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Assistant Director for Operations

14 November 1946

Chief, Interdepartmental Coordinating and  
Planning Staff

Distribution of FBIS Daily Reports to the Press

References & Enclosures

Letter to DCI dated Oct. 25, 1946 from Editor, Washington Post

DF to DCI dated 31/10 from Asst. Dir. for Operations

Memo dated 7 Nov., 1946 from Asst. Dir. OR&E to ICAPS

Memo dated 6 Nov., 1946 from Asst. Dir. OCD to ICAPS

1. Your D/F on subject with enclosures and the comments of ORE and OCD are returned herewith.
2. It is the considered opinion of ICAPS that the distribution of FBIS Daily Reports to the Press should be made by the press sections of the government departments currently recipients of this service, with the following stipulations:
  - a. Distribution to the press will be limited to individually selected items of primary interest to each department. The selection of the items will be the responsibility of each department, and should reflect the interests of that department and of the United States Government.
  - b. 'Carte blanche' agreements to deliver the entire contents of the Daily Reports should not be authorized.
  - c. Each department should be cautioned against sudden and pointed emphasis on any subjects which might draw undesirable attention to United States trends in policy.
  - d. To avoid criticism on grounds of discrimination released items should be made available on a parity request basis to all responsible press representatives.
3. It is believed that by the above recommended procedure the press may be serviced without the undesirable publicity features of direct OIG participation, and with security features adequately safeguarded.

DONALD EDGAR

EW:bhr

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O R T

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP  
INTER-OFFICE ROUTING SLIP  
 (Revised 10 Sept 1946)

FROM	TO	INITIALS	DATE
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE			
EXECUTIVE TO THE DIRECTOR			
SECRETARY TO THE DIRECTOR			
EXECUTIVE OFFICE: ASST. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR			
ADVISORY COUNCIL			
EXECUTIVE FOR PERSONNEL & ADMINISTRATION			
CENTRAL RECORDS			
SECRETARY, NIA			
✓ CHIEF, INTERDEPARTMENTAL STAFF			
ASST. DIRECTOR, SPECIAL OPERATIONS			
ASST. DIRECTOR, RESEARCH & EVALUATION	✓	<i>[Handwritten initials]</i>	7 Nov 6 Nov
ASST. DIRECTOR, COLLECTION & DISSEMINATION			
CHIEF, SECURITY BRANCH			

- APPROVAL
- ACTION
- RECOMMENDATION
- SIGNATURE
- INFORMATION
- RETURN
- PREPARATION OF REPLY
- CONCURRENCE
- DIRECT REPLY
- COMMENT
- FILE
- DISPATCH

REMARKS:

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SECRETARY, NIA			
CHIEF, INTERDEPARTMENTAL STAFF	✓		
ASST. DIRECTOR, SPECIAL OPERATIONS			
ASST. DIRECTOR, RESEARCH & EVALUATION			
✓ ASST. DIRECTOR, COLLECTION & DISSEMINATION			11/6
CHIEF, SECURITY BRANCH			

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|---|---|---------------------------------------|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> ACTION         | <input type="checkbox"/> RETURN               | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMENT      |
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REMARKS:

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**CONFIDENTIAL****Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT**

TO : Chief, ICAPS

DATE: 6 November 1946

FROM : Assistant Director, OGD

SUBJECT: Distribution of FBIS Daily Reports to the Press

1. The Office of Collection and Dissemination has studied the recommendations of Director for Operations on the subject of FBIS reports to the press, and comments as follows:

a. Screened service to the press. If the service to the press is to be resumed, it is believed that any screening of recipients cannot be effected, as proposed in par. 4 of the attached memorandum, without running the risk of opening this organization to criticism on the grounds of preferential treatment. The service must be open to all comers or to none at all. As an example, if the Daily Worker and P.M. should find out that FBIS reports were made available, free of charge, to some 75 other newspapers and that the Daily Worker and P.M. had been excluded from the distribution, these two newspapers might well launch a violent campaign on the subject of discriminatory treatment of the press which might focus the attention of unfriendly interests upon this organization.

b. Service to universities and other institutions. It is understood through conversations with ORE that a number of universities who were former recipients are also interested in having service to them reestablished. They also will become very resentful toward CIG as soon as they learn that a selected press is receiving it. Again the service must be open to all comers or none at all. ORE would probably like to comment on this part.

c. Security. It is believed that the resumption of procedures whereby the press was furnished copies of the Daily FBIS reports could still be objected to on security grounds in view of the fact that furnishing such reports (which would have to be downgraded to unclassified) could indicate to its recipients the coverage capabilities of this organization with respect to monitoring of foreign broadcasts. Although this objection is not particularly serious, it nevertheless runs counter to the policy of the Director of Central Intelligence that the organization and operational capabilities of the Central Intelligence Group must not be divulged except when necessary in the conduct of official business with accredited agencies or individuals.

2. OGD concurs in the substance of General Sibert's recommendation to broaden the service of FBIS, subject to the proviso that screening should be only for the purpose of eliminating duplication.



C. E. OLSEN  
 Captain, U. S. N.  
 Assistant Director for  
 Collection and Dissemination

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THE WASHINGTON POST  
Washington 4, D.C.

Herbert Elliston, Editor

October 25, 1946

General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, Director  
Central Intelligence Group  
New War Department Building  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Has the new set-up in the Central Intelligence Group made any difference in your policy with regard to sending the Daily Report to the press?

If it has, I should very much like to repeat my request for these very useful reports. If we can receive them, they should be addressed to:

Miss Susan Oulahan  
Editorial Department  
The Washington Post  
Washington 4, D. C.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

/s/  
Herbert Elliston

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7 November 1946

MEMORANDUM TO: Chief, ICAPS

SUBJECT : Distribution of FBIS Daily Reports to the Press

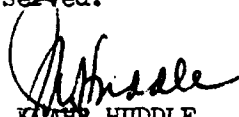
1. ORE believes that it is advisable to modify the present policy of suppression of FBIS reports to the end that legitimate requests for these reports may be accommodated when received from newspapers, press associations, special press correspondents, collegiate institutions, and other organizations or individuals of like nature in the United States. This is in general agreement with the proposal from the Office of Operations, Section 4, and the recommendations in Section 5.

2. ORE, however, concurs with the suggestion from the Office of Collection and Dissemination that attempted screening of applicants would be unwise and would be difficult of justification and practical application.

3. The Assistant Director for Collection and Dissemination has voiced a possible objection (accompanying memorandum, 1-c, Security) on security grounds, namely, that furnishing such reports might indicate coverage capabilities with reference to the capacity of CIG for monitoring foreign broadcasts. An objection along similar lines might be that since transcriptions of broadcasts by FBIS are along selected lines, a study thereof could conceivably indicate the trends of CIG interests and investigations. The Assistant Director for Collection and Dissemination points out that objections of this nature do not appear particularly serious, and in this opinion ORE concurs.

4. The question also arises whether CIG, by its very nature, should engage in publicity arrangements of any kind and whether dissemination of FBIS material to public agencies should not better be effected through some such agency as the Information Division of the State Department.

5. In general, ORE believes that if FBIS remains under CIG control, CIG interests would be well served by the proposed concession to such influential organs as The Washington Post and other important agencies or individuals who might be served.

  
J. KIHARR HUDDLE  
Assistant Director  
Reports and Estimates

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x 31/10 Asst. Director for Operations

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SUBJECT: Distribution of FBIS Daily Reports To The Press

1. During the war the Domestic Branch of the Office of War Information had responsibility for the distribution of government material to newspapers, commentators, press associations and radio stations. Included in this distribution was the text of foreign broadcasts monitored by the FBIS. Immediately following the cessation of hostilities, this function of OWI was discontinued and FBIS, when it was a part of the Federal Communications Commission, assumed responsibility for distributing its Daily Reports to the representatives of the press that had previously been serviced by the OWI.
2. Shortly after the transfer of FBIS to the Intelligence Division of the War Department, the latter changed the FBIS distribution policy so that only official government offices could receive the reports. This action was taken on grounds of (a) economy; (b) security safeguard; and (c) to forestall possible congressional criticism of free

distribution of a government report to private parties. The press as a whole was very critical of this change in policy since it had been depending on the broadcast intercepts of FBIS as a valuable news source from various parts of the world. The only reason given for the change in policy was that it was necessary to effect economies and the question was raised by the press as to whether the insignificant savings would over-balance the value of making available to the people the information broadcast to the world by the foreign radio.

3. On 25 October 1948, The Washington Post wrote to you requesting that the policy decision of the War Department be reviewed by OIG and, if possible, to add it to the mailing list for the FBIS Daily Reports. After careful consideration of the pros and cons of this problem, I am in favor of making these reports available to the press upon request. These reports are verbatim texts of foreign broadcasts intercepted by FBIS and contain no analysis or evaluation of the material. The transmissions are broadcast in the open to anyone with the receiving facilities to listen to them, so pose no real security problem in making them available for public consumption. The additional cost of adding the country's leading newspapers to the FBIS mailing list is negligible since it involves merely the mailing and extra mimeograph paper for approximately 100 copies. On the positive side, I believe that the distribution of this material would be in line with the government's general policy of making available to the public all non-classified information that it can. Adding the press to the FBIS mailing list, I am sure, would result in a very favorable reaction toward OIG which may be extremely valuable in the near future.

4. If authorized by you to recommence this service, FBIS would mail to a screened list of former recipients a notice that service will be renewed upon the receipt of formal written request from those concerned. A review of our records indicates that a maximum of 107 press and radio organizations received this service during the war. We estimate that about 75 would properly receive it now. This eliminates former duplications and now inactive agencies.

5. Recommendation. I recommend that FBIS be authorized by you to proceed as outlined in paragraph 4. If approved, this can be undertaken and continued through this fiscal year without increase in budget or personnel within the FBIS.

Executive Registry  
Central Records (2)  
Mr. Shepherd, BFS  
Return to General Sibert - Rm. 2172  
Stayback

ERWIN L. HARR  
Major General, USA  
Assistant Director for Operations