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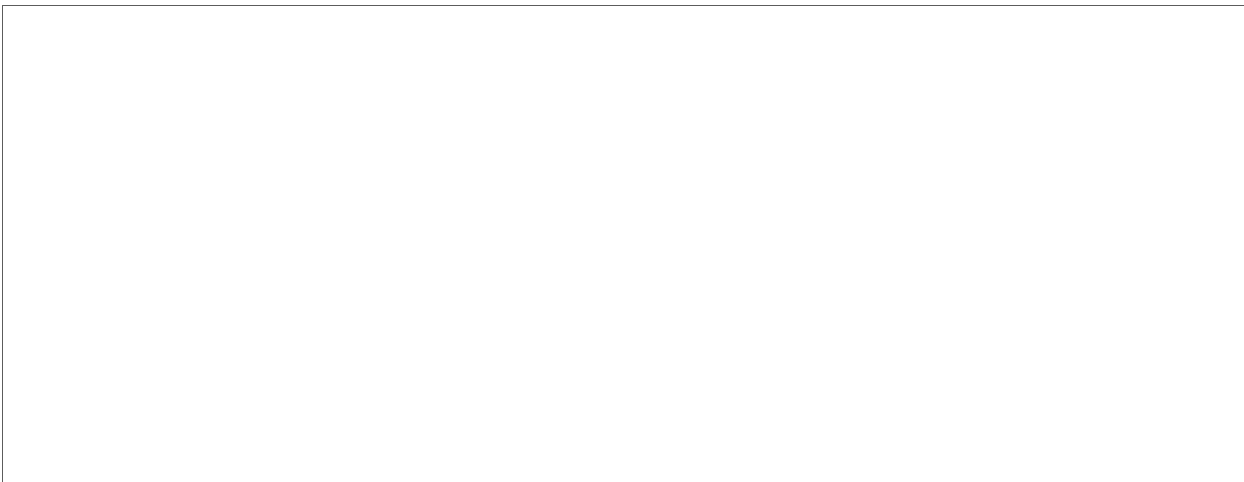
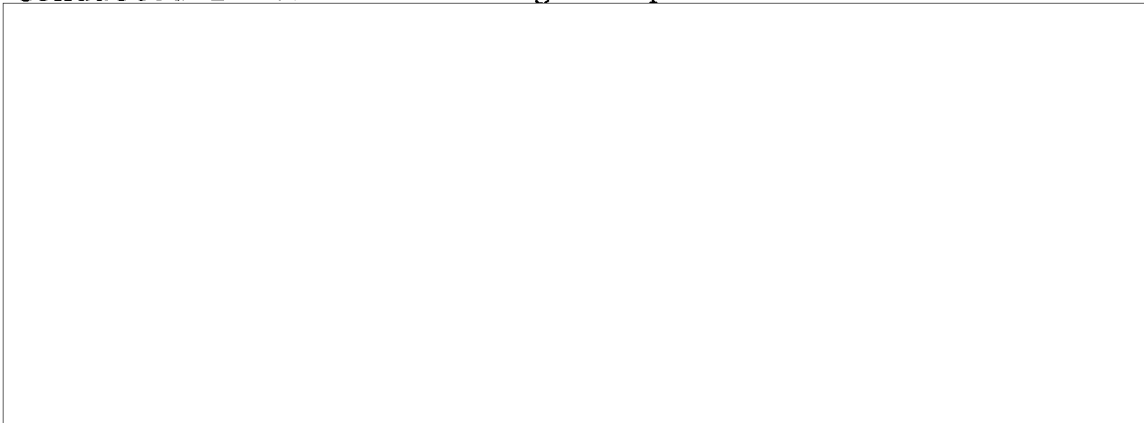
APPROVED FOR RELEASE □ DATE:
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(b) (1)
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21 January 1975

SUBJECT: Mail Intercept Program

1. A program of intercepting mail between the United States and the Soviet Union (HTLINGUAL) was conducted in New York during the period 1952-1973.



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3. New York Mail Intercept Program (HTLINGUAL):

The HTLINGUAL effort in New York was the only continuously operating mail intercept unit. The project was initiated in 1952 by a request from the Chief of Operations Staff, ADSO (predecessor to Office, DDP), to the Office of Security to provide leads to SR Division on contacts between individuals and organizations in the USSR and USA, to spot individuals in the USSR who were disaffected and of potential help to the U.S., to acquire sources for names to be used as addressors of mail to the USSR, to spot individuals in the U.S. who were sympathetic to Soviet interests, and finally for possible positive intelligence take from letters opened on a selective basis. The Chief Postal Inspector in Washington approved the project in November 1952 before it was activated in New York City. Postmaster General Summerfield was briefed generally on the program by Mr. Helms in 1954, as was Postmaster General Edward Day in 1961. The program including the fact for the first time that we were conducting clandestine openings of the mail, was later briefed to then Attorney General Mitchell and Postmaster General Blount in June 1971. The FBI was informed of the HTLINGUAL operation in 1958, several years after its inception. The FBI had contacted U.S. Postal authorities in 1958 [redacted]

[redacted] The Postal authorities informed CIA of the [redacted] CIA in turn then alerting the FBI to the existence of our HTLINGUAL operation. The HTLINGUAL project was suspended by DCI Schlesinger in February 1973 who expressed his agreement with the desirability that the project be passed to the FBI and his lack of conviction that the product to CIA was worth the risk of our involvement.

Background: The HTLINGUAL project was initiated in 1952 as described above but was turned over to the CI Staff in 1955 and was managed by the latter unit until its suspension in 1973.

a. Following are the statistics on the number of letters opened with contents photographed and the number of reports which were disseminated to interested customers based on this HTLINGUAL information:

Year	Letters Opened and Interiors Photographed	Dissemination		
		FBI	SR	Others
1953-				
1958				
1959				
1960				
1961				
1962				

Year	Letters Opened and Interiors Photographed	Dissemination		
		FBI	SR	Others
1963				
1964				
1965				
1966				
1967				
1968				
1969				
1970				
1971				
1972				
1973				
TOTAL				

b. As indicated above, the FBI received a grand total of [] reports from HTLINGUAL information over the years and expressed an interest in continuing to receive such reports from this project.

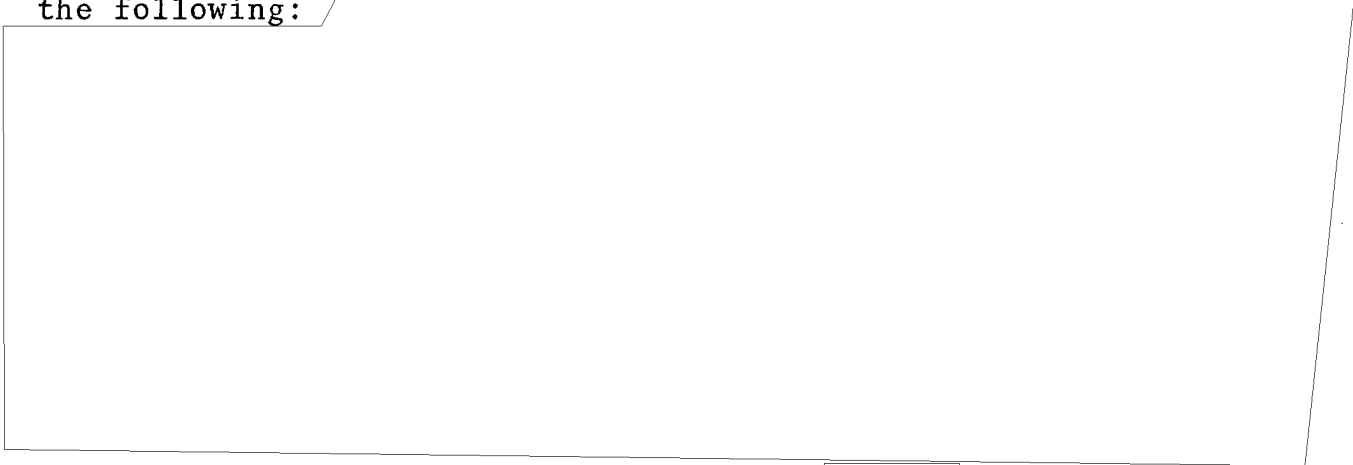
c. The HTLINGUAL machine record indicates over [] names of persons involved in U.S.-USSR contact were acquired under the project during the years and have been used for name traces and other counterintelligence purposes.

NOTE: The Office [] paid [] for two or three years" and "payments of [] per month" to a U.S. Post Office employee who worked closely with CIA personnel for fifteen years or more at the HTLINGUAL mail intercept site in New York City. There is no indication that U.S. Post Office officials are aware of our payments to their employee. At the beginning of his assignment to the mail intercept program the employee was told by his U.S. Post Office supervisor that our CIA personnel with whom he would be working were from "Washington," the implication being that they were from the Post Office Department.

5. Overall Evaluation of Project HTLINGUAL:

a. It is useful to keep in mind that at the origin of this project in 1952, CIA lacked general background information useful to mount positive intelligence collection operations against the Soviet Union as well as for counter-intelligence purposes. It was on this basis and within this framework that the project was originated and appeared to acquire significantly useful information over the years that followed. It should also be kept in mind that the project was essentially a CI Staff operational tool and was not designed to produce clearly measurable disseminable intelligence or information in

support of specific operational undertakings. Nonetheless, the project was useful from a purely technical point of view when used to examine incoming mail from the USSR to determine the following:



b. In late 1952 the Soviet agent [redacted] was recruited in Vienna. The biggest operational problem we faced after his recruitment was determining how to communicate clandestinely with him once he had returned to the Soviet Union. [redacted]



c. The HTLINGUAL intercept material was used to acquire operational information on [redacted]

[redacted] all of which was useful in supporting and documenting cover legends to be given to agents being sent to the Soviet Union under the REDSOX or REDSKIN operational

programs. The HTLINGUAL material was also screened intensively for leads to possible legal travelers who might be approached under the [] program and might also be useful as communication links with agents inside the Soviet Union. Our overall assessment of these efforts, however, is that the project was not very useful for these purposes.

d. There were literally hundreds of what appeared to be useful operational leads or background information passed by the project over the years to the line divisions of the DDO although the great majority of these proved to be of only marginal value. (See Attachment "Nature and Utilization of HTLINGUAL Material") SR Division at one point, however, did find the HTLINGUAL information of some use for targeting purposes. One SE officer recalls mail from []

[] who would have been of target interest to us. In addition, the mail from the USSR to the United States provided leads for SE Division and other DDO area divisions regarding travel plans of target individuals in advance of our receiving this information from other sources and also identified some of their contacts in the United States who could then be targeted by us as access agents to these Soviet and other foreign target visitors.

e. The HTLINGUAL intercept information proved most useful to the [] in monitoring contacts of United States citizens, including some U.S. military and government officials, who were in touch with Soviets and who had not reported these contacts to their own parent organizations. There were many other instances of very significant internal security information acquired from the HTLINGUAL project which was passed to the [] for their action. (Some random examples are attached to this memorandum.) It is significant to note that the [] contributed broadly over the years to the project's Watch List of individuals or categories of individuals whose mail would be of interest to them, and has stated that the HTLINGUAL reports have been "of assistance and continue to be of assistance to us". (As an example of [] requests to be placed on the HTLINGUAL Watch List, see Attachment, memorandum from []

f. A recent check with our SE Division Reports Staff

indicates there were no positive intelligence disseminations deriving from HTLINGUAL information over the life of the project.

6. Conclusion:

Although project HTLINGUAL was quite useful in assisting OTS on technical problems [redacted] and other technical problems to be encountered by our agents operating abroad, and also provided specific internal security counterintelligence to the [redacted] on a continuing basis, the overall evaluation of the project is that it was of marginal value to our positive intelligence operational programs directed against the Soviet Union and was useful basically as a CI Staff operational tool which had only occasional and limited specific operational utility to the line divisions of the Directorate of Operations.

Attachments:

1. "Random Examples of Production" of assistance to the [redacted]
2. Memorandum from Director, OTS to ADDS&T on Technical Value of Mail Intercepts in the United States
3. Memorandum from [redacted]
4. "Nature and Utilization of HTLINGUAL Material"

RANDOM EXAMPLES OF PRODUCTION

1. [REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED] ANTI-IMPERIALIST DELEGATION [REDACTED]
In [REDACTED], the mail of eleven major U.S. radical
leaders who were in [REDACTED] was intercepted. This delegation

[REDACTED]
was enroute to [REDACTED]
guests of the [REDACTED]
This correspondence revealed (a) that the leaders were get-
ting ideological stimulus in [REDACTED] and activist-revolutionary
support in guerilla training in [REDACTED], and (b) the
whereabouts, unknown to concerned U.S. agencies, of such
leftists as:

[REDACTED]

(c) the anti-U.S. manifesto of the group, contained in their
jointly signed letter; (d) warning about [REDACTED] plans to take
over [REDACTED] after [REDACTED]. The

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

letter set forth justification for "events that will unfold in [redacted] in the coming months." This provided insight in planning even though the [redacted] intentions never materialized; (e) establishment of the International Section of [redacted] operating from [redacted] (f) information on [redacted] affairs and associates of [redacted] in [redacted].

3. [redacted] TRAVEL TO [redacted] AND [redacted]

In the past many dissident new left activists have gone to the Communist world via Moscow where they pause to write letters. These letters often provide U.S. agencies the first and only notice of their presence in Communist countries. The Project constantly reports such travel, which has included such notable as:



4.

5.

6. On [redacted] the [redacted] Washington, D.C., forwarded a two-page circular letter to [redacted]. After expressing in strong terms its opposition to the conflict [redacted] and the arming of the [redacted] the [redacted] outlined its campaign for mass rallies on [redacted] discussions with government workers, harrassment of traffic to and from the Pentagon Building, etc. This was to be followed on [redacted] with strikes, demonstrations, and work stoppages everywhere. In its letter the [redacted] urgently requested [redacted] support in the form of demonstrations in foreign capitals and major cities, protest cables addressed to President NIXON, and work stoppages in American factories abroad. This information Mr. Helms provided to Attorney General MITCHELL.

7. In [redacted] the [redacted] asked the Project to watchlist [redacted] mail between the U.S. and [redacted] and requested any and all items from the past. [redacted] items, going back as far as [redacted] were retrieved from the files and passed to the [redacted]. Two months later the [redacted] informed the Project that the [redacted] items had scored four "hits", the quarry being illegal entrants. The Project continues to furnish the [redacted] regularly with [redacted] mail.

NOTE:

[redacted] items are [redacted] correspondence either (a) forwarding inquiries of U.S. persons about relatives lost [redacted] or (b) replying to inquiries of [redacted] citizens about relatives who have disappeared and could be in the U.S. The latter provide the clues which are taken up by the [redacted]. The Project does not see mail originated by the [redacted]. [redacted] it is believed to come by official pouch for passing to the [redacted] by the [redacted].

8. [redacted] CIA furnished the United States Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation information extracted from Project materials. Two letters had been received which had been authored by a person in [redacted] believed to be identical with one of the armed suspects seized by the Secret Service in [redacted] at [redacted] hotel at which [redacted] stayed during the [redacted]. In writing to [redacted] students at [redacted] the writer, who had recently returned from a tour of [redacted] gave vent to his ardent wish for the rise, in the United States, of a [redacted].

9. [redacted] Project files contained information made available to the [redacted] concerning items of correspondence exchanged between [redacted] and [redacted] in [redacted] and [redacted] correspondence to others in the [redacted] in [redacted] correspondence of [redacted] was also available. In [redacted] it was also possible to use Project records to identify the [redacted] who [redacted] had referred to but not named in [redacted] as a fellow [redacted] in [redacted] in [redacted].

10. [redacted]

11. Advance notice that a [redacted] attending [redacted] is expected to come to the U.S. [redacted] the [redacted] and, to a limited extent, for foreign [redacted] youth leaders) [redacted]; of interest to the FBI.

12. [redacted]

13. The Project provided the first positive indication that [redacted] the [redacted] was in the [redacted] after [redacted] disappeared from [redacted] in [redacted]

14. The Project has also provided information about the other [redacted] and [redacted] who fled to the [redacted] in [redacted] and some items concerning the [redacted] from [redacted] and [redacted] who went to the [redacted] in [redacted]

15. Correspondence between [redacted] scientists and academicians and the [redacted] counterparts has been valuable in providing insight into [redacted] planning and interests with respect to various [redacted] such as the [redacted] and [redacted] In particular, for example, correspondence to and from and about [redacted] when married with collateral information has been useful in briefing and guiding [redacted] when [redacted] comes into contact with [redacted] in [redacted] and at [redacted] [redacted] had reported early [redacted] efforts [redacted] to induce [redacted] to collaborate with them and [redacted] has remained alert to continuing [redacted] interest in [redacted]

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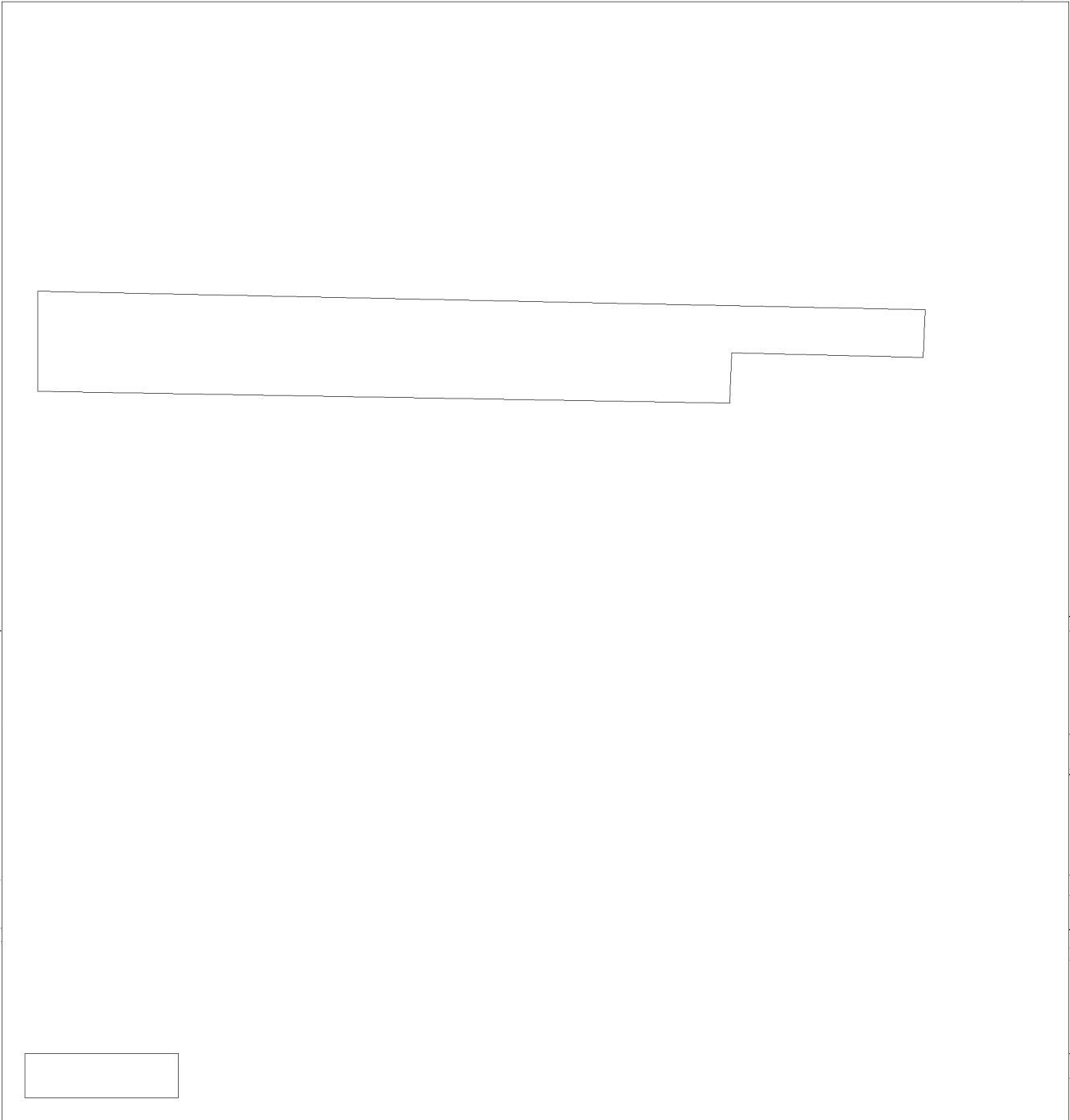
ATTACHMENT I



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Federal Bureau of Investigation

March 10, 1972

Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C. 20505

BY CIA COURIER

ATTENTION: Deputy Director for Plans, *JAMES ANGLETON*

RE: *HUNTER PROJECT*

Dear Sir:

- 1. For your information, I am enclosing communications which may be of interest to you.
- 2. It will be appreciated if you will have the investigation conducted as requested in the enclosed memorandum and furnish the results.
- 3. No further investigation is contemplated with regard to this matter.
- 4. You will be advised of the pertinent developments in connection with this inquiry.
- 5. Please note change in caption of this case.
- 6. Status of case: Completed Incomplete

Very truly yours,

J. Edgar Hoover
John Edgar Hoover
Director

~~GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification~~

~~SECRET~~

Enc.

*(Upon removal of classified enclosures if any
this transmittal form becomes UNCLASSIFIED)*

Reference is made to your special notation on
Hunter Report No. 27,226, item 2A10.
Attached is a list of types of traffic we
would like to receive.

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would, of course, like to receive any traffic on individuals who are there for a short time if they have been sponsored by subversive organizations and subversive individuals or have received special invitations or special treatment from the Soviets.

6. We have no interest in the hundreds of legitimate travelers who visit the USSR on regular tours or go to see relatives.

known communists, New Left activists, extremists and other subversives;

7. Communist Party and front organizations (such as American Russian Institute, National Council of American-Soviet Friendship and "Ukrainian News"), extremist and New Left organizations.

~~GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification~~

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(b)

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8. Protest and peace organizations, such as People's Coalition for Peace and Justice, National Peace Action Committee and Women's Strike for Peace.

9. Communists, Trotskyites and members of other Marxist-Leninist, subversive and extremist groups, such as the Black Panthers, White Panthers, Black Nationalist and Liberation groups, Venceremos Brigade, Venceremos Organization, Weathermen, Progressive Labor Party, Worker's Student Alliance, Students for a Democratic Society, Resist, Revolutionary Union and other New Left groups.

11. Traffic to and from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands showing anti-U.S. or subversive sympathies.

13. Soviet Committee for Cultural Relations with Compatriots Abroad (contacts with emigres and emigre organizations in U.S.).

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prepared for [unclear]

~~SECRET / EYES ONLY~~

14 March 1972

COMMENTS ON THE [] UPDATED STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR CI/PROJECT

In comparing the [] previous requirements of October 1962 with the newly received ones we note the following changes:

ADDITIONS: Protest and peace organizations, subversive and extremist groups, the New Left (many listed) ;



Traffic to and from the Virgin Islands showing anti-US or subversive sympathies.

DELETIONS: None noted.

NOTE CI/Project states with reasonable certainty that its policy with regard to dissemination of its materials to the [] during the period 1962 to February 1972 has substantially been in accord with the [] March 1972 restatement of its requirements.

~~SECRET / EYES ONLY~~

~~SECRET~~
SECRET ONLY
~~EYES ONLY~~

4 March 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Nature and Utilization of HTLINGUAL Material

1. Since 1957 the HTLINGUAL project supplied intelligence data to the [] CI Staff components [], SB Division, WH Division, other area divisions when appropriate, DO/I, FI Staff, ORR, OCI, and CA Staff.


2. Increased watch-listing and concentration on persons of CI or operational interest gradually minimized the amount of material of FI, ORR, or OCI interest, while dissemination to CA Staff was ordered curtailed at the time of the RAMPARTS and National Student Association disclosures.

3. Present consumers of HTLINGUAL material are given in the following pages with the types of data desired and regularly supplied.

4. Apart from the reporting of current information to these consumers according to their requirements, an equally - if not more - important service is the supply of data from the record, dating back to 1955, when the consumer requests a name-check, further background, or earlier activities of a given subject. The HTLINGUAL machine record includes [] names of persons involved in USA-USSR contact.

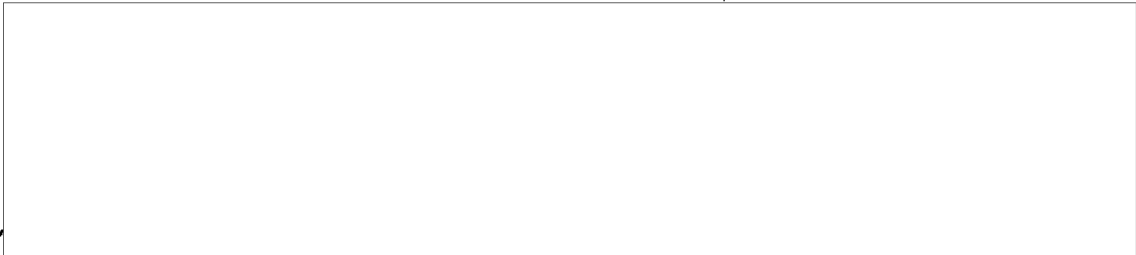
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~~EYES ONLY~~



The  requests and receives information and leads from Project material to/from, identifying, or concerning:



- d. US defectors in the USSR, and contacts with US.
- e. CPUSA members and officials contacting USSR.
- f. Contacts of radicals and subversives with USSR.
- g. Contacts with USSR of militant, dissident, and protest groups.



- 1. Record material in name checks, supplying further identification of subjects, their background and activities.

~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

CI STAFF

CI Staff components receive pertinent material of interest to operational divisions, as well as the following:



~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

SB DIVISION

SB Division uses Project material for operational leads, for augmenting operations, and for CI and operational files. It extracts and supplies information for basic files, 201's, and input programs of SB interest. SB has requested and gets materials to/ from or concerning the following types:



~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

AF DIVISION

Africa Division receives Project material identifying and concerning:

WH COG

Cuba Operations receives Project material which:

DO/I

DO/I receives - and gets operational leads from - Project materials to/from, identifying, or concerning:

RID

RID/AN, and each division concerned (AF, NE, FE, WH, etc.,) receive extracted material identifying foreign students in the USSR. This goes out under a blind memo not identifying the Project.

CA STAFF

Though there is no current dissemination to CA Staff, there is a wealth of material of potential relevance and usefulness. Material formerly sent to CA included:

~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

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