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30 October 1969

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director for Intelligence**

**SUBJECT: Publications Procurement**

1. This memorandum concerns the effects of implementing the Executive Director-Comptroller's 29 October memorandum on publications procurement. In sum, implementation of these instructions will have a disastrous effect upon the Agency's acquisition of commercial, governmental, and scholarly publications.

25X1 2. The attached statement shows that we have already obligated upwards of [redacted] Some of this may be recoverable but only at the expense of serious disruption to the acquisitions process.

25X1 3. The acquisitions process begins its annual cycle each July. The pattern of the previous year's expenditures is established and a budget is projected for the following year. In July 1969 we projected a [redacted] outlay with expectation that almost another [redacted] would be available for over-runs. We estimated the needs of each major spender of acquisition funds in FY 1969, arbitrarily reduced these outlays, and informed each customer of his FY 1970 funds. We then produced EAM machine listings of the subscriptions that were current for both foreign and domestic period<sup>ical</sup> publication acquisition, forwarded these to the CIA offices ordering the periodicals, and requested their review and revalidation. By about 1 September, these revalidation of subscriptions were returning to CRS. Throughout September they were consolidated. The reordering of subscriptions began about 1 October. Today it is virtually complete with the result that over [redacted] has already been obligated. 25X1

4. We have not yet paid for many of these subscriptions that have been reordered and we may be able to cancel existing orders and reorder in smaller quantities, saving some funds. We must, however, do this

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in the next two weeks or so because the suppliers of the publications need almost two months to fit our orders into their distribution systems. If the process is not complete by early November, the result will be that many of our subscriptions will run out at the end of December, and we will have no ability to acquire the desired publications. Thus, to cut back on orders in being, we must redo a four-month cycle in two weeks or less.

5. CRS considers the 29 October memorandum on publications procurement from the Executive Director-Comptroller to be ill-advised for other reasons as well. Total cost of publications procurement is nominal if one considers that most authorities on U.S. intelligence have concluded that more than 75% of all useful intelligence information is obtained via open sources, and if one considers the high cost of any **SECRET** intelligence collection relative to buying a magazine on a newsstand. Certainly the outlined program will generate heavy control costs particularly in the already pared down CRS acquisitions operation. The memorandum also seems to totally neglect the fact that the cost of publications has increased by something more than 5% annually since 1965 because of inflation. It also seems to neglect that the 9% increase during FY 1969 procured a smaller number of items than were obtained in 1968. Inflation added about 7.6% to the average price of all U.S. periodicals in 1969 as compared with the average 1968 price.

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[Redacted]  
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Central Reference Service

Attachment

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