

Fact Sheet No. 4
For Insertion in the War Information Manual
Section II - The Enemy (Tactics)

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
BUREAU OF MOTION PICTURES
HOLLYWOOD OFFICE

NOTE: The following information is being sent to you as a supplement to the War Information Manual. Its purpose is to give further amplification to the Government's war program, and to provide material for short subjects and feature pictures. If more detailed information on the subject is desired, it will be furnished to you, on request, by the Office of War Information. Should you wish to use this material in your short subject or feature program, kindly communicate with this Office in order to avoid unnecessary duplication.

FOOTPRINTS OF THE TROJAN HORSE

THE PROBLEM: AXIS PROPAGANDA VS. AMERICAN MORALE

The goal of Axis militarists is world conquest. Their strategy is a combination of armed onslaught and internal demoralization, the two methods of attack functioning simultaneously. But just as military attack from without can be foreseen and thwarted by counter-attack, so it is possible for us to foresee the fifth column attack from within, to prepare ourselves to meet it head on, and to counteract the deadly virus of Axis propaganda.

THE FIFTH COLUMN - HOW IT OPERATES

"Mental confusion, indecisiveness, panic," Hitler has said, "these are our weapons". We have seen the use of these weapons - in Austria and Czechoslovakia, in France, Holland and Belgium. Axis war-

fare is total warfare, aimed directly at civilian populations, based on the proven knowledge that internal collapse leads inevitably to the collapse of armed resistance.

Warfare against civilians takes the form of lies and scare-rumors, of the strategy of terror, of creating disunity by the now familiar method known as Divide and Conquer. The obvious purpose is to distract attention from the real enemy - the Axis - to create in the minds of various groups and factions a bogus enemy, the product of self-interest, fear and prejudice.

AMERICA IS NOT IMMUNE

America is a titan of strength, great in courage, resourcefulness and productive power, great in a heritage of justice and decency, great in the will to fight. "America is you and me." America is its workers and manufacturers, its farmers and tradesmen, its doctors and lawyers and teachers, its housewives and children. America is Catholic, Protestant and Jewish; it is English, Scandinavian, Polish, Dutch, Greek, Chinese, Italian, Mexican, German; it is all nations in one. Therein lies its strength, and therein, too, lies a potential weakness.

America is not without its prejudices. From time to time in our history, religious hatred has flared -- against Catholics, Jews and minority Protestant sects. Polish, Irish, Mexican and Chinese minorities have been persecuted. Capital has fought labor and labor has fought capital. Prejudice and ill-feeling are latent in America, as they are latent everywhere. Today, when the survival of our nation and our way

of life is threatened from without, the enemy within seeks to inflame these latent prejudices and hatreds, to destroy our national unity and our will to resist aggression.

HOW AMERICA IS BEING ATTACKED FROM WITHIN

Fifth column propaganda is always cleverly disguised. It appears where least expected, and under the most innocent auspices, often turning up as a chance remark or the latest funny story. This is the real peril, for it is next to impossible to trace rumors and lies back to their source.

An unknown number of paid Axis agents are operating today in the United States, aided and abetted by Axis sympathizers and, worse yet, by loyal Americans who mistake rumor-mongering for honest criticism and thus give currency to Axis-inspired whispering campaigns.

We are told that labor's demands are holding up production, that industry is profiteering at the expense of labor, that the farmers are growing fat on subsidies. We are made to distrust Congress and Federal administrators by wild tales about rationing and priorities. Negroes are told they are fighting a white man's war; whites are told that the negroes are disloyal. Jews are alarmed by lies about discrimination; Gentiles are told that this war was engineered by the Jews. Protestants and Jews are told that Catholics take orders from Fascist Italy.

Each instance of the mistreatment of a citizen of foreign extraction is used to undermine the loyalty of all naturalized citizens

and friendly aliens. Conversely, each instance of disloyalty on the part of an immigrant is used to arouse suspicion toward everyone of foreign birth or parentage. And so it goes. Thoughtless prejudices are made to seem reasonable. Petty grievances are enlarged and distorted. Self-interest is exploited to the neglect of the war effort and national unity. This is what is known as dancing to the Axis tune.

HOW WE CAN FIGHT THE FIFTH COLUMN

The lies spread by the enemy are generally coated with a thin veneer of truth. They are made to seem near enough to the truth to sound plausible to people whose state of mind is already one of doubt and suspicion. Our ability to resist the Axis poison, therefore, depends on our state of mind. A positive, resolute state of mind, bulwarked by the truth is the best immunization to the poison.

The best way to counter the fifth column and the propaganda menace is not to draw specific attention to it, but to enlighten the people as to the fundamentals of rumor-spreading, the fundamentals of the enemy strategy of lies and terror, of Divide and Conquer. Americans should be encouraged to challenge the rumor-monger, to question all word-of-mouth information until it has been verified by government spokesmen.

The best weapon against lies is the truth -- the truth about the war, the issues and the enemy. The truth will create confidence, will give every American the sense that he is an integral and important part of the war effort, that he has everything at stake in the outcome

of the war. The Axis strategy of Divide and Conquer is the surest symptom of its own weakness, of its own fearful certainty that it must meet defeat at the hands of a strong and unified people.