

No. 342

March 19, 1942

12 Noon

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

FROM: William J. Donovan

The following is a summary of the Weekly General Directive issued by the British Ministry of Political Warfare:

Policy:

(a) Avoid reference to Japanese threat to Russia in Far East.

(b) Avoid reference to Japanese threat to Madagascar.

Strategy:

(a) Russia. Due to marked Russian progress, in several sectors promising situations seem to be developing. The cutting of the Leningrad-Novgorod railroad increases the threat to German positions south of Moscow. The capture of Dorogobush by parachute troops and partisans provides an important point of origin for Russian advance south of Vyasma. Stress Russian counter offensive continues with increased

-2-

violence and that German counter attack has not been successful on any part of extensive front. Inquire why German communiques made no reference to the plight of a large portion of the 16th Army cut off and surrounded near Staraya Russa or why they failed to acknowledge Russian capture of elaborately fortified stronghold of Yukhnov.

(b) Far East:

(1) Java. Japanese completed conquest of Java where allied forces received no reinforcements after attack started. Lack of aircraft made it impossible for inferior allied forces to rest or regroup, thus hastening the collapse of organized military resistance.

(2) Timor. Imperial troops are still waging bush warfare in the interior.

(3) New Guinea. Salamoia and Lee now in hands of the Japanese. The Japanese objective is capture of Port Moresby and domination of Torres Straits.

(4) Burma. Our forces are falling back slowly on Prome. The Japanese are also advancing northward toward Toungoo. A chinese division has arrived

-3-

just north of Toungoo. Other important Chinese units are in the vicinity of Maymo and moving southward from Lashio.

Propaganda Policy:

We must not permit our European audience to feel that we are discouraged by Japanese successes or we have lost our grip on situation. Demand is for efficiency, equality of sacrifice and ruthless treatment of everyone who acts in a manner contrary to the public interest. We must convince Europe that we are as much a part of that continent as we felt ourselves to be in the dark days of 1940. Our influence on Europeans is dependent upon the conviction we can inspire in them that our thoughts are not overseas in oceans and lands strange to their minds and needs.