

4485

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

JUNE 13, 1942

2303

Document 3

The following statement is for release to editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 8:30 p.m., E.W.T., Saturday, June 13, 1942.

The same release also applies to radio announcers and news commentators.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

The President today signed an Executive Order consolidating in one new agency the information functions of the Government - foreign and domestic.

The new agency will be known as the Office of War Information. It will be divided into two main divisions. The first will deal with the dissemination of information within the United States. The second will deal with the dissemination of information in all foreign countries, except Latin America.

Into the new agency will be consolidated all of the functions and duties of the following existing informational agencies: the Office of Facts and Figures; the Office of Government Reports; the Division of Information in the Office for Emergency Management; the Foreign Information Service of the office of the Coordinator of Information. #

In addition, the Director of the new Office of War Information will have authority, subject to policies laid down by the President, to issue directives to all departments and agencies of the Government with respect to their informational services. He will have full authority to eliminate all overlapping and duplication and to discontinue in any department any informational activity which is not necessary or useful to the war effort.

While the actual information service of the different departments and agencies will continue to remain with such departments and agencies, their informational activities must conform to the directives issued by the Director of the Office of War Information.

The existing Office of Coordinator of Information (exclusive of the Foreign Information Service) is being transferred to the Joint Chiefs of Staff to operate directly under their supervision. Its name is being changed to the Office of Strategic Services, and it will continue to perform its functions of collecting secret and strategic information in foreign countries and performing general miscellaneous strategic services abroad, other than the dissemination of information by radio, leaflets, etc. These information functions in foreign countries will become part of the functions of the new agency - the Office of War Information; and the appropriate staff will be transferred to the new agency for this purpose.

To assist the Director of the Office of War Information, a Committee on War Information Policy will be established. The Director will be the Chairman of this committee; other members of the committee are set forth in the Executive Order. This committee will formulate basic policies and plans on war information; but the Director, after consultation with such committee, will have full power as the executive head of the new agency.

Document 3

- 2 -

The Director of the new Office of War Information will be Mr. Elmer Davis. An administrative officer to serve under Mr. Davis will be designated. Mr. William J. Donovan will serve as the head of the new Office of Strategic Services, reporting only to the combined Chiefs of Staff and to the President.

The information service for Latin America will continue to be handled by the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs.

The Executive Order prescribes close collaboration between The Director of Censorship, Mr. Byron Price, and the Director of the new Agency, for the purpose of facilitating the prompt and full dissemination of all available information which will not give aid to the enemy.
