

OGC Has Reviewed

TELEGRAMS

In Defense of Official Action.

8 July 1947

MEMORANDUM FOR THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER, OSO

Subject: Telegram to Mrs. James Angleton

1. This is in answer to your memorandum of 7 July on the above subject. We find that we are unable to agree fully with your arguments for charging this expense to the Government. Particularly, in paragraph 3, you argue that it was necessary for us to serve as "cut-out" from time to time. We maintain that where we merely act as intermediary for personal messages, whether for security reasons or otherwise, the expenses should be borne by the individual concerned.

2. In the absence of obvious subterfuge or misuse this office will never question an administrative ruling on security aspects of operations. Consequently, we accept your statement that the subject telegram was not part of correspondence between the persons involved, but was a separate operational message, intermediate to their correspondence, which was required in order to have Mrs. Angleton cease her efforts to get in touch with her husband. On this ground, and this ground only, there is no legal objection to transferring this charge for payment by unvouchered funds. As noted above, this in no way sets a precedent for passing of personal messages.

3. We wish to point out that an item of this sort tends to cast doubt on the administration of our unvouchered funds. The message was, on its face, purely personal, and even on the grounds given in paragraph 2 above, we consider it a border line case. If a message is truly operational, we believe it can normally be phrased as such, in which case it can be paid from vouchered funds when, as here, the message itself did not contain classified information.

LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON
General Counsel

LRH:emj