

● PSF: Subject File

Carter, John Franklin  
Nazi Psychology and the 7 Yrs. War  
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"We, the People"  
"The Week in Washington"

Metropolitan 4112  
Metropolitan 4113

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January 19, 1944.

REPORT ON NAZI PSYCHOLOGY AND THE SEVEN YEARS WAR.

I thought you might be interested in the attached report on Putzi's reaction to a State Department study of the Seven Years War. Goebbels has recently been using this as the theme for his domestic propaganda in the Reich.

*J.F.C.*  
J.F.C.

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By Deputy Archivist of the U.S.  
By W. J. Stewart Date MAY 1 1972

PART XLIV

January 13, 1944

I delivered to Dr. S. yesterday afternoon a study of the Seven Years War. This study was apparently prepared with the idea that it might suggest to the Doctor some way of attacking or refuting the German Frederickian propaganda. I had an opportunity to read this memorandum only once and the Doctor during my visit merely glanced through it, remarking that it seemed very well done.

The memorandum itself expresses doubt that any direct attack can be made on the Frederickian legend and Dr. S. seemed yesterday, at least, of the same opinion. He stated that in pointing out how German propaganda is now drumming into the minds of the German people the Frederickian legend of indomitable resistance in the face of disaster, he did not intend to suggest that this propaganda was susceptible of direct refutation. It was his purpose in pointing out the use being made of the Seven Years War by German propagandists to overcome the effects of recent bombings and military defeats to focus attention on the frame of mind which German propaganda was endeavoring to build up in the German people and to warn us that it was unwise to assume by analogy from the last war that present Germany would equally suddenly collapse.

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As reported in an earlier memorandum, the Doctor points out that the Kaiser's advisers did not have the same personal experience of survival of disaster which is shared by all the principal leaders of the Nazi party, nor did the Kaiser have at his disposal a propaganda machine, alert, determined, and conscious of its aims.

The Doctor feels that the only action which can be taken to offset the Frederickian propaganda is for those who control American propaganda to adopt an equally serious and unified point of view. Our present propaganda effort, in the Doctor's opinion, gives evidence of lack of coordination of thought. We first build up excessive optimism and are then compelled to preach against that same optimism; authorities contradict each other and the inevitable result, he feels, must be the development of a spirit of skepticism with regard to all official pronouncements. The Doctor, who as you know has a son in the Pacific area, has been particularly irritated by the publicity connected with the recent return of Admiral Halsey. The Admiral's broadcasts making light of Japanese opposition in the Pacific are qualified by the Doctor as unworthy of even the most ordinary recruiting sergeant and he considers the photographs of Halsey beamingly surrounded by movie stars to be very bad

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propaganda. He feels that Halsey's remarks must be re-  
sented by the troops actually confronting the Japs and  
must arouse considerable skepticism in the minds of the  
public who read comment of an entirely different tenor in  
the daily and weekly press.

The Doctor may, of course, have different ideas  
after he has had an opportunity to give further study to  
the Department's memorandum on the Seven Years War. His  
first reaction, however, was that the Frederickian legend  
cannot be directly attacked; we can only endeavor to off-  
set it by building up in the American people an equally  
resolute frame of mind by a seriously conceived and  
properly coordinated propaganda program. Not being an  
authority on American history he does not suggest what  
episodes of our history could most appropriately be  
played up to offset the Frederickian legend.

In addition to the foregoing I should like to ven-  
ture a remark of my own with regard to the study on the  
Seven Years War. On page 2 of this study it is stated  
that the recovery of Silesia had become the prime point  
in the foreign policy of Maria Theresa and Kaunitz, while  
on page 14 it is stated that the military effort made by  
Frederick was not successful enough to gain him anything  
since the "Hubertusberg peace secured him in Silesia;  
it granted him nothing beyond this."

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Aside from the apparent inconsistency of the two remarks, the latter seems to overlook the point that the mere fact that Frederick was secured in Silesia was of great ultimate consequence. Frederick gained no new territory, to be sure, but he was confirmed in possession of a very important previous conquest which later made it necessary to consider him in the partition of Poland and was also an important factor in the ultimate decline of Austrian power.

Similarly, as was pointed out in a previous memorandum reporting the Doctor's remarks, it should not be forgotten that Hitler, as a student of Frederick, may well now be basing his plans on the belief that by holding out to the bitter end he may at least be able to fight the war to a draw and this in the long run will amount to a German victory.

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