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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

26 October 2018

Mr. John Greenewald, Jr.
27305 West Live Oak Road
Suite #1203
Castaic, CA 91384

Reference: F-2016-02255

Dear Mr. Greenewald:

This is a final response to your 27 July 2016 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for **all records, electronic or otherwise, of all records pertaining to the Project Electronic Ray**. We processed your request in accordance with the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended, and the CIA Information Act, 50 U.S.C. § 3141, as amended.

We completed a thorough search for records responsive to your request and located the enclosed two documents, consisting of five pages, which we have determined are released in their entirety. Copies of the documents are enclosed at Tab A.

We also determined that three documents, consisting of 18 pages, can be released in segregable form with deletions made on the basis of FOIA exemptions, (b)(1), (b)(3), and/or (b)(6). Copies of the documents and an explanation of exemptions are enclosed at Tab B. Exemption (b)(3) pertains to information exempt from disclosure by statute. The relevant statutes are Section 6 of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, as amended, and Section 102A(i)(1) of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended. As the CIA Information and Privacy Coordinator, I am the CIA official responsible for this determination. You have the right to appeal this response to the Agency Release Panel, in my care, within 90 days from the date of this letter. Please include the basis of your appeal.

If you have any questions regarding our response, you may contact us at:

Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC 20505
Information and Privacy Coordinator

703-613-3007 (Fax)

Please be advised that you may seek dispute resolution services from the CIA's FOIA Public Liaison or from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) of the National Archives and Records Administration. OGIS offers mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. You may reach CIA's FOIA Public Liaison at:

703-613-1287 (FOIA Hotline)

The contact information for OGIS is:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001
202-741-5770
877-864-6448
202-741-5769 (fax)
ogis@nara.gov

Contacting the CIA's FOIA Public Liaison or OGIS does not affect your right to pursue an administrative appeal.

Sincerely,



Allison Fong
Information and Privacy Coordinator

Enclosures

Explanation of Exemptions

Freedom of Information Act:

- (b)(1) exempts from disclosure information currently and properly classified, pursuant to an Executive Order;
- (b)(2) exempts from disclosure information which pertains solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the Agency;
- (b)(3) exempts from disclosure information that another federal statute protects, provided that the other federal statute either requires that the matters be withheld, or establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld. The (b)(3) statutes upon which the CIA relies include, but are not limited to, the CIA Act of 1949;
- (b)(4) exempts from disclosure trade secrets and commercial or financial information that is obtained from a person and that is privileged or confidential;
- (b)(5) exempts from disclosure inter- and intra-agency memoranda or letters that would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency;
- (b)(6) exempts from disclosure information from personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy;
- (b)(7) exempts from disclosure information compiled for law enforcement purposes to the extent that the production of the information (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings; (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication; (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy; (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source or, in the case of information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source; (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law; or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger any individual's life or physical safety;
- (b)(8) exempts from disclosure information contained in reports or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, or on behalf of, or for use of an agency responsible for regulating or supervising financial institutions; and
- (b)(9) exempts from disclosure geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

April 2012

TAB A

12 DEC 1950

Honorable W. Blodgett Priest
Deer Crossing Farm
Hackettstown, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Priest:

The President has sent me your letter of 3 December 1950 and has asked me to look into the premise of the Projecting Electronic Ray. In the near future a member of my staff will seek an appointment with you to this end.

I hope you will feel in a position to cooperate with him completely so that all pertinent information will be made available. The individual who contacts you will have proper credentials to identify himself as a member of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Sincerely,

WBS

W. B. SMITH

OSI:HMC/mtw

Rewritten HJMuller:amk

Distribution: orig - dispatch
Signer - 2cc
OO/C - 2cc
AD/SI - 1 cc
Central Records - 1cc

by
HJM

Official

Approved for Release: 2018/10/24 C02194732
MEMORANDUM TO: GENERAL SMITH

I have arranged for Dr. Chadwell to see you at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, 22 December, to give you a report and recommendations on the "Projecting Electronic Ray" referred to you by the President.

*For
file*

JAE
JE

JK

19 December 1950
(DATE)

*J.S. E
J.M.*

11 DEC 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Projecting Electronic Ray

I am having qualified representatives from this organization investigate at once the project brought to your attention by Mr. Wells Hodgett Priest of Hackettstown, New Jersey, and will report the results as soon as they return.

44000

WALTER B. SMITH
DIRECTOR

Distribution:
Orig & 1 cc—addressee
2 cc—signer
1 cc—AD/SI w/ basic
1 cc—Central Records

*Official**White House*

SECURITY INFORMATION

3.5 626

MEMORANDUM TO: AD/OC

DEC 23 1950

THROUGH: (1) DD/I
(2) Assistant to the Director (R. S. 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 ICI from Mr. Walter W. Cowhig 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. Cowhig 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. Cowhig 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. Cowhig 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 1936, and it was the subject of an investigation contract of 9 May 1936 (W-ord-235 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.

SECRET

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
SECURITY INFORMATION

(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. Cowhig. The technical files on the "Ray" have been retained by this Office.

E. MARSHALL SMITH

Attachments**Distribution:**

1 & 2 Addressee
1 DD/I
1 Ex Reg ✓
2 AD/SI
1 Ex/SI
1 P&E/SI

CONFIDENTIAL
~~SECRET~~

TAB B

Explanation of Exemptions

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April 2012

856

11 DEC 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Projecting Electronic Ray

I am having qualified representatives from this organization investigate at once the project brought to your attention by Mr. Wells Blodgett Priest of Hackettstown, New Jersey, and will report the results as soon as they return.

Signed

WALTER B. SMITH
Director

HJM/c

Distribution:
Orig & 1 cc--addressee
2 cc--signer
1 cc--AD/SI w/ basic
1 cc--Central Records

DOCUMENT NO. 46
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____
AUTH: HR 702
DATE: 2/03/81 REVISION:

(b)(3)

Reading

MEMORANDUM TO: AD/GO

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DEC 23 1952

THROUGH: (1) DD/I
(2) Assistant to the Director (R. E. 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 DCI from Mr. Walter W. Cowhig 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. Cowhig 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. Cowhig 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. Cowhig 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 1936, and it was the subject of an investigation contract of 9 May 1936 (W-ord-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 "unclassified" on 30 July 1947.

DOCUMENT NO. 7
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S 267
NEXT REVIEW DATE:
AUTH: HR 70.9
DATE: 28/03/81 REVIEWER: _____

~~SECRET~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(b)(3)

COPIED FROM NEARLY ILLEGIBLE ORIGINAL

SECRET

(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. Cowhig. The technical files on the "Ray" have been retained by this Office.

H. MARSHALL CHADWELL

Attachments

SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED SECRET
(SENDER WILL CIRCLE CLASSIFICATION AND BOTTOM)

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

TO		INITIALS	DATE
1	Assistant Director for Scientific Intelligence	HUC R-31	7 Jan
2			
3	Ex Reg for file	Zmc	1/2/53
4			
5			
FROM			DATE
1	Deputy Assistant Director for Operations		4 Jan 53
2			
3			

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

REMARKS: As per your request, we are returning all papers in relation to "Projecting Electronic Ray" and letter from Mr. Walter Cowhig to the DCI. As you know, [redacted] has already discussed this matter with Mr. Cowhig.

also returned to [redacted]

SECRET CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED UNCLASSIFIED

(b)(3)
(b)(6)

(b)(1))(3)
(b)(3))(1)

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ ~~RESTRICTED~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ~~SECRET~~
(SENDER WILL CIRCLE CLASSIFICATION TOP AND BOTTOM)

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

TO		INITIALS	DATE
1	AD/Scientific Intelligence	<i>[Handwritten initials]</i>	23 Dec
2	Deputy Director/Intelligence	<i>[Handwritten initials]</i>	26 Dec
3	Assistant to the Director	<i>[Handwritten initials]</i>	
4	Assistant Director/O		
5	AD/SI		
FROM		INITIALS	DATE
1	Ass't to the Director	REL/z	12/15/52
2			
3			

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

REMARKS: Please return all papers together with your recommendation. I have talked with -- nothing to be added from that quarter.

→ *over* R. E. Long

~~SECRET~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ~~RESTRICTED~~ UNCLASSIFIED

(b)(3)

Bob: This is forwarded
for the record only since
I have just learned that
[redacted]
[redacted]
has already taken care
of the request. [redacted]

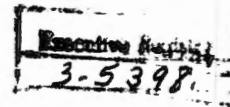


(b)(3)

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

(b)(3)



Cowhig Industries

899 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON 18, MASS.

TEL., KENMORE 6-8833

December 13, 1952

General W. B. Smith,
Central Intelligence Agency,
2430 E Street N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear General Smith;

On December 11th I visited your office where the receptionists turned me over to your [redacted] who asked me to write this letter rather than wait for the information I am seeking. I showed [redacted] a copy of a letter addressed to Hon. Wells Blodgett Priest, Hackettstown, N.J. dated January 20, 1951 as written by Warner Stutler, Authorized Contracting Officer, wherein a letter from General Smith to Judge Priest was referred to. That letter was dated 12-12-50 on the subject of "Projecting Electronic Ray"

(b)(3)

(b)(3)

The inventor of the "Projecting Electronic Ray" Mr. William Marchant, Woburn, Mass., has asked me to join him in the manufacture of the 'ray' for industrial applications but before I invest any substantial sums of money I must ask your assistance as being the only source of verifying statements made by Mr. Marchant.

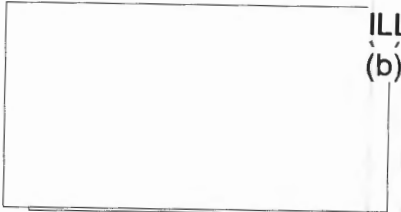
21
4
Mr. Marchant states that he has had four contracts with government agencies, the first with Army Ordnance, Contract Word-259 dated April 30, 1936, a secret contract between the United States of America and Marchant Assoc., Inc., for design and construction of Projector T-1. The cover sheet of the contract states 'Amount - \$ 3,000,000.00. I would want to be permitted to read the contracts that follow this contract for many reasons and probably the most important reason is that Mr. Marchant claims that he, in all the contracts, retained the right to manufacture the 'ray' for industrial uses and that there were no liens by the government, and further that application for Letters Patent were made in his name but kept secret at that time for security purposes.

The letter of January 20th referred to above states that the agreement regarding security was abrogated by that letter. Would you therefore advise me whether you are free to let me read the file on the subject so that I may learn where, in what other government departments there is a technical file that has evaluated the 'ray'.

Very truly yours,
COWHIG INDUSTRIES

Walter W. Cowhig
Walter W. Cowhig, Gen. Mgr.

JAN 20 1951



ILLEGIB
(b)(3)

Honorable W. Hodgett Priest
Deer Crossing Farm
Hackensack, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Priest:

This Agency wants to thank you for cooperating with its people who have looked into the promise of the "Projecting Electronic Ray", which was the subject of the letter from General W. B. Smith to you of 12 December 1950. General Smith has reported to the President that essentially the same idea had been brought to the attention of several government agencies by the inventor during the period of 1936 to 1942; that at that time it was appraised by the appropriate parts of the government and found to be infeasible and of no interest. This Agency concurs with those findings.

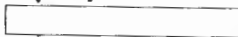
We are returning to you herewith all of the papers which you and Dr. Marchant have made available to us. Will you please sign the enclosed receipt and send it to the address given above.

Because of the outcome of our investigation, the agreement regarding security handling signed by you and me dated 21 December 1950 is abrogated.

We are disappointed at the outcome of this appraisal because such an electronic ray, if effective, would be of great interest and use to this country.

Very truly yours,

151



Authorized Contracting Officer

(b)(3)

Encl: 6

1. Draft ltr to CO, Watertown Arsenal from A. W. Marchant dated June 1946 (7 pages).
2. Formulas for making up Tube Filaments (1 page).
3. Tube Filaments (1 page).
4. Ray Tube Circuits (2 pages).
5. Apparent Principles of the Ray Working (1 page).
6. Drawing by A. W. Marchant, Sept. 25, 1950 (1).

Distribution:

- Contracting Officer
- CO/C
- AD/SI ✓
- General Counsel



02151

ILLEGIB
(b)(3)

UNCLASSIFIED Approved for Release: 2018/10/24 C02194749 SECRET
 (SENDER WILL CIRCLE CLASSIFICATION AND BOTTOM)

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
 OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

TO		INITIALS	DATE
1	AD/SI	<i>am</i>	3 Jan 51
2	Central Records		
3			
4			
5			
FROM		INITIALS	DATE
1	Assistant to the Director	<i>JOS</i>	2 Jan 51
2			
3			

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

REMARKS: MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

The information contained in attached correspondence was given verbally to the President by the DCI on 29 December 1950

J. S. Earman

SECRET CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED UNCLASSIFIED

FORM NO. 30-4
 SEP 1947

(b)(6)
 (b)(6)

~~SECRET~~

one copy

AD/OSI

26 December 1950

Chief, P&E Division

Projecting Electronic Ray

Ref. (a): Memorandum to AD/OSI, 18 Dec 50, subject as above

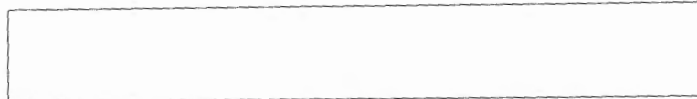
1. In furtherance of investigations of the Projecting Electronic Ray, and in accord with the instructions received in the office of the Director on 20 Dec 50, a second conference was held on Mr. Priest's farm in Hackettstown, New Jersey on 21 December. The information obtained and my observations and conclusions are reported below. They are summarized in a draft of a memorandum for the Director's signature to the President, enclosed.

2. The conference was attended by:

a. Primata Research and Development Company:

Mr. W. Elodgett Priest
Mr. Arthur W. Marchant
Mr. Percy Landolt
Mr. Thomas Brundie

b. CIA:



3. In order to meet the conditions stipulated by Messrs. Priest and Marchant, as stated in paragraph 4 of reference (a), an agreement drafted by the legal counselor of CIA was duly signed and witnessed. One copy of this agreement is enclosed for CIA files, one copy was left with Mr. Priest.

4. The basic principle of the Projecting Electronic Ray was disclosed by Mr. Marchant along with a description of the equipment, design and operational aspects and results of tests claimed to have been obtained with a prototype model by Mr. Marchant in the early '30's. The description was based on a drawing prepared by Mr. Marchant on 25 September 1950 from the notes covering his work during the period 1931-34 and supplemented by (a) copy of Marchant's letter to the commanding officer of Watertown Arsenal, Watertown, Massachusetts, of June 1936 (seven pages), and (b) a set of typed notes pertaining to "critical items and specific formulae" of the projector (five pages). The drawing and twelve pages of typed material were obtained by me on a loan basis against a receipt signed by me on behalf of the Agency.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)~~SECRET~~

5. I must admit that I failed to understand the operational claims for the Projecting Electronic Ray, as outlined by Mr. Marchant, and his description of the principle and design details of the equipment. The analysis of these, however, lead me to believe that:

a. The equipment as revealed to me is incapable of producing and maintaining electronic radiation of the kind required for the claimed performance of a prototype equipment built by Mr. Marchant and his associates.

b. Neither Mr. Marchant nor any of his associates have shown the basic understanding of the functional capabilities or usefulness of the individual elements of the "projector" as outlined to me by Mr. Marchant.

c. The "projector" is, in effect, an uncritical attempt to combine several conventional and well-known electronics principles and equipments in the hope that powerful radiation might result and with expectation that sufficient interest might be produced within the governmental circles to furnish Mr. Marchant and his associates with sufficient funds to undertake a basic study of the project.

6. The examination of the material supplied by Mr. Marchant and obtained by me on a loan basis shows that the basic idea for the Projecting Ray was a subject of a secret contract between Mr. Marchant and the United States Army Ordnance issued by the Chief of Ordnance to Marchant and Associates, Inc., in 1936 under Ordnance Contract W-ord-259. An inspection of the contract files reveals that the contract was issued on May 9, 1936, and was cancelled on October 8, 1937, due to the failure of Mr. Marchant and his associates to supply the necessary information and services as stipulated by the contract. The matter of the contract and of Mr. Marchant's claims were reviewed by the Chief of Ordnance, U.S. Army, in 1938, upon instigation of Mr. James Roosevelt and in 1939 as a result of a direct inquiry originated by Senator H. O. Lodge, Jr. In 1940 the matter was reopened by a proposal of a William F. Mahor to modify the basic idea and equipments for use as an airplane detector capable of 200 miles range. In all cases the Army Ordnance review resulted in negative recommendation.

7. Thus far no definite proof of any tests of the projector or of any result of such have been supplied or found in support of Mr. Marchant's claims. It has been ascertained that there appeared an article in a Sunday issue of one of Boston's newspapers published in 1935, which describes the results of some tests with a prototype model as reported by Mr. Marchant to a newspaper correspondent.

_____ has been requested to obtain and forward to us a copy of this article for information and file. It is doubtful, however, whether the article can be used as a positive proof of Mr. Marchant's claims.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)
(b)(1)
(b)(3)

✓ The contract and all material pertaining to it was downgraded to "unclassified" on 30 July 1947.

SECRET

8. In an attempt to verify my opinion of the basic technical principles of the Ray producing equipment, and of Mr. Marchant's claims, I discussed the available information and material with Mr. Robertson, WFOG, Mr. R. L. Clark and several members of OSI. The results of these discussions were as follows:

a. There is no indication that the equipment is capable of meeting any of the claims of Mr. Marchant and his associates.

b. There exists no reason for any further action by CIA.

c. If the investigations so far made by CIA cannot be terminated, the project should be transferred to the National Inventors Council for a thorough technical review, inspection, and judgment.



(b)(3)

TMO:mek
Encl.

- (a) Draft of memo from the DCI to the President
- (b) Copy of agreement between CIA and Mr. Priest
- (c) One drawing
- (d) 12 pages of typed material

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

Assistant Director for Scientific Intelligence

18 December 1950

Chief, Physics and Electronics Division

Projecting Electronic Ray

1. In accordance with your request, I visited Mr. W. E. Priest on 16 December 1950 at his farm in Hackettstown, N. J. I was accompanied by [redacted], who handled the preliminary investigations and arrangements for the visit.

2. No specific technical information on the Projecting Ray, its principle of operation or its potentialities were made available to me at this meeting, as Mr. A. Marchant, who is claimed to be the originator of the Ray, and who is working on the technical design of the pertinent equipment, was not present.

3. The discussions with Mr. Priest and his assistant left me with the following observations and impressions:

a. The Projecting Electronic Ray at this stage is a promotional project, the purpose of which is to obtain adequate funds from the U. S. Government for research, development and design of an equipment "capable of delivering powerful electronic energy to a distance in excess of a few hundred yards to cut trees, minerals, and metals, and to destroy life" by conversion of a sharply tuned electronic ray into heat.

b. No factual information on technical principles or details of producing the Ray is known to Mr. Priest, and his activities are guided by the potentialities of the Ray as derived from his belief that Mr. Marchant is capable of producing such Ray and from the claimed fact that a prototype of the Ray-producing equipment, as built by Mr. Marchant, was used as a glass and metal cutting tool and was destroyed by Mr. Marchant when he recognized the full significance of the potentialities of the Ray.

c. In this promotional project, Mr. Priest has a vested interest derived from his support to the project by the exploitation of his intimate contacts with the high authorities in Washington. The key technical factor is, however, Mr. Marchant. It is apparent that he is reasonably cautious in sharing his ideas on the Electronic Ray, and any attempt to formulate an opinion on the feasibility of production and potentialities of the Ray must involve direct contact with him.

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4. A direct contact with Mr. Marchant is predicated on the following conditions, as stipulated by Mr. Marchant and stated to me by Mr. Priest:

a. Positive assurances must be given to Mr. Marchant that his ideas and principles, as these pertain to the Electronic Ray, will be duly protected and no attempt to exploit them be made by the government without his concurrence and approval.

b. Due credit will be given to Mr. Marchant for his ideas if any use of his ideas and principles are made by the government.

c. All negotiation for such uses will be made through the Primalta Research and Development Company.

5. Provided that the above conditions are met, Mr. Marchant is anxious to meet with the U.S. Government representatives as soon as feasible, preferably by Wednesday, 20 December 1950.

6. My personal opinion and recommendations are as follows:

as indicated
a. The general pattern of the Projecting Electronic Ray developments so far induces me to think that there is nothing revolutionary in it, and that it is in effect nothing but an outright promotional scheme.

b. But for the fact that the President and his personal friend are involved, I would recommend that we drop our participation in the project.

c. In view of the manner in which we have been involved in the project, however, I would recommend that the investigations be continued and that a duly authorized representative or representatives of the government be instructed to contact Mr. Marchant.

d. In view of the specific requests for assurances contained in paragraph 4 above, I recommend that the Director's opinion be obtained on the advisability of transferring the responsibility for contacts with Mr. Marchant to RDB or other suitable organizations, or the advisability of requesting participation and support from such organizations to CIA in further investigations.

e. If this cannot be done forthwith, I recommend that the CIA be directed to request a postponement of a visit to Mr. Marchant from this week, as recommended by Mr. Priest, to a more suitable time.

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Assistant Director for Scientific
Intelligence
Assistant Director for Operations

DEC 11 1950

Primalta Research and Development Company,
Hackettstown, New Jersey

1. The attached report contains all of the information that the Contact Division of this Office was able to obtain through discreet local inquiries on the Primalta Research and Development Company and the individuals associated with it. This report is submitted in response to your informal request to Mr. Osborn of the Contact Division on Friday, 8 December 1950.

2. This Office will be happy to take whatever further action you consider desirable to support your report to the DCI on this matter. Based on the limited information we have been able to obtain in the relatively short time allotted, it would appear that Mr. Priest may be the innocent victim of opportunism in the persons of Dr. Gardner and Mr. Marchant.

GEORGE G. CAREY

Attachment: As stated above

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Report on request by AD/OSI for information as to background and general reputation of following individuals:

1. Mr. Arthur Marchant
Woburn, Massachusetts
2. Mr. Wells Priest
Deer Crossing Farm
Hackensack, New Jersey
Primalta Research and Development Corp.
3. Dr. Daniel Gardner
4. Percy Landolt

1. Mr. Marchant

Address, 44 Warren Avenue, Woburn, Massachusetts. Is about 60 years of age and has wife and two daughters. He is unknown in scientific circles in Boston and is not listed in New England roster of professional engineers.

He has a reputation as an eccentric inventor and some years ago the Boston Globe carried a feature article describing his invention of a powerful "death ray". He lives in respectable section of Woburn and is generally thought of as a quiet, stable individual.

2. Mr. Wells Priest

Has lived in the Hackensack area for over ten years, came from St. Louis, Missouri, where he was reputed to have been a lawyer and a judge of some court there. He is between 60 and 65 years old, married to a former Miss Cox (now 32-33 years old) of Budd Lake, New Jersey. None of our informants know of the Primalta Research and Development Company as such, however, his minister knows that he is in the process of organizing a research laboratory and is doing some type of confidential work. There is a Dr. Daniel Gardner working with him but nothing is known about him or his background.

Priest has boasted of his gold mining interests out west (U.S.), has real estate deals around St. Louis and his contacts with high officials in Washington. The minister saw a letter addressed to Priest from President Truman that was of a social nature. Priest claims intimate friendship with General Yaghn, Aide to the President. He claims to have been a Vice President of the Third Avenue Transit System in New York City and also to be a relative of Congressman Priest of Tennessee.

He lives on Allamuchy Road about one mile outside of Hackensack in a large (8 to 10 rooms), well kept house, has frequent visitors from New York State, travels to New York City about once a week, appears well off financially, ap-

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parently retired and living on returns from investments, has started several business ventures in Hackettstown area, such as raising chickens, without any apparent success. His neighbor considers him intelligent, a good secure citizen and an emotionally stable individual who has had only minor illnesses during the past ten years. During World War II, he was a member of the local draft board. None of the three informants had anything adverse to say about Priest and all felt he was a "normal" individual who was prone to boast a little.

Priest apparently has two associates in his new X Company. Dr. Daniel Gardner and a Thomas Brunco, who lives at the Priest's home. Our informants were unable to supply us with details on either Gardner or Brunco.

Records of Port Intelligence Officer, New York Port of Embarkation, dated 20 December 1941, indicate that Priest has an ID Number 197619 assigned. This is presumed to have been for loyalty check purposes possibly for overseas movement. This communication further classifies Priest as a boiler maker with home address at that date as Hackettstown, New Jersey. No indication of completed investigation appears from records seen. No information is available on Primalta Research and Development Company.

3. Dr. Daniel Gardner

Born in USSR on March 15, 1878
 Professor Metallurgy and Chemistry in St. Petersburg, Russia from 1911 to 1914.
 From 1914 to 1925 taught chemistry in London - University unknown.
 1925 to 1940 with Sarbonne in Paris
 In 1940 to Columbia, S.A., entered U.S. at various times, but first entry in 13 May 1944 from Barranquilla, Colombia

Has written FBI many times on "hot leads" - in 1943 wrote that he was in touch with a Russian by the name of Gabrielovich who had just arrived in this country and who had an invention that could kill mice at 50 yards by death ray.

Was involved at one time in a tantalum mine in Canada which turned out to be a swindle. No firm evidence that he was directly implicated.

First army records indicate that Daniel Gardner has aliases, i.e., Daniel Gardener and it is believed that the FBI will have further file on this individual. Gardener alias Gardner is considered to be a Chemist.

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4. Peru Landolt

Nothing available.

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