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MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Luce

FROM: C. D. Jackson

October 8, 1957

cc: Mr. Jessup  
Mr. Furth



If I were still in Washington working for the President, this is what I think I would have told him Monday morning.

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The successful launching of the Soviet satellite is an overwhelmingly important event -- against our side. You know the military implications better than I do, and your scientific advisers can spell out the scientific implications better than I. And conceivably on these two points you may think my word "overwhelming" is too strong.

But from the standpoint of worldwide psychological warfare it is the correct word. In the Middle East, in Africa, in Asia, where it will be exploited to the hilt by the Communists, it will have tremendous impact. This will be the first time that they will have achieved a big scientific jump on us, ostensibly for peaceful scientific purposes, yet with tremendous military overtones. Up to now it has generally been the other way around.

In this country, it will not have the same jolting impact, and the Americans will undoubtedly do a slower "take". But it will certainly deepen the national malaise, and the inter-Service and partisan political bickering that is certain to develop will heighten the confusion and make a further continuing contribution to the malaise.

For some time, I have used the word "orchestration" to try to describe the way we should conduct our psychological or political warfare. Orchestration as opposed to one-shot spectacles. Except in the case of Atoms-for-Peace, I have never been able to achieve orchestration, and even that was not as good as it might have been.

Within the past thirty days we have been treated to as skillfully executed an example of psychological warfare orchestration as I have ever seen.

The first note was the arrival of the Soviet jet airliner. The second was the announcement of the successful testing of their ICBM. The third was the earth satellite. The fourth was the announcement of their setting off a hydrogen device "at great height". The fifth will be another bigger and better earth satellite to be launched on the 40th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

You will notice the skillful alternation of war and peace -- coexistence and atomic blackmail. You will also notice that all these items convey either Soviet "firsts" or Soviet success where the U.S. has either failed or not yet succeeded.

To repeat, all of this adds up to "overwhelming".

We already know from all over the world that the impact has been unusually great, and in favor of Russia -- and no comfort should be derived from the fact that it has shoved Little Rock off the front pages of the world.



In this country, as I said, we seem to be doing a slow take. I think that Jim Hagerty's first statement, that the launching of the Soviet satellite did not come as a surprise and that "we never thought of our program as one which was in a race with the Soviets; ours is geared to the International Geophysical Year and is proceeding satisfactorily in accordance with its scientific objectives", was good -- in fact the best that could be said under the circumstances. However, I think that Admiral Bennett's statement, "a hunk of iron almost anybody could launch", was appalling, and I hope you will immediately get the U.S. satellite chiefs, civilian and military, together to give them a few do's and don't's on their public reactions.

I should add that the successful impact of the Soviet orchestration is considerably heightened by the U.S. backdrop in front of which the Russians are playing -- Little Rock, two unsuccessful Atlas launchings, eleventh-hour Defense Department cuts and stretchouts by departing Secretary Wilson, non-resolution of the whole U.S. missiles program and consequent public inter-Service bickering, etc.

You badly need a little U.S. orchestration right now, and unfortunately you have very little to work with at the moment, so little that most of the recommendations have to be negative rather than positive.

..For instance, although you will doubtless want to speed up our own satellite program as much as possible, it should not be speeded up in such a way that it looks like a crash program. If we are indeed geared to the IGY and have a schedule, the important thing is to stick to the schedule but make sure that when our satellite goes up, it goes all the way -- and if not bigger than the Russians' let it be unmistakably better.

..For instance, you would not only immeasurably help Neil McElroy but the whole U.S. cause if, on the first day that McElroy is in office, you were to summon the Joint Chiefs and the civilian Service Secretaries to a meeting in your office with McElroy, and lay down the law on inter-Service behavior for the coming months. This is no time for fooling, and on both Defense Department cuts and the missiles program the Administration must speak soon and with one voice.

..For instance, over the weekend I read a mystery story, the international intrigue type. At one point the Central European Master Mind, explaining to the simple Britisher who has stumbled into the middle of "the situation", says, "Your phrase 'psychological warfare' is all wrong. You don't really use psychology, and from what I have been able to observe you will go to any lengths (Machiavelli, plus) to avoid warfare. Therefore the only way in which you can be effective is for you to understand and help us in what we are trying to do. And the name for that is 'interference'. The Soviet appearance of



strength and omniscience depends on their functioning without interference. That is why they have their Iron Curtain, their NKVD, their monolithic media of communication. As soon as any real interference arises, their whole apparatus gets out of kilter."

I recommend some quick and possibly drastic interference.

There are quite a few things that can be done in Poland, many of them quite benign, that would constitute interference. Middle East is another area for interference, but not the panic-switch type à la Jordan two months ago. Maybe this is the moment to start thinking about Albania again. Certainly this is the moment for U.S. diplomacy and the U.S. Treasury to join hands in exploiting targets of opportunity.

..For instance, it is none too soon for you personally to start a series of public appearances in which by reasoned argument you start to restore U.S. prestige. But this too will require its own sub-orchestration, because you will not only have to make sure that the normal organs of U.S. information abroad correctly interpret and amplify your statements, but you should also insure that a small bipartisan group of prominent Americans steps up and supports your thesis.

You should be prepared for military action, and it might be better to have it on a small scale before the U.S. back is to the wall.

I have been through quite a few of the ups and downs of this game, and have always been able in a "down" to know that it would pass.

This is the first time that I have seen so many important options in Soviet hands.



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