States.

The Operations Coordinating Board was not necessarily envisioned as an independent intelligence entity, in and of itself, despite having the Director of Central Intelligence member to the board. However, as discussed previously the very nature of intelligence, and the coordination and control over information, whose attempted separation doomed the Psychological Strategy Board, was embraced by the Operations Coordinating Board. The focus and attention paid to creating a modern intelligence-driven community in the post-war national security enterprise emphasizes the recognized importance of intelligence in guiding policy. Again, we must reflect upon the traditionalist and activist beliefs outlined in the introduction regarding the intelligence-policy divide. Now with a better understanding of the form and function of the OCB, it becomes clear that they existed in an area between the two, closely representing that which is argued for in the activist approach. Having established: how the OCB was built into the NSC structure; the avenues by which the OCB could inform policy; and the audience with which the OCB held court; we have been able to show how the inclusion of the new archival records has granted the opportunity to construct a narrative noticeably absent from the existing literature. The declassified accounts are enlightening as to the true directions, functions, and capabilities of the Operations Coordinating Board. Going forward we will continue to lean heavily on previously classified material, and in the following chapter we will explore how the OCB leveraged the placement and access described in this chapter, to inform and influence US-Middle East policy.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ The United States National Intelligence Council creates National Intelligence Estimates on issues facing the national security interests of the United States. National Intelligence Estimates are community-wide assessments and are efforts to provide assessments from across the intelligence community.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FROM THE PSB TO THE OCB: THE STRATEGY FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

In this chapter, we will turn our attention to the Middle East and the preliminary steps the US took to develop a regional strategy. This is not a novel concept in and of itself, as US-Middle East policy development in the Cold War has been covered extensively in the academic corpus. However, much of the secondary literature on topics discussed in this chapter, such as: US regional policy; access to oil; Soviet containment; and military relationships, often with few exceptions fails to mention the PSB or the OCB outright. Therefore, the strength of this study remains our ability to view and understand these topics through a new prism, from the elements that were influential in shaping them. In previous chapters we have discussed that Washington recognized the economic and military importance of the region in the struggle against the spread of Soviet communism. However, recognizing something as a national security interest and developing policy against it are not one and the same. This chapter will establish the policy link from the PSB to the OCB, which is important as we track the policy roadwork leading the US to executive decisions following the coup in Iraq in 1958.

In the preceding chapters we have shown how the membership and makeup of both the PSB and the OCB lent themselves to the continuity of operations (i.e. how the OCB was able continue the work of PSB); however, our goal here is to go a bit deeper and construct the link between the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board using Middle East policy as our bridge. At our disposal, we will use the March 1952 PSB *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, the 1953 PSB D-22: *Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, the National Security Council's July 1954 report *United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, and the Operations Coordinating Board's July 1954 *Progress Report on NSC 155/1: U.S. Objectives and Policies With Respect to the Near East*. The goal is to illustrate that recommendations for policy developed under the Psychological Strategy Board survived the demise of the PSB and were largely adopted into the National Security Council's policy toward the region. The OCB was then tasked against coordinating the policy efforts of the NSC Middle East policy and reporting its progress back to the National Security Council. Not only will this show how the PSB impacted national policy, we will show those PSB recommendations tracked parallel to Middle East policy developments the US implemented in pursuit of its regional objectives. It is important to revisit a key argument of this thesis, that the disparate and competitive national security policy environment (existing after the Second World War),

had left nationally-minded presidents dissatisfied with the progress being made confronting the Soviet Union on the global scale. Therefore, both Truman and Eisenhower created and enhanced a national security policy system to bring the views, interests, and actors from the key agencies together in order to provide the chief executive with consolidated, whole of government, national assessments. Under this construct, Truman and Eisenhower believed they could be better informed of the risks and issues facing the United States than had existed in the more decentralized past. We will pay particular attention to a key facet of America's regional policy: the evolutionary attempts to establish defensive relationships in the Middle East, from the Middle East Command (MEC) to the Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO) and the path to the Northern Tier concept. These regional strategies, informed by the work of the PSB and OCB, would have impact on the national decision to commit forces after the fall of the Western-leaning Iraqi government.

The Psychological Strategy Board had been beset by a number of issues regarding process, responsibility, and authority. These issues had impacted the PSB's ability to produce against their charter - the development of psychological strategies for American foreign policy. However, despite the PSB's inability to reach its full potential, the board had been able to generate a number of pilot studies on key issues to include: *PSB D-23: Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning Tasks with Regard to South East Asia* (the repatriation of prisoners of war in Korea); *PSB D-14c: Psychological Operations Plan for the Reduction of Communist Power in France*; *PSB D-24: Program of Psychological Preparation for Stalin's Passing From Power*; *PSB D-7c: Psychological Operations Plan Incident to Korean Cease-Fire Negotiations*, *PSB D-11b: National Overt Propaganda Policy Guidance for General War*, and *PSB D-33: Doctrinal (Ideological) Warfare Against the USSR* among others.⁴⁶⁷ While these are notable as they show that the PSB had engaged in important work for the US national security, in particular (and important to this study), they had

⁴⁶⁷ The Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Board Staff Study on Repatriation of Prisoners of War in Korea*, Washington D.C., 18 October 1951, CIA General Records - CIA-RDP80R01731R003200010025-3, NACP, CREST Archives; The Psychological Strategy Board, *Eleventh Meeting of the Psychological Strategy Board, March 27, 1952*, Washington D.C., 27 March 1952, CIA General Records - CIA-RDP80R01731R003300160013-9, NACP, CREST Archives; The Psychological Strategy Board, *Progress Report on Implementation of PSB D-14c: Psychological Operations Plan for the Reduction of Communist Power in France*, Washington D.C., 13 January 1953, CIA General Records - CIA-RDP80R01731R003200020009-0, NACP, CREST Archives; and The Psychological Strategy Board, *Progress Report by the Director at the Seventeenth Meeting of the Psychological Strategy Board*, Washington D.C., 15 January 1953, CIA General Records, CIA-RDP80R01731R003300190026-2, NACP, CREST Archives.

succeeded in producing a psychological strategy (some elements of which we covered in Chapter Four) for reaching national security goals in the Middle East, *PSB D-22 Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East*, before being disbanded. The PSB may have ceased to exist, yet the necessity for Middle East policy remained. Taking up the mantle from the ashes of the PSB, the OCB set about to tackle the problem set, unencumbered by the self-limiting “psychological” boundaries of the PSB.

So as not to “bury the lead,” in March of 1954 the Operations Coordinating Board recommended (based on an interdepartmental review of PSB D-22) that the OCB should reaffirm the validity of the existing plan for use in the board’s general plans and operations for the Middle East region. The information in the OCB’s report would be made available to “those individuals engaged in planning and operations in the Middle East area,” so they may be provided the context necessary to govern the US policy toward the area.⁴⁶⁸ The point here is that the Psychological Strategy Board’s Middle East report was not forgotten, nor scrapped; rather, it was approved by an interdepartmental committee as a template for the Operations Coordinating Board’s own reports on the area. Of course, this should come as no surprise, while the naming convention and the mission charter changed from the PSB to the OCB, the cornerstone remained remarkably stable. Although there were new personnel within the OCB, and a more inclusive and broader focus, the key membership of the boards remained the same. Remaining constant were the DCI and board members of the undersecretary levels of the executive departments. So, while the personalities were changed (as is common with a changeover of administrations) the agencies and their interests remained the nucleus of the board. This is important to highlight at the outset as we look at the PSB psychological strategy for the Middle East knowing that those recommendations were reviewed and approved for the OCB. Additionally, what we will show in this chapter is that the recommendations put forward by the PSB were later reflected in the NSC policy *155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, which the OCB was charged with coordinating. This brings full circle the policy recommendations made by the PSB, to the policy approved by the National Security Council, and coordinated by the OCB. In a nutshell, major elements of US policy toward the Middle East (later resulting in the decision to commit forces

⁴⁶⁸ The Operations Coordinating Board, *Recommendations for OCB Action Regarding the Paper PSB D-22, Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East*, Washington D.C., 30 March 1954, CIA General Records - CIA-RDP80-01065000200150002-8, NACP, CREST Archive.

in 1958), was first seeded in the PSB, accepted by the NSC, and further developed and coordinated by the OCB.

On 14 July 1953, six months after taking office, President Eisenhower approved *NSC 155/1 United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*. Using this report, we will show how foundational aspects of the PSB study were carried forward by the National Security Council in their regional policy, and designated the OCB the coordinating agency for the plan. Rather than creating a bulleted list of the information in the reports, or developing side-by-side categories from each board, it is more prudent to focus on the general topics and their relationship to national security. First and foremost, both the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board, despite having different missions, began from a point of common ground, i.e., recognition of the strategic importance of the Middle East.

MIDDLE EAST OIL, LOCATION, AND NATIONAL SECURITY

As stated previously, the natural resources of the Middle East were of vital importance to the United States and the West. In the PSB staff study on the Middle East, the board stated at the outset that “the ultimate U.S. National objectives in the Middle East are the insurance that the area and its resources remain available to the U.S. and its Allies.”⁴⁶⁹ To understand just how important the supply and trade of foreign petroleum was to US national security interests, we will examine a 1953 governmental complaint against US oil. In January 1953 the Departments of Defense, State, Interior, and Justice provided a report to the NSC regarding a developing national security issue concerning free world petroleum demands and potential supplies. This January 1953 report, *National Security Problems Concerning Free World Petroleum Demands and Potential Supplies*, was generated after the publication of a Federal Trade Commission (FTC) report alleging that US oil companies (engaged overseas) had been operating in violation of anti-trust law. The FTC report indicated US oil companies had colluded to raise the price of oil, in efforts to gain larger contracts from the US military.⁴⁷⁰ It was estimated in

⁴⁶⁹ Psychological Strategy Board, *DRAFT: Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, Washington D.C., 18 MAR 1952, Box 2, Planning Coordination Group Series, White Office/NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-1961 File, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library (DDEL), Abilene, Kansas.

⁴⁷⁰ National Security Council, “National Security Problems Concerning Free World Petroleum Demands and Potential Supplies”, 6 January 1953, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1952-1954, General: Economic and Political Matters, Vol. 1,

one example that the American oil companies had over-charged the United States' Navy approximately \$70 million dollars (roughly \$746 million dollars in 2020) to meet their demand for petroleum.⁴⁷¹ The FTC report had resulted in the United States Attorney General establishing a grand jury to investigate criminal conduct undertaken by American oil operating on the world market. Despite the apparent abuse and illegal actions of US businesses in the international oil cartel, both the Departments of State and Defense argued that American and Western control over global oil markets were too important to jeopardize with the potential political fallout from the grand jury indictments. As a result, they recommended the grand jury investigation be terminated and moved to civil court (rather than criminal) where the repercussions could be better controlled. Both the DOD and DOS argued to the NSC that complex economies of the Western world were absolutely dependent on the continued supply of oil, and that "expanding economies, whether modern and progressive, or backward and underdeveloped, require ever increasing quantities of petroleum."⁴⁷²

The estimates given to the NSC were stark: oil and natural gas amounted to 50% of America's vast energy consumption, the United States' national consumption accounted for 60% of the overall world demand.⁴⁷³ Ultimately, major sources of foreign oil were indispensable to the economies of Europe and in the future might become indispensable even to the peacetime economy of the United States. This reality was further complicated by the estimate (at that time), that the Middle East accounted for over half of the world's oil supply. Therefore, in spite of evidence to suggest that American oil companies were defrauding the US military while supplying arguably their most valuable resource, the National Security Council was being petitioned to halt the investigation in light of US and Western national security interests.⁴⁷⁴ Outside of the Department of Justice, the various departments of the executive branch were nearly unanimous that a criminal investigation of the oil companies held too great a risk to US national security interests to be allowed to continue. Based on those recommendations, President Eisenhower, who considered himself a strongly anti-trust president, and by his own admission "had a long and bitter experience with the oil companies, and was of the opinion

Part 2, eds. Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, John P. Glennon, and Paul Claussen (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1974) Document 159.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

that they had almost lost us the last war,” nevertheless believed that national security was at stake and approved the recommendations of the DOS and DOD.⁴⁷⁵

Ultimately, the American oil companies’ relationship with the governments of the oil producing states was seen as the United States’ most valuable investment with respect to national security.⁴⁷⁶ Fears that the fallout from a criminal prosecution could lead to Soviet propaganda against Western capitalism; restricted access to foreign petroleum; or an equally devastating outcome, the loss of military presence in key states; were simply too great for the president and the NSC to chance. With this as context, it is therefore understandable that in July of 1954, the NSC would highlight not only the access to oil as vital to US national security, but also acknowledged that in addition to the natural resources present in the region, the geography of the Middle East combined into a global flashpoint at the epicentre of the Cold War. This was something the 1953 NSC report described as “one of the most explosive areas of the world.”⁴⁷⁷ Earlier, the Psychological Strategy Board had described “the problem of oil exists both from the standpoint of denial to the Soviet Union and, more immediately, the oil requirements of free world forces.”⁴⁷⁸ The following year, the NSC would make clear that it was vital to ensure that not only should the “resources, the strategic positions, and the passage rights of the area” be made available to the US and her allies, but equally important was the denial of those same “resources and strategic positions to the Soviet Bloc.”⁴⁷⁹ In addition to the largest known petroleum reserves in the world at that time, the National Security Council also recognized that the region held “essential location for strategic military bases in any world conflict against Communism.”⁴⁸⁰ The need

⁴⁷⁵ DDE, “Memorandum of Discussion at the 128th Meeting of the National Security Council on Friday, January 9, 1953,” *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, General: Economic and Political Matters, Vol. 1, Part 2*, eds. Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, John P. Glennon, and Paul Claussen (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1974) Document 161.

⁴⁷⁶ National Security Council, “National Security Problems Concerning Free World Petroleum Demands and Potential Supplies,” 6 January 1953, Document 159.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁸ Psychological Strategy Board, *Working Draft: 21a - D-22: The Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, Washington D.C., 25 July 1952, p. 4, General CIA Records: CIA-RDP80-01065A000200150024-5, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴⁷⁹ National Security Council, Document 127, *United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, Washington D.C., 23 July 1954, p. 27, George Washington University, National Security Archive, Washington D.C., Documentation on Early Cold War U.S. Propaganda Activities in the Middle East.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

for a military presence to protect American interests was recognized; the question was how to establish one? In the following section we will talk about how the PSB, the NSC, and later the OCB focused on the issue of military defence arrangements and adopted both conciliatory and coercive recommendations to engage the region.

MILITARY PRESENCE: THE MIDDLE EAST COMMAND AND THE MIDDLE EAST DEFENSE ORGANIZATION: THE RECOGNITION OF THE NORTHERN TIER

The Truman administration had recognized the necessity for a defence collective of Middle Eastern states to protect Western interests, and after delegation with the British in 1951, the US agreed to take part in the Middle East Command (MEC). In particular, Toru Onozawa notes in “Formation of American Regional Policy for the Middle East, 1950-1952: The Middle East Command Concept and Its Legacy” that “behind the scenes, the [Truman] administration was developing another dimension of the regional policy, which was being formulated by Ad-Hoc Panel “H” of the Psychological Strategy Board.”⁴⁸¹ Panel H’s report, *PSB D-22: The Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, noted specifically that the “net result [of the Middle East] is that the area is in essence a military vacuum, an economic slum, a political anachronism, and a house divided against itself.”⁴⁸² The PSB agreed that military assistance programmes would play an important role in winning the cooperation of the Middle Eastern governments, and attaining the long-term goal of “developing adequate armed forces in the Middle East, to protect and defend that area in the event of Soviet attack.”⁴⁸³ However, what should be noted is that the PSB viewed these military assistance programmes as the vehicle to the long term goal, not the destination in and of themselves.

In a July 1952 draft of the PSB Middle East study, the board assessed that the establishment of a strategic military presence in the region served two purposes: first it brought to attention the political and domestic instability that characterized the Middle Eastern states; second, that Middle Eastern neutrality was not an acceptable outcome for the US. The PSB noted that instability was endemic to the region, and it jeopardized those governments’ ability to resist Soviet power and ultimately

⁴⁸¹ Toru Onozawa, “Formation of American Regional Policy for the Middle East, 1950-1952: The Middle East Command Concept and Its Legacy,” *Diplomatic History*, 29:1 (January 2005) p. 146.

⁴⁸² Psychological Strategy Board, *Working Draft 21a - D-22: The Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 3.

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

domination. The PSB felt the political and domestic instability could hinder US military designs for the region, in fact it considered “the settlement of disputes involving Iran, Egypt and the U.K. to be keys to the success of our Middle East objectives, from which would flow cooperation in the Middle East Command and the diminution of the danger of violent nationalism.”⁴⁸⁴ A January 1954 declassified CIA document, *Middle East Defense Arrangements: Background*, states that the MEC was a multilateral military pact intended to solve the Anglo-Egyptian impasse over the British military presence in the Suez.⁴⁸⁵ Under the MEC, Egypt was approached to join as an equal founding member, no doubt, to the collective mind of the PSB, necessary to stabilize a devolving political situation in Cairo. As the PSB D-22 makes clear, “the imminent threat to Western interests arises not so much from the threat of direct Soviet military attack as from acute instability, anti-Western nationalism and Arab-Israeli antagonism.”⁴⁸⁶ Egyptian involvement in the MEC was thought to be a first step towards taming the tide of anti-Western nationalism fomenting instability and plaguing the accord between Egypt and the West. Additionally, in March 1952, early drafts of the PSB *Staff Study On Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, the Psychological Strategy Board noted that while the “Middle East Command is a beginning of a multilateral approach, but within the U.S. Government there has yet to be conceived a plan for coordinated and total approach to the security problem of the region as well as of the Middle East Command itself.”⁴⁸⁷ To add insult to injury, Egypt rejected the British and US offers, and decision-makers in Washington set about to re-imagine the concept.

For the PSB, the NSC, and later the OCB, the end-state for the region was a progressive, modern, and stable Middle East, aligned with the West and capable of fending off Soviet influence. The purpose of pointing this out is simply to make clear that the PSB strategy, while not focused entirely on the military solution, it was a substantial ingredient to the overall recipe. It cannot be argued that the Psychological Strategy Board was the impetus for the Middle East Command, as the decision to establish the MEC predated the PSB. However, as the Psychological Strategy Board records show, a Middle East defence arrangement was a foundational pillar of the psychological strategy to fight

⁴⁸⁴ Psychological Strategy Board, *Working Draft: 21a - D-22: The Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 4.

⁴⁸⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, *Middle East Defense Arrangements: Background*, Washington D.C., 14 January 1954, pg. 1, General CIA Records, CIA-RDP79R00890A000200030020-0, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴⁸⁶ Psychological Strategy Board, *Working Draft: 21a - D-22: The Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 4.

⁴⁸⁷ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study On Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, Washington D.C., 18 March 1952, p. 2, General CIA Records, CIA-RDP80-01065A000500100077-8, NACP, CREST Archives.

communism. Whether it was the MEC discussed in the July 1952 draft, or its successor organization the Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO) discussed in the final version of PSB D-22 (January 1953):

The ultimate end of the U.S. policy is to insure that the area and its resources are available to strengthen the free world. To do so requires that the U.S. and its Allies persuade the leaders of the area to develop and maintain armed forces adequate to insure internal security. Such force would be inadequate for resisting Soviet aggression. The U.S. must, therefore, also create an atmosphere which will allow entrance of Allied troops into the area should such a move become necessary to prevent a Soviet over-running all or part of the area. This atmosphere can best be obtained by creation of a Western-Middle East Defense Organization.⁴⁸⁸

In a March 1953 secret telegram, two months after the final PSB D-22 report recommended the MEDO as the best option for creating a regional environment amicable to Washington's designs, Eisenhower's new Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles (CIA Director Allen Dulles' brother) wrote to the US Embassy in Iraq stating specifically that establishing the MEDO could be a "concrete measure to implement "psychological objectives" of [the] PSB program for [the] Middle East as contained [in] document D22 February 6, 1953."⁴⁸⁹ The relevance here being that the PSB, consisting of key personnel from the preeminent departments of American foreign policy (DOS, DOD, and CIA), was the vehicle for consolidated assessments putting forward findings and recommendations that were being implemented in the search for a reasonable Middle East strategy. As the Dulles telegram shows, these recommendations were then used to justify the pursuit of the individual department policies outside of the PSB construct. Further evidence for this is found in other State Department declassified records where PSB policy recommendations, regarding regional stability in the Middle East, are noted as integral parts to MEDO's success. In order to increase MEDO's likelihood for acceptance, State argued "the West should continue to work on the two principal keys to MEDO success: i.e. improvement of public opinion towards the West, and strengthened leadership

⁴⁸⁸ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, Washington D.C., 13 January 1953, p. 26, General CIA Records, CIA-RDP80R01731R003200030029-7, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁴⁸⁹ John Foster Dulles, "Telegram March 6, 1953," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, the Near and Middle East Volume IX, Part 1.* eds., Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, John P. Glennon, and Paul Claussen (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1974) Document 122.

in NE (Near East) governments,” both of which being key tenets of the PSB D-22 strategy.⁴⁹⁰ Additionally, echoing the PSB (and later NSC and OCB) opinions, the Department of State argued that it was necessary “to give Arab states the leading role, or a belief that they have a leading role, in the defense of their own area.”⁴⁹¹ It is interesting, but also important to emphasize here, that the Department of State was actually calling for the United States to operate in a seemingly hands-off approach, as this would give the Arab states a better perception that they were controlling the process. In Dulles’ March 1953 telegram to the embassy in Iraq he makes explicit that “there might well be advantages in giving Middle East participants at least psychological benefit of having word spread throughout [the] area that Western powers are prepared [to] join the in area defense rather than vice versa.”⁴⁹² This issue had been specifically addressed by the PSB staff earlier in August 1952, when the acting Assistant Director for Plans (and later OCB acting Deputy Executive Officer), United States Air Force Colonel Byron K. Enyart wrote, “the announcement of the formation of the Middle East Command should not have been put forward by powers outside the area,” as it only strengthened the regional perception that the United States would “intend to use their country as an area of conflict.”⁴⁹³ The move to change Arab perception was not the only shift taking place after the collapse of the Middle East Command; the very scope of the problem was under review.

In “SEATO, MEDO, and the Baghdad Pact: Anthony Eden, British Foreign Policy and the Collective Defense of Southeast Asia and the Middle East, 1952-1955,” Kevin Ruane notes that the lack of progress in realizing the MEC (intended as a formal command organization) led the US to enter into agreement with the British government (in the Summer of 1952) to establish the MEDO, envisioned as a planning organization “which might someday develop into a fully-fledged Middle East NATO.”⁴⁹⁴ The shift highlighted a change, one from a tactical command, based on immediate needs (basing rights

⁴⁹⁰ Funkhouser, *Additional Notes on Possible Iraq, Syria, Lebanese Reactions to MEDO*, Washington D.C., 5 November 1952, Department of State Lot Files, Record Group 59, 57 D 298, NACP.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹² John Foster Dulles, “Telegram March 6, 1953,” *FRUS*, Document 122.

⁴⁹³ Psychological Strategy Board, *Personal Reactions after Conversations with Mr. Max - Byron K. Enyart*, Washington D.C., 19 August 1952, p. 2, Whitehouse Office, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948 -1961, Psychological Strategy Board Central Files Series, Box 4, PSB X-201, Enyart, Byron K., DDEL.

⁴⁹⁴ Kevin Ruane, “SEATO, MEDO, and the Baghdad Pact: Anthony Eden, British Foreign Policy and the Collective Defense of Southeast Asia and the Middle East, 1952-1955,” *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 16:1 (2005) pp. 169-199.

in Egypt) to more of a strategic planning organization. The change in policy reflected a change in thought in Washington, highlighted during the closed-door sessions of the Psychological Strategy Board in March 1952. During PSB meetings regarding the scope and focus of Panel H's D-22 strategy, United States Army Colonel Paul Davis, a member of the Psychological Strategy Board staff, detailed the board's view that the Middle East Command had been too much of a short term, or as he put it, "a short-range," approach.⁴⁹⁵ In these meetings, the undersecretaries of State and Defense, and CIA Deputy Director Allen W. Dulles, held discussions with PSB staff and Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) representatives to discuss the nation's psychological strategy for the Middle East. Speaking for the board staff, Colonel Davis argued that the planning approach to the region necessitated long-range thinking, as opposed to the short-range approach that had dominated discussions focusing only the immediate threat, i.e. "the political crises in Iran and Egypt and the immediate steps toward creating a Middle East Command."⁴⁹⁶ Colonel Davis emphasized that the projected plans for large-scale Western economic and military involvement in the region would span several years, creating additional and unforeseen social and psychological strains in the area. In the earlier Psychological Strategy Board Staff Study, the PSB pointed out:

The thought is that development of certain economic facilities in support of the Middle East Command will be required. This will include the development of ports, cement plants, waste-gas conversion industries, machine shops, air-craft repair facilities, and similar industrial bases necessary to a communications zone...These activities will undoubtedly have, perhaps in a years' time, significant economic impact on the area. Such an impact although it may be only temporary as in World War II, offers several possibilities, as well as problems, from the standpoint of psychological strategy.⁴⁹⁷

The point of raising this is to show that early on the Psychological Strategy Board recognized the Middle East Command as a short-range approach with long-range implications. This resulted in the PSB recommending in the early stages moving toward a more long-range platform with planning as the focus. Particularly evident in the July 1952 working draft of the PSB D-22, the Psychological

⁴⁹⁵ Psychological Strategy Board, *Eleventh Meeting of the Psychological Strategy Board, March 27, 1952*, (1952) p.7.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 7.

⁴⁹⁷ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 9.

Strategy Board pointed out that “the strengthening of the Middle East must be approached on a regional, institutional basis,” and that it was true “that an independent Egypt is of little consequence in a free-world security structure.”⁴⁹⁸ The obvious meaning behind this was that a specific country focus (such as Egypt in the example of the Middle East Command) was too limited to be meaningful. Regionalism was required, regionalism that saw beyond the immediate threat and one that planned for the future. Therefore, planning was necessary for regional economic measures, regional defence programmes, regional cultural outreach, and regional political modernization. It is important to note at this time that the Psychological Strategy Board chose to call attention away from the Cairo-centred Middle East concept, and bring focus to another geographic regional consideration. In the case for developing a broader approach, the PSB mentioned that “perhaps the most promising area for special political measures is the Soviet border area running from Turkey to Pakistan.”⁴⁹⁹ These recommendations would play a larger role in short order as the United States began to pursue more directly its “Northern Tier” concept. However, such policy would follow in a step-wise fashion, and before the Northern Tier could be pursued with policy, the United States moved forward with the MEDO after the failure of the MEC.

US policy makers had been caught off guard by the negative reactions from regional leaders (and regional populations) to Western military involvement as envisioned in the Middle East Command. Looking forward, the Psychological Strategy Board felt that the stress and strains, as described by Colonel Davis, that would inevitably result from Western involvement in the region could be successfully mitigated by a “properly conceived long-range plan,” that could “identify and can assist in channelizing into such ways as to reduce the basic instability in the area.”⁵⁰⁰ Under this concept, Washington began to move away from the tactical command idea of the MEC and developing strategies that more closely mirrored the PSB’s long-range regional approach, melding regional interests with Western involvement. The targets of this strategy included not only the existing regional leadership, but also “opinion forming groups” and “the new urban and intellectual classes,” those groups necessary for engaging the future “stress and strain” and inevitable instability that would emerge.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁸ Psychological Strategy Board, *Working Draft: 21a - D-22: The Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, p. 6.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid. p. 9.

⁵⁰⁰ Psychological Strategy Board, *Staff Study on Psychological Strategy Planning for the Middle East*, (1952) p. 2.

⁵⁰¹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (13 January 1953) p. 1.

Onozawa notes that the PSB D-22 established political stability as the overall objective, assuming such stability would be attained by redirecting efforts and “channelling the regional dynamism into constructive channels” that would represent another (and more inclusive) side for US regional policy than had been exhibited previously under the planning for the Middle East Command, and was “a harbinger of further American involvement in the Middle East.”⁵⁰² Interestingly, the dynamism that the Psychological Strategy Board was referring to, proved to be a versatile foe for US policy makers. While in the MEC example, political instability served to exasperate the American position in the struggle against communism (resulting in the outright rejection of the plan from Cairo), in the earlier case of the grand jury investigation into US oil, such instability had served to insulate the United States from negative fallout. In the National Security Council memorandum where Eisenhower sided with protecting the oil companies, it had earlier been asked of Secretary John Foster Dulles: why had the government not seen greater pushback after the investigation had been made public? In his response, Dulles remarked that “the reactions in the Middle East had not been so notable, thanks largely to the preoccupation of the governments of the Middle Eastern countries with their own problems.”⁵⁰³ While Middle Eastern political and domestic instability had served the US well in that instance, overall, the instability was a true threat to the West’s efforts against the Soviet Union. Such focus and preoccupation on domestic matters in the Arab states were not amenable to the larger Western design for incorporating the Middle East into its defence against communism, as too local a focus often resulted in Arab leaders leaning toward neutrality. In particular, the PSB argued that the leaders of the region should not be allowed to think that neutrality in the Cold War struggle would “equate to independence and that present defense mechanisms of the Middle East are totally inadequate to prevent (Soviet) aggression in the area.”⁵⁰⁴ Following the rejection of the MEC, the national security architecture in Washington set about devising another construct to allow Western military power a

⁵⁰² Onozawa, “Formation of American Regional Policy for the Middle East, 1950-1952: The Middle East command Concept and Its Legacy,” (2005) p. 146.

⁵⁰³ Psychological Strategy Board, “Memorandum of Discussion at the 128th Meeting of the National Security Council,” Washington D.C., 9 January 1953, p. 1340, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, General: Economic and Political Matters, Volume I, Part 2*, eds. David M. Baehler, Herbert A. Fine, Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, Ronald D. Landa, Lisle A. Rose, William F. Sanford, Jr., Ilana M. Stern (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1983).

⁵⁰⁴ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (13 January 1953) p. 7.

foothold in the Middle East. The PSB (and later the OCB) accepted that regional defence required a broader focus than previously envisioned under the Middle East Command. It was imperative for the regional governments and leaders to see themselves as active participants in that struggle, neutrality was not acceptable.

Therefore, regrouping, the United States set its sights on a second attempt, the MEDO. In a June 1952 classified telegram sent from the Paris station to State Department headquarters, Secretary of State Dean Acheson described the MEDO as a NATO-style defence organization that would allow the West to provide Middle East states with assistance in the form of training and advice, coordinate requests by Middle East states for arms and equipment, and coordinate operations with NATO command in the Mediterranean and Asia.⁵⁰⁵ The 1954 CIA document mentioned earlier in this chapter regarding Middle East defence arrangements supports the assessment that the goal was to establish a centre of cooperative effort focused on *planning* for regional defence.⁵⁰⁶ MEDO was therefore more in-line with the Psychological Strategy Board recommendations of Colonel Davis with an emphasis on long-range regional planning. However, MEDO was sponsored by seven entities: the UK, the US, France, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Turkey. With the exception of Turkey (which is today more closely linked to the Middle East than it was then), there lacked a Middle East representative at the founders' table. Any attempt to give the MEDO a more local flavour was conspicuously lacking. Unfortunately, despite having entertained the concept for greater inclusion (and strategic planning over tactical command), the MEDO met a similar fate to the MEC. Richard Spain cites in his 1954 *The Middle East Journal* article, "Middle East Defense: A New Approach," that while MEDO did succeed in changing the narrative and terminology from an "allied command" (under the MEC) to a "defence organization" (under MEDO), it was still unable to move beyond the perception of a Western construct.⁵⁰⁷ In his article Spain quotes Secretary of State Dulles admitting that the MEDO, as envisioned, was unlikely to be realized as:

⁵⁰⁵ Dean Acheson, "Telegram June 27, 1952," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, the Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*. eds., Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, John P. Glennon, and Paul Claussen (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1974) Document 79.

⁵⁰⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *Middle East Defense Arrangements: Background*, (1954) p. 1.

⁵⁰⁷ James W. Spain, "Middle East Defense: A New Approach," *Middle East Journal*, 8:3 (Summer 1954) p. 252.

A Middle East Defense Organization is a future rather than an immediate possibility. Many of the Arab countries are so engrossed with their quarrels they pay little heed to the menace of Soviet Communism. However, there is more concern where the Soviet Union is near. In general, the northern tier of nations shows awareness of this danger. There is a vague desire to have a collective security system, but no such system can be imposed from without. It should be designed and grow from within out of a sense of common destiny and common danger.⁵⁰⁸

This quote mirrored the change in thinking taking place in Washington. In the PSB D-22, the board noted that long-term psychological operations should be directed towards influencing all the people of the region, however, most of the governing systems in place did not “necessarily rest on the democratic will of the people,” therefore, a blanket targeting of the populations was unlikely to succeed.⁵⁰⁹ The board felt that the regional tendency to focus primarily on individual domestic issues meant that arguing the menace of Soviet communism was unlikely to hold water. There was an exception however, and that lay with the “northern tier” countries, those nations that shared a border with the Soviet Union, and by geography, the communist spread was a localized and domestic issue. In the ‘Annex B’ of the PSB D-22 report, the board commented on Washington’s perception of the “Arab Mind.” In this annex, the PSB put forward their view that “opportunism” was a predominant Arab trait, highlighting the danger that increased Soviet influence in susceptible areas could play to an “Arab fatalistic acceptance of strength and a desire to survive by being associated with what is believed to be the ‘winning side’ in any conflict.”⁵¹⁰ As Dulles mentioned, the “northern tier” of nations would be where America would turn to next.

The Psychological Strategy Board believed that absent both the time and fuller socio-economic development required to build up their own indigenous capabilities, the Arab states’ only immediate

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East (PSB D-22): Annex A*, Washington D.C., 6 February 1953, pp. 1-11, Whitehouse Office, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948 -1961, Psychological Strategy Board Central Files Series, Box 2, PSB X-091.4, Middle East, DDEL.

⁵¹⁰ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East (PSB D-22): Annex B*, Washington D.C., 6 February 1953 pp. 10-15, Whitehouse Office, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948 -1961, Psychological Strategy Board Central Files Series, Box 2, PSB X-091.4, Middle East, DDEL.

protection was dependence on Western military strength. But did those very states in danger see it that way? The PSB noted that “it is difficult to direct various other indigenous trends along lines supporting U.S. interest.”⁵¹¹ By May of 1954, the National Security Council had become very concerned over “trends” assessed to be developing in the Middle East. Not only were they “inimical to Western interests,” they were seen as part of a continuing decline of the prestige and position of the West.⁵¹² The council believed this decline had resulted in the increased determination of Middle East nations to assert their independence and be ever “suspicious of outside interest in their affairs.”⁵¹³ Complicating the issue were other factors such as: acute political and economic instability; military weakness; widespread unrest; and Soviet activity, all of which were unfavourable to Western goals. In fact, the National Security Council felt so strongly about this that they stated “In the Near East the current danger to the security of the free world arises not so much from the threat of direct Soviet military attack as [it does] from a continuation of the present unfavourable trends. Unless these trends are reversed, the Near East may well be lost to the West within the next few years.”⁵¹⁴ The National Security Council, in line with previous Psychological Strategy Board assessments, believed these acute de-stabilizers plaguing the region were not only unfavourable to the West, but implementation of successful American policy would require the regional states to participate in “collective efforts to increase the stability and strengthen the security of the area.”⁵¹⁵ Initially, this would require Western militaries to shoulder the burden until such time that the Middle Eastern states could defend themselves. Both the PSB and the NSC accepted this as reality and they forecast that such efforts to

⁵¹¹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (14 January 1953) p. 7.

⁵¹² National Security Council, “NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East,” Washington D.C., 14 July 1953, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, the Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*. eds., Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, John P. Glennon, and Paul Claussen (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1974) Document 145.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Operations Coordinating Board, “Progress Report on NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East,” Washington D.C., 29 July 1954, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, the Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*. eds., Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, John P. Glennon, and Paul Claussen (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1974) Document 221.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid.

prevent the loss of the Near East would require increasing responsibility, initiative, and leadership by the United States in the area.⁵¹⁶

The National Security Council believed that the US needed to find ways to bring the individual states (initially Egypt) into the Western fold, whether in concert with the United Kingdom or independently, to “seek an early negotiated settlement of the Suez Canal Base and related defense questions.”⁵¹⁷ These related defence questions dealt closely with what has already been covered up to this point relating to the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization. The NSC recommended that:

The United States should develop secretly plans for the defense of the area with the United Kingdom, Turkey, and such others as may be desirable. Take leadership in bringing the countries of the area into an organization in which the Western powers participate (or with which they are associated) and which is designed to influence the political orientation, increase the internal stability, and strengthen the defense of the area, recognizing that the political base for such an organization does not now exist and must first be brought in being.⁵¹⁸

This approach would require the United States to provide military assistance in promoting US security interests. The effort was expected to work two-fold: it was likely to “increase confidence in the United States, and to help in developing indigenous forces which can improve political stability, internal security, and the maintenance of pro-Western regimes,” ultimately contributing to the overall area defence (we will revisit this in the following chapters discussing the OCB 1290 d programme).⁵¹⁹ We can start to see the shift further away from the MEC and MEDO and more toward the Northern Tier as the PSB and the NSC felt that the US should select certain key states for this type of assistance, “choosing those who are most keenly aware of the threat to Soviet Russia and who are geographically located to stand in the way of possible Soviet aggression. In this regard, special consideration should

⁵¹⁶ Ibid. and Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East (PSB D-22): Annex A*, 6 February 1953, pp. 1-11.

⁵¹⁷ Operations Coordinating Board, “Progress Report on NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East,” (29 July 1954) *FRUS*, Document 221.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

be given to Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Iran and Pakistan.”⁵²⁰ Specifically in reference to this last point, it is important to notice who is included on this list, but also to take note of who is not, Lebanon. In the final chapter of this study, we will assess the impact of these recommendations on US-Middle East foreign policy and the ultimate decision to take to the shores of Beirut in 1958.

Thus far, both the National Security Council and the Psychological Strategy Board (and later the Operations Coordinating Board) assessed that the geographic area of the Middle East would require American and Western military presence to ensure access to petroleum and strategic forward operating bases necessary to impede the communist spread. However, the strategies presented by the Psychological Strategy Board, and later the NSC, made clear that in order to meet the military goals of the plan, it was necessary for the US to target what today is referred to as the “hearts and minds” (a phrase first used by General Templer in Malaya in the early 1950’s) of the regional populations.⁵²¹ The process of ensuring participation in collective security and stability efforts just mentioned, and to maintain the autonomy and independence of the regional states, the PSB recommended promoting a state of mind which would “permit setting up a regional defense organization in association with the U.S. and its Allies; to develop an attitude or receptiveness for the stationing of U.S. and Allied troops in or near the area.”⁵²² Developing the attitude and receptiveness of the region to the West’s plans were in line with the psychological approach tasked to the PSB. Supporting the argument that the PSB lines of effort were carried forward through the National Security Council. The NSC echoed the recommendation that the United States “take leadership in bringing the countries of the area into an organization in which the Western powers participate (or with which they are associated) and which is designed to influence the political orientation,” and “seek to obtain transit and base rights where required within the area, and, upon the threat of and during general hostilities the right to operate forces in the territories of the various nations of the area.”⁵²³ In order to accomplish this, the NSC clarified that the United States would need to “win the Arab states to a belief that we sympathize with

⁵²⁰ National Security Council, “NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East,” 14 July 1953, *FRUS*, Document 145.

⁵²¹ Simon Smith, “General Templer and Counterinsurgency in Malaya: Hearts and Minds, Intelligence, and Propaganda,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 16:3 (2001) pp. 60-78.

⁵²² Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (13 January 1953) p. 7.

⁵²³ Operations Coordinating Board, “Progress Report on NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East,” (29 July 1954) *FRUS*, Document 221.

their legitimate aspirations and respect their interests.”⁵²⁴ Both the Psychological Strategy Board and the National Security Council recognized that attaining the necessary basing rights could not be a purely military endeavour. Instead, it would have to incorporate what is often referred to today as a *hearts and minds* strategy.

HEARTS AND MINDS: COERCION AND CONCILIATION

A hearts and minds strategy falls strongly into the psychological realm, it targets the enemy’s will to fight, and the population’s will to tolerate the enemy in its presence. Such a strategy requires both conciliatory and coercive approaches. The combination of what would seem polar approaches is the mainstay of modern US counterinsurgency doctrine; and while the point here is not to equate American-Middle East foreign policy to an insurgency, they share a related target (the hearts and minds) in the former case of the population and in the latter of the governments and leadership. David Galula, a 20th century French military officer, and counterinsurgency theoretician, who in modern American military academia is often considered the father of modern counterinsurgency, offers in his book *Counterinsurgency: Its Theory and Practices*, the concept of victory under this approach:

A victory is not the destruction in a given area of the insurgent’s forces and his political organization... It is that plus the permanent isolation of the insurgent from the population, isolation not enforced upon the population but maintained by and with the population.⁵²⁵

While Galula does not define what constitutes coercion or conciliation in his text specifically, he does make clear distinctions between force (military operations) and diplomacy (political operations). There is some bleed over between the two, i.e., conciliatory military operations that protect the population and do not target the insurgent, and coercive political operations that exclude or target certain segments of the population. Therefore, for our purposes here we will use coercive measures to mean actions that are meant to force an outcome, while conciliatory measures mean actions to remove the opportunities for communists to establish a cause. As Galula’s quotation reflects, the coercive

⁵²⁴ National Security Council, “NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East,” 14 July 1953, *FRUS*, Document 145.

⁵²⁵ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, (London, Praeger Security International, 1964) p. 54.

approach (i.e. the destruction of the insurgent's forces and political organizations) is easily identifiable. However, the latter part of the quotation, the insurgent isolation maintained by the population is actually the result of the second, conciliatory approach. Galula argues that for an insurgency to be successful the most important element is a "cause." Without a cause (used to motivate or identify with a population) an insurgencies likelihood of success is limited. The causes can vary, and can be anything along the political-social-economic spectrum that the insurgent uses to foment angst against the counterinsurgent. The conciliatory approach aims to address the grievances or disparities in order to stabilize a population rendering an insurgent's propaganda less effective, or to win the population back to its side. This bit of background is necessary so as to provide a context for our comparison to the Psychological Strategy Board and the National Security Council developing strategies for the Middle East. Using the dual-track counterinsurgency approach just mentioned, we will show how the PSB, the NSC, and later the OCB, were amenable to recommending both coercive and conciliatory means to assure Western access to positions in the Middle East. Again, to be clear, the argument here is not that the PSB and the NSC promoted counterinsurgency strategy to win over the Middle East, simply that the mental framework of winning over a population through both coercive and conciliatory measures is similar to winning over a population when addressing a counterinsurgency. Therefore, we are using Galula and his theory as a tool to understand the board's actions.

In the Psychological Strategy Board's staff study on the Middle East, the PSB argued for the need "to develop an attitude in the leaders and opinion forming groups of the area that it is to their advantage to take steps which will facilitate the resolution of those international and intraregional controversies which now weaken the security and stability of the area."⁵²⁶ In this recommendation, the PSB hoped to address the causes that could be used by the communists to challenge Western relationships in the region. In a similar vein, the NSC sought attaining "stable, viable, friendly governments in the area, capable of withstanding communist inspired subversion from within and willing to resist communist aggression."⁵²⁷

⁵²⁶ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (13 January 1953) p. 1.

⁵²⁷ National Security Council, "NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East," 14 July 1953, *FRUS*, Document 145.

CONCILIATORY

Stated already, both boards included efforts to improve the daily lives of the people of the region. If we use Galula's concept of victory, the Psychological Strategy Board and the National Security Council sought the isolation of communism that would then be enforced and maintained by the population. The United States needed to develop indigenous "buy-in," or support. In order to accomplish this the PSB recommended a number of conciliatory approaches to the NSC, key among them being strengthening the Middle Eastern people's confidence in the integrity of the United States and its principles.⁵²⁸ The PSB reported to the NSC that the United States would need to telegraph the "sincere friendship" America had for the people of the region and respect for their sovereignty, by emphasizing a "mutual community of principles" existing between the Middle East and the West.⁵²⁹ Again, this concept would be echoed by the National Security Council as they called for "wider recognition in the free world of the legitimate aspirations of the countries in the area to be recognized as, and have the status of, sovereign states."⁵³⁰ To begin creating a foundation for the mutual community of principles, the State Department set about establishing working groups among their Foreign Service stations to investigate ideas for special projects that could engender support for the West or, vice versa, lessen support for the Soviet Union. This call was in support of the newly established (in 1952) United States International Information Administration (IIA), charged with conducting the Department of State's "international information and educational exchange programs."⁵³¹ In April 1952, the State Department sent out a circular on the subject of "Special IIA Projects for Islamic Countries."⁵³² The Baghdad Station replied on 1 October 1952 recommending coordination with the CIA funded American Friends of the Middle East (AFME) for "fuller distribution and utilization of American books on the Middle East," provided these books were

⁵²⁸ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, 13 January 1953.

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

⁵³⁰ National Security Council, "NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East," Washington D.C., 14 July 1953, *FRUS*, Document 145.

⁵³¹ Department of State, "Departmental Announcement No. 4, Establishment of the United States International Informational Administration (IIA)," 16 January 1952, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, National Security Affairs, Volume II, Part 2*, eds. Lisle A. Rose and Neal H. Peterson, (United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1984) Document 291.

⁵³² Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch, Special IIA Projects for Islamic Countries*, 1 October 1952, George Washington University, National Security Archives, Washington D.C., NSAEEB, 78, Document 74.

dealing with contemporary political subjects.⁵³³ The AFME was a pro-Arab, anti-Zionist organization made up of influential American educators, theologians, and writers formed in 1951 and published criticisms of the US support for Israel. The Baghdad Station believed that if a higher circulation of American writings on pro-Arab topics could find its way to a greater percentage of the Arab world it may show the Arab populations that there were Americans who shared their points of view, offering a commonality with the West.

As mentioned, proactively addressing other political, social, and economic conditions in the Middle East was another aspect of the PSB's conciliatory recommendations. Many of which were adopted by the National Security Council, to include grandiose prospects such as the "settlement of major issues between the Arab states and Israel," as the foundational measure for establishing peace and maintaining order in the region.⁵³⁴ It should be noted that at the time of the PSB and NSC reports, the state of Israel had existed for less than ten years. Without the 70+ years of history that complicates the picture today, at that time, the goal did not likely seem insurmountable. The board recognized that settling such fundamental disagreements were long-term goals, and not the only solution, therefore recommending measures that could help improve regional conditions in the short-term as well. The Psychological Strategy Board succinctly explained this process stating the need to:

Encourage thinking of progressive elements so that they will advance constructive programs for the improvement of economic and social conditions which will produce a political stability better able to combat the twin extremes of Communism and anti-Western politico religious fanaticism. Develop an attitude which will promote confidence in the possibility of orderly progress in political, economic, and social spheres, and the ability to obtain it.⁵³⁵

For the NSC this would also include increasing "efforts to achieve a settlement of the political differences among the states of the area, and between them and the Western nations,"⁵³⁶ as well as to

⁵³³ Department of State, *Foreign Service Dispatch, Special IIA Projects for Islamic Countries*, 1 October 1952.

⁵³⁴ National Security Council, "NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East," 14 July 1953, *FRUS*, Document 145.

⁵³⁵ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (13 January 1953) p. 1.

⁵³⁶ National Security Council, "NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East," 14 July 1953, *FRUS*, Document 145.

“stimulate measures of self-help, encourage the expansion of private investment, and provide somewhat increased economic and technical assistance.”⁵³⁷ All of these measures were meant to increase stability in the countries of the region and align them with Western priorities; hopefully making them resistant to Soviet influence and pre-emptively remove a cause for communist actors to leverage for disruption. However, as Galula states, “no operation can be strictly military or political, if only because they each have psychological effects that alter the over-all-situation for better or for worse.”⁵³⁸ Similarly, the Psychological Strategy Board and the National Security Council recognized that they could not expect to attain basing rights and a strong military presence with conciliatory policies alone, there was ample need for coercive measures as well.

COERSIVE

In the previous examples, what we have termed the “conciliatory measures” recommended by the Psychological Strategy Board and the National Security Council were directed toward the populations of the region. What we will see in the following examples are the “coercive measures,” which aimed more at targeting the governments and the leaders of the Middle East. For the PSB and the NSC, the crux of the argument was to make the ruling parties in the region aware that under no circumstances should they allow communist groups or activists to take root in their countries, as it was a threat to the livelihood of their populations, but also to their longevity as powerbrokers. The PSB was very clear in this regard as they stated it would be necessary “to use every possible technique to identify communism as a cloak for Soviet national imperialism, and to identify local communist elements as tools of a foreign power.”⁵³⁹ Again the PSB’s position was to emphasize that communism was not the antithesis to colonialism, (a major psychological underpinning to the region previously mentioned in Chapter 4) but rather, was the new face of foreign imperialism. According to the PSB, unlike the West, Soviet communism had no respect for sovereignty or the culture of the Middle East and demonstrated a clear and present “threat to the cultural patterns and social traditions of the individual, family and community.”⁵⁴⁰ For the PSB, the United States needed to demonstrate that America believed Middle East institutions were capable of evolving a better and indigenous socio-economic

⁵³⁷ Ibid.

⁵³⁸ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, p. 62.

⁵³⁹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (6 February 1953) p. 6.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

pattern than communism, and that the US was prepared to support such an evolution. A similar approach was recommended by the National Security Council where the nations in the region were to be confronted with the hostile intentions of the Soviet regime.⁵⁴¹ In addition to arguing the case for Western Capitalism over Soviet communism, the NSC also advised as good policy to “support leadership groups which offer the best prospect of orderly progress towards free world objectives,” and that this should include a wider recognition by such countries “of their responsibility toward the area and toward the free world generally.”⁵⁴²

This brings our discussion back to the Middle East defence relationships. Discussions around the Middle East Defense Organization highlight a glaring example of the option for strong-armed coercion. In the following instance an internal Department of State memoranda indicates that even the rejection of an agreement would not close the door on America’s options:

Consideration should be given to alternatives to MEDO in the event Arab states find themselves unable to accept MEDO. This could be cooperation with the Arab Mutual Security Pact or it could mean continuation of the existing arrangements which may be the most practical militarily and the least dangerous politically.⁵⁴³

In fact, in one of the most extreme examples of a coercive approach, there were some in the State Department who believed that formally establishing MEDO was not of great concern as “the rights which could be expected from a MEDO agreement such as formal permission to enter Arab territories in war might be of little real importance in the event of war. In fact it might prove easier to do what we wish militarily in event of a war without having stimulated opposition before-hand.”⁵⁴⁴ The reality was that (according to the declassified record from DOS) Great Britain and Turkey were in favour of moving forward in establishing a MEDO even without the acceptance of the Arab states. The Department of State recommended that while the MEDO talks “should not proceed officially without the Arabs,” the United States should proceed “by working with the British and Turks secretly on a

⁵⁴¹ National Security Council, “NSC 155/1: United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East,” 14 July 1953, *FRUS*, Document 145.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*

⁵⁴³ Funkhouser, *Additional Notes on Possible Iraq, Syria, Lebanese Reactions to MEDO*, 5 November 1952.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

real military defense of the Middle East.”⁵⁴⁵ Ultimately, it appears that this opinion was an outlier, or a “last case scenario” observation, as when instability and war presented itself in the Middle East in the coming years the United States did not resort to unilateral action without reverence to the regional states as a first resort.

At this point we have shown that the PSB presented the foundation of a Middle East policy recommending employing dual strategies of conciliatory and coercive approaches. The main tenets of this strategy were echoed by the National Security Council in its policy for the region, and would be adopted by the PSB’s successor, the Operations Coordinating Board. In some ways this scenario is similar to two opposite banks of a river. On one side we have the PSB that began policy construction, the NSC serves as the bridge having instituted much of the PSB strategy recommendations and carrying them over the water to the other side. The other bank is the OCB, having used the NSC to establish connection with the PSB, the OCB now must coordinate that policy going forward. Ultimately, this bridge allowed for continuity and institutional memory for a Middle East strategy that would develop further as the years progressed; leading to the United States considering military intervention in Lebanon as the regional policy lay in tatters. In the next chapter we will explore the far bank of our river and track the OCB’s path to disaster in Baghdad and the shores of Beirut.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER EIGHT: FROM THE MIDDLE EAST TO LEBANON

In the previous chapter we used the Psychological Strategy Board and National Security Council reports to establish a baseline understanding for US-Middle East policy in the first half of the 1950s. A combination of conciliation and coercion was adopted as the best path forward in securing the natural resources of the region for the Western world, and as importantly, denying those same resources to international communism. In this chapter, we will focus on the impact of the Operations Coordinating Board in shaping that policy as the decade carried on, but also the influence the OCB had in constructing the picture of the Middle East as it devolved toward left-leaning nationalism and possible communist satellite status. Not only was the OCB responsible for coordinating the policy outlined by the National Security Council, it was also designated as the responsible body to assess the internal security of the regional states and the risk posed by a perceived increase in communist influence. After we have shown how the OCB informed the decision-making environment, we will explore the influence that this perception had on Eisenhower's decision to invade Lebanon in 1958 – a last-ditch effort to save a failing policy.

With the benefit of hindsight, we know that the road to the Lebanese invasion in July 1958 was the result of a devolving regional situation. For several years the United States had struggled: first, to understand the Middle East; and second, to develop a regional policy to combat the spread (as the US saw it) of Soviet communism. Yet communism was only part of the threat picture; in fact, Arab Nationalism and Pan-Arabism were perceived as equally dominating threats to Western designs. Complicating the issue was the fact that the US national security structure had undergone (and in many ways continued to experience) drastic changes, that coupled with the “newness” of the problem set (from an American perspective) inhibited Washington's ability to develop an accurate regional picture. Without the benefit of a “clear view” of the region, and the inherent dynamism of the changing Middle East, the US government was forced to make assumptions (natural in national policy development) that put too great an emphasis on charismatic personas and too much reticence to upsetting popular Arab opinion (or as referenced pejoratively, the “Arab street”). Such a statement would seem to suggest that there existed clear choices, black and white, that the United States either got it right or wrong. However, as this chapter will show, reality truly existed more in shades of grey.

COMMUNISM VS. ARAB NATIONALISM

In the Operations Coordinating Board's 29 July 1954 *Progress Report on NSC 155/1 United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, the OCB identified the "increased USSR activity in the area," as one of the primary emerging problems in the region demanding "firmer and more decisive measures to control the situation."⁵⁴⁶ The perceived spread of international communism presented a grave threat to the free flow of oil out of the region. The Psychological Strategy Board had recognized early that should the United States lose access to the resources and key strategic positions in the area - the military, economic, and political ramifications for the West were dire.

Later authors like Kevin Brown, Syed Rifaat Hussain, and Jeffrey Karam have argued that Washington was unwilling to look past the global threat of communism enough to deal with the local realities of nationalism, and this resulted in a flawed regional policy that devolved into conflict. While there is merit to this argument, we will use the reports and findings of the OCB and other US government agencies from the archival sources to show that while true, there existed some nuance that widens the aperture and provides greater context to the US approach. In "The Syrian Crisis of 1957: A Lesson for the 21st Century," Kevin Brown states that the root causes of American policy blunders in the Middle East were driven by the "inability for United States policy makers to see beyond international communism ... as the foundation for all foreign policy."⁵⁴⁷ This position would seem to be supported in Jeffrey G. Karam's "Missing Revolution: the American Intelligence Failure in Iraq, 1958," where Karam cites declassified interviews with American embassy officials who argue a major factor in the United States' "surprise" over the revolution in Iraq had to do with "an overemphasis on 'keeping an eye on the communists' rather than nationalists and other movements."⁵⁴⁸ However, a review of the PSB, OCB, and other national intelligence documents does not paint the same picture. Instead, these sources indicate that Washington felt the US needed to adopt a tiered approach to the problems facing

⁵⁴⁶ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on NSC 155/1 United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, Washington D.C., 29 July 1954, p.1, General CIA Records, CIA-RDP80R01731R003000120007-3, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁵⁴⁷ Kevin Brown, "The Syrian Crisis of 1957: A Lesson for the 21st Century," *CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy*, Paper 4 (2013) p. 5.

⁵⁴⁸ Jeffrey G. Karam, "Missing Revolution: the American Intelligence Failure in Iraq, 1958," *Intelligence and National Security*, 32:6 (2017) pp. 693-709

the region as opposed to focusing myopically on one facet of the problem. This tiered approach required: first, assessing those countries that were in jeopardy of falling prey to Soviet influence and therefore posed the greatest threat for expanding communism; second, identifying other states that could be considered more pro-western in orientation; and then, establishing collective security and mutual defence arrangements that could be used to both thwart Soviet designs and promote Western interests. Finally, once defensive arrangements were put in place, US policy would then pivot toward supporting domestic programmes of greater economic, social, and political freedoms in the Middle East.

Reflecting back on previous PSB, NSC, and OCB reports, we see the strategic regional assessments indicated an understanding that the economic and political climates served not only as catalysts for communist infiltration, but also for burgeoning Arab nationalism. As we examined in the preceding chapters of this study, the Psychological Strategy Board, the National Security Council, and the Operations Coordinating Board were all aware, and made mention of, the threat posed by anti-Western domestic politics in the Arab states. Covered in chapter four, there was confusion, or at the very least disagreement over the role of Arab nationalism. Partner (1960) noted that at the end of the Second World War left-wing socialism had found favour within the Arab nationalist movements. Therefore, Arab nationalists who found common cause in their opposition to old Europe (and the West) became linked with similarly anti-Western socialist and left-leaning groups. Additionally, as just mentioned, failing economies, poverty, and stratified societies were seed-ground for both left-wing and nationalist movements. With this in mind, could US policy makers truly afford to separate the two (international communism and Arab nationalism)? From a practical standpoint in the 21st century we could argue that yes, the two could, and were separated, particularly considering that Nasser outlawed the communist groups in Egypt and in Syria under the United Arab Republic. However, for American policy makers, the distinction was not as clear. Did Nasser banish the communist groups because they were incongruent with Arab nationalism, or rather, were they simply illegitimate checks on Nasser's growing power? While Nasser's motivations fall outside the scope of this paper, we will explore the PSB and the OCB approach to the twin threats of the region for the US, and endeavour to offer explanation as to why international communism appears (on the surface) to have received the lion's share of attention over Arab nationalism in an area where the latter was arguably much more dominant.

Ultimately it was a combination both of necessity and public relations. International communism (to include independent communist elements, i.e. Moscow and Beijing, similar yet independent) was rooted to its foundation in opposition, ideologically and militarily, to the West. Therefore, the PSB, NSC, and OCB were aware that should communist elements establish control over the governments of the Arab states, Washington's greatest fear should come to pass and the natural resources of the region would not only be lost to the West, but they would be put to the industry of the Soviet machine. Additionally, the United States had to compete with its own nationalist history, and realized they could not publicly oppose (or appear to oppose) the independent ambitions of the Arab states without handing the Soviets fodder for their already ambitious propaganda production. Against these principles the American national security architecture set about recognizing both ambitions (communism and nationalism), while *publicly* targeting only the former. We can find evidence for this in John Foster Dulles' 1957 testimony before the United States' Senate where he stated that American support to the region must be tethered to the threat of international communism as any commitments to the area for any other reason, would fall under the responsibility of Article 51 of the United Nations charter; becoming an international responsibility and limiting the United States capacity for unilateral action.⁵⁴⁹ In light of this, we can see how the recommendations put forward by the PSB, NSC, and the OCB regarding aid and support to the region (internal security forces, economic aid, military assistance, etc.) were *required* to be linked to the threat of international communism for approval. This has given the appearance of the United States as being hyper-focused on narrow lanes of communism to the detriment of all else.

Additionally, another complicating factor was understanding how Islam, the region's religious and cultural backbone, affected the scope and nature of Arab nationalism. In particular, the record of the PSB and the NSC (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 7) reflects that Arab nationalism was not ignored, but rather, the left-leaning tendencies that were present in Arab nationalist movements throughout the region were (although distinct and individualistic) lumped together with the larger threat of communism. The underlying theory, or hope, of the PSB and the NSC was that both communism and Arab nationalism could be dealt with via similar approaches. In John C. Campbell's 1960 work,

⁵⁴⁹ John Foster Dulles testimony, *Economic and Military Cooperation with Nations in the General Area of the Middle East*, Hearing on H.J. Res. 117 (9 March 1957) a copy of that testimony can be found here - <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1957-pt1/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1957-pt1-3.pdf>.

Defense of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy, the author explains that Washington's approach toward combating communist subversion in the Middle East was based on the recognition that force alone could not stop the Soviets, adopting instead "a three-pronged policy of reducing the fear of armed conflict, helping non-Communist governments to build adequate internal security forces, and fostering economic progress to remove the causes of popular discontent."⁵⁵⁰ If we view this approach through the prism of the last few chapters, the PSB, the NSC, and soon the OCB were engaging in a step-wise fashion the three pronged strategy. First, reducing the fear of armed conflict through military agreements and defence arrangements in the MEC, MEDO, and the Northern Tier concept; second, helping non-communist governments to build adequate internal security forces in the OCB 1290-d programme (explained shortly); and finally, fostering economic progress through the soft-power recommendations from both the PSB, the OCB, as well as the National Security Council. Could we argue that the United States' policy could have been better served by focusing on the localized and direct threat of Arab nationalism to the individual countries as opposed to the regional threat of international communism? Maybe, however, that would fall outside the scope of this study, and we are then more likely to fall victim to hindsight bias. Instead, our aim in these final chapters is to focus heavily on the assessments of the Operations Coordinating Board, a sub-board of the NSC responsible for coordinating policy across the various levers of state, and explore how America assessed the stability and political situation in the region. We will then have a clearer picture, cast through a new lens, to view executive decisions in the summer of 1958.

Discussed previously in this study, the United States wrestled with its new position on the world stage following the Second World War. Washington believed that Western survival would require continued involvement in Middle East; therefore, the American administrations set their national security architecture against developing a policy to secure US and Western interests in the region. The Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board remain unsung architects of US policy that included economic and cultural development, resource protections, military agreements, and developing anti-communist leadership. In the existing academic history of Middle East policy development, the PSB and the OCB have been overshadowed by the dominance of the National Security Council and the "uphill" policy development focus of previous authors. These previous works have drawn attention to organizations (like the National Security Council Planning Board) on

⁵⁵⁰ John C. Campbell, *Defense of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960) p. 123.

one side of a policy hill, while downplaying the role of the other organizations in a policy cycle. As we have shown, the “downhill” slope that encompasses the administration, coordination, review, and recommendations of current policy is just as important to a policy’s success or failure as the initial idea. In this chapter we focus exclusively on the OCB and the Middle East from 1954-1958. We will show how the OCB assessed the existing regional policy (developed by the PSB and the NSC), the successes, the failures, and just as importantly the recommendations for the way ahead. The foundation of this chapter will be the National Security Council (5428) *United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, which we used in the last chapter to bridge the connection to the Psychological Strategy Board’s strategy for the Middle East. Using the Operations Coordinating Board’s progress reports and national assessments we can offer a unique view of how the US strategy in the Middle East evolved leading up to the coup in Iraq and subsequent invasion in Lebanon. As would be expected we will rely heavily on the Operations Coordinating Board’s records, but we will also use other contemporaneous national security and intelligence documents to provide context for impact.

INTERNAL SECURITY: THE OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD AND THE 1290-D PROGRAMME

As true in 1958 as it is today, internal stability is a hallmark of national risk. Internal security forces are often the focus when it comes to a destabilizing scenario.⁵⁵¹ In National Security Council Report - *NSC 5501, Basic National Security Policy* (1955), the council stated that it is in the “U.S. interest to assist countries vulnerable to communist subversion to develop adequate internal security forces.”⁵⁵² This policy was pursued due to the council’s recognition that “direct action against the communist apparatus must rest largely with the local governments concerned, although the U.S. should be able to help significantly, chiefly through covert means.”⁵⁵³ Additionally, as will be important, in the same paragraph mentioning the American responsibility to develop internal security forces, the council also

⁵⁵¹ While the record supports this, the author also draws upon personal experience having spent a decade working Middle East internal security forces for the United States Department of Defense.

⁵⁵² National Security Council, NSC 5501 Basic National Security Policy, Washington D.C., 7 January 1955, p. 34, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955–1957*, National Security Policy, Volume XIX, eds. William Klingaman, David S. Patterson, and Ilana Stern (United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1990) Document 6.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*

states that “in case of an imminent or actual Communist seizure of control, the U.S. should take all feasible political, economic, and covert measures to thwart it, and, if appropriate, should take military action, if required to cope with the situation.”⁵⁵⁴ In their report to the National Security Council in October of 1955, the Operations Coordinating Board pointed out that “many countries threatened with communist subversion have neither the knowledge, training nor means to defend themselves successfully from it.”⁵⁵⁵ In order to address these deficiencies, the National Security Council implemented NSC Action 1290-d, a programme established to assess the internal security forces of foreign states, and if so warranted, to develop ways of improving them to withstand the threat of communism. We should note that the 1290-d programme was not Middle East specific, but rather a global effort. However, for our purposes we will focus exclusively on the assessments of the Middle East.

The 1290-d programme was important because it was used to identify and categorize countries across the spectrum based on: susceptibility to the communist threat; alliances with the West; benefits from military assistance; and requirements for greater social and economic policies. Based on the findings, the United States could then (in theory) develop specific plans to maintain stability and destroy the effectiveness of the communist apparatus in targeted countries.⁵⁵⁶ One important aspect of the 1290-d reports was the impact they could have on military assistance programmes. As the OCB noted, many of the countries (in the Middle East and elsewhere) were likely incapable of resisting communist and nationalist-inspired domestic unrest were they to rely on indigenous capability alone. Therefore, the United States was prepared to offer assistance (military and economic) to regional governments to assist in maintaining internal security. The 1290-d assessments were used to inform national security decision makers who to target and support. This is relevant to the OCB because the National Security Council assigned the Operations Coordinating Board the task of overseeing the programme, requesting also that the OCB “present to the Council a report on the status and adequacy of the current program to develop constabulary forces to maintain internal security and to destroy the effectiveness of the communist apparatus in the free world countries vulnerable to communist

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, Washington D.C., 6 October 1955, p. 1, White House Office, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs: Records, 1952-61 OCB Series, Subject Subseries, Box 5, Overseas Internal Security, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

⁵⁵⁶ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, (October 1955).

subversion.”⁵⁵⁷ The OCB 1290-d reports offer insight and context into the assessments that shaped the Middle East regional picture for US policy makers; identifying where the US government felt the greatest threats lay and where they believed attention should be paid. As we have covered in previous chapters, this insight is valuable because it offers another angle with which to view the diverse and complicated history. The dual problem of international communism coupled with Arab nationalism, presented a combined threat (especially in the case of the latter), as evidenced in the Psychological Strategy Board reports expressing the United States’ struggles to determine whether the region’s nationalism could present as an ally or foe. On this final point, we move forward in this chapter with the acceptance that the United States had tried and failed to develop an overall regional policy capable of manoeuvring the seat of Arab nationalism (Egypt) into a defensive pact with the West and solidify a dependent relationship antithetical to Soviet designs (covered in the previous chapter with the failures of the MEC and the MEDO). Instead, the Eisenhower administration opted to pursue the creation of a Middle East defence collective based around the northern tier approach, or as a June 1954 National Intelligence Estimate described it: a loose defence grouping based on the “Turk-Pakistani agreement” and “would involve initially adherence of Iraq and Iran,” to the US-sponsored agreement.⁵⁵⁸ Washington believed that the Turk-Pakistani agreement provided a:

...new basis for development of a Western-oriented defense grouping in the Middle East avoiding some of the problems which defeated the two previous efforts in this direction. Although formidable obstacles still remain to be overcome, a regional grouping based on the Turk-Pakistani agreement would be less subject to the stigma of being under direct Western control than were the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization. The desire for the US military and economic aid is probably the most powerful inducement to enter into such an arrangement, and the willingness of individual states to join will depend largely on the nature, scale, and terms of the US aid offered them.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁸ National Intelligence Estimate, “NIE 30-54: Prospects for Creation of a Middle East Defense Grouping and Probable Consequences of Such a Development,” Washington D.C., 22 June 1954, p. 517, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*, eds. Paul Claussen, Joan M. Lee, and Carl N. Raether (United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1986) Document 215.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 518.

The belief underpinning much of this approach was that “Iraq would adhere to the Turk-Pakistani agreement and pave the way for the adherence of other Arab states.”⁵⁶⁰ The defensive strategy that was developed for the Middle East is detailed in Fairchild and Poole’s, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy*, and outlined in Operation Plan (OPLAN) 219-57. It was based around a protective barrier constructed on the Northern Tier Concept, recommended by the Operations Coordinating Board and discussed in previous chapters. The goal was based around preventing 1) “an initial Soviet advance from breaching the Elburz Mountain line in Northern Iran, and reaching the Zagros Mountain passes in Southern Iran, as well as 2) hold the Erzurum-Lake Van line in eastern Turkey and Pakistan’s northern frontier.”⁵⁶¹ This defensive mind set centred around an outer barrier, granting enough lead time to establish more formidable defences to protect the soft under belly of the interior Middle East. It is prudent to note that while the northern tier countries were the first line of defence against Soviet aggression, the focus of our study is based around Iraq and the Levant (Syria and Lebanon). We will show in the remainder of this chapter how the OCB helped shape policy that supported weighing the region on specific and critical actors, and that the over-reliance on these states (in some cases to the detriment of their neighbours) put into place a system that would be jeopardized in its entirety once the dominoes began to fall.

1290-D: INTERNAL SECURITY – A REGIONAL PROBLEM

Weak and impoverished states and ungoverned areas are not only a threat to their people and a burden on regional economies, but are also susceptible to exploitation by terrorists, tyrants, and international criminals. We will work to bolster threatened states, provide relief in times of crisis, and build capacity in developing states to increase their progress.⁵⁶²

In his 2007 article for the *International Studies Review*, Stewart Patrick writes that complicating the picture of state solvency is the:

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Byron R. Fairchild, Walter S. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs*, The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy: Volume VII 1957-1960, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2000) p. 139.

⁵⁶² The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington D.C., March 2006, p. 33, available online at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20090529235009/http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/80/nsc/nss/2006/nss2006.pdf>.

...appreciation that states in the developing world vary along a continuum in terms of institutional strength, both overall and in particular spheres; equally important, their level of dysfunction can represent a variable mixture of inadequate capacity and insufficient will. A second is a nuanced appreciation of the complex linkages between state weakness, on the one hand, and a country's propensity to fall victim to or enable particular threats, on the other. A third is recognition that developing countries are embedded in a larger global system that exerts both positive and pernicious impacts on their resilience and vulnerability.⁵⁶³

The issue of US national security strategy and foreign internal security is nothing new, in fact nearly everything that Patrick comments on above applied to the Middle East seven decades ago and is reflected in the records of the PSB and OCB. To the point, each of these complicating factors, such as: varied state development; inadequate capacity; and insufficient will, were all inputs into the regional construct developed by the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board. Domestic stability, and a state's internal security forces, were seen as the primary means to ensure that Western partners did not become failed states, falling victim to global communist influence or enabling the threats of communist sympathies and Arab nationalism to undermine the Western relationship. These countries were embedded within the regional dynamism of this developing sphere, as well as the global conflict between the West and Soviet communism. As a response, the National Security Council sought to tackle one element of the equation that they felt could bring about the largest return on investment, regional security forces. Under the 1290-d programme, the Operations Coordinating Board established working groups consisting of the key security stakeholders (Central Intelligence Agency, Department of State, Department of Defense, and the Foreign Operations Administration) tasked to report the status of foreign security forces and state stability based on predetermined targets: 1) the nature of the threat - CIA; 2) a description and assessment of the internal security forces - Department of Defense; 3) current inventory of US programmes at work in the country - Foreign

⁵⁶³ Stewart Patrick, "Failed States and Global Security: Empirical Questions and Policy Dilemmas," *International Studies Review*, 9:4 (Winter 2007) pp. 644-662.

Operations Administration; and 4) political factors bearing on current and future internal security – Department of State.⁵⁶⁴

The 1290-d programme reemphasizes something threaded throughout this study: both the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board, by their very membership and relationship as a sub-board of the National Security Council, were intimately involved in policy at all levels of government. This was particularly so in the case of the OCB, which served not only as the coordinating agency for the Middle East plan (5428) but also for the regional security force assessments (1290-d) to the National Security Council. An argument of coexistence without influence or impact is not credible: that is, the Operations Coordinating Board submitted reports and made recommendations in their national assessments to the NSC that were either ignored or irrelevant cannot be supported. Added to this is the fact that it would be harder still to propose that the independent agencies (Central Intelligence Agency, Department of State, Department of Defense) would operate completely separated from the national level coordinating element consisting of its own members. Rather, it is argued here that the OCB was used as force multiplier, where the individual agencies could use the Operations Coordinating Board (through their agency's membership), to argue for and support the policies of their home organization. In fact, it is this latter position that is supported by the record. In particular, the assessments in the OCB 1290-d reports were used in follow-on intelligence estimates for the Middle East that prefaced the American involvement in the region.

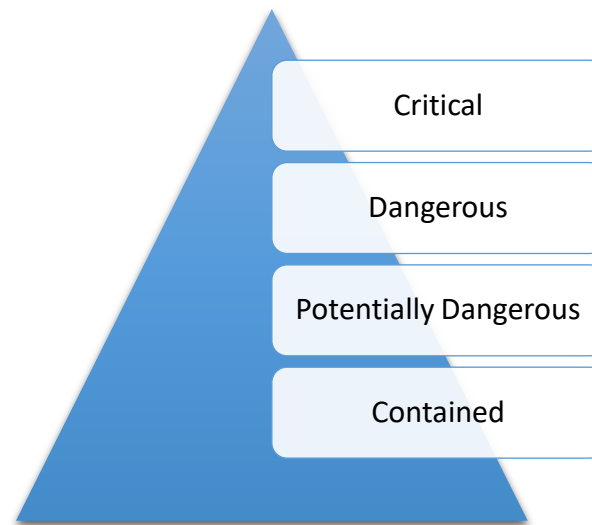
The validity of the 1290-d programme lay in its apparently positive approach to improve internal security forces and direct support to that effort.⁵⁶⁵ Understanding how state weakness and insecurity could affect regional ambitions, the OCB used the 1290-d programme to examine issues facing not only primary internal security forces, but also the military forces, legislative and judicial procedures, and public support for internal security programmes.⁵⁶⁶ The Operations Coordinating Board leveraged

⁵⁶⁴ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, Washington D.C., 12 September 1955, p. 7, White House Office, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs: Records, 1952-61 OCB Series, Subject Subseries, Box 5, Overseas Internal Security, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

⁵⁶⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, (October 1955) p. 1.

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.* p. 2.

the 1290-d programme as both a measure of stability, and a threat scale (posed by both the current, and likely future, communist developments within a country). This scale was based on a four-point metric system to classify and grade the threat of communist subversion (from greatest to least): critical, dangerous, potentially dangerous, and contained.



Of the eighteen countries that were reviewed in the Operations Coordinating Board's first 1290-d assessment, only two were listed as falling into the *Critical* threat category for communist subversion. Those two countries were the South East Asian countries of Cambodia and Vietnam. For the Near and Middle East region, Syria was the only country to be racked in the *Dangerous* category while the Northern Tier countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran) began to figure into the *Potentially Dangerous* category. Of interest, in this initial report, not only was the Iraqi subversive communist threat considered contained by the Operations Coordinating Board, but Lebanon did not figure on the list at all. Considering that the destabilization and collapse of Iraq would cap off a regional descent that led to the American decision to invade Lebanon, the surprise in Washington in July 1958 was likely a result of overconfidence regarding these initial assessments.

In the Operations Coordinating Board's October 1955 report to the National Security Council they state:

World Communism usually prefers to expand by means other than direct military aggression, ranging from mild propaganda on up to armed insurrection. NSC 5501 ... states that it is in

the U.S. interest to assist countries vulnerable to communist subversion to develop adequate internal security forces. Many countries threatened with communist subversion have neither the knowledge, training nor means to defend themselves successfully from it. In NSC Action 1290-d, the NSC requested the OCB ‘to present to the council a report on the status and adequacy of the current program to develop constabulary forces to maintain internal security and to destroy the effectiveness of the communist apparatus in the free world countries vulnerable to communist subversion.’⁵⁶⁷

As this statement makes clear, the Operations Coordinating Board was tasked to formulate concepts for implementing policies assisting such forces.⁵⁶⁸ Far from being a detached element for policy review, the OCB had direct influence on policy that formed the bedrock of America’s efforts to establish and maintain a region adverse to international communism and militarily allied with the West. Armed now with an understanding of the purpose and mission of the OCB 1290-d effort, we can turn our attention to the specific country reports, providing us an insight into how the American policy makers racked, stacked, and prioritized Middle Eastern regional threats. For logical flow, we will begin with the OCB October 1955 1290-d report which encompassed the overall mission of the programme and included rough assessments of the Middle East region. We will then turn to the specific country reports detailing Syria, Iraq, and then Lebanon. This will allow us to follow the progression of the assessed threats over the next 34 months when the United States sent forces onto the beaches of Beirut.

THE MIDDLE EAST: A REGION PUT TO THE TORCH

Instability was commonplace in the Middle East in the years leading up to the Iraqi coup and Lebanese invasion. In 1959, Quincy Wright, of the Woodrow Wilson Department of Foreign Affairs at the University of Virginia noted that “within the last few years there have been six revolutions in Middle Eastern states – in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Cyprus and Egypt, and a near-revolution in Jordan.”⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁷ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, (October 1955) p. 1.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ Quincy Wright, “Conditions Making for Instability in the Middle East,” *The Middle East Report 1959: Nationalism, Neutralism, Communism – The Struggle of Power*, (Washington: The Middle East Institute, 1959) p. 5.

Wright, like the OCB before him, sought to analyse the conditions which made for instability, to include: the internal conditions of the Middle East states; the regional relations of those countries; and the outside influences that had come to bear.⁵⁷⁰ Just like the PSB had done previously, the OCB highlighted the issues of non-military conditions for instability, knowing that measures taken to improve the effectiveness and capabilities of the internal security forces would matter little if they did not also improve the economic, social, and political conditions fomenting the instability to begin with.⁵⁷¹ The board stated - in a repeat of both their previous 5428 reports and earlier PSB assessments - that soft power and conciliatory gestures would cover more ground than military prowess alone. Reflecting on previous chapters we are reminded that the PSB recommended encouraging progressive elements to advance constructive programmes for the “improvement of economic and social conditions which will produce a political stability better able to combat the twin extremes of Communism and anti-Western politico religious fanaticism.”⁵⁷² The Operations Coordinating Board put forth a similar recommendation, that “in varying degrees, measures taken by the U.S. which contribute to economic stability and development, to social betterment and to political stability will, as a consequence, have an effect on the total environment out of which internal security problems arise and thus an effect on the capabilities of internal security forces.”⁵⁷³ Both the PSB and the OCB had argued that conciliatory efforts of soft power, aimed at improving the daily lives of the people in the region, had the potential for greater reach toward Western interests than a strong security force alone. Years later, Wright would cite the economic and political disparity as a cornerstone for the region’s unrest arguing that while not a new phenomenon, economic poverty had increasingly fomented political disturbances as the population’s continued contact with foreign interests had made them “more aware of their poverty than they have been in past ages.”⁵⁷⁴ These, now noticeable disparities, had granted opportunities for communists (and other political movements) to trade on

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 6.

⁵⁷¹ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, (October 1955) p. 18.

⁵⁷² Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, Washington D.C., 13 January 1953, p. 1, General CIA Records, CIA-RDP80R01731R003200030029-7, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁵⁷³ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, (October 1955) p. 18.

⁵⁷⁴ Wright, “Conditions Making for Instability in the Middle East,” p. 6.

growing social unrest; voicing demands for improvements to social conditions and economic status while painting the West as the culprit.

Western democracy, or at least western aligned Arab democracies, Wright viewed as a bridge too far without first advancing in these other socio-economic areas.⁵⁷⁵ So why then, if the PSB, the OCB, and the NSC were aware of the benefits recommended in the conciliatory “soft power” approaches, did the United States not focus on them as the primary effort? In his 2013 paper, *The Syrian Crisis of 1957: A Lesson for the 21st Century*, Kevin Brown argues that individuals in Washington D.C., particularly President Eisenhower and his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, ignored the recommendations of national security elements (like the PSB and OCB) calling for socio-economic development, and instead opted for a more traditional “hard-power” military build-up of forces against the threat of Soviet communism.⁵⁷⁶ Brown argues that this came at the exclusion of dealing with the Arab culture and identity of the post Second World War region, a split between hard and soft power. In some ways Brown is correct: in Chapter Four of this study, we explored the difficulty that policy makers had in understanding the region, making sense of Arab nationalism, and the relationship between Islam and communism. The United States had difficulty appreciating the realities of the region and its unique cultural-religious identity. As we have covered throughout this study, the PSB, the OCB, and the NSC all recommended that soft power with ground level changes to the socio-political systems could offer the greatest reward as far as stabilizing the region and endearing the populations to Western involvement. However, what Brown fails to explore in equal measure was that PSB, OCB, and NSC assessments realized that time was also a factor. In an unlimited environment, with time and money available to bolster the right institutions and fund the right programmes, the long-game socio-economic approach should definitely prevail. However, as this study has gone to lengths to show, the PSB, OCB, and NSC also recognized that the Middle East was not a static environment. Its dynamism and fluidity were destabilizing, in and of themselves, and the disparities mentioned above allowed for near constant challenging of ruling authority – hence, six revolutions prior to 1959. As such, the PSB did advise policy makers that state government frailty in the region would require the United States to develop contingency plans. Such plans were military in nature and hard-power focused. In Chapter

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁶ Kevin Brown, “The Syrian Crisis of 1957: A Lesson for the 21st Century,” *CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy*, Paper 4 (2013) pp. 1-49.

Seven we noted that in *PSB D-22: The Psychological Strategy Plan for the Middle East*, the PSB made clear that military assistance programmes were vital to attaining cooperation from the governments as part of the long-term goal of developing armed forces in the region capable of defending against Soviet attack. Yet, the PSB had also been clear that the true threat to America's interests spawned from acute instability and anti-Western nationalism (as opposed to direct communist attack). For the United States to pursue true change in the Middle East it first had to strengthen its allies through military power and support, then after this was attained, leverage military dependency to pursue socio-economic modernization. With that in mind, it becomes difficult to fall in line behind Brown's argument entirely. Yes, both the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board made recommendations from the start to address the true factors of destabilization in the Middle East; that while communism was a threat, the roots of instability lay in the region's nationalist push (spurred by socio-economic disparities). Therefore US leadership weighed the pros and cons of hard vs. soft power and the choice was made to delay socio-economic changes until state stability could be established.

Additionally, complicating the picture further, Arab nationalism carried with it the amplifying threat of neutrality in the greater ideological struggle of the Cold War. In the minds of Washington's decision-makers (and highlighted in the PSB, NSC, and OCB reports), Arab neutrality presented an advantage for communists in the war of minds as its propaganda played well with discord, without the need to provide an actual alternative. In some sense, communism was an argument rather than a reality. Whereas the policy makers in the West felt they needed to provide evident and working alternatives to instability, the Soviets need only create it. The Operations Coordinating Board expressed this concern in a November 1955 report to the National Security Council stating that in an effort "to frustrate Western-sponsored collective security arrangements and to advance neutralism," the communists have, "shown an unprecedented interest in the Near East."⁵⁷⁷

The PSB in particular had called attention to this early on, stating that local communist parties (some supported by Moscow) were able to sow discord as the majority of the governing systems in place (in

⁵⁷⁷ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on the Near East (NSC 5428): United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, Washington D.C., 2 November 1955, p. 5, National Archives and Records Administration College Park (NACP), College Park, Maryland, Records of the National Security Council, Records Group 273; also available in the Department of State, S/S-NEA Files: Lot 61 D 167, Near East (NSC 5428).

the Middle East) did not necessarily “rest on the democratic will of the people,” offering a well-spring of discontent in a sea of change; whereas, the US approach needed to focus on concrete efforts rather than abstract principles.⁵⁷⁸ With this view in mind it is more understandable how, despite recommending systemic socio-economic changes, the PSB and OCB also saw the need to establish military and defence arrangements in order to cement hard power relationships capable of confronting communist influence in the short term, before turning the focus to the substantial issues at the heart of Arab nationalism. As such, it was less that their recommendations were ignored, as is Brown’s argument, but rather that both hard and soft power were recommended, with the hard power approach thought more attainable in the short-term (therefore the hard power military assistance granted to Iraq and Lebanon shortly is more understandable under this concept).

The declassified archives also indicate that Washington’s national security enterprise and intelligence community had not turned a blind eye to Arab nationalism at all. Not only had nationalism been identified as an issue in the PSB D-22 reports where they recommended persuading Middle Eastern leaders to “develop adequate forces to maintain internal security,” the impetus for the OCB 1290-d programme, they also made clear to the NSC the damage that resulted from “all forms of extremism, whether ultra-nationalist, xenophobic, religious, or totalitarian.”⁵⁷⁹ The PSB also recommended that the United States encourage constructive programmes to improve the “economic and social conditions which will produce political stability,” able to combat communism and ultra-nationalism better than any Western supplemented security force.⁵⁸⁰ This sentiment was again briefed to the National Security Council in 1955 when the Operations Coordinating Board stated that internal security forces, “while important do not necessarily work toward improving the economic, social, and political conditions which often time permit or actually foster the development of the internal security problems which these forces are designed to combat.”⁵⁸¹ In fact, as mentioned already in this study, a major aspect of the NSC’s 5428 policy for the Middle East was for the US to “seek to guide the

⁵⁷⁸ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (January 1953) p. 14.

⁵⁷⁹ Psychological Strategy Board, *Psychological Strategy Program for the Middle East (PSB D-22)*, (January 1953) p. 8.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.* p. 9.

⁵⁸¹ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, (October 1955) p. 18.

revolutionary and nationalistic pressures throughout the area into orderly channels.”⁵⁸² From these examples we can see that Washington had not, in fact, ignored the threat of Arab nationalism and continued to identify the threat it posed to Western designs. The following year, in July 1956, the intelligence community reported that much of the turbulence in the Arab world was the result of “the tide of revolutionary nationalism,” which had toppled several regimes and brought political turbulence to others.⁵⁸³ Fear, therefore, was a potent catalyst for policy. Five months before the revolution in Iraq and the invasion of Lebanon, the intelligence community produced Special National Intelligence Estimate (*SNIE*) 30-58 *Prospects and Consequences of Arab Unity Moves*, stating that the community assessment was that nationalistic regional trends had placed state against state, combating one another in competition as the representatives of Arab unity.⁵⁸⁴ There are other examples that we will highlight later in this chapter; however, it is necessary to call to attention here that the OCB (and the intelligence community) considered both international communism and Arab nationalism in the context of regional instability.

We examined previously the US attempts to support military agreements with the countries in the region (MEC and MEDO) for Soviet containment. These larger defence agreements had met with very little success and the US focused more on realizing the Northern Tier Concept (through the 1955 Baghdad Pact), holding onto the hope that the success of the pact would be a catalyst pulling other Arab states into the fold. However, as we will see, these hopes went largely unfulfilled. It is within this grey area, between deep rooted socio-economic nationalist issues and larger region-wide military agreements, that the NSC tasked the OCB to operate the 1290-d programme, a state-by-state assessment of both hard-power internal security forces and soft power political unrest. At this point

⁵⁸² National Security Council, “United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East,” Washington D.C., 23 July 1954, p. 529, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*, eds. Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, John P. Glennon, and Paul Claussen (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1974) Document 219.

⁵⁸³ National Intelligence Estimate, “NIE 36.2-56: The Outlook for Iraq’s Stability and Foreign Policies,” Washington D.C., 17 July 1956, p. 998, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East Region; Iran; Iraq, Volume XII*, eds. Paul Claussen, Edward C. Keefer, Will Klingaman, and Nina J. Noring (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1991) Document 435.

⁵⁸⁴ National Intelligence Estimate, “SNIE 30-58: Prospects and Consequences of Arab Unity Moves,” Washington D.C., 20 February 1958, pp. 41-42, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Near East Region; Iraq; Iran; Arabian Peninsula, Volume XII*, ed. Edward C. Keefer (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1993) Document 11.

we must circle back to the initial list of Near and Middle East countries assessed by the OCB, calling specific attention to Syria as the “country most vulnerable to the establishment of communist control.”⁵⁸⁵ This is actually an interesting assessment, as we discussed previously the PSB, NSC, and OCB were shifting focus to the Northern Tier Concept under the theory that the shared border (with the Soviets) placed these countries at the greatest risk. Indeed, referencing the northern tier, the board remarked that:

Afghanistan’s long common frontier with the Soviet Union exposes it to Soviet economic and political penetration. In East Pakistan there is a strong threat of communist subversion while in West Pakistan it is less pronounced ... Iran, having only recently survived a communist attempt to take over, is still confronted with a serious subversion problem.⁵⁸⁶

However, Syria was seen as the primary threat. The Operations Coordinating Board’s 1955 1290-d report, *Analysis of the Internal Security Situation in Syria*, can help us understand why.

SYRIA

There exists a clear and present danger that the Syrian Government will become dominated by the Communists if the current trends continue unabated. The Syrian situation has been characterized over the past eight years by an inherently unstable Government, thinly veiled intervention by a number of foreign powers working at cross purposes, apathy toward communism, and anti-West, allegedly neutral, international position. Although relatively successful and advanced in the subversive stages, the Communists by themselves do not appear sufficiently strong to seize the government, nor does it appear that this is their intention. Rather they seek to destroy national unity and to strengthen support for Soviet policies and opposition to western policies, plus exacerbating tensions in the Arab world. In

⁵⁸⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d*, (October 1955) p. 3.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

this latter aim the Communists have made significant progress.⁵⁸⁷ – Operations Coordinating Board – *Synopsis of Individual Country Analyses* (1955)

In his 1957 article for *The World Today*, “Syria on the Move: Ascendancy of the Left Wing,” Walter Z. Laqueur states that “the rise of ‘leftist’ forces in Syria has to be viewed in the wider context of Syrian domestic politics during the last twenty years, the failure of parliamentary democracy there, the disintegration of the old parties, and an almost permanent economic crisis.”⁵⁸⁸ Laqueur argues that similar to other regional governments, the progression of Syrian political factions “promised radical changes while in opposition. But after they entered the Government they proved to be no better qualified than their predecessors to provide efficient administration and carry out long overdue political, social, and economic reforms.”⁵⁸⁹ These same concerns were outlined four years prior in the Operations Coordinating Board’s July 1955 report to the NSC, *Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Syria (Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d) and Recommended Action*, stating:

...the primary security threat in Syria arises from inherent instability of the government, a characteristic of all governments holding office during the last eight years ... coups d’etats, political assassinations, armed uprising and threats of armed foreign intervention are characteristics of the of the existing situation.⁵⁹⁰

In other words, the consensus at the time, both in American government and in academia, was that the Syrian internal scenario offered little stability or bedrock to build a western oriented government. The OCB’s outlook was also that there were no indications the situation was likely to improve,

⁵⁸⁷ Operations Coordinating Board, *Report to the National Security Council, Synopses of Individual Country Analyses (Annex B)*, Washington D.C., 12 September 1955, p. 27, White House Office, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs: Records, 1952-61 OCB Series, Subject Subseries, Box 5, Overseas Internal Security, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

⁵⁸⁸ Walter Z. Laqueur, “Syria on the Move: Ascendancy of the Left Wing,” *The World Today*, 13:1 (January 1957) pp. 17-26.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.* p. 18.

⁵⁹⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, “Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Syria (Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d) and Recommended Action,” Washington D.C., 7 July 1955, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East: Jordan-Yemen*, Volume XIII, eds., Will Klingman, Aaron D. Miller, and Nora J. Noring (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1988) Document 299.

something that appears to have held true at least in Laqueur's estimation.⁵⁹¹ Not only did the OCB recognize that Syria had fallen victim to communist apathy on the part of its politicians, but possibly more worrisome, its military officers too. According to the OCB, the Syrian Communist Party "is now the largest and best organized Communist party in the Arab world," in addition to being one of the leading forces in the country.⁵⁹² A year following the OCB Syrian 1290-d report, the intelligence community published Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE 36.7-56), where they again noted that "Soviet efforts are enjoying a large measure of success, primarily because the USSR is able to cater to the desire of key elements in the army and government."⁵⁹³ The primary Syrian socialist group, the Arab Socialist Resurrection Party's (ASRP) organization and outreach allowed it to establish "close contacts" with socialist parties in other Arab countries in order to develop alliances of specifically Arab socialist party blocs and presenting a significantly greater threat outside of local Syrian politics.⁵⁹⁴

The regional socialist parties in question were the Jordanian Ba'ath, the Iraqi National Democrats, and the Lebanese Progressive Socialists. With sympathetic groups in Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon we can begin to see how the Operations Coordinating Board could view Syria as the socialist axle with spokes connecting to the regional wheel. These connections warranted concern for the board as the potential for regional impact was great, specifically for US regional policy as these three countries, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon were seen as Western anchors in the region. Within 24 months of the SNIE, Iraq and Jordan would form the Arab Federation as the conservative Arab bloc opposing the Syro-Egyptian United Arab Republic (UAR). Lebanon would also establish itself closer to the Western-leaning Arab Federation and these three countries were pivotal to America's regional designs. Thus underscoring the OCB's concern that the largest and most effective socialist element in the Arab world had connections and influences to the left-leaning elements in all three. Therefore, the Operations Coordinating Board felt (later supported in Laqueur's argument) that if the United States could not control the Syrian situation, at best, they could hope to box it in.⁵⁹⁵ This theory will be explored again

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² Ibid.

⁵⁹³ National Intelligence Estimate, "SNIE 36.7-56: Outlook for the Syrian Situation," Washington D.C., 16 November 1956, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East: Jordan-Yemen, Volume XIII*, eds., Will Klingman, Aaron D. Miller, and Nora J. Noring (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1988) Document 340.

⁵⁹⁴ Walter Z. Laquer, "Syria on the Move: Ascendancy of the Left Wing," pp. 17-26.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 20.

in this chapter as it helps to provide context for the OCB's recommendations relating to Syria's key neighbours, Iraq and Lebanon.

Nonetheless, returning our focus to Syria, the ASRP's strong standing among the Syrian levers of state, and both its willingness, and ability, to gain audience with regional elements are why the OCB placed Syria at the highest risk for communist subversion (among the Arab states). Detailed in the 1290-d report, the OCB identified the ASRP as possessing the greatest direct subversive strength in Syria due to its "following within the Army, its strength in the Legislature (15%), and its relationships with independent political figures, holding key ministries of the government."⁵⁹⁶ The Operations Coordinating Board also noted that a considerable number of officers in the Army supported the ASRP, and the party collaborated with senior officers to protect the "strong position of the army in Syrian affairs," while advocating "Syrian opposition to the international policies of the Western power, nationalization of major economic enterprises, and sweeping social reforms for the benefit of worker and peasant."⁵⁹⁷ Again, drawing further correlation between the OCB and the national security enterprise, these same concerns were noted the following year by the intelligence community who identified the threat the ASRP posed with adherents not only in the army but also within Syrian intelligence itself.⁵⁹⁸

In the OCB reports, the DOD estimated that the Syrian membership of the ASRP was close to 10,000 personnel, 600 of whom were deemed to be "hard-core" militants, with an additional 2,000 individuals who were seen as ASRP collaborators but not members themselves.⁵⁹⁹ Worrisome, was the fact that this was twice the size of the DOD's estimates for Syrian internal security forces (somewhere around 5 thousand non-military internal security forces) which included the national Gendarmerie and Desert

⁵⁹⁶ Operations Coordinating Board, "Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Syria (Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d) and Recommended Action," Washington D.C., 7 July 1955, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East: Jordan-Yemen, Volume XIII*, eds., Will Klingman, Aaron D. Miller, and Nora J. Noring (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1988) Document 299.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁸ National Intelligence Estimate, "SNIE 36.7-56: Outlook for the Syrian Situation," (1956) Document 340.

⁵⁹⁹ Operations Coordinating Board, "Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Syria (Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d) and Recommended Action," (1955) Document 299, p. 531.

Patrol police deployed strategically throughout the country.⁶⁰⁰ The OCB reported to the National Security Council that these internal security forces lacked the fundamental training necessary for an efficient security force. Armed primarily with small arms, a few crew-served weapons, and lacking any artillery or armoured vehicles, one can understand how a communist organization, successfully infiltrating the civilian levels of government, and honing substantial influence within the armed forces, was deemed a high threat to a relatively ill-equipped, ill-trained, and ineffective internal security force. However, strength and power are not the only avenues to combat influence: intelligence functions and domestic surveillance can sometimes be used to close gaps where sheer power does not stack up. Unfortunately, the Syrian police intelligence organization, the Sûreté, tasked with the collection of political intelligence, counter-espionage, and control of foreign influence within Syria, was woefully inadequate. The DOD reported to the Operations Coordinating Board that this plain clothes service of close to 300 personnel, was internally and systemically disorganized and untrained, lacking in the production of high quality, domestic intelligence.⁶⁰¹ Worse still, the Sûreté's counter subversive activities clashed with the Deuxième Bureau, or Intelligence Branch of the Syrian Army's General Staff. This resulted in the "duplication, misplacement of effort, and indiscriminate compiling of information of dubious value."⁶⁰² What the OCB assessments reveal (and were briefed to the NSC) was a perception of an influential and growing communist party in the ASRP. They had infiltrated the Syrian army where junior officers spread party doctrine freely without interference from staff officers. The Syrian internal security forces were ineffective and untrained. Domestic intelligence functions of both the police and the army were duplicitous and undisciplined, and as already noted in the SNIE the following year, subverted by socialists as well. Lastly, and of great concern, lay the fact that the party had extended its reach and influence beyond the Syrian borders. Specifically in reference to the relationship with Lebanon, the OCB made the case that "the Communist Party of Syria is organically united with the Communist party of Lebanon."⁶⁰³ Not only did the Syrian communists provide guidance, safe haven, and other assistance to the communist parties of Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon, but the OCB stated that they also provided some support to the Tudeh Party of Iran.⁶⁰⁴ The

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid. p. 532.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid. p. 533.

⁶⁰² Ibid. p. 531.

⁶⁰³ Operations Coordinating Board, "Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Syria (Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d) and Recommended Action," (1955) Document 299, p. 531.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 531.

Operations Coordinating Board emphasized to the National Security Council that the communist party of Syria and Lebanon (organically linked in 1955) were the largest, best organized, and most competently led socialist group in the Arab world.

The point here is to construct the regional picture as the Operations Coordinating Board saw it. From the early reports of the Psychological Strategy Board to the 1290-d assessments of the OCB, US policy-makers were searching for regional targets against which to apply resources. The elements of American national security in the CIA, the DOS, the DOD, and the Foreign Operations Administration (FOA), led under the auspices of the OCB, were detailing a “whole-of-government” assessment that harkened back to early PSB reports on the dangers of a neutral regional attitude to Soviet communism. As the OCB working group made clear, the primary security threat in Syria was the result of not only the inherent instability of the government that had made coups d’état, political assassinations, armed uprisings, and threats of armed foreign intervention common place; but also fostered indifference toward communism. Such an environment of violent upheaval and ideological apathy allowed the ASRP to become a powerful force not only in Syria but also the region. Interestingly, the OCB assessed that the ASRP and its umbrella of socialist groups did not “appear to have as its immediate objective seizure of power. Rather it seeks to destroy national unity, to strengthen support for Soviet policies and opposition to Western policies and to exacerbate tensions in the Arab world.”⁶⁰⁵ What the Operations Coordinating Board was assessing was that the communist parties in Syria sought less to control the state and more to create a power vacuum by destroying everything else in their path. The State Department reported to the Operations Coordinating Board that these elements had made significant progress toward these objectives because “Communist penetration, factionalism and lack of active encouragement from those holding political power, the non-military security forces are unable to restrict the further expansion of Communist propaganda, agitation and penetration.”⁶⁰⁶ While the OCB felt that the police and Gendarmerie had sufficient manpower and equipment (if properly trained and led) to handle small-scale disturbances; in the event of a communist insurrection, the Syrian Army would be required to assist the security forces. The DOD felt there was “little question that the Syrian Army, if properly led, could maintain internal

⁶⁰⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, “Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Syria (Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d) and Recommended Action,” (1955) Document 299, p. 534.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 534.

security in the foreseeable future, including the suppression of a communist uprising,” but the socialist influence among the Army’s junior officers and support of the ASRP, actually increased the danger that the military would aid, rather than oppose, extreme left movements.⁶⁰⁷ The Operations Coordinating Board advised that if present trends continued, there was real danger Syria could fall under control of the ASRP as it increased its military and political strength.⁶⁰⁸ Such a scenario was later echoed by Laqueur who noted that, “Syria has for long been regarded by Soviet observers as the most promising country in the Middle East.”⁶⁰⁹ The OCB had identified to the NSC that the Syrian situation was dangerous, and was likely too far gone for US hard power assistance to have any measureable effect. The OCB was priming the NSC to consider regional counterbalances to the destabilizing effects of a deteriorating Syria. The OCB crafted recommendations for the National Security Council to limit the damage a destabilizing Syria could wreak on Western regional designs. As they wrote in their 1290-d report, “If the present trend continues there is a strong possibility that a Communist dominated Syria will result, threatening the peace and stability of the area and endangering the achievement of our objective in the Near East.”⁶¹⁰ The OCB felt that (in 1955) neither the current Syrian government, “nor any successor which the Syrians themselves are likely to install,” would take effective action against communist subversion or “check the trend toward communist control.”⁶¹¹ As a result, the OCB recommended against strengthening the Syrian internal security forces, as they were unlikely to prevent communist domination of Syria, but may in turn “serve to perpetuate the hold of an undesirable government in Syria.”⁶¹² Instead of strengthening the internal security forces directly, the recommendation was made to consider developing courses of action that could affect Syria indirectly. In particular, it was suggested to attempt to bring Lebanon and Jordan into the Iraq-Turkey agreement (the Baghdad Pact) in hopes such a development might pull Syria in the same direction. In a precursor of things to come, the DOD reported to the Operations Coordinating Board that “to some extent a pro-Iraqi element in the [Syrian] army tends to offset ASRP and communist influence,” limiting the ASRP’s apparent strength and impeding its ability to overtly

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ Walter Z. Laqueur, “Syria on the Move: Ascendancy of the Left Wing,” p. 20.

⁶¹⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, “Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Syria (Pursuant to NSC Action 1290-d) and Recommended Action,” (1955) Document 299, p. 536.

⁶¹¹ Ibid p. 536.

⁶¹² Ibid.

take over the government.⁶¹³ This statement indicates the growing reliance the OCB, and the United States, were placing on Iraq to be a bellwether in the region.

IRAQ

The Government of Iraq was widely heralded in our press and elsewhere as being one of the most progressive, one of the most constructive governments, in the Middle East... the government of Nuri al-Sa'id as being the most friendly to our country and the key point of the Baghdad pact..." however, "no matter how good the Iraqi Government was in economic terms – the disparity between its economic growth and political stagnation was such as to make a blow up of some sort inevitable."⁶¹⁴

As William Polk notes in the above quotation, Iraq was at the same time the West's best option for success and also a powder keg waiting to explode. As opposed to the previous example of Syria, where the board felt that communists and leftist front organizations had infiltrated every station of government, Iraq was seen differently by the Operations Coordinating Board. In fact, as suggested in the Syrian report, Iraq was considered as a possible counterbalance to the reach and influence of the Syrian communists, especially at the time of the 1290-d report in 1955.

Where the OCB assessed Syria offered fertile seed ground for disaffected Arab socialists in the military and state, the board viewed the Iraqi government's approach with greater favour, believing Western interests to be better protected under Nuri Al-Said. These assessments were being communicated to the National Security Council and the President of the United States. In the six months prior to the December 1955 1290-d Iraq report, the Iraqi government, led by Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa'id had managed a severe repression campaign against left-wing and communist elements within the kingdom, even severing diplomatic relations with the USSR in January of that year. The CIA estimated the Iraqi communist party strength to be around 2000 with a cadre of 400; when the total number of socialists

⁶¹³ Ibid. p. 533.

⁶¹⁴ William Polk, "Report on Iraq," *The Middle East Report 1959: Nationalism, Neutralism, Communism – The Struggle for Power*, (Washington: The Middle East Institute, 1959) p. 13.

and front group sympathizers were included, that estimate increased to approximately 10,000.⁶¹⁵ Ultimately, this was not strikingly different when compared to the (total) estimated communists in Syria (~12,000). However, the distinction lay in the perceived reach and infiltration of those numbers. The OCB had assessed that Syrian communists had bled into all facets of the Syrian state from the civilian government to the military; in contrast to Iraq where the CIA reported to the Operations Coordinating Board that they believed the repressive measures levied by al-Said's government had limited the communist party from seriously jeopardizing the Western-oriented political establishment. As opposed to the pervasive communist subversion of the Syrian state, in Iraq the board felt the threat was "principally one of the limited infiltration of professional groups and lower and middle levels of government."⁶¹⁶ The limited communist involvement outside of the state public works unions had led the CIA to assess that Iraqi communists had [at most] the "capability to maintain clandestine internal communications, to provide safe havens for fugitives and to communicate abroad."⁶¹⁷ The OCB did not aim to overtly minimize the threat though. Maintaining covert lines of communication to the most established and capable communist threat in the region (Syria), one that was also intricately linked to similar elements in Lebanon, was of great concern to Western designs. As long as they were linked, the threat would remain, and the Iraqi communist parties would have the opportunity to "conduct agent operations and improve its own organization."⁶¹⁸ Therefore, wary of the tenuous situation they were facing, the Operations Coordinating Board had become concerned over reports that Nuri al-Said was considering relaxing restrictions on communist political activities, as the board felt the party and its sympathizers "could be expected to carry out considerable disruptive activity in the form of propaganda, demonstrations, strikes, etc," if given the opportunity.⁶¹⁹ However, the board assessed that even under relaxed conditions it remained "unlikely that the communists could infiltrate key government positions on a large scale or would be able to control any government that might

⁶¹⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, "Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action," Washington D.C., 14 December 1955, p. 980, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East: Jordan-Yemen, Volume XIII*, eds., Will Klingman, Aaron D. Miller, and Nora J. Noring (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1988) Document 427.

⁶¹⁶ Operations Coordinating Board, "Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action," (1955) Document 427, p. 980.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid. p. 980.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid.

emerge.”⁶²⁰ In the end, the OCB advised the NSC that Iraqi communists had the potential to be an “enabler” to regional Soviet designs, incapable of controlling large swathes of the Iraqi government itself. Therefore, the OCB perceived an Iraqi threat to exist, but one that was far less capable or immediate as that faced in Syria. As we will cover shortly, the OCB appears to have been lulled by the collective sense that Iraq’s Western-trained military and strong leadership under Nuri al-Said, believing the powers of state to be within their control. These assessments are owed to the DOD analysis of the internal security and military forces of Iraq, reporting to the Operations Coordinating Board under the 1290-d programme.

Iraq’s police forces (roughly 12-14,000 strong) were seen as beneficiaries of Western (British) organization and training. Despite an overall police force that was considered “fair” by area standards, the OCB assessed that the Criminal Investigation Division (CID), the “key agency in the maintenance of internal security and the suppression of subversive activities,” was competent and effective enough to maintain internal stability and provide domestic security capable of thwarting a growing communist presence.⁶²¹ The OCB felt that these forces were moderately well trained and (at the higher levels) relatively honest. In particular, the CID was seen by the OCB as organized and capable enough to counter any significant activity as long as it was not dispersed widely across the country. In a scenario where there were multiple uprisings, the OCB believed the military could be relied upon to support both the regular police and the CID. The main element of the Iraqi military, the Army, constituted roughly 53,000 in strength and benefitted from above average leadership and good small unit and individual training. Most importantly, the DOD reported to the OCB that, above all, the Army was loyal to the Crown with little to no communist infiltration.⁶²² Similarly, in his 2017 paper on the 1958 Iraqi Revolution author Jeffrey Karam found that subsequent American intelligence assessments through 1957-58, referenced the findings of the 1955 OCB 1290-d report, citing the Iraqi military as loyal to the Hashemite monarchy, with little to no communist infiltration.⁶²³ In fact in the *National Intelligence Survey for Iraq (NIS 30)* published in October 1957, the intelligence community noted that

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ Operations Coordinating Board, “Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action,” (1955) Document 427, p. 981.

⁶²² Ibid. p. 982.

⁶²³ Jeffrey G. Karam, “Missing Revolution: The American Intelligence Failure in Iraq, 1958,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 32:6 (January 2017) p. 697.

the Communist Party itself was virtually impotent, and similar to the OCB report stated that both the police and the army were “considered non-political and loyal to the regime.”⁶²⁴ Therefore, we can begin to see examples of the Operations Coordinating Board national assessments shaping intelligence assessments moving forward, even as the threat of nationalism grew and eventually toppling what the intelligence community had considered one of the most stable regimes in the Middle East.⁶²⁵

If we were to stop at this point, one might argue the Operations Coordinating Board and the American government were operating under the short-sighted hyper-focus on communism. The collective elements of the CIA, DOD, and DOS appeared to miss the nationalist forest for the communist trees. This argument would seem to be supported by OCB assessments that “most responsible political opinion in Iraq is keenly alive to the communist menace both from without and from within,” with no mention of the nationalist wave spreading throughout the region and surrounding Iraq.⁶²⁶ However, we have to revisit the point made at the beginning of this chapter. Specifically, that the OCB 1290-d reports made recommendations for supporting internal security forces with training and equipment. For example, that “priority in the allocation of military aid to Iraq should be given to military units appropriate to the internal security function of the armed forces,” and advising that there should be no change to the overall military aid programme.⁶²⁷ Under this umbrella (military aid and regional defence) the OCB was *required* to relay threat through the prism of international communism; otherwise, as Secretary Dulles told the Senate Committee, the issue was out of America’s hands and under the purview of the United Nations. Therefore, if we understand that in the narrow scope of the 1290-d programme the OCB was limited as to how they could present the problem, we can move

⁶²⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Survey Iraq (NIS 30)*, Washington D.C., October 1957, p. 32 – a copy is available online at <http://www.fqs.org/cia/docs/100/0001252284/NATIONAL-INTELLIGENCE-SURVEY---CHAPTER-1---BRIEF;-IRAQ.html>.

⁶²⁵ Karam’s article makes note that the OCB found a lack of nationalist and communist infiltration to the Iraqi officer corps. The actual OCB 1290-d report on Iraq’s internal security only makes mention of the lack of Communist infiltration into the Army. The December 1955 report makes no mention of nationalist elements. However, later OCB reports, particularly the 7 August 1957, Operations Plan for Iraq (5428), does mention the threat and pressure of extreme Arab nationalists in addition to Communism, yet even here there is not a mention regarding the nationalist infiltration of the Army.

⁶²⁶ Operations Coordinating Board, “Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action,” (1955) Document 427, p. 984.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 986.

forward with an acceptance that although nationalism is not specifically mentioned in these individual reports, it is not evidence in and of itself of wilful negligence of the nationalist threat. Indeed, by exploring further, we benefit from evidence in later OCB reports to the National Security Council under the 5428 plan remain consistent with the 1290-d reports, and additionally identify the threats to American ambitions in the region posed by Arab nationalism.

The anti-colonial and anti-Western undercurrents of Arab nationalism were concerning to Washington as they were impediments to the West securing access to the region's resources and establishing bases to keep the Soviets from attaining free reign in the region. Unlike Soviet-supported military forces, the realities of Arab nationalism and its philosophical relationship to establishing free and independent states made it more of an elusive target. The United States could not openly target the burgeoning anti-colonial states in the region without drawing comparisons to its own national history. For this reason, unlike efforts to identify, target, and root out Soviets and Soviet sympathizers (operating in the Middle East), America sought to steer, or guide, nationalist elements to more constructive paths (this relates to the soft power recommendations from both the PSB and the OCB), in line with Washington's objectives. This also reinforces the difficulty that the US had in deciphering Arab nationalism as well. Without a better understanding of the socio-cultural realities in the region, the US was unable to determine the role Arab nationalism would play, i.e. Washington had already concluded that the West could not cohabitate with communism; they had not come to that mind completely as it related to Arab nationalism. In the April 1956 *Progress Report on the Near East (5428)*, the OCB reported to the National Security Council that efforts were underway to work with "newspapers, government officials and other prominent persons in seeking to guide nationalistic pressures into orderly channels friendly to the West."⁶²⁸ Unfortunately, public perception was wary of the European powers and their American allies. The OCB noted that not only had these efforts failed to produce positive results, the anti-American trend appeared to have gained momentum, and as the OCB pointed out, the problem of "communist infiltration through nationalist movements, the press, labor, and the peasantry," was expected to grow.⁶²⁹ The regional governments faced similar problems themselves. On the one hand they could not outright condemn calls for "Arab unity," or

⁶²⁸ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on the Near East (5428)*, Washington D.C., 5 April 1956, p. 7, White House Office, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948-61 Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) Central File Series, Box 78, Dwight David Eisenhower Library.

⁶²⁹ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on the Near East (5428)*, (April 1956) pp. 7-9.

state independence, as doing so would serve propaganda that the governments were colonial puppets of the West. Consequently, condoning or supporting these same forces could in effect challenge their own hold on power, as many of these movements developed out of dissatisfaction with the political elite. In fact, two weeks after the progress report just mentioned, the OCB submitted their 19 April 1956 report on the *Detailed Development of Major Actions Relating to United States Policy on the Near East (NSC 5428)*, reporting that the governments of the Near East countries showed greater concern with issues involving the emergent nationalism among their peoples, as opposed to the apparent danger from a distant Soviet threat.⁶³⁰ This is reminiscent of the early Psychological Strategy Board reports that warned against the danger of Arab neutrality resulting from the lack of threat perceived by the regional governing institutions. Washington recognized that the US could openly support “state stability,” much easier than they could denounce Arab nationalism, and it was this recognition that allowed for internal security programmes (like 1290-d) to provide both policy insight and intelligence. A combination that examined both the international communist threat existing in these countries, as well as assessing the fundamental workings of the state. Therefore despite claims that the OCB ignored nationalism to focus exclusively on communism, the newly available records of the PSB and the OCB indicate that policy *required* an outward focus on communism. The record is also enlightening in the sense that it shows both boards considered Pan-Arabism as a threat to Washington’s state-specific support (Iraq, Lebanon, etc.) However, Pan-Arabism (in the board’s view) was not entirely synonymous with individual anti-colonial nationalism in the independent states. Therefore, to address the problem without overstepping necessary policy restraints, the threat from nationalist movements was linked to communist propaganda as they were fuelled by similar socio-economic and cultural complaints. The soft-power environmental recommendations were made to target this aspect, while the hard-power recommendations were made to target the overt communist threat. It is this insight that allows this study to provide new context to the history from behind a new lens.

The Operations Coordinating Board was aware from the outset that while their charter was to focus on the *internal security forces* of the countries in question, actual *state internal security* was a much broader subject, one that included the socio-economic realities of each country. In the OCB’s 1290-d report

⁶³⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, *Detailed Development of Major Actions Relating to United States Policy on the Near East (NSC 5428)* - From November 3, 1955 Thru April 2, 1956, Washington D.C., 19 April 1956, p.3, White House Office, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948-61 Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) Central File Series, Box 78, Dwight David Eisenhower Library.

for Iraq, they called attention to the fact that “the Iraqi economy has large water and petroleum resources but is poor in human skills,” noting that these resources had the potential to have profound effects on the lives of the Iraqi population, and a measurable impact on the internal stability of the state.⁶³¹ In an August 1957 report to the National Security Council on the *Operations Plan for Iraq*, the OCB argued that the United States should support and encourage efforts of the Iraq development programme that emphasized long-range reforms to expand Iraq’s economy; prioritize the petroleum industry; and encourage land resettlement.⁶³² Provided the explanation above, we can see that OCB was emphasizing reforms to counter both problematic nationalism and subversive communism as both fed off of discontent. Later that year, in the NIS 30 survey, the intelligence community cited as progress that the Iraqi development programme had begun financing the beginnings of a comprehensive land drainage programme, and was receiving substantial technical assistance from the United States in the field of agriculture provided by the International Cooperation Administration (ICA), the same organization involved in the 1290-d OCB working group. These examples show that the Operations Coordinating Board, far from being a side-line policy review element of the NSC, was involved in recommending and coordinating national security policy at the highest levels. Not only would the board’s recommendations impact the strength and aid the United States provided to foreign security forces, but elements of the OCB working group were tasked to implement soft-power change advocated by both the PSB and the OCB.

Washington’s view was that change was necessary to limit the appeal of both nationalism and communism. However, change came with a price. The OCB perceived Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Said as a Western-oriented leader, capable of maintaining control over domestic unrest and instability, and challenging the nationalist and socialist states in the region. Change, in the greater sense, came with risks. Al-Said was the gatekeeper and guardsman of the traditional power brokers of the Iraqi state; Washington feared change to the socio-political makeup could jeopardize their ally in Baghdad. The OCB briefed the National Security Council that while al-Said was the strongest figure in the

⁶³¹ Operations Coordinating Board, “Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action,” (1955) Document 427, p. 983.

⁶³² Operations Coordinating Board, “Operations Plan for Iraq (NSC 5428), Washington D.C., 7 August 1957, p. 1064, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East Region; Iran; Iraq*, Volume XII, eds. Paul Claussen, Edward C. Keefer, Will Kingaman, Nina J. Noring (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1991) Document 462.

country, his age and declining health could pose a problem for the future.⁶³³ In the NIS 30 report the intelligence community raised a similar concern that “Nuri has no heir apparent capable of manipulating Iraqi politics with the same mastery. It is generally expected that his departure from active political life will be followed by a troubled period of jockeying for place among a number of potential successors.”⁶³⁴ The Operations Coordinating Board assessed that radical changes in government policy were unlikely (even in the event of al-Said’s departure), as power would likely pass to another pro-Western element in Iraqi state leadership.⁶³⁵ These sentiments were expressed again the following year in the July 1956 National Intelligence Estimate (36.2-56) which concluded that “Iraq is unique in the Arab world in its political stability,” due in large part to the work of Prime Minister Nuri Al Said, and as long as he [al-Said] remains active, “no radical changes in Iraq’s relationships with the West are likely.”⁶³⁶ As we have now seen in several examples, the OCB had assured the NSC and the president that Iraq was stable and secure, and only time would expose how wrong they were. The intelligence community reiterated these points again in the NIS 30 report stating that political rivals to al-Said’s Western alignment were limited, lacked leadership, and had “little immediate potential for achieving political organization.”⁶³⁷ Therefore, while the PSB, OCB, NSC and the IC all made recommendations for support to socio-political changes to the region, it required controlled change that did not upset the greater balances of power. The OCB felt that the Soviets were not burdened by such dilemmas inherent to Western long-range planning; instead, the board felt that Moscow and its allies increased their influence by sowing the seeds of doubt against entrenched institutions and calling for large-scale, vacuum forming change (power granted through destabilization, such as the Syrian situation where little thought was given to actually running the state or addressing problems). It was through this dynamic that the OCB saw the greatest threat to the Iraqi state: foreign pressure particularly from Syria, but also from nationalist Egypt. Foreign influence and intervention

⁶³³ Operations Coordinating Board, “Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action,” (1955) Document 427, p. 985.

⁶³⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Survey Iraq (NIS 30)*, (1957) p. 31.

⁶³⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, “Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action,” (1955) Document 427, p. 985.

⁶³⁶ NIE 36.2-56 “The Question of U.S. Military Assistance to Iraq, U.S. Interest in the Political Stability of Iraq, and the Visit to the United States of Crown Prince Abdullah.” 16 July 1956.

⁶³⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Survey Iraq (NIS 30)*, (1957) p. 31.

particularly from the Syrian socialist parties with ties to groups, not only in Iraq, but also across the region, pushed the OCB to recommend enhancing the internal security of the country.

Important here are the OCB recommendations to strengthen the Iraqi police force, and conduct a survey to address the actual weaknesses in training, equipment, and morale identified.⁶³⁸ Less than two years later in the Iraq NIS 30 survey, it would appear as if the OCB recommendation had been actualized as the intelligence community noted that the Iraqi police force had grown (from close to 14,000 in 1955) to 21,500 in 1957; additionally, the US had established a police training mission for the Iraqi government and was in the process of furnishing much needed police equipment identified in the OCB 1290-d reports.⁶³⁹ Both the 1955 1290-d report and the NIS 30 report assessed that the police were sufficiently well organized to counter significant subversive activity, with military intervention necessary to meet simultaneous demonstrations in any one city.⁶⁴⁰ The OCB recognized that even though Iraq possessed a sizable police force, the army would be required to augment internal security efforts against a diffuse uprising. For this reason, the OCB recommended to the NSC that the US agree to provide Iraq a variety of military equipment to reinforce the army and support the government's internal security mission.⁶⁴¹ Again, using the NIS 30 report, the intelligence community indicated that Washington had acted on these recommendations as the Iraqi army had begun receiving "U.S. artillery, light tanks, jeep-mounted 106 mm recoilless rifles, mortars, and radios through the U.S. Military Assistance Program," indicating that while the army remained deficient in important items of equipment for combat against an enemy force, it was fully capable of maintaining security against armed insurrection.⁶⁴²

As a result, the State Department assessed that the political conditions in Iraq were considered stable, owing to a weak and decentralized communist apparatus in the country that was deemed incapable of overthrowing the government by force or subverting or influencing it significantly. In effect the police

⁶³⁸ Operations Coordinating Board, "Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action," (1955) Document 427, p. 985.

⁶³⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Survey Iraq (NIS 30)*, (1957) p. 32.

⁶⁴⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, "Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action," (1955) Document 427, p. 981.

⁶⁴¹ Operations Coordinating Board, "Operations Plan for Iraq (NSC 5428)," (1957) Document 462, p. 1067.

⁶⁴² Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Survey Iraq (NIS 30)*, (1957) p. 51.

force, supported by the army, remained fully capable of maintaining security against armed insurrection.⁶⁴³ We can see how as a result of these national assessments, Washington could be lulled into complacency, staying the course despite danger ahead. As already discussed, however, as the nationalist fervour grew throughout the region in the coming years, the Operations Coordinating Board began to include more pointed recommendations than in the initial 1290-d assessments. In the OCB's August 1957 report to the National Security Council, the board advised that "the United States should support strongly Iraq's efforts to maintain its independent policies and territorial integrity in the face of threats of communist subversion and pressures from extreme Arab nationalists."⁶⁴⁴ In the 1290-d assessment the danger of foreign actors threatening Iraqi territory was amplified as the OCB felt the army would be incapable of supplying and supporting more than one infantry division outside of Iraq without losing the capability to maintain internal security.⁶⁴⁵ So while the Operations Coordinating Board felt that the government's willingness to participate in regional collective security (Baghdad Pact and Northern Tier Concept) assured that Iraq would remain solidly in the Western alliance; it also presented the government to challenges from nationalist and left-leaning neighbours, regional animosity, and competition against the Western proxies, toward disastrous results.⁶⁴⁶ In this section we showed that the Operations Coordinating Board promoted the concept of Iraq as a safe, stable, Western oriented government, one that the US should assist with military and economic aid so that it would remain so. We have shown that the OCB findings and recommendations were promoted by other agencies and in some cases were carried forward to action. While this supports our argument that the OCB actually informed and shaped policy outside of simply coordinating it, it also shines the light on the fact the Operations Coordinating Board's assessments of Iraq's stability and strength, were a siren's song (and possible germinator of groupthink, with the government unable to move on from these assessments until it was too late) that soon came crashing down in the early morning hours of 14 July 1958, plunging the region into chaos and sending US military forces to the shores of Beirut.

⁶⁴³ Ibid. p. 982.

⁶⁴⁴ Operations Coordinating Board, "Operations Plan for Iraq (NSC 5428)," (1957) Document 462, p. 1063.

⁶⁴⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Survey Iraq (NIS 30)*, (1957) p. 50.

⁶⁴⁶ Operations Coordinating Board, "Analysis of Internal Security Situation in Iraq and Recommended Action," (1955) Document 427, p. 984.

CHAPTER NINE: THE OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD AND LEBANON

The Iraqi coup in July 1958 was a game-changer that turned US regional policy on its head and cast the Eisenhower administration into a “short-fuse” scenario where difficult decisions were required at a moment’s notice. In this final chapter we will examine the devolving situation in Lebanon in the lead up to the Iraqi coup, and make the case that President Eisenhower’s decision to send US forces to Beirut was influenced by a regional perspective shaped by the OCB (and the PSB before it). This point is unique, as in the existing history the roles and influence of the PSB and the OCB have garnered little attention. Much of what the PSB and OCB provided was subsumed into the National Security Council and the policies that the council put forth (as the process intended); the result has been a focus on the end product (NSC policy) or output, and less on the inputs (progress reports, coordination, and national assessments). The goal here is not to establish whether the OCB “got it right” or “got it wrong” necessarily, particularly because reality resides more in shades of grey (i.e. history has shown the OCB was more accurate in some areas than in others). Rather, the goal is to show that newly declassified archival sources of the PSB and the OCB can be used to provide context to policy decisions regarding national security and foreign policy, with this case study on the Middle East serving as an example. Due to the fact that much information remains classified, it is difficult to concretely state that the PSB or OCB alone led policy; however, their placement and access within the NSC system and executive policy process proves that they were purposefully constructed and staffed to have policy impacts. The membership of these boards (undersecretaries and deputy secretaries from across government) and their position within the NSC system illustrate that PSB and OCB reports and recommendations preceded US policy actions in support of those recommendations (as seen in the examples from the previous chapters), and indicate their influence on larger national security policy.

In the previous chapter we showed how the OCB (specifically through the 1290-d programme) informed national security policy makers of the tenuous stability and security environment in the Middle East, particularly in the cases of Syria and Iraq. Detrimentially, the OCB national assessments and IC reports of Iraqi stability would prove to be inaccurate and result in administrative surprise when Iraq’s government was overthrown. Now in this chapter we will turn our attention to Lebanon, the “Paris of the Middle East,” as the OCB assessments would suggest Lebanon as another counterbalance to nationalist and communist influences in the region (and a supportive element to

Iraq's strong position), even while Lebanese stability came into question. It is important to remind ourselves what we have covered to this point. Beginning with the Psychological Strategy Board, and then the Operations Coordinating Board, the president and his NSC had been kept abreast of US policy and national security issues in the Middle East. As we remember from earlier chapters, Presidents Truman and Eisenhower (Eisenhower to a greater extent) established the National Security Council as the chief executive's principal forum to consider national security and foreign policy decision making, and their central vehicle for coordinating these policies across the federal government. As sub-boards reporting to the council (which Eisenhower regularly presided over) the PSB and the OCB were often in a direct line to the president himself. The president (through the NSC) assigned key missions and programmes to the PSB and the OCB (the OCB 1290-d programme being a prime example) and therefore looked to them for advice and information on the key issues facing the country. The OCB's 1290-d internal security reports identified Syria as the greatest communist threat in the region. The PSB and the OCB had called attention to the practice of Arab nationalists (in every country) taking advantage of the anti-Western rhetoric to garner support for neutralist and socialist causes that the boards had warned were becoming safe havens for the Soviets. The point is to show both the direct and indirect lines for the OCB to inform the president himself. With the combined approach, detailed in the last chapter, the OCB set out to assess these threats in Lebanon.

According to the 1290-d, not only was Iraq recognized as the West's most capable ally in the region, but it was assessed to be strong and stable in what was seen as a sea of discontent (from the Western perspective) with little chance for the upheaval experienced by its neighbours (this sentiment would be shared across government in the lead-up to the coup). As the sole Arab member of the Baghdad Pact, the defensive hopes of the Northern Tier Concept rested with Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Said, who Washington (collectively, and possibly a result of groupthink) believed held iron-clad control over his country's security and steadfast resistance to Moscow. While the Operations Coordinating Board reflected confidence in the government of al-Said, the increasing ties and relationships between Nasser's Egypt and Syria were extremely worrisome to the OCB and Washington. The OCB reported to the National Security Council that Nasser's Pan-Arab message resonated across the region among populations that had only known foreign control; when coupled with the entrenched Socialists in Syria (capable of supporting their comrades in the conservative states) it meant that the region as a whole could tilt in either direction. As we will explore later in this chapter, concerns over Washington's

number one priority, oil, prompted the OCB to highlight to the NSC that with 70% of Western Europe's oil supply dependent on the oil wells in the Middle East, communist control could spell doom for the Allies' global military power. The sabotage of the Syrian pipelines during the Suez Crises of 1956 had exposed the weakness of the West's defences. Realizing it was unlikely for Iraq to hold the region on its own, the OCB and the national agencies looked to other countries to bolster its position and hopefully keep the Syro-Egyptian threat contained. John C. Campbell (1960) argues that Lebanon was seen by the United States as a wall, put up to stop the spread of Nasser's Pan-Arabism as Washington was concerned that if "Lebanon fell to Abdel Nasser the rest of the Arab world would follow and the northern tier would be undermined."⁶⁴⁷ In this context Lebanon rose in importance, and having been informed by the OCB and his NSC, President Eisenhower responded quickly when disaster struck.

LEBANON

By dawn on 14 July 1958, word reached Washington D.C. that there had been a military coup in Iraq. Prime Minister Nuri al-Said, the Crown Prince, and several royal family members had been executed and Nasserite Iraqi military leaders had taken control of the country. Eisenhower met with his staff and his National Security Council to discuss how the United States should respond. What we know now (from later authors and Eisenhower's own admission) is that the president had already made up his mind. As Eisenhower notes in his memoirs "because of my long study of the problem... this was one meeting in which my mind was practically made up regarding the general line of action we should take, even before we met."⁶⁴⁸ In fact, according to author Agnes Korbani in his book, *U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982: Presidential Decision-making*, when Secretary of State John Foster Dulles approached Eisenhower after their meeting with the cabinet and NSC, the president waved him off stating – "Foster, I've already made up my mind. We're going in."⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁷ John C. Campbell, *Defense of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy, Revised Addition*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960) p. 140.

⁶⁴⁸ Agnes G. Korbani, *U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982: Presidential Decision-making*, (New York: Praeger, 1991) p. 42.

⁶⁴⁹ Townsend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dulles*, (New York: Little Brown and Company, 1973) p. 435.

What convinced the president and the national security team that troops on the ground in Lebanon were necessary, or better yet, required? As previously covered in this study, after failing to secure Egyptian cooperation in a Western-oriented defence pact, the United States focused its efforts behind supporting the Northern Tier Concept, anchoring America's defensive strategy to Iraq (the sole Arab member). Lebanon was not part of the Baghdad Pact; in fact, Beirut had turned down every opportunity to join. Why then had the President been so certain of action from the very start? The fact is that Eisenhower's "long study of the problem," was informed by the assessments and reports of his national security apparatus and intelligence community, to include the PSB and the OCB. The role of the PSB and the OCB in informing the National Security Council (of which Eisenhower actively attended meetings) cannot be understated. The OCB reports had continuously acknowledged the growing threat of Arab nationalism as a regional destabilizing force; they had warned of the opportunism of Soviet and communist groups to infiltrate the anti-Western movements; and they had called attention to the dangers these threats posed to the precarious relationships the United States had developed in order to protect the free flow of natural resources from region. Now, faced with the reality of all these threats coming to pass, Eisenhower saw the Western map of the Middle East coming to pieces and decided it was time to act.

The 1290-d reports identified Syria as the primary communist concern in the region, and when they agreed to a joint partnership with Nasser (the undisputed figure of Arab nationalism) under the UAR, they had created an anti-Western political bloc attracting the various Arab unity parties sweeping the region. Set in their sights were the conservative, western-aligned, governments of Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. All the nations with which the United States and Great Britain had pinned their hopes of stopping communism. Unfortunately for the West, perception was as effective a political tool as military equipment or financial aid. Nasserite Pan-Arabists and Syrian socialists had targeted Iraq for entering into a pact (Baghdad Pact) with non-Arab countries and Western imperialists. These condemnations had even come from Arab countries considered in the Western camp. In the Operations Coordinating Board's 19 April 1956 *Detailed Development of Major Actions Relating to United States Policy on the Near East (NSC 5428)*, the OCB made clear to the National Security Council that Arab resentment towards the Baghdad Pact, and the uncertainty of the US position when it came to the pact, had led the government of Lebanon in particular, to wonder how much it could count on the West for effective support. More worrisome still, were reports that Lebanon was reportedly becoming inclined toward partial accommodation of Egyptian, Syrian, and Saudi Arabian demands to

abandon the pact entirely.⁶⁵⁰ Ultimately this had not been a surprise to the board. The Operations Coordinating Board had reported to the National Security Council that steps to woo additional Arab governments into pact membership had actually backfired. The OCB had assessed that the perception among the Jordanian population that the government was considering entering into the non-Arab Baghdad Pact resulted in riots destabilizing the government's cabinets and had effectively deterred Jordan from joining the pact.⁶⁵¹ It was not just Jordan that was affected by the uprising: there were other far-reaching foreign policy effects as well. The Operations Coordinating Board assessed that the riots in Jordan (a result of Soviet-supported anti-Western pan-Arabism in the board's view) had effectively caused the Lebanese government to question whether it would even be possible politically to remain friendly to the West, let alone become member of a political flashpoint like the Baghdad Pact.⁶⁵² This was a major blow to the United States. Lebanon had been trumpeted by the Operations Coordinating Board as the only territory apparently unwilling to side with the Soviets, as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen were reportedly moving toward military pacts with Syria and Egypt.⁶⁵³ If Lebanon abandoned its Western relationships under regional pressure, the United States could be looking at catastrophic failure to its regional goals. These concerns, reported to the NSC and the president, emphasized the importance of both Iraq and Lebanon to Washington's regional calculus. Thinking ahead, we can begin to understand how the loss of one, and the imminent collapse of the other in July 1958, drove Eisenhower to realize the entire Middle East policy was in jeopardy.

So in May 1956, fears were elevated when the OCB informed the National Security Council that Soviet activities in the region were continuing at an alarming pace, noting "Soviet activity, which formerly

⁶⁵⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, *Detailed Development of Major Actions Relating to United States Policy on the Near East (NSC 5428) - From November 3, 1955 Thru April 2, 1956*, Washington D.C., 19 April 1956, White House Office, National Security Council (NSC) Staff: Papers, 1948-61 Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) Central File Series, Box 78, Dwight David Eisenhower Library (DDEL).

⁶⁵¹ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on the Near East (5428)*, Washington D.C., 5 April 1956, p. 2, White House Office, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

⁶⁵² Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on the Near East (5428)*, (April 1956), p. 2; and Operations Coordinating Board, *Detailed Development of Major Actions Relating to United States Policy on the Near East (NSC 5428) - From November 3, 1955 Thru April 2, 1956*, (April 1956) p. 24.

⁶⁵³ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, Washington D.C., 17 May 1956, p. 4, White House Office, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61 OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

consisted mainly of encouraging local parties and engaging in small covert operations, has burgeoned into an extensive economic and diplomatic effort which seriously threatens the British and American position in the area.”⁶⁵⁴

LEBANESE SOFT POWER

While it was too early for the US to consider Lebanon “lost” to the West, the OCB reports indicating Beirut shifting more closely to the Soviets were of great concern. As we mentioned in the previous chapter: Iraq was seen as the key counterbalance to the Soviet threat emanating from Syria, particularly from a military conflict standpoint. As previously noted, the OCB was aware of the nationalist fervour in the region and the problems that it posed to their lone Arab ally, Iraq. In a series of reports from the OCB 5428 working group from January 1956, the OCB reported to the council that in order to incorporate a more inclusive approach, Lebanon should be considered as an additional target country to stem the growing threat of a communist Syria. In particular, the board recommended to the NSC that the US work through economic soft power means, to bring about a union between Syria and Lebanon, in an effort to stabilize the Syrian situation.⁶⁵⁵ The OCB followed this recommendation with a report at the end of January stating the United States should seek regional avenues (outside of Syria) to eliminate or reduce factors favourable to anti-western and pro-Soviet elements in the Syrian state.⁶⁵⁶ Economically, the US Department of Labor recommended to the OCB that the United States assign labour attachés to the Syrian-Lebanese area (headquartered in both countries) in an effort to establish successful labour relationships in the hopes of reducing the attractiveness of communism.⁶⁵⁷ The OCB wanted to use Lebanon’s economic success to showcase the benefits of Western relationships. These soft power, conciliatory recommendations are understandable as, at that time, Lebanon’s economy

⁶⁵⁴ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East*, (May 1956) p. 2.

⁶⁵⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, *Preparation of Courses of Action Against Communism in Syria*, Washington D.C., 9 Jan 1956, p. 4, White House Office, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61 OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

⁶⁵⁶ Operations Coordinating Board, *Courses of Action against Communism in Syria – OCB Working Group on NSC 5428*, Washington D.C., 27 January 1956, White House Office, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61 Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

⁶⁵⁷ Operations Coordinating Board, *Department of Labor Contribution - Courses of Action against Communism in Syria*, Washington D.C., 17 January 1956, White House Office, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61 Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

was flourishing under President Camille Chamoun. Lebanon's sources of income were varied, from the strong transit-trade of oil from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, tourism, and services rendered largely to non-Lebanese people. The uncertainty and upheaval that had enveloped the region had been a boon to Lebanon as:

...a round of revolution in adjacent countries drove not only refugees into Lebanon but also capital for bank or real-estate investments. In the Suez crisis of 1956 many Europeans and Americans, fleeing Israel and Egypt, found a haven in Lebanon.⁶⁵⁸

Washington hoped that the foreign investment, successful trade, and business environment in Lebanon could attract Syrians toward more Western trade-centred policies. However, the Soviets were also aware of the economics of international relations, and the archival records indicate that Moscow aimed to rob the West of the "Paris of the Middle East." Just over a month later in March 1956, while considering the Department of Labor suggestion, the OCB highlighted a request from the Lebanese President for American "aid programs to provide for triangular trade which would enable Lebanon, Egypt and other Near Eastern countries to dispose of some of their surplus crops without being so dependent on the Soviet Bloc."⁶⁵⁹ President Chamoun was voicing his concern over the communist bloc's ability to take almost any amount of excess products serving as a "most dangerous" weapon against the West. According to OCB daily intelligence abstracts published a few days prior, Lebanon was experiencing a Soviet economic squeeze; with Moscow offering Beirut economic and technological aid and support, with no political or economic conditions attached.⁶⁶⁰ Chamoun's concerns only continued to mount and the OCB was forced to report to the NSC the following month that Chamoun was becoming deeply concerned over the increasing popular and parliamentary pressure being brought to bear on his government to accept the Soviet offers of arms and economic assistance.⁶⁶¹ The OCB was clearly functioning outside of the policy review and monitoring role that

⁶⁵⁸ Philip K. Hitti, *A Short History of Lebanon*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965) pp. 228-230.

⁶⁵⁹ Operations Coordinating Board, *No. 575 Daily Intelligence Abstracts of Interest to Working Groups*, Washington D.C., 8 March 1956, NSC Staff: Papers, OCB Central Files Series, Box 110, OCB 350.05 Intelligence Abstracts, DDEL.

⁶⁶⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, *No. 571 - Daily Intelligence Abstracts*, Washington D.C., 2 March 1956, NSC Staff: Papers, OCB Central Files Series, Box 110, OCB 350.05 Intelligence Abstracts, DDEL.

⁶⁶¹ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on the Near East (5428)*, Washington D.C., 5 April 1956, p. 2, White House Office, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

is so often assigned to it in the literature. Not only have we shown that they regularly proposed policy recommendations, but that they were also informing the NSC about situations developing on the ground in the region. This again reinforces the argument that the OCB was operating within the connective tissue of the intelligence-policy divide as opposed to one pole or the other.

The Lebanese President found himself in a precarious situation. Ascending to the presidency after the 1952 Lebanese coup, Chamoun had enjoyed enormous popularity, being selected for the presidency by a staggering 96% of the votes in chamber. Unfortunately, his support soon began to wane as his allies (during the coup) splintered off into separate coalitions and began targeting Chamoun to bolster their own political power.⁶⁶² These events happened to coincide with the rise of Nasser and his Pan-Arab message, and the leaders of Chamoun's opposition, "rallied sometimes by mere opportunism to Nasserist policy," sought Cairo's blessing and support to weaken and usurp Chamoun.⁶⁶³ Fortunately for the United States, the give and pull of the domestic political landscape in Lebanon had forced Chamoun to strengthen his relationship with the West and the US. Washington watched the spectacle unfold, as George Hadad describes:

It became a classical procedure for those who had any grudge against Chamoun to ingratiate themselves with Nasser by making a pilgrimage to Cairo or to Damascus where they were generously received, and their utterances against Chamoun and his policies were reproduced in provocative headlines.⁶⁶⁴

The open support Nasser and the government in Syria received from Chamoun's opposition, allowed the OCB (and official Washington would follow) to categorize them (the opposition) as a threat – as nationalists who could play proxy for the communists. However, a clear delineation between forces was not the same as addressing the problem, and the problems continued to grow.

⁶⁶² George M. Haddad, *Revolutions and Military Rule in the Middle East: The Arab States Pt. I: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan*, (New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1971) pp. 407-409.

⁶⁶³ Haddad, *Revolutions and Military Rule in the Middle East: The Arab States Pt. I: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan*, p. 409.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.* p. 410.

LEBANON: AN AGENT OF CHAOS

Lebanon's descent into civil war has been covered in the literature over the last six decades.⁶⁶⁵ This study does not necessarily add to that story but rather shows where the OCB and other declassified records can provide additional insight into the narrative, while continuing to illustrate where the OCB was informing national decision makers. Importantly, the OCB's assessments (which included intelligence, policy, and military inputs) allowed President Eisenhower to feel that he had been equipped with the knowledge necessary for action. As untimely and unfortunate as the situation was, the American President believed himself informed of the "ground truth" and remained confident in his decision, as expressed at the opening of this chapter. The OCB had misinformed the NSC and the president about the stability in Iraq as events would show. Reinforced by later IC assessments, the US engaged in policy missteps relying on Iraq as the centerpiece of the US regional plan. With this being said, the OCB had been correct (whether by luck or sound tradecraft) that Lebanon was also important to the West's regional plans. Presented as part of a two-pronged approach to deal with communism and nationalism in the region, Eisenhower knew that in order to avoid total and complete

⁶⁶⁵ For more on Lebanon's chaotic descent see - Chalouhi, Robert G., *The Crisis in Lebanon: A Test of Consociational Theory*, PhD Thesis, University of Florida, 1978 [Unpublished]; Ponzio, J.F., *The New Look: The Eisenhower Doctrine and American Intervention*, MA Thesis, Naval War College, 1991 [Unpublished]; Wagner, Theodore, *Analysis of the Employment of United States Troops in Lebanon in 1958*, MA Thesis, Army War College, Carlisle P.A., November 1971 [Unpublished]; Wilson, David N., *The Eisenhower Doctrine and its Implementation in Lebanon – 1958*, M.A. Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2002 [Unpublished]; Agwani, Mohammed Shafi, *The Lebanese Crisis, 1958: A Documentary Study*, (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965); Campbell, John C., *Defence of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960); Gray, David W., *The U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958: A Commander's Reminiscence*, (Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute, 1984); Haddad, George M., *Revolutions and Military Rule In the Middle East: The Arab States Pt. I: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan*, (New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1971); Halpern, Manfred, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1963); Hitti, Philip K., *A Short History of Lebanon*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965); Khalaf, Samir, *Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon: A History of the Internationalization of Communal Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Korbani, Agnes G., *U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982: Presidential Decision-making*, (New York: Praeger, 1991); Riedel, Bruce, *Beirut 1958: How America's Wars in the Middle East Began*, (Washington: Brookings Institute Press, 2020); Sharabi, Hisham B., *Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World*, (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1966); Sharabi, Hisham B., *Government and Politics in the Middle East in the Twentieth Century*, (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1962); Shulimson, Jack, *Marines in Lebanon: 1958* (Washington: Headquarters United States Marine Corps, 1966); and Little, Douglas, "His Finest Hour? Eisenhower, Lebanon, and the 1958 Middle East Crisis," *Diplomatic History*, 20 (Winter 1996) pp. 27-54.

regional collapse of the US position in the Middle East, Lebanon's Western-oriented government could not be allowed to fail.

While the US President could feel secure in his position as the chief executive, the same could not be said for his counterpart in Beirut. Regional and domestic condemnation against Chamoun increased markedly after November 1956 when his government failed to break diplomatic relations with Britain and France over the Suez Crisis. Political domestic opposition against Chamoun continued until the Lebanese elections in June 1957, where the President's supporters gained seats in the government and four leading members of the opposition were defeated; at this point political opposition turned to abject violence and the country began to tear itself apart as Hadad recounts, "between the end of the elections in the early summer of 1957 and the beginning of the rebellion in May 1958, sabotage in Beirut and clashes of armed bands in the country were continuous. Arms were smuggled mainly from Syria in preparation for an insurrection."⁶⁶⁶

A MEETING WITH THE SHAH

As the violence in Lebanon grew, Eisenhower became more concerned that Chamoun's grip on the country was in jeopardy. The OCB and NSC reports were painting a bleak picture. Two weeks before the coup in Iraq upset the region's politics, the downcast OCB assessments were affirmed during Eisenhower's meeting with the Shah of Iran to discuss regional developments and the evolving picture in Lebanon. According to a declassified government memorandum of the conversation, the Shah expressed his view that the Lebanese unrest "arose from exploitation by the UAR of a purely internal Lebanese problem"; however, the Shah qualified his statement by saying he believed that "even in the absence of this pretext Nasser would have found some other basis for bringing about upheaval in Lebanon."⁶⁶⁷ The Shah went on to warn Eisenhower that communism and Nasserism were constantly probing for weak spots, again reinforcing PSB and OCB assessments of the dual threat increasing in the region, and if "Lebanon should fall, Iraq and Jordan would be in grave danger. The current

⁶⁶⁶ Haddad, *Revolutions and Military Rule in the Middle East: The Arab States Pt. I: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan*, p. 416.

⁶⁶⁷ White House, "Memorandum of Conversation - Lebanon and the Middle East," Washington D.C., 1 July 1958, p. 571, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Near East Region; Iraq; Iran; Arabian Peninsula, Volume XII, ed. Edward C. Keefer (United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1993) Document 242.

problem, now being aggravated by the Syrians and Egyptians, was a worry to all of us.”⁶⁶⁸ The Shah’s dire warning, a reminder of the stakes in play, were amplified by the events in Baghdad two weeks later.

The US had been aware of and concerned about Egyptian and Syrian destabilizing elements for some time. The OCB had notified the NSC in January 1956 that the Department of State should encourage the government of Lebanon to “reduce freedom of movement between Syria and Lebanon of known or suspected Syrian and Lebanese Communists and members of Communist front groups; and arrest for trial and imprisonment Syrian communists apprehended for activities in Lebanon prejudicial to the security of the Lebanese state.”⁶⁶⁹ As we recall from the last chapter, the Syrian communist party was the most extensive and organized in the region, with established ties to groups in both Lebanon and Iraq. These recommendations for Lebanon to use its economic advantages and take active efforts to control the reach of Syrian communists emphasizes the expectations the OCB held for Lebanon. Underscoring the board’s position that Lebanon serve as another counterbalance to Syria and Egypt, a counterbalance that existed outside of the controversial Baghdad Pact and could provide needed support to an increasingly isolated Iraq. In a 22 June 1956 OCB memo to Dillon Anderson, President Eisenhower’s Special Assistant for the National Security Council, the OCB reported that:

...the political situation in Syria has drifted further to the left with Syria concluding a formal arms agreement with Czechoslovakia, in response the US agreed to furnish certain arms to Lebanon (recoilless rifles) together with increased economic assistance (Beirut-Damascus Highway and Beirut Airport Facilities).⁶⁷⁰

Operations Coordinating Board intelligence notes from later that August offer us additional insight. According to the OCB record, the State Department assessed that additional M40 anti-tank recoilless rifles should be shipped to the Lebanese government in an effort shore up Lebanese security and to

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁹ Operations Coordinating Board, *Courses of Action Against Communism in Syria – OCB Working Group on NSC 5428*, (27 January 1956) p. 4.

⁶⁷⁰ Operations Coordinating Board, *Memorandum to Dillon Anderson - Progress Report on U.S. Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East (NSC 5428)*, Washington D.C., 22 June 1956, p. 1, White House Office, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

reward the government for consistently refusing to accept or buy arms from Soviet bloc countries.⁶⁷¹ The United States was seeking to improve Lebanon's hard power and maintain its alliance with Washington. Further to that point, the OCB record indicates that the State Department warned that failure to continue to supply the Lebanese could provide further disillusionment with the US and hurt Washington's position there.⁶⁷² OCB intelligence notes from December 1956 indicate that Ambassador Heath in Beirut communicated that "immediate consideration be given to renewed Lebanese requests for additional arms," as this would show the Lebanese the faith the US had in its pro-American government; demonstrating that the United States had not abandoned the field to the Soviets.⁶⁷³ These concerns were also made to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that should the United States fail to provide the necessary equipment to the Lebanese they might force them into the arms of the Soviets.⁶⁷⁴ More concerning for the US, in addition to failing to broaden the coalition of Arab partners to the Baghdad Pact, as 1956 drew to a close the OCB informed the NSC that "the Soviet Union, by outright propaganda support of the Arabs and by supplying aid, primarily military armaments, made psychological capital of the situation and greatly strengthened its position, particularly in Syria, Jordan, and Egypt."⁶⁷⁵ Additionally, the OCB warned the NSC that the nationalistic government of Nasser in Egypt had gained influence throughout the area, so much so that other Arab heads of state were "less able to resist the formation of governments which catered to this surge of nationalism."⁶⁷⁶ The Jordanian street protest example provided earlier shows how nationalist fervour could prove insurmountable for the regional powers, forcing them (and others) to refrain from aligning themselves more closely with the Baghdad Pact and the West. The Operations Coordinating Board described this succinctly to the National Security Council in December 1956 as:

⁶⁷¹ Operations Coordinating Board, *Intelligence Notes*, Washington D.C., 20 August 1956, p. 1, NSC Staff: Papers, OCB Central Files Series, Box 110, OCB 350.05 Intelligence Abstracts, DDEL.

⁶⁷² Ibid.

⁶⁷³ Operations Coordinating Board, *Intelligence Notes*, Washington D.C., 6 December 1956, p. 1, NSC Staff: Papers, OCB Central Files Series, Box 110, OCB 350.05 Intelligence Abstracts, DDEL.

⁶⁷⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Request from the government of Lebanon for the Sale of Military Equipment and Services," Washington D.C., 8 May 1956, p. 188 – 191, *Foreign Relation of the United States, 1955-1957*, Near East: Jordan-Yemen, Volume XIII, eds., Will Kingaman, Aaron D. Miller, Nina J. Noring (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1988) Document 127.

⁶⁷⁵ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East (NSC 5428)*, Washington D.C., 22 December 1956, p. 1, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 2.

Throughout the Arab area there have been increasing manifestations of an awakened nationalism, springing in part from a desire to end both real and imagined vestiges of the mandate and colonial periods, but stimulated by opportunism, Soviet propaganda, aid and infiltration, and by Egyptian ambitions and intrigue. Nationalistic leaders in some of the Arab nations have rejected established economic and commercial relationships with the Western European powers which they have linked to the earlier mandatory colonial relationships.⁶⁷⁷

The OCB's national assessments on the deteriorating situation in the region (and concern over the stability of Lebanon) was reinforced by both reporting and action from the State Department as they tried to shore up Lebanese security with military and security support.

PETROLUUM, PIPELINES, and PROTECTIONS

Of course, such a trajectory did not bode well for the US in general, but it was also dire for the Western world's ready access to oil. As has been covered numerous times throughout this study, oil, and the protection of that resource, remained at the forefront of the United States policy in the region. Despite not having the oil resources of its neighbours, Lebanon was nonetheless instrumental to the production and supply of oil to the West. Not an oil producer in its own right, Lebanon was pivotal in the transit trade with oil shipments (pipelines) travelling across the region to refineries in Lebanon, where it was then offloaded via the Mediterranean and then on to Western Europe. This figured into the OCB's regional military and defence planning. In June 1956, the OCB reported to the NCS on discussions between the US and UK delegations for the protection of the region's oil resources in the event of conflict. The OCB's delegation report was presented to the NSC amidst the turmoil of the Lebanese parliamentary elections; five months before the Syrian extremists sabotaged the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) pipelines (in Syria) during the Suez crisis. The OCB's report on the *Denial and Conservation of Middle East Oil Resources and Facilities in the Event of War (NSC 5401)*, discussed the deliberations between the Western delegations on regional oil denial planning. The OCB informed the NSC that the delegations had agreed Western protections should be extended to include the

⁶⁷⁷ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East (NSC 5428)*, Washington D.C., 22 December 1956, p. 4, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

Levant states: Egypt, Iran, and the Kuwait Neutral Zone. In particular, the United States government was to be responsible for the Lebanese refinery at Sidon, Lebanon.⁶⁷⁸ The US and UK agreed that “surface denial” was the highest priority and included protecting refined stocks; vital refinery equipment; and transporting and refining facilities. According to the OCB report, the delegations agreed that in addition to surface defence and capping, the wells and installations themselves needed to be protected against sabotage (such as they would experience shortly during the Suez crisis).⁶⁷⁹ While the Syrian sabotage affected Iraq much more directly than it did Lebanon, it is important to understand the scope of the problem that included Lebanon as the oil terminus to the Mediterranean. Again, we see how the OCB was relaying to the NSC (and the president) that the pivotal issue in the region was under threat. The point the board was explicitly making to US decision-makers was that Lebanese security was directly related Western access to oil.

According to the intelligence community in *National Intelligence Survey for Iraq (NIS 30)*, Iraq was the fourth largest crude oil producer in the Near East (behind Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Iran), with 70% of this output supplied to the European markets.⁶⁸⁰ By comparison, Iraq at the time of the revolution in July 1958 was averaging 3,207,000 tons of crude oil produced a month as opposed to the UAR at 284,000 tons.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁸ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on 5401 (Denial and Conservation of Middle East Oil Resources and Facilities in the Event of War)*, Washington D.C., 22 June 1956, p. 3, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Survey Iraq (NIS 30)*, Washington D.C., October 1957, pp. 2-3 – a copy is available online at <http://www.fqs.org/cia/docs/100/0001252284/national-intelligence-survey---chapter-1---brief-Iraq.html>.

⁶⁸¹ United Nations, *Economic Development in the Middle East 1957-1958: Supplement to World Economic Survey, 1958*, (United Nations: New York, 1959) p. 27.

FIGURE 14. CRUDE OIL EXPORTED FROM IRAQ, BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION
(In thousands of long tons)

COUNTRY OF DESTINATION	1953		1954		1955	
	Northern pipelines	Southern pipeline	Northern pipelines	Southern pipeline	Northern pipelines	Southern pipeline
Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan.....	576	0	581	0	555	0
France.....	8,538	679	9,367	789	9,243	1,083
United Kingdom.....	5,513	666	4,232	766	3,438	224
Federal Republic of Germany.....	1,467	0	1,582	0	1,800	257
Italy.....	5,340	425	6,121	628	5,822	1,572
Belgium.....	867	0	915	0	1,411	0
Netherlands.....	665	276	1,153	47	267	170
United States.....	117	67	181	0	992	0
Portugal.....	14	66	181	331	33	595
Spain.....	49	0	14	0	618	0
Borneo.....	0	343	0	1,384	0	0
Indonesia.....	0	248	0	389	0	2,551
Other countries.....	743	93	407	118	517	496
Total.....	23,889	2,863	24,731	4,452	24,696	6,948

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While the numbers show that Iraq dwarfed the oil production of the UAR, it was reliant upon the pipeline systems that connected Iraq to the Mediterranean and the European markets. These systems travelled through Syria and terminated in Lebanon. According to the State Department most of the oil produced far in the interior of the country [Iraq] relied on the development of an extensive pipeline transportation system to the ocean ports. The larger of the two Iraqi pipelines, the northern line, carried crude oil through Syria and Lebanon to the Mediterranean; eliminating several thousand miles of tanker haul to Western Europe and toll costs through the Suez Canal.⁶⁸³ In the 4 June 1957 National Intelligence Estimate submitted by the DCI, *National Intelligence Estimate Number 36.2-57: the Outlook for Iraq*, the intelligence community recounted that during the Suez crisis, when the Syrians cut the pipeline, this act of sabotage virtually shut down most of Iraq's oil activities, cutting off close to 70% of the government's revenues.⁶⁸⁴ This had been damaging to Iraq's economy, but also it had thrown into stark relief the threat that Syrian activity had over Europe's access to oil. Ivan Pearson points out that British Prime Minister Macmillan had warned Eisenhower (after the Iraqi coup) failure to respond to President Chamoun's pleas for help could "destroy the oil fields and the pipelines and all the rest

⁶⁸² Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Survey Iraq (NIS 30)*, (1957) p. 40.

⁶⁸³ Ibid. p. 39.

⁶⁸⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Estimate Number 36.2-57: the Outlook for Iraq*, Washington D.C., 4 June 1957, CIA General Records: CIA-RDP98-00979R000400370001-7, National Archives and Records Administration at College Park (NACP), College Park, Maryland, CREST Archives.

of it.”⁶⁸⁵ The records of the Operations Coordinating Board show that they, like Macmillan, recognized the threat and the scope of the problem.

DESCENT INTO VIOLENCE

This final section provides a brief synopsis of events leading up to the overthrow of the Iraqi government and the American invasion of Lebanon. Information for this period (leading up to the invasion) remains largely classified. However, that is not the same as saying there is nothing to learn from what is available. Therefore, we will highlight the instances where the records show the OCB, along with other government agencies, informed decision makers in the run up to war. Where the primary record is sparse, we use secondary source material to fill the gaps. In the future as more information becomes available, there will be an opportunity to revisit this final section and provide greater context and detail to the OCB’s involvement. For now, we return to the records which show that the OCB were tracking events in Lebanon as they happened. As time went on, their reports to the NSC (when added to the history of assessments and reporting just examined) painted a grim picture of the Lebanese environment and the future of the US position in the region.

By August 1957, the OCB reported to the National Security Council that Syrian leaders were more inclined to blindly accept Soviet influence than any other country in the area. There was evidence, according to the OCB, that “the Soviets are making Syria the focal point for arms distribution and other activities, in place of Egypt.”⁶⁸⁶ This brings to mind the previous OCB recommendations to the NSC staff for supporting efforts encouraging Lebanon to minimize and monitor cross-traffic coming from Syria. Similarly, Egypt remained a concern for the OCB as the Egyptian leadership, “although set back in its efforts to establish a neutralist pro-Egyptian government in Jordan and Lebanon, continued its subversive activities both within Arab states and from outside through radio.”⁶⁸⁷ Egyptian radio was an effective measure to spread Nasser’s vision, with the OCB explaining:

⁶⁸⁵ Ivan Pearson, “The Syrian Crisis of 1957, the Anglo-American ‘Special Relationship,’ and the 1958 Landings in Jordan and Lebanon,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 43:1 (January 2007) p. 58.

⁶⁸⁶ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the near East (NSC 5428)* Washington D.C., 7 August 1957, p 4, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.* p. 6.

...the psychological appeal in all the Arab states of unified Arab objectives and actions, and the repercussions of the continued Arab-Israel dispute, complicate the maintenance of viable friendly and stable states in the area. The nationalism in the area remains pan-Arab; interest in the allegiance to individual countries is, with large and influential segments of the population, secondary. Extreme nationalist leaders thus continue to find wide support for their interference in the affairs of other states on the grounds that the leaders of these states have violated Arab unity and sold out to “imperialists.” Even the governments which seek to resist the subversive efforts of the extreme nationalists do so with lip service to Arab unity.⁶⁸⁸

In these examples, the OCB continues to emphasize Syria and Egypt as centres for regional instability, however, they also identify the role of psychological warfare being implemented through Egyptian radio to spread propaganda to audiences throughout the area. While physical violence continued to erupt throughout Lebanon with clashes ebbing and flowing from 1956 on, the OCB was alerting the NSC and the president that an ethereal attack was taking place over the airways. Therefore, the Eisenhower administration needed to account not just for physical conflict, but Egypt’s own attempts to win the hearts and minds of Arab world.

According to a previously classified 1958 Joint Chiefs of Staff report on the Middle East: in an effort to force the Chamoun government to break ties with the Western powers during the Suez Crisis, opposition forces engaged in a terror campaign where “Beirut was rocked by a series of anti-Western riots and bombings,” and it was not until the Army was sent in to take control of the city that the turmoil began to dissipate.⁶⁸⁹ Additionally, Department of State records show that the Lebanese government requested (and was granted permission to receive) US military equipment in support of its internal security forces.⁶⁹⁰ By the time the 1957 elections began in May, the battle lines had been drawn and the OCB’s concerns had turned to reality. The opposition forces had solidified around a platform that was “extremely pro-Egyptian, anti-Western, and neutralist,” and was vocally against any

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Concise History of the Middle East from 1910*, Washington D.C., 2 Sept 1958, p. 168, available online through - [Http://www.blackvault.com](http://www.blackvault.com).

⁶⁹⁰ Department of State, “Memorandum of conversation – Lebanon, Washington,” 17 October 1957, p. 220, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East: Jordan-Yemen, Volume XIII*, eds., Will Klingman, Aaron D. Miller, Nina J. Noring, (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1988) Document 143.

amendments to the constitution that would allow Chamoun to serve a second term.⁶⁹¹ This placed the possibility of Lebanon supporting the Western efforts in jeopardy, and the OCB's recommendations for supporting another Western counterbalance in danger of becoming a null proposition, with previous resources being wasted.

The rioting that broke out in late May between government security forces and opposition crowds - which according to Lebanese Foreign Minister Charles Malik were fomented by Egypt and Syria - seemed to only bolster the OCB's position that Cairo and Damascus truly were the catalysts for anti-Western instability.⁶⁹² According to the declassified JCS historical report: on 8 June 1957, the US supplied military aid to Lebanon as they received 40 jeeps equipped with anti-tank rifles for their gendarmerie forces to assist in quelling violence during the election period (voting was to take place over the following four Sundays).⁶⁹³ Previously, the OCB assessed that substantial evidence existed to implicate active Egyptian government interference in the affairs of other Arab nations; the report went on to state that "the Lebanese have also uncovered extensive Egyptian covert activity," and "Syria, in particular, remains a likely focal point for Communist influence."⁶⁹⁴ These assessments appeared to be validated following the elections as acts of sabotage and violence increased with the Lebanese government messaging that foreign elements (directed out Syria and Egypt under the UAR) as the responsible parties.⁶⁹⁵ Foreign Minister Malik accused the Syrian government of sending current and former Syrian Army personnel into Lebanon to conduct terrorist attacks, as well as accusing the Syrian Consul General in Damascus of smuggling weapons and ammunition into Lebanon in the trunk of his car.⁶⁹⁶ This latter incident cited by Malik resulted in 500 armed persons crossing the border and attacking Lebanese posts at Al Masna, only ceasing their attack upon the arrival of the Lebanese

⁶⁹¹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Concise History of the Middle East from 1910*, (1958) p. 169.

⁶⁹² Department of State, "Memorandum of Conversation – Lebanon," (1957) Document 143.

⁶⁹³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Concise History of the Middle East from 1910*, (1958) p. 170.

⁶⁹⁴ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East (NSC 5428)*, (22 December 1956) p. 6.

⁶⁹⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Concise History of the Middle East from 1910*, (1958) p. 170.

⁶⁹⁶ Agwani, *The Lebanese Crisis, 1958: A Documentary Study*, (1965) pp. 58-59; Summary of Statement by Mr. Charles Malik, the Foreign Minister of Lebanon, at a Press Conference accusing the UAR of intervention in the internal affairs of Lebanon 13, May 1958.

Army.⁶⁹⁷ If we are to peer ahead: when Iraq fell to Nasserite military officials, the assumption must be made that these OCB assessments forecast a similar result in Lebanon should no action be taken.

Additionally, the OCB (apparently reading the tea leaves of unrest that were likely to follow the elections) had earlier recommended to the NSC that it would be wise for the US to support “Lebanon in its efforts to preserve its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity whether against aggression from without or subversion from within.”⁶⁹⁸ In similar fashion to its recommendation for Iraq under the 1290-d programme, the OCB pushed for US projects to be designed to “strengthen the Lebanese government capacities for resisting aggression and subversion by increasing the strength, efficiency, and loyalty of the Lebanese armed forces and internal security forces.”⁶⁹⁹ According to OCB and State Department documents, Washington telegraphed its willingness to provide: anti-tank weapons; light artillery; motor transport; engineering equipment; fortification material; and electronic equipment.⁷⁰⁰ Three months later in September 1957 then Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, William Rountree, petitioned Secretary Dulles to “obtain the President’s assurance that funds up to two million dollars will be made available for strengthening the Lebanese Gendarmerie.”⁷⁰¹ The OCB knew that the Lebanese unrest and instability could jeopardize the greater Western regional designs as they reported to the NSC that US actions in Lebanon were important, not only for the effect on Lebanon itself, but that “they may in the long run have an equally important effect area-wide.”⁷⁰²

The OCB again pushed for economic support that could make Lebanon “a showcase of US-Arab cooperation, the tangible benefits of which could be expected in the long run to stimulate more

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁸ Operations Coordinating Board, *Operational Guidance with Respect to Lebanon in Implementation of NSC 5428*, Washington D.C., 6 June 1957, p. 1, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid. p. 2.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid; and Department of State, “Memorandum – Emergency Grant Aid to Strengthen the Lebanese Gendarmerie,” Washington, 12 September 1957, pp. 216-217, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, Near East: Jordan-Yemen*, Volume XIII, eds., Will Klingman, Aaron D. Miller, Nina J. Noring, (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1988) Document 141.

⁷⁰¹ Department of State, “Memorandum – Emergency Grant Aid to Strengthen the Lebanese Gendarmerie,” (1957) pp. 216-217.

⁷⁰² Operations Coordinating Board, *Operational Guidance with Respect to Lebanon in Implementation of NSC 5428*, (6 June 1957) p. 2.

favourable attitudes toward the US and UK politics elsewhere in the Arab world.”⁷⁰³ How could the OCB hope to present Lebanon, a country in the throes of domestic upheaval, as the centrepiece for US-Arab cooperation? As we had mentioned earlier in this chapter, the OCB and the NSC were cautious and concerned about the situation in Lebanon; however, they stopped short of considering it a failed state. Instead, should US economic and military support succeed in assisting the government to quell unrest and restrain Egyptian and Syrian influence, this could serve as a template for other countries under pressure from their own nationalist currents. But was there cause for such hope? According to OCB records the board believed so. Despite the uncertainty surrounding the Lebanese situation, the OCB informed the NSC that the regional picture was not as daunting as it may seem, and could possibly be salvaged. A lull in the violence had given the OCB optimism that the corner had been turned:

Saudi Arabia and Jordan moved to closer collaboration with the pro-US, anti-Communist states of Iraq and Lebanon. Nearly normal access was restored to the resources, strategic positions and passage rights of the area following the unblocking of the Suez Canal and the partial opening of the Syrian pipeline.⁷⁰⁴

Decision-makers in Washington were likely relieved to learn from the Operations Coordinating Board that the perceived turn-around was the result of the United States flexing its military might in the Mediterranean (something that would figure into future planning). Previously, in April 1957, King Hussein of Jordan survived a coup attempt by Pro-Nasserite elements in the country. The Jordanian situation was seen as dire in Lebanon, as State Department cables show President Chamoun sent an urgent message to Eisenhower warning “If Jordan falls to international communism or to its puppets or allies, then that might start a chain reaction in our area whose sombre consequences cannot be foretold. The moment requires swift and decisive action almost at any cost.”⁷⁰⁵ Chamoun believed that the fate of Western civilization lay in the balance, and the communists on a seemingly unstoppable march to conquest, were poised to strike. Eisenhower responded to a request from King Hussein by deploying the US Naval Sixth Fleet, a formidable seventy-seven vessels in all, including three aircraft

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁴ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East (NSC 5428)*, Washington D.C., 27 June 1957, p. 1, NSC Staff: Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central File Series, Box 78, DDEL.

⁷⁰⁵ DOS – “Chamoun to Eisenhower,” 24 April 1957.

carriers, two battle cruisers, and twenty-two destroyers; a show of force that apparently was taken seriously.⁷⁰⁶ The OCB reported to the National Security Council that the:

...prompt movements of the Sixth Fleet which appeared to have had a psychological effect in restraining extremist elements in Syria and Jordan, and US membership in the military committee of the Baghdad Pact as visible evidence of its support of the Pact. These developments checked the situation which prevailed at the beginning of the year, when Soviet and Egyptian influence was gaining in all Arab states and the anti-Western group of Arab states was more powerful than the pro-western group.⁷⁰⁷

The perception that such direct action had quickly resulted in a favourable resolution gives support to the argument that Eisenhower (informed by the OCB and the NSC) had not hesitated to commit forces to Lebanon following the coup in Iraq hoping for a similar result. Indeed, the OCB's optimism for stability would soon be dashed, as Roger Spiller states "increasingly, daily life in Lebanon in 1957 was punctuated by explosions and gunfire as members of all the factions armed themselves. Charges of official terrorism were levelled by the Chamoun government claiming that the opposition groups had been penetrated by *agents' provocateurs* from Egypt and Syria, playing pawns in the hands of Arab extremists."⁷⁰⁸

As Chamoun's government failed to bring order to the country, the Deputy Under Secretary of State Robert Murphy sent a request on 8 November 1957 to the JCS for the urgent "preparation of an operational plan for possible combined U.S.-U.K. military intervention in the event of an imminent or actual coup d'état in Lebanon and/or Jordan."⁷⁰⁹ This planning effort would result in the invasion of Lebanon under Operation BlueBat twenty months later. Three months after Murphy's request, in February 1958, the governments of Egypt and Syria entered into an agreement forming the United

⁷⁰⁶ Roger J. Spiller, "Not War But Like War: The American Intervention in Lebanon," *Leavenworth Papers No. 3* (January 1981) p. 9.

⁷⁰⁷ Operations Coordinating Board, *Progress Report on United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East (NSC 5428)*, (27 June 1957) p. 2.

⁷⁰⁸ Spiller "Not War But Like War," p. 7.

⁷⁰⁹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Chronology of Significant Events Relating to the Employment of U.S. forces in Lebanon*, First Installment, Historical Division, Washington D.C., 20 November 1958, p. 1, available online through the internet archive at archive.org.

Arab Republic, a Pan-Arab propaganda nightmare for the United States. The records show that both Washington and the OCB were caught off guard by the announcement of the UAR, and their ability to alert the administration to what lay ahead fared no better. The only consensus was the understanding that the region's primary communist threat and the region's nationalist powerhouse had joined forces, a potentially deadly combination.

OCB assessments that Lebanon was desperately attempting to retain stability while under real assault from Egyptian and Syrian elements, were supported by separate CIA reporting that the formation of the UAR was a deeply disturbing development for US designs in the region.⁷¹⁰ Hardly a week following the announcement of the UAR, Iraq and Jordan announced the formation of the Iraq-Jordan Federation (or the Hashemite Arab Federation). The CIA assessed that Lebanon, concerned with its own domestic issues at the time, would "wish to preserve its special character and economic position," standing independent in hopes the "two groupings will produce an equilibrium in the area."⁷¹¹ Such equilibrium referenced by the CIA failed to develop, and Lebanon continued to fracture. The culminating event occurred on the 8th of May when (after weeks of escalating violence) the editor of an anti-government/pro-Nasser newspaper was assassinated in Beirut. The opposition immediately laid blame at the feet of the Chamoun government.⁷¹² In one of the final Operations Coordinating Board daily intelligence notes from 21 May 1957, the Iraqi government (crown prince, prime minister, and foreign minister) called for the US to address the situation as it had the Jordanian unrest hoping "that the US will order the Sixth fleet into Lebanese waters in view of the troubled situation there."⁷¹³

Immediately following the assassination, protests, riots, and violence ripped through the streets. Department of State telegrams report that the following day armed protesters sacked and burned the

⁷¹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, *Special National Intelligence Estimate Number 30-58, Prospects and Consequences of Arab Unity Moves*, Washington D.C., 20 February 1958, p. 5, National Intelligence Council (NIC) Collection, 0000221323, NACP, CREST Archives.

⁷¹¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Special National Intelligence Estimate Number 30-58, Prospects and Consequences of Arab Unity Moves*, (20 February 1958) p. 6.

⁷¹² K.S., "The Lebanese Crisis in Perspective," *The World Today*, Volume 14 No. 9 (September 1958) pp. 369-380.

⁷¹³ Operations Coordinating Board, *Daily Intelligence Notes - 31 May 1957*, Washington D.C., 31 May 1957, p. 1, NSC Staff: Papers, OCB Central Files Series, Box 110, OCB 350.05 Intelligence Abstracts, DDEL.

USIS library in Tripoli; the start of a revolt had begun and US-Western targets were on the list.⁷¹⁴ The USIS library in Beirut was also attacked and torched, and in recollection of the turmoil of 1956, an IPC pipeline in northern Lebanon was blown up. After a general curfew failed to quell unrest, the Lebanese government began to petition the West (the United States in particular) for support, claiming the country was under attack by Egyptian and Syrian agents massively interfering in Lebanon and arming the rebels.⁷¹⁵ The Department of State also reported that the Egyptian Under Secretary for Presidential Affairs was directing subversive activity from Damascus, resulting in an attack of a Lebanese citadel and holding a small Lebanese airfield near the Syrian border in Aliat.⁷¹⁶ Eventually, the situation culminated in an attack on the Lebanese presidential palace where “Chamoun himself had to help the palace guards and use a machine gun against his attackers,” and the house of the Lebanese Premier was plundered, destroyed, and burned.⁷¹⁷

On 20 June 1958, the same day that the State Department received a report that the UAR military were told to be on alert, Secretary Dulles sent a telegram to the American Embassy in Beirut requesting that William Rountree inform President Chamoun that the “US would find it very awkward to act militarily,” in Lebanon. Dulles went to say:

...we also believe that Lebanon has the capacity to solve this crisis without use of foreign military forces, and we are prepared to give all appropriate assistance to this end. We do not consider that the introduction of Western forces into Lebanon would either solve the present crisis or enhance Lebanon’s long term position in the area.⁷¹⁸

Therefore, if what Dulles was relaying was the US position, why then, was Eisenhower by his own admission ready to go in the complete opposite direction less than a month later? The Iraqi coup in July 1958 was a game changer that turned US regional policy on its head and cast the Eisenhower

⁷¹⁴ Department of State, *State Telegram 3758, Beirut Embassy Ambassador McClintock to Secretary of State*, Beirut, 10 May 1958, Department of State, Central Files, 783A.00/5-1058. Record Group: 59, NACP.

⁷¹⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Concise History of the Middle East from 1910*, pp. 171 – 172.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid.

⁷¹⁷ Haddad, *Revolutions and Military Rule in the Middle East: The Arab States Pt. I: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan*, p. 426.

⁷¹⁸ Department of State, *John Foster Dulles to William Rountree*, Washington D.C, 20 June 1958, Ann Whitman Files, 1903-61, International Series, Box 34, Lebanon, DDEL.

administration into a “short-fuse” scenario where difficult decisions were required at a moment’s notice. Prime Minister Nuri al-Said, the crown prince, and several royal family members had been executed and Nasserite Iraqi military leaders had taken control of the country. Al-Said had attempted to flee the country dressed as a woman, but was discovered, executed, and his corpse publically mutilated. Immediately, after meeting with the NSC to discuss the US response, Eisenhower (by his own admission) had already made up his mind. As noted in the previous chapter, Eisenhower stated that “because of my long study of the problem... this was one meeting in which my mind was practically made up regarding the general line of action we should take, even before we met.”⁷¹⁹ In fact, according to Korbani (1991), when Secretary Dulles approached Eisenhower after their meeting with the cabinet and NSC, the president waved him off stating – “Foster, I’ve already made up my mind. We’re going in.”⁷²⁰

President Eisenhower’s decision to send US forces to Beirut was based upon a regional perspective informed by the Operations Coordinating Board (and the Psychological Strategy Board before it). A perspective that Egypt and Syria were an existential threat intent on bringing Western leaning countries under their knee. The fighting in Lebanon; the opposition to Chamoun; and finally the coup in Iraq; had exposed that the American position (promoted by the PSB and OCB) which called for military and financially supporting the Iraqi and Lebanese states was a disaster. Nasser appeared on the move having sympathizers seize control of Iraq and murder the US’ strongest and stable ally in Nuri al-Said. Eisenhower and his personal policy group (the NSC) had centred American policy (informed by the national assessments of the PSB and the OCB) on a military “defence-first” policy, with cultural and social reforms taking a back seat. In a spiralling situation Eisenhower fell back on military action, something the OCB reported had quelled unrest in Jordan. This point is unique as in the existing history the roles and influence of the PSB and the OCB have garnered little attention. We have shown that the archival records (increasingly declassified) of the PSB and the OCB can provide another context for understanding American foreign policy and executive decision-making; showing that the PSB and the OCB should be considered more than an afterthought in the shadow of the NSC.

⁷¹⁹ Agnes G. Korbani, *U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982: Presidential Decision-making*, (New York: Praeger, 1991) p. 42.

⁷²⁰ Townsend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dulles*, (New York: Little Brown and Company, 1973) p. 435.

CONCLUSION:

Lebanon would continue to descend into violence and upheaval, and on 15 July 1958 (the day following the coup in Iraq) Battalion Landing Teams (BLTs) of the United States Marine Corps attached to the US Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean took the shores of Beirut 700 yards from the Beirut International Airport and proceeded to secure the airstrips and surrounding areas. Rather than entrenched enemy forces, the US Marines were greeted by curiously entertained bikini-clad beach goers, villagers on horseback, construction workers, and soft-drink vendors.⁷²¹ Over 14,000 US Marines and Army soldiers would take the beaches of Lebanon and arrest the collapse of the Chamoun government threatened by civil strife and UAR regional influence.⁷²² Overall, the operation was a success for the US, resulting in a peaceful transition of power from Chamoun to the Commander of the Lebanese Army and country did not become a vassal state of the UAR or Moscow. This was reflected in the command summary of the operation where:

The rapid and dramatic deployment of US armed forces into Lebanon at the request of the Lebanese Government was an effective demonstration of military power which caused the internal opposition factions as well as the UAR to pause and consider.⁷²³

The Lebanese invasion was the first military realization of the “Eisenhower Doctrine” to protect western-aligned states from falling to communism. More importantly for this study, the Lebanese operation marked the point where policy (developed under the PSB, NSC, and OCB) turned to action. As a result, Eisenhower succeeded in thwarting a complete collapse of America’s regional policy, and marked the only time that the US military would become engaged in conflict in the Middle East before the OCB was disbanded in 1961. While an examination of the Lebanese conflict falls outside of the scope of this paper, the increasing and evolving resources of declassified material becoming available present exciting future opportunities to reengage the historical record, not only of this operation, but that of America’s Cold War experience.

⁷²¹ Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon*, (Washington: Headquarters of the United States Marine Corps, 1966) pp. 12-13.

⁷²² Bruce Reidel, “1958: When America First Went to War in the Middle East,” *Brookings Institute*, (July 2018), p. 1.

⁷²³ US Specified Command Middle East, *Command Report on Operation “Blue Bat,” 15 July -25 October 1958*, (December 1958), pp. 2-3.

Having laid out the thesis argument in the introduction, this paper, and this conclusion show that newly available sources can be used to provide greater context and new insights into our understanding of national security policy architecture during the Cold War, as well as regional policy decisions such as the invasion of Lebanon. The fact that the invasion took place is indisputable, the fact that the Iraqi coup was the surprise event that galvanized Washington to action is unchallenged. But what has not been explored at any length, or been given the proper attention, till now, are the “how’s” and “why’s” of those regional policy decisions seen through the unique lens of the PSB and the OCB. How had America arrived at a regional strategy that promoted certain policies (defence arrangements) over others (socio-economic development)? Using the PSB records now available, this study shows that the board’s March 1952 Staff Study on the Middle East reflects their recognition of both problematic socio-economic realities and military weakness facing the region. In this report to the NSC, the PSB recommended what became a dual socio-economic/defence approach promoting western-aligned military defence arrangements to establish security and offer the time necessary for longer-term economic “pump-primers” to alleviate discontent and rob the Soviets of fuel for their propaganda. While the US worked to draw the countries in the region into western supported defence relationships (first with the Middle East Command, and later the Middle East Defense Organization), the PSB had early-on recommended a focus to the northern tier countries of Turkey and Iran; as their geographic location and socio-economic stability could serve as defensive buffers between the Middle East and the Soviet Union. In fact it was this “Northern Tier Concept” that was adopted by Washington, where defensive arrangements with the Soviet border-states were anchored to the Arab countries of the Middle East through Baghdad. These PSB recommendations were adopted by the NSC, approved by the President of the United States, and overseen by the Operations Coordinating Board. The records of the PSB and the OCB also shed greater light onto of the question of why Washington had been caught off guard by the coup in Iraq, and why Lebanon was seen as important enough to commit US troops to harm’s way. The OCB’s October 1955 1290-d report and their December 1955 internal security analysis of Iraq, show us that Washington was lulled into believing Iraq was stable and secure as long as Nuri al-Said maintained control (with nothing to suggest he would not remain so), both a failure of intelligence and policy resident in the OCB. Additionally, in the 1956 OCB 5428 reports, the board had recommended Lebanon as an additional counter measure (supporting Iraq) to the destabilizing threat of Nasser’s Arab nationalism and Soviet subversion, a recommendation that was pursued. Throughout 1956 and 1957 the OCB (and later the Shah of Iran) warned the NSC and the president that should Lebanon fall, it would jeopardize Iraq’s position, and

by virtue, the entire US regional policy. Therefore, when the government of Iraq was overthrown in a coup, Eisenhower decided on a show of force to secure Lebanon and what remained of the United States' policy in the Middle East. Ultimately, it is through the apparent failures of the PSB and the OCB that we are granted a more complete picture of US national security architecture and policy development. The PSB's struggle to establish itself within the psychological space of national security ushered in a more efficient and centralized policy architecture in the OCB and the NSC (under Eisenhower). The OCB's failure to warn decision-makers of the scope and depth of instability in Iraq and Lebanon grants us greater insight into operational policy decisions following the coup in Iraq. This study shows that with the inclusion of the declassified records of the PSB and the OCB, we are better able to contextualize processes and decisions, and reengage the historical record with new information adding substantial value to the academic literature of American Cold War history.

As discussed at the outset and throughout this study, the current literature on US national security policy formulation during the early Cold War has relied on records derived largely from the National Security Council itself (national security) and the US Department of State (foreign policy). The result has been an incomplete picture of the national security system framework, policy development, and possible impacts on US executive decision making in the late 1940s and 1950s. In this study we argued two points: first, the recently declassified and untapped records of two understudied policy and coordination boards of the US National Security Council Staff – the PSB and its successor the OCB – reframe US Cold War national security policy architecture, presenting a more nuanced, fuller picture; and second, the “national assessments” derived from the combined policy and intelligence elements of the PSB and the OCB grant us unique access and understanding into the development and execution of US Middle East policy in the 1950s. This novel insight into regional policy development and executive decision making afforded by the PSB and OCB records is not found in the existing literature; showing that the PSB and OCB deserve a place in the history of US policy development and execution. In fact while the OCB was abolished in 1961, the problems they faced in the Middle East have remained, and the work begun under the PSB and the OCB (including psychological strategy and covert operations) have carried on. Understanding that history therefore helps us to better understand US policy today.

This study examined the creation and placement of the PSB and the OCB within the national security system, using the primary source material of the PSB and OCB records themselves. We have shown

that the PSB and the OCB were more than periphery “bit players” within the council system, reviewing and coordinating predetermined policy with little impact to speak of. This study shows that these boards were intimately involved within the “policy cycle” as opposed to the backend of a “policy hill.” They did more than review and coordinate, they formulated, proposed, and recommended policies (through their national assessments) to the highest level of American government. Through the PSB and OCB records we are granted new and enlightening context to our understanding of the developing American national security architecture following the Second World War. This study emphasizes that the US government sought to use this architecture to centralize and formalize the areas of military, intelligence, and foreign policy into an enterprise that recognized, debated, and addressed the highest order national security issues facing the United States government in developing Cold War policy to confront the Soviet Union. Following the Second World War, Washington faced the spectre of psychological war with the Soviet Union in a battle over the hearts and minds of the people of the Middle East. Stalemates, resulting from national security agency competition, had stalled the development of coherent and effective government-wide strategies. The Psychological Strategy Board was established by Truman to bring together the DOD, DOS, and the CIA under the banner of psychological warfare and take the fight to the Kremlin. As discussed in this study, infighting surrounding this crucial area of psychological warfare and strategy was too great for the PSB to surmount. The incoming administration of Dwight Eisenhower sought to streamline and transform the entire NSC system, under which the PSB was dissolved, but not without consequence (both in form and policy).

The PSB had emphasized a need, both for coordinating elements for the NSC but also for inclusive (regional) policy. The premier policy-making body in the US government, the National Security Council, needed coordinating elements as the threats were diverse and the missions were varied. The NSC required sub-elements that could assist working through the fog. While the PSB had been too narrowly focused by its “psychological” mission, in its place Eisenhower created the OCB, tethered to the more robust “operations” responsibility. The OCB was established with more clearly delineated roles within the national security policy process. Despite this, the role and impact of the OCB (similar to the PSB) has been largely misunderstood (or at least overly simplistic) within the existing literature. This study shows that the OCB served as more than a review mechanism in the national security policy process and this examination uses the primary record to clearly emphasize how the placement and access of these boards saw them inform policy-makers and influence strategy.

Using the declassified archival records of the PSB and OCB (as well as the CIA, NSC, JSC, DOS, etc.) this study has provided new insights into the history of the American national security system and US Middle East foreign policy. By establishing the unique positions and makeup of the PSB and the OCB within the national security enterprise across two administrations, we have shown how these boards (with nuclei consisting of the executive departments such as the DOD, DOS, and the CIA) were structured into the national security policy process of the NSC and reported to the President of the United States. Importantly, the PSB and the OCB offer a unique example of a close proximity relationship between intelligence and policy, something uncommon in the American system.

Traditionally, foreign policy has been considered the arena of the State Department. The PSB and the OCB do not often figure in the conversation of American foreign policy during the Cold War. This study shows that through the development of the PSB's psychological strategy for the Middle East and the Operations Coordinating Board's 1290-d programme, the PSB and the OCB carried the weight of their collected agencies and were positioned to review and recommend policy by way of their national assessments to the relevant decision-makers. This information served the key function of intelligence (to inform decision-makers) and the PSB and OCB's integration within the National Security Council system gave them proximity to executive level policy-makers as well as the chief policy maker himself, the President of the United States.

Tracking the US-Middle East policies from the PSB to the OCB, we follow the development of a regional policy through the national security architecture and across administrations. In so doing, we craft a new understanding of Cold War national security policy history and reinforce the argument that the Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board were uniquely placed to influence foreign policy, in this example, Middle East policy. This study shows that much of the US-Middle East policy (developed during the 1950s) originated within the PSB's psychological strategy for the Middle East, serving as the impetus (or at least a key catalyst) for the NSC's national security strategy for the Middle East. Once the NSC and the president adopted that strategy into policy, the OCB was tasked to review and support it; providing reports to the NSC and the president regarding the military and state stability of the region through the 1290-d programme. Not only does this study leverage new primary material to provide greater context to the histories of these boards, but it also provides an example of how this material can be used to view foreign policy events from another

angle, one that is positioned uniquely in both the worlds of intelligence and policy and offers exciting new opportunities for future study.

Particularly as it relates to the Middle East, the OCB 1290-d programme resulted in national assessments with policy recommendations that provide greater insight into the US government's perceptions (informing us of the "how's" and "why's"), misleading and inaccurate as they may have been (from a 21st century perspective). These assessments were reasoned and grounded in the efforts to stabilize a dynamic region, seen as a hotbed of Soviet activity that threatened the West's access to vital resources. The OCB's 1290-d and country reports show an emphasis on the Syrian and Egyptian threats, whereas the Iraqi and Lebanese states were viewed as more reliably stable, with hopes of their serving to provide a counterweight to the Soviet inspired nationalist groups in the region. The coup in Iraq and the open conflict developing in Lebanon in 1958, proved that the American government had poorly perceived regional stability; a failure of both intelligence and policy resident in the OCB. Importantly, the national assessments from the PSB and later the OCB carried the weight of a "whole of government assessment" including intelligence from the CIA coupled with positions from the DOD and the DOS (in addition to other agencies as necessary). This newly available information shows that for the better part of a decade, the PSB and the OCB, through the National Security Council mechanism, had informed American policy-makers of the developing powder keg in the Middle East; calling attention to the dual threat (as they saw it) of communism and Arab nationalism that consumed western regional alliances. These assessments have not gained traction in the literature and are explored for the first time here. Importantly, the PSB and the OCB give us new insight into the debates, assessments, and recommendations surrounding regional defence relationships such as the MEC, MEDO, and Northern Tier Concept. The transition to the Northern Tier Concept saw the US build its reliance on Iraq.

From these records we see that the PSB studies and the OCB assessments recognized and called attention to the issues of how nationalism and communism were complicating Washington's attempts to construct a Western-friendly region. We now know that the PSB and OCB provided policy recommendations that detailed aspects of both "soft" and "hard" power to guide regional leadership into the Western orbit and uproot Soviet gains in the Middle East. As mentioned, the PSB produced the Psychological Strategy for the Middle East, the precursor to the NSC 5428 Middle East Strategy. President Eisenhower selected the OCB to run the 5428 (Middle East) and 1290-d (internal security)

working groups, which relayed reports and findings from across government back to the National Security Council and the president himself. After examining the OCB's 1290-d reports, the government's assessments placed misguided faith in the strength and stability of the Iraqi government led by Nuri al-Said, and his ability to stem the tide of communist sympathizers within the region's growing nationalism. We now see how this overconfidence led to universal national surprise after the formation of the United Arab Republic, and later the Iraqi coup itself. An examination of the records also show that the OCB had supported Lebanon as a secondary counter-measure (behind Iraq) to Nasserism, Arab nationalism, and the Soviet influence increasing in the region. Based on this information provided by the OCB, through the NSC, and to the president, when Eisenhower was informed in the early morning hours that the government in Iraq had fallen, we can now better understand why the invasion of Lebanon was deemed a necessary risk to save America's failing policy and protect Western access to the natural resources that made the region so valuable to the world.

As mentioned, the board's collective assessments had made clear that Iraq was central to American defence arrangements in the region under the Northern Tier Concept and Baghdad Pact. When other Western-leaning countries were under pressure from the blend of socialist and nationalist causes (domestically and regionally) from the UAR, the Operations Coordinating Board had pointed to Lebanon as a counterweight that could assist Iraq in confronting the growing threat. As the region continued to deteriorate, the OCB warned the NSC and the president of the damage US policy would suffer, should the Lebanese state collapse (effectively leaving Iraq isolated as the sole collaborator for US interests). In July 1958, when the government of Nuri al-Said was overthrown, a severely depleted and weakened Lebanese government under President Camille Chamoun, remained the last piece in a failing US strategy. With little time for action, President Eisenhower, having been appraised of the situation and armed with the knowledge provided by the OCB and the NSC over the years, quickly confirmed military action in Lebanon to save American regional policy in the Middle East. Understanding the importance and impacts of the PSB and the OCB (strategically significant national security planning and coordination elements) tasked against developing strategy and policy are only just beginning. This study emphasizes one aspect, Middle East policy, yet there remains much more to explore as the declassified records breathe new life into the study of American Cold War history.

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