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14 MAR 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Tardy Response to Letter from
Congressman James C. Auchincloss

1. I wish to express my apologies for the embarrassment and chagrin caused by the failure of my office to prepare promptly the necessary reply to Congressman Auchincloss. We received the letter on 23 February and forwarded a draft reply on 6 March--clearly an unacceptable performance.

2. The incident in question does not in any way represent our normal performance nor lack of awareness of good manners and public relations in the handling of correspondence. Responsibility for preparing responses to correspondence to be signed by you or other senior officers on matters pertaining to personnel has been centralized in the office of the Director of Personnel and assigned to a single senior staff officer. In the instant case this officer was absent on several days leave when the Auchincloss letter arrived. This simple fact set the scene for a series of attempts by conscientious but less experienced personnel to prepare the necessary reply with the ultimate result of the delinquent response.

3. To prevent recurrence of such incidents, the Legislative Counsel and I have developed special controls and timetables which should assure that final or interim replies, if necessary, to congressional correspondence are ready for signature within five working days of arrival. Secondary controls will ensure that final replies to interim acknowledgments are prepared on a timely basis.

4. Within the Office of Personnel I am formalizing assignments of responsibility, procedures, action timetables, and monitoring methods to ensure that replies to congressional and comparable external correspondence are prepared within two working days.

[Redacted Signature Box]

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Emmett D. Echols
Director of Personnel

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14 Mar 61*