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6 June 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: KRONTHAL, James Speyer

[REDACTED]

(b)(3)

1. The attached memos from C/UDAC and Ed Sayle indicate a retired Agency "source" alleges that the Kronthal espionage information came from the debriefings of Dr. Otto John [REDACTED] [REDACTED] by Justin O'Donnell [REDACTED] or William Corson.

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2. O'Donnell's file was reviewed. He entered the Agency through the OSS, where he had served in Egypt. His military record reflects an uncooperative and rebellious attitude. O'Donnell had instances of refusing to obey NCOs, exhibiting a sarcastic attitude toward them.

3. Another previous supervisor from the Pennsylvania Motor Police stated he "would betray a confidence if it were in his interest to do so." A third supervisor recalled he was "unhesitant about lying to further his own endeavors."

4. O'Donnell's Agency career was marked with instances of conflicts between him and his peers and supervisors. In 1955 he submitted a handwritten memorandum under the title, "Reasons Why I Think I Am Being Made a Target" (as an Agency scapegoat). Another late 1955 memo further illustrates instances of paranoia and intemperate acts.

5. In 1961 O'Donnell attended a meeting conducted by C. Tracy Barnes, then A/DDP where he alleged:

a. Failures in the CI/CE field, as evidenced by Communist penetrations of the DD/P. [REDACTED] a staff officer, was mentioned in this connection, but only as an example of poor management.

b. O'Donnell also noted several unnamed penetrations of SR Division, inferring that the penetrations were the reasons that SR had lost a number of agents.

WARNING NOTICE
INTELLIGENCE SOURCES
OR METHODS INVOLVED

[REDACTED]

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c. He alleged that he had been asked by the DD/P to go to the Congo and kill Patrice Lumumba. O'Donnell felt this "was basically wrong" and noted he would fight it.

While O'Donnell was asked on several occasions to put his allegations in writing and name names, he refused. This resulted in his dismissal, after several meetings with DCI Dulles failed to resolve his allegations.

6. O'Donnell subsequently went to work for DOD. A 14 September 1962 memo stated that he appeared to be on a personal vendetta against the Agency and reflected "his hatred for the CIA which he exhibited continuously."

7. A 15 February 1979 SAD MFR notes that in William Corson's book, The Armies of Ignorance, he singles out "my good friend" Justin O'Donnell among those he acknowledges for help in his book.

8. Otto John's 201 file has not been reviewed, but from the above information it is obvious that O'Donnell is a disgruntled former employee, grinding his ax against the Agency for their failure to believe his unsubstantiated claims of a penetration and other "wrongs" he feels were perpetrated against him. One would think that if disgruntled O'Donnell were contacted by or met disgruntled Corson, a fast friendship would have ensured.

9. Corson's service record (attached) does not have any indication that he was detailed to or served with the Agency, particularly during Allen Dulles' tenure as DCI, 1952-1960. Corson's security file [REDACTED] was started as result of his allegations of Agency employment. Corson does not have, and never has had, an Agency Personnel folder. Corson's ability to have been in a position to debrief Otto John seems seriously in doubt.

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Attachments

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