

SECURITY INFORMATION

3.5626

MEMORANDUM TO: AD/OC

DEC 23 1950

THROUGH: (1) DD/I
(2) Assistant to the Director (S. H. Long)
(In turn)

FROM: AD/SI

SUBJECT: Request for Information on Mr. William Marchant's
"Projecting Electronic Ray"

1. Attention is invited to the attached letter to the ISI from Mr. Walter W. Cowing of Boston, Mass. which requests data from the files of this Agency on a "Projecting Electronic Ray." You will recall we evaluated this invention of Mr. William Marchant at the request of the President and with the assistance of your Office in December 1950. The background file on this effort two years ago is also attached for your information.

2. Unfortunately, Mr. Cowing has seen at least part of this Agency's letter of 20 January 1951 closing out our 1950 review of the case, and he knows we have information on the "Ray." It would not be desirable to make our technical files on this case available to him, nor is it recommended that we go on record in a formal letter to him denying that we have any information or transmitting the unclassified history of the considerations of the invention by various other government agencies.

3. Therefore, it is recommended that Mr. Cowing be contacted informally through the appropriate field office and given such of the following unclassified information as is deemed appropriate in such a way as to divorce this Agency from the case and avoid any subsequent publicity.

a. There is no technical information on the "Projecting Electronic Ray" available with CIA that would be helpful to Mr. Cowing that is not available with the inventor, Mr. Marchant.

b. The invention has been evaluated by the Ordnance Corps, Department of the Army and by the National Inventors Council.

(1) The idea of the "Ray" was originally offered to the US Government in 1935, and it was the subject of an investigation contract of 9 May 1936 (Ward-259 for \$3,000) between the Army Ordnance (Watertown Arsenal) and the Marchant Associates, Inc. The contract was terminated on 8 October 1937 due to failure of the inventor to fulfill his contractual obligations. This contract and all material pertaining to it was downgraded to 'unclassified' on 30 July 1947.

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(2) The matter was reviewed by the Army Ordnance in 1937, upon a recommendation of Mr. James Roosevelt, and in 1938 as the result of an inquiry by Senator H. C. Lodge, Jr. In 1940 the matter was reopened by an offer of the inventor to modify the basic idea for use as an "airplane detector." In all cases Army Ordnance reviews failed to find valid reasons for a positive action.

(3) Early in 1942 the same basic idea was submitted to the National Inventors Council which requested technical information necessary for evaluation. This information was not supplied and the project of evaluation was abandoned.

4. The attached papers should be returned to Central Records of Executive Registry upon completion of the action on the attached letter from Mr. Cowbig. The technical files on the "Ray" have been retained by this Office.

E. MARSHALL SMITH

Attachments

Distribution:

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