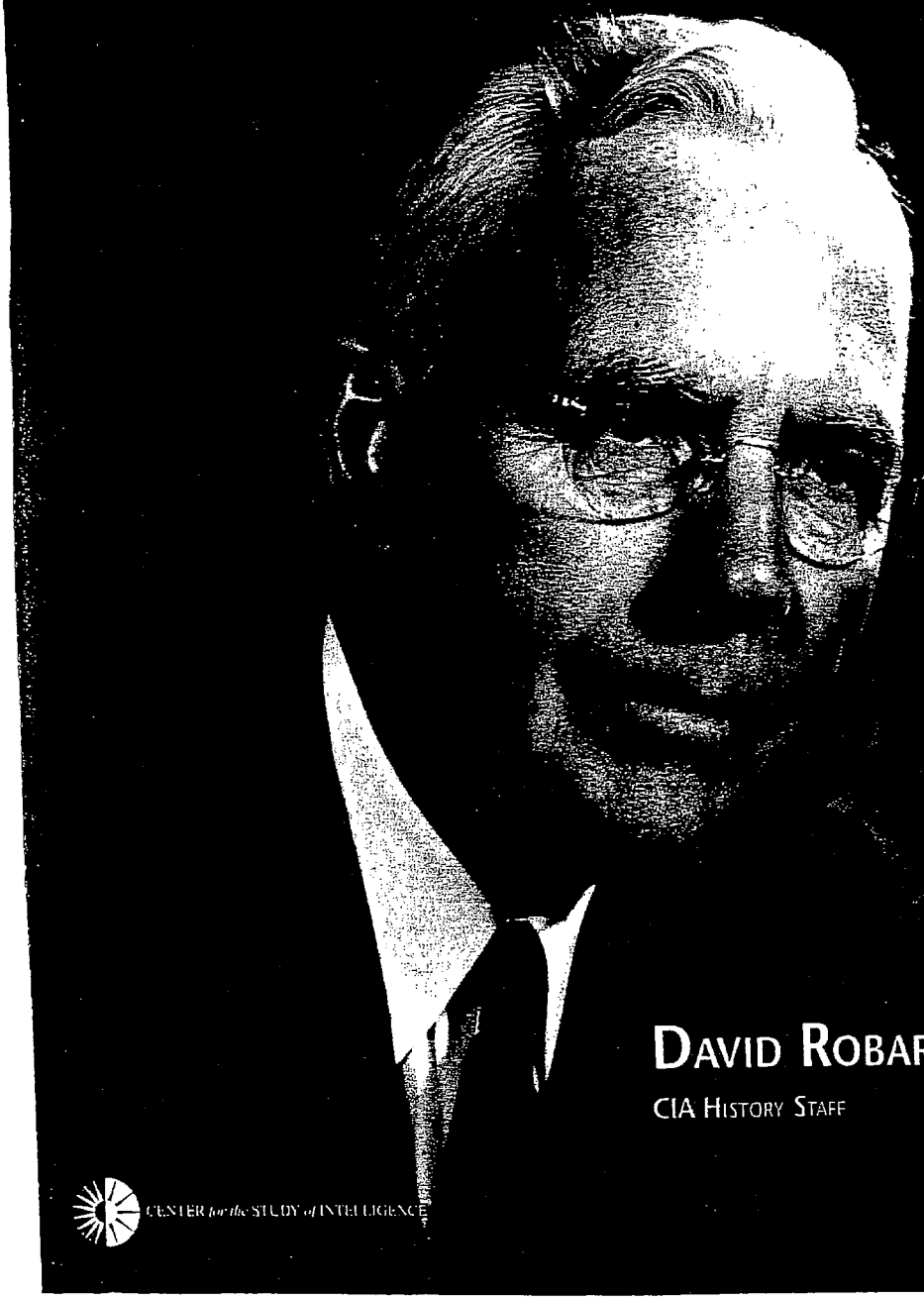
John McCone

As Director of Central Intelligence 1961–1965



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PART 2 OF 2

CHAPTER

10

Confronting the Main Adversaries (I): The Soviet Union (U)

CIA was created in 1947 as the Cold War began, principally to provide US leaders with strategic warning of hostile attack. Commentators have given prominence to the CIA's covert action roles, but the Agency's main mission during the first 15 years of East-West conflict was to deploy collection and analytic assets to detect and preempt a nuclear Pearl Harbor. No other intelligence topic had greater implications for US survival than Soviet strategic weapons: what kind and how many did Moscow have and how did it intend to use them? The link between intelligence and policy was never clearer or more significant than on these questions. Through the U-2 program, CIA succeeded in the late 1950s in dispelling fears of a "bomber gap" and a crash Soviet nuclear weapons program. (U)

By 1960, however, renewed fear that the Soviet Union would surpass the United States in strategic weaponry—the "missile gap"—and was winning the ideological battle for the Third World helped John F. Kennedy win the presidency. Kennedy was a committed cold warrior, and throughout his brief but eventful administration, he believed the Soviet Union and, to a lesser degree, the People's Republic of China were causing most of the world's instability. During his election campaign he said, "[t]he enemy is the Communist system itself—implacable, unceasing in its drive for world domination." In the speech he planned to give the day he was killed, he described the United States as the "watchman on the walls of world freedom," charged with blunting "the ambitions of international Communism." That adversary was monolithic and expansionist, fed on economic misery and political and social turmoil, and could only be contained through decisive displays of toughness in diplomacy, military action, and intelligence activity.[1] (U)

Discerning Soviet Objectives: CIA Collection and Analysis in the Early 1960s (U)

The clandestine and analytical resources of John McCone's CIA were mobilized in this crisis atmosphere to attack the worldwide communist target—especially the Soviet bloc. Between mid-1963 and mid-1965, approximately [redacted] of the personnel in the DDP were in the Soviet Russia (SR) and Eastern Europe Divisions; nearly [redacted] were running or supporting operations against Iron Curtain countries. Officers in all regional and functional divisions and the CA and CI Staffs spent large parts of their time working against the Soviet Union and its satellites. Overall, nearly [redacted] of the DDP's personnel in the early 1960s was dedicated to the Soviet target directly, and approximately [redacted] worked on Soviet satellite countries (including Cuba), local communist parties, and other Soviet-related targets. Additionally, CIA's clandestine technological capabilities were deployed overwhelmingly against the Soviet Union. During FY 1964, for example, 18 successful CORONA satellite missions covered over [redacted] miles of that country.[2] ~~(S//NF)~~

On the analytical side, resource allocations during the McCone period are harder to determine because major components of the DI were organized largely along functional, not geographic, lines. For example, in 1965 NPIC, the largest DI component, had [redacted] people distributed among numerous functional components; on average, about [redacted] them worked exclusively on the Soviet bloc target at any given time in the early 1960s. Other DI offices—[redacted]—had the same organizational ambiguity. The latter, for example, had [redacted] on the Soviet Union and Eastern

[1] Kennedy speech in Salt Lake City, 23 September 1960, quoted in Richard J. Walton, *Cold War and Counterrevolution*, 9; *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1963*, 890–98. (U)

[2] *Annual Report for FY 1964*, 31 and tables following 4, and *Annual Report of the Central Intelligence Agency (for Fiscal Year 1965)*, 30 September 1965, tables following 1, ER Files, Job 86B00269R, box 7; DDP staffing charts for 1962–65 in Office of Personnel Files, Job 82-00469R, box 2, folders 1 and 2; Helms memorandum to Executive Director, "Fiscal Year 1964 Foreign Intelligence Plans and Programs," 9 May 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 25. During McCone's directorship, [redacted]

Europe, but an undetermined number of its officers at times also dealt with Soviet issues. The situations in ONE and OCI, in contrast, are much clearer. Those offices had branches devoted to Soviet and Bloc affairs, representing percent of their personnel respectively. The second-largest DI component, ORR, had the highest proportion of staff working on the Soviet target. There, of its military and economic analysts covered Iron Curtain countries. Directorate-wide, the proportion of DI people dealing with Soviet-related issues as of mid-1965 was around

ORR did the bulk of the Intelligence Community's military cost analysis during McCone's years at CIA because the new DIA was not yet equipped to do so, but the effort stretched the office very thin. In October 1964, the Pentagon asked the Agency to provide detailed estimates of enemy forces and capabilities, a job DIA still lacked the resources to produce. ORR accordingly undertook comprehensive studies of the effect various scenarios of military expenditures would have on Soviet long-term growth. Concerned about duplication and conflict, McCone and Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus Vance agreed in early 1965 that "studies relating to cost and resource impact of foreign military and space programs...should be more centrally directed, monitored, and evaluated" by CIA. Subsequently, ORR received a hefty increase in staffing.[4] (U)

Spying on the Enemy (U)

DDP's SR Division underwent major changes during McCone's leadership. The need for the overhaul, instituted during 1963–64 by a new division chief, David Murphy (appointed in August 1963), was evident when McCone became DCI. The HUMINT programs then being emphasized— were not producing the quality or quantity of intelligence needed to satisfy policymakers' requirements about Soviet strategic capabilities and intentions. On the other hand, CIA's premier Soviet agents of this period, Pyotr Popov and Oleg Penkovskiy, had shown what valuable intelligence could be acquired from Soviet citizens who were willing to serve as "in place" assets. Consequently, the acquisition of such sources—particularly those stationed in foreign countries, where they were more accessible—became the priority for CIA's Soviet operations during McCone's later years and after. SR Division was rearranged from geographical to functional lines, and the focus of Agency espionage shifted from the Soviet Union proper to the "external" Soviet target worldwide.

[4] "Coordination and Exploitation of East-West Exchange Program," 25 July 1963, DCI Files, Job 86T00268, box 2, folder 12. (S/

To compensate for the limitations on positive intelligence, McCone tried to improve the community's early warning mechanism by authorizing changes in how the USIB Watch Committee and National Indications Center (NIC) functioned. The new procedures, published in 1962,

responded to a PFIAB suggestion. They included adding personnel to the NIC, establishing a formal link with DIA's Current Intelligence Indications Center to avoid confusion and overlap, and placing the Watch Committee under the direction of the DDCI to improve its responsiveness. In 1963, after the Cuban missile crisis, McCone directed that information about imminent hostilities with the Soviet Union—already reported in the CRITIC (critical intelligence) system—be made available to "responsible action officials in Washington" within 10 minutes. Improving the indications and warning process could only go so far, however, as McCone warned PFIAB. The community still had to rely on "indirect and inferential techniques" for evaluating signs of "abnormal Soviet behavior." For the foreseeable future, policymakers had to settle for warning judgments based on "less than complete information and...less than full proof of Soviet intentions."[10] ~~(S)~~

The Acme of Analysis: The Soviet Estimate (U)

All-source intelligence on the Soviet Union in the early 1960s was incorporated into a small library of DI-produced analytical publications. McCone regularly read the most important of these and often asked OCI to prepare special memoranda about Soviet developments. He also was apprised of the judgments of major ORR studies on the Soviet economy and military spending. As chairman of USIB, he oversaw the community's analytic effort and was deeply involved in the preparation of NIEs and SNIEs of the Soviet military, politics, and economy. McCone's close engagement with the estimative process—and in particular, on the Soviet Union—put him in the center of an enterprise steeped in intellectualism and politics. As CIA historian Donald Steury has noted:

> the place occupied by national intelligence estimating at the pinnacle of the intelligence process virtually guaranteed that the estimates were prepared in an atmosphere charged with political energy.... NIEs existed at the intersection of analysis, strategy, politics, and (perhaps, most important) military procurement. At this level, a single fact or piece of intelligence could have profound implications for the bureaucratic and resource interests of some institution of the federal polity.... Nowhere was the tension and complexity of the estimative process more pronounced than in strategic forces analysis.[11] ~~(S)~~

Of all the publications that came out of CIA and USIB in McCone's day, none were more fraught with political and economic implications than Soviet estimates. McCone participated in the drafting and adjudication of these assessments more than most DCIs before or since because he combined technical expertise with an intellect that thought in strategic terms. He was at bottom an empiricist who almost always sided with his analysts if their case was persuasive. McCone's attentiveness to the content of these products is well conveyed in a recollection of a former DDI and officer in ONE, R. Jack Smith:

> In Allen Dulles's time I had waited with six or eight other officers long hours in his anteroom to discuss our latest estimate, only to find that he had not read it and had only the faintest interest in it.... Our reception by John McCone could not have stood in greater contrast. At four o'clock precisely, he walked into the director's conference room with our estimate in his hand. "I have read your paper," he said, "and I have just three points I want to discuss." These three points proved to be the key judgments we had made about the state of the Soviet economy, our view that the Soviet leaders would be guided by caution rather than reckless adventurism, and the numbers we had estimated for one new weapons system. These three points were the very heart of the Soviet estimate. McCone did not oppose them out of hand, but he wanted to be convinced that we had solid data and supporting arguments to buttress our judgment. The discussion was thorough and searching, but after thirty minutes or so the new director pronounced himself satisfied. At no time had he shown any discernible bias. What he brought to bear was a judicious skepticism. We left the session relieved and delighted.[12] (U)

The community produced more estimates on the Soviet Union during the McCone years—one quarter of the

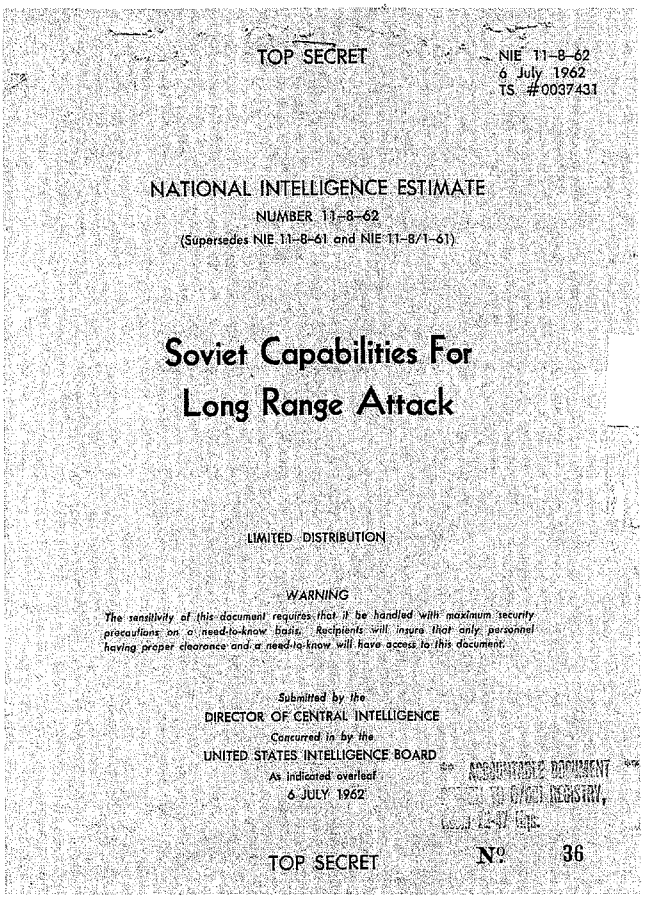
[10] McCone memorandum to Killian, "The Watch Committee of the United States Intelligence Board and the National Indications Center," 30 April 1962, with attachments, CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 12, folder 234; DCID No. 7/1, "Handling of Critical Intelligence," 25 July 1963, DCI Files, Job 86T00268, box 2, folder 12. This directive defined critical intelligence as "information indicating a situation or pertaining to a situation which affects the security or interests of the United States to such an extent that it may require the immediate attention of the President." ~~(S)~~

[11] [redacted] 64–67, 133–37; [redacted] 37–38; *Intentions and Capabilities*, xviii. ~~(S)~~

[12] Smith, *The Unknown CIA*, 150–51. (U)

total—than on any other country. This output included comprehensive annual assessments on atomic energy, air and missile defense, military capabilities and policies, strategic weapons, and general purpose forces, as well as periodic estimates on foreign policy, outer space, political and economic problems, science and technology, and Soviet objectives and intentions in specific countries or regions. In addition, USIB occasionally issued SNIEs or "Memoranda to Holders" if breaking developments or new intelligence called for an off-schedule update to a published estimate. McCone at times ordered USIB committees or panels of consultants to prepare special studies on Soviet weapons, and, in the case of air defense and antiballistic missile systems, he initiated a new NIE series on a subject to which policymakers were increasingly attentive. As an important supplement to the intelligence available to ONE, during the Cuban missile crisis and after, McCone gained for CIA access to top secret Pentagon strategic planning documents. He believed that, as DCI, he needed to be informed of US strategic capabilities to put intelligence about Soviet military activities in context.[13]

During McCone's tenure, ONE institutionalized two important changes in its analytical approach to Soviet military NIEs. Previously ONE had concentrated on estimating force levels, but a RAND Corporation study conducted before McCone's appointment had criticized the assessments for not treating Soviet strategic forces as an integrated system, and for not discussing them as an element of Soviet global strategy. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara told McCone that community estimates were not very useful to "action officials" and that he "got very little" from them. A new outline for Soviet military estimates, adopted in 1961, therefore took a "systems approach" compatible with the quantification-heavy concepts used in McNamara's Pentagon. The outline also called for five- to ten-year projections of Soviet military strategy, considerations of likely policy alternatives facing the Kremlin, and analyses of Soviet military expenditures with a more inclusive study of their place in the Soviet Union's political economy. These assessments



TOP SECRET

NIE 11-8-62
6 July 1962
TS #0037431

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

NUMBER 11-8-62

(Supersedes NIE 11-8-61 and NIE 11-8/1-61)

Soviet Capabilities For Long Range Attack

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Submitted by the
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
Concurred in by the
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD
As indicated overleaf
6 JULY 1962

TOP SECRET

No. 36

The first estimate of Soviet strategic forces published while McCone was DCI (U)

were incorporated into the "Intelligence Assumptions for Planning" that the secretary of defense and the Pentagon used in developing resource allocations for several years ahead. The estimates that McCone reviewed and released as USIB chairman incorporated these themes.[14]

The other change had wide-ranging implications for McCone's role as DCI, for Intelligence Community relations, and, most importantly, for national defense policy. ONE's estimators, eventually joined by counterparts in the

[13] Lay, vol. 4, 522–23, 533, 546–50; Price, 41.

[14] "The Development of Strategic Research at CIA, 1947–1967," History Staff unpublished manuscript No. MISC-10 (April 1973), 271–73, 275–76; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record: Discussion with Secretary McNamara…December 4, 1961," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 1; 35–36; *Annual Report for FY 1964*, 66; *Annual Report for FY 1965*, 70. Much of the longer term, quantitative projecting was done by the new Joint Analysis Group (JAG), set up in 1962 with McCone's and McNamara's assent. With members from DIA and CIA (including an officer from ONE), the JAG produced the National Intelligence Projections for Planning (NIPPs), extremely detailed 10-year projections of Soviet (and later, Chinese) forces. The Pentagon used those studies for planning US weapons and personnel requirements. According to one scholar of strategic estimates, intelligence professionals did not regard those products highly. McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, ER 62-1182/1, 26 April 1962, McCone Papers, box 1, folder 14; Lawrence Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, 2nd ed., 44–45; 36; "The Development of Strategic Research at CIA," 286–89, 302–9.

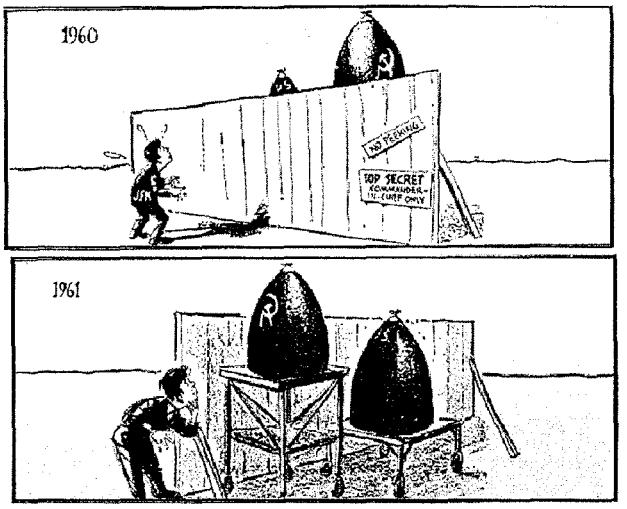
Army and Navy (but not the Air Force), shifted from a "worst case" perspective on what the Soviet arsenal could contain to a "most likely" judgment derived from information about actual production rates and ORR's costing analyses. The new methodology led to a different bottom line, reflected in the first Soviet strategic forces estimate of McCone's directorship (NIE 11-8-62, "Soviet Capabilities For Long Range Attack") in July 1962. The new NIE argued that Moscow had not embarked on a crash program that put all its resources into big-payload ICBMs, but instead was developing various sizes and kinds of strategic weapons at a more deliberate pace. The thrust of the estimate's basic judgments was that over the next five years Soviet strategic forces would grow at a slower rate than that of the United States. In short, US strategic superiority would *increase* during the period the NIE covered.[15] (S)

President Kennedy asked that a committee of senior intelligence, foreign policy, and defense officials evaluate the policy implications of this less threatening forecast. Sherman Kent represented CIA; his counterparts were U. Alexis Johnson and Charles Bohlen from the Department of State and Paul Nitze from the Department of Defense. Their report, which McCone, Rusk, McNamara, and JCS Chairman Lemnitzer signed and sent to the White House in late August, concluded that the lowered estimate of Soviet strategic forces did not call for basic changes in US national security policy. Even though the Soviet Union would be more threatening in absolute terms, its leaders would base their actions on their relative inferiority. Behind the rhetoric of "peaceful coexistence," they would continue to test Western resolve and probe for weaknesses, but they would not abandon caution except perhaps if they thought they had obtained a temporary military superiority. This special review reaffirmed the administration's approach and did not contribute to any departures. Nevertheless, it was one of the clearest examples of the nexus between intelligence and policy during McCone's directorship.[16] (U)

The disappearance of the missile gap led to unintended consequences McCone had to address. The sudden swing from strategic inferiority to superiority, he told PFIAB, might produce a sense of complacency in the minds of the American public and its politicians—a sentiment that he regarded as "wrong and dangerous" and that might result in sharp cuts in the national security budget. When briefing Congress, McCone observed, he not only had to highlight intelligence successes but also show what the US government did *not* know about the Soviet threat. He had to do this without sounding alarmist and without implying that the community was not doing its job or was just after more money.[17] (S)

The change in estimative methodology and the new judgments resulting from it forced McCone to confront one of the most serious and recurrent problems in the history of the community's strategic threat assessments: the differences between CIA and Air Force estimates of Moscow's strategic capabilities and intentions. These disagreements at times approached a schism and went well beyond the substance of

MISSILE GAP



A contemporary cartoon suggested the "missile gap" was a Soviet deception. (U)

[15] Harold P. Ford, *Estimative Intelligence: The Purposes and Problems of National Intelligence Estimating*, 227, 231; Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, 76–77; [redacted] "The Development of Strategic Research at CIA," 278, 283; [redacted] 206; NIE 11-8-62, "Soviet Capabilities for Long Range Attack," 6 July 1962, *Intentions and Capabilities*, 181–90. See also two ONE memoranda, "Changes in National Intelligence Estimates on Soviet Long-Range Striking Forces," 10 September 1962, and "Changes in National Intelligence Estimates on Soviet ICBM Forces," 21 February 1963, National Security Files, Box 298, Missile Gap 2/63–5/63 File, JFK Library, which explain why the estimates' projections differed from earlier ones. (S)

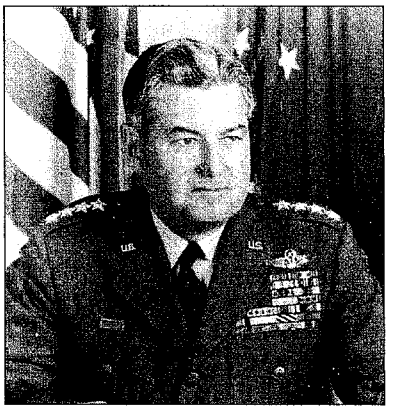
[16] Rusk, McNamara, McCone, and Lemnitzer memorandum to the president, "Report on Implications for US Foreign and Defense Policy of Recent Intelligence Estimates," 23 August 1962, with attached "Report of the Special Inter-Departmental Committee on the Implications of NIE 11-8-62 and Related Intelligence," in Raymond L. Garthoff, *Intelligence Assessment and Policymaking*, 37–53. (U)

[17] Kirkpatrick, "Memorandum for the Record: Meeting of the DCI with the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board...December 28, [1962]...," CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 8, folder 140. (S)

the intelligence and its analysis. The coincidence of national security, bureaucratic competition, budgetary imperatives, political pressures, and intelligence gaps, all existing in the context of an issue of (literally) earth-shaking magnitude, severely tested McCone's management of USIB. (U)

Prior to McCone's tenure, almost without exception, the Agency's estimates of the quantities of Soviet strategic weaponry and its projections of the rate of growth of the Soviet arsenal were lower than those of the Air Force. (Army and Navy estimates were closer to the Agency's.) Since the heyday of the "bomber gap" in the mid-1950s, the Air Force had advanced the most anxious assessments of Soviet strategic power of any service. It continued with similarly overstated projections well into the 1960s, despite intelligence from technical and human sources disproving the existence of a missile gap. Air Force Chief of Staff Curtis LeMay and SAC Commander Thomas Power were fervent proponents of the view that the Soviet Union would outstrip the United States in strategic weapons during the decade. Their service, concerned about the survivability of the US bomber and missile force, placed great emphasis on the role of missiles in the Cold War strategic balance. In general, the Air Force believed the combative rhetoric of Soviet leaders and concluded that if a suspect site in Soviet territory conceivably *could* build or house a missile, it *would* do so and must be factored into the projections. Consequently, contention between USIB member departments and the Air Force became more pronounced in the early 1960s. The service's USIB representative routinely dissented from the community's conclusions in the strategic force estimates and often took footnotes objecting to the consensus. In rebuttal, CIA analysts believed Air Force positions were "a matter of SAC policy more than an honest intelligence difference of judgment" and amounted to "propagandizing."[18] ~~(S)~~

Despite his misgivings about Soviet intentions, previous service in the Department of the Air Force, and political connections with California's aerospace contractors, McCone rejected the worst-case scenarios and insisted that estimates of the Soviet threat be based on what he called "measurables." While he was chairman of the AEC, his agency had agreed with the lower range of projections in Soviet weapons production, based on its estimate of how much fissile material the Soviet Union had. He was critical of civilian and military analysts when they ignored or misinterpreted evidence. Soon after becoming DCI, he privately rebuked both CIA and the Air Force for having promoted the missile gap theory, but he was most critical of the Air Force. He reportedly told the formidable Gen. LeMay that "Air Force Intelligence is the laughing stock of Washington." In late January 1962, he flew to SAC headquarters in Omaha to discuss the Air Force's views with Gen. Power. After hearing SAC and CIA representatives make their cases, McCone and Power agreed to have a team of experts from CIA, SAC, and DIA review all available data to come up with as reliable a list of Soviet strategic installations as possible.[19] ~~(S)~~



Curtis LeMay (U)

This attempt to resolve the differences failed. The Air Force took a footnote in NIE 11-8-62, arguing that the Soviet Union would build twice as many weapons by 1967 as projected in the estimate. In August 1962, McCone wrote to LeMay that he was "seriously shaken" to hear that the Air Force was accepting and acting on SAC figures that were even higher than those in the footnote. He noted that USIB had vetted SAC's prediction to the Hyland Panel, which had concluded it was unfounded.[20] After "a most exhaustive, impartial, and deep study of every scintilla of intelligence available to the community," a majority of USIB departments reached different judgments and projected lower

[18] Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, chaps. 4–6, 8; Ford, *Estimative Intelligence*, 229, 231–32; Laqueur, 150; Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, 66–67; Edgar M. Bottome, *The Missile Gap*, 118–19; "Closing the Missile Gap," in *Central Intelligence: Fifty Years of the CIA*, 125; "Memorandum for the Record...DCI's Briefing of President's Board...9 November 1962...," CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 8, folder 140. Some analysts in CIA's OSI were inclined to think as the Air Force did. Once they concluded that the Soviets were technically able to develop a weapon, they were reluctant to acknowledge that military, economic, or political considerations might prompt Moscow not to move ahead with it. "The Development of Strategic Research at CIA," 297. ~~(S)~~

[19] Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, 79; Price, 63 and n. 12; McCone calendars, entries for 22–23 January 1962; McCone letter to Killian, 5 February 1962, CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 122. A demonstration of the gravity with which the administration viewed the USIB-Air Force dispute was shown by the fact that McCone was accompanied on the trip by the president's military adviser, the director of DIA, and two representatives of PFIAB. Also along were three members of BNE and the heads of the DCI's committee examining the working of USIB and CIA, Lyman Kirkpatrick ~~(S)~~

appear before USIB to present their evidence. They declined the invitation.[21]

McCone never succeeded in gaining Air Force concurrence with a Soviet strategic forces estimate. The service continued taking footnotes, despite accumulating imagery that supported lower projections of Soviet strategic weapons production. In the last such assessment the DCI approved (a Memorandum to Holders in April 1965), the Air Force reduced its numbers somewhat in light of new photography, but there was no way McCone could have fully reconciled the USIB consensus with the Air Force position. LeMay was quoted in late 1964: "I have a very simple view. I think the Russians have more missiles than we have found yet, but the current estimate includes only the missile launchers that we have a picture of." The fundamental difference between McCone, CIA, and most USIB members on one side, and the Air Force (and, depending on the issue, occasionally the Army, DIA, or on the other, lay in their respective assessments about Moscow's strategic intentions. The first group believed that the Soviets' principal aim for the balance of the decade was to strengthen their strategic deterrent—to make their nuclear force strong enough that the United States would not dare launch a first strike. The second group judged that the Soviets would not be building up their nuclear force so intensively unless they were seeking parity and, ultimately, superiority through a "counterforce" strategy aimed at destroying US strategic capabilities.

Budgetary considerations and interservice rivalries were involved as well. The Air Force's assessments justified the weapons systems it wanted to build or expand, and sometimes its dissents undercut the procurement priorities of the other services. In contrast, CIA believed, the Army's and Navy's occasional divergences from the community consensus were based on "honest differences."[22]

The only noteworthy aspect of Soviet strategic estimates on which McCone and the Air Force agreed even temporarily concerned ABMs.[23] The first Soviet ABM facilities had been identified near Leningrad in 1961, and new intelligence indicated that the Soviets might be deploying an extensive ABM system in northwestern Russia. Concern about another "gap" soon seized some quarters of the Kennedy administration's national security apparat because Soviet ABMs would weaken the nuclear dominance of the United States. This alleged Soviet capability also had direct implications for arms control. McCone and other US officials used it as a rationale for resuming atmospheric tests; thus, the fate of test ban proposals then being discussed in both capitals might be determined if Moscow's reason for expanding its ABM system could be ascertained.[24]

The evidence indicating what the Soviets were doing was not definitive, however, and led to the guarded judgments of NIE 11-3-62, "Soviet Bloc Air and Missile Defense Capabilities Through Mid-1967," issued in October 1962. Further puzzlement was added when intelligence indicated that the Soviets were abandoning the Leningrad construction

[20] The Hyland Panel—also known as the Strategic Advisory Panel—was named for its chairman, Lawrence Hyland, a vice president of Hughes Aircraft. In keeping with its practice begun late in Allen Dulles's directorship, the panel met three times while McCone was DCI (in June 1962, September 1963, and August 1964) to review the yearly estimates on Soviet strategic forces. Some ORR and ONE analysts and the then-chief of OSI, Albert Wheelon, opposed McCone's use of the panel on the grounds that it could not absorb the tremendous amount of intelligence collected and comment knowledgeably on the estimate in the three days it allotted for itself. The DCI disagreed, believing that such groups of outside experts offered a useful check on community assessments vol. 6, appendix F.

Although it differed with the Air Force in the abovementioned instance, overall the Hyland Panel reached pessimistic conclusions about Moscow's strategic threat. In August 1964, for example, it described the Soviet weapons program as "alert, dynamic, [and] forward-going...with no slackening of pace" and "on a much more accelerated curve than the Free World." The Soviets were "engaged in an enormous effort to stop or seriously interfere with our overhead surveillance" and were "approaching an anti-satellite capability...that, when achieved, we will be blind." At the same time, the community was "somewhat complacent" in emphasizing the quantity of intelligence collected over its quality, while US policymakers were "not pushing an active [strategic weapons] program and kept looking for the ultimate weapon." The DCI told PFIAB in early 1965 that he shared the panel's fears. Carter memorandum about USIB-Hyland Panel meeting on 1 August 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 19, folder 9; Kirkpatrick memorandum about McCone-PFIAB meeting on 4 February 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 19, folder 382.

[21] LeMay letter to McCone, 16 August 1962, McCone Papers, box 5, folder 13; McCone letter to LeMay, 22 August 1962, ibid., box 1, folder 14; Lay, vol. 4, 525–33. The Pentagon from time to time questioned the objectivity of the USIB committees that reviewed and contributed to the drafting of the strategic NIEs. One senior Air Force officer (Gen. George Keegan) complained that McCone "stacked the deck" by appointing CIA officials to chair the committees. Price, 99.

[22] Lay, vol. 4, 537–45, vol. 6, 717–25; Kent memorandum to McCone, "Talking Notes for the Director...Service Parochial Interests as Revealed by Dissents to NIEs," 9 October 1964, McCone Papers, box 5, folder 5; Ford, *Estimative Intelligence*, 232–33; Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, 79; Bottome, 197–98; Desmond Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 68–78. By the end of the decade, the Air Force's numbers proved to be more accurate; see below.

[23] General sources used on the ABM issue are Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, 152–64; Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, chap. 5; Lindgren, 115–17; Price, 81, 89–90; Lay, vol. 4, 546–53, vol. 6, 730–37; and "The Development of Strategic Research at CIA," 384–86.

[24] McCone, "Memorandum of Meeting with the President...January 17, 1962...," and "Notes on NSC Meeting...February 27, [1962,] Called for Purpose of Discussing Nuclear Test Policy," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 1.

and building installations in Estonia—the so-called "Tallinn Line." By 1963, the community had become deeply divided over the issue. CIA, the Army, the Navy, and the Department of State maintained that the sites around Tallinn probably were for antiaircraft purposes and not part of an ABM network; they were too small and located in the wrong places to defend Moscow against incoming US warheads. The Air Force, backed by DIA, disagreed and argued that the new facilities were harbingers of an extensive ABM program. To clear up the ambiguities, McCone commissioned two studies—one by the USIB's Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence Committee, the other by an ad hoc panel of technical experts.

On the basis of his interpretation of the available intelligence and the findings of the panels, McCone initially sided with the Air Force and DIA. According to a CIA official involved in the debate, the DCI "felt strongly" about the Soviet Union's potential for building an ABM system. After listening to USIB members argue their positions, he directed that CIA's draft update of NIE 11-3-62, a Memorandum to Holders in November 1963, be "sharply modified." Community disagreement on the question persisted well into 1964, as additional imagery did not resolve the mystery of the Tallinn Line. By the time the next NIE in the series came out in December, McCone had stepped back from his conclusion of the year before. NIE 11-3-64, "Soviet Air and Missile Defense Capabilities Through Mid-1970," used CIA's more circumspect draft as its main text. As was almost always the case on other issues, the DCI had been argued out of a position on the basis of evidence—or in this case, the lack thereof. After McCone's departure, the community— —concluded that the Tallinn complex was intended for antiaircraft defense and was not an ABM system. The Air Force continued to argue, however, that it could be upgraded to defend against missiles.[25]

By the mid-1960s, the Intelligence Community had detected signs that Khrushchev's concentration of Soviet military resources on nuclear weapons development at the expense of conventional forces was producing a "radical change in the nature of the military establishment," in the words of an April 1965 NIE. "In the mid-fifties, Soviet military theorists concentrated heavily on large-scale campaigns in Europe; by the early sixties they were giving increased attention to the complex problems of intercontinental strategic exchange." US intelligence services may have differed over force counts and projections, but no member agencies denied that Soviet strategic capabilities were growing at a robust rate.[26] (U)

McCone did not let the estimates speak for themselves about what he termed Moscow's "dynamic military effort." He met with senior policymakers several times in the latter part of 1964 to press the point. In August, he notified cabinet-level officials that the Soviets had embarked "not on a crash program but [on] a consistently expanding one, despite public statements designed to mislead world opinion." This "dynamic expansion" encompassed testing new ICBM systems (the SS-9 and SS-10), expanding capacity to produce fissile material (including construction of more than a dozen new reactors), building new nuclear submarines and converting older models, and enlarging aircraft factories. In September, he warned Rusk that as Soviet delegates were discussing arms control in Geneva, intelligence showed that Moscow was testing new and larger missiles and building more hardened launchers for ICBMs and more radar sites. At the end of the year, McCone briefed President Johnson on the latest NIE 11-8. According to all-source intelligence, the Soviet Union's military program was "dynamic, progressive...not being cut back...sophisticated...[and] directed toward quality rather than quantity." That trend raised the prospect of "a breakthrough...which would redress the present balance of power," but, on the basis of available evidence, the community judged that the Soviet Union was not working toward a first-strike capability.[27]

Translated into policy, this assessment—which McCone conveyed in open congressional testimony in February 1965—justified the Johnson administration's decision to upgrade the quality of American strategic forces but not

[25] 89 and n. 51; Lay, vol. 4, 553–55 116; "Ferrets Above," 462–63.

[26] NIE 11-4-65, "Main Trends in Soviet Military Policy," 14 April 1965, *Intentions and Capabilities*, 163. (U)

[27] "Memorandum of Conversation...Recommended Content of a Joint Statement Relating to a Reduction of Military Expenditures...," 12 August 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XI, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 93–94; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Rusk...," 13 September 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 13; NIE 11-8-64, "Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack," November 1964, Gerald K. Haines and eds., *CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union, 1947–1991*, 142ff.; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President..." 12 December 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, The Soviet Union*, 201; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Briefing of President Johnson...December 28, 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 10; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with Senator Russell—7 January 1965," ibid., box 2, folder 15.

increase their number substantially. As McNamara stated in April 1965: "[T]he Soviets have decided that they have lost the quantitative race, and they are not seeking to engage us in that contest.... [T]here is no indication that the Soviets are seeking to develop a strategic nuclear force as large as ours." That was a serious miscalculation. After the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev had vowed that the Soviet Union would never again be put in a position in which the United States could force it into concessions because of its military inferiority, and a massive conventional and nuclear buildup began in the mid-1960s. The "collective leadership" that ousted Khrushchev in October 1964 accelerated the nuclear program so rapidly that by 1969, the Soviet Union had reversed the strategic imbalance of the early 1960s, overtaken the United States in ICBMs, developed a secure second-strike capability, and may have been pursuing the capacity to launch a first strike. The Intelligence Community recognized but consistently understated these developments in its estimates starting in mid-decade—largely owing to its overstatement of the Soviet strategic threat in previous years.[28] (U)

The Nuclear Test Ban Revisited (U)

The test ban issue provides one of the clearest examples of McCone's work at the intersection of intelligence and policy. As chairman of USIB, he oversaw the community's collection and analytical activities on the Soviet strategic program—including their research and development of new weapons; as a member of the Kennedy administration's Committee of Principals, he helped formulate US policy on arms control. A clash between intelligence objectivity and policy advocacy was always possible. McCone disagreed with the administration's judgment that the United States was better off with a test ban even if the Soviets cheated, and he rigorously opposed a treaty that could not be monitored. As he did at other times on other issues, McCone insinuated himself into the policy debate early in the Kennedy administration, after he left the AEC and was a private citizen with no official connection to the issue. According to his successor Glenn Seaborg, after McCone received a briefing in 1961 from John McCloy, the president's arms control adviser, he called Seaborg and said "he was very disturbed because throughout the discussion there was a kind of feeling that it wasn't important to do any testing. He said that if the Geneva negotiations broke down, as seemed likely, he would oppose our just standing still. He seemed to feel very strongly about this."[29] After McCone became DCI, he even threatened (quietly) to resign over the issue. (U)

By the time John F. Kennedy became president, he had established a public record in favor of a treaty banning the testing of nuclear weapons.[30] Upon taking office, he ordered a full review of the US government's position on a test ban. His proposed revisions were limited in scope, however, and, for several reasons, generally followed the framework he inherited from the Eisenhower administration. Lacking an electoral mandate, he was constrained by the positions of powerful congressional opponents of a test ban. Western allies, especially the United Kingdom, were content with the direction of US policy at the time. Lastly, the scientific assumptions on which the previous administration had based its position had not changed by 1961. (U)

During Kennedy's first two years in office, both the US and the Soviet governments said one thing about nuclear testing but did another. Despite professed commitments to reducing strategic weapons and, in Washington's case, definite bureaucratic moves in that direction—the creation of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) in September 1961 and the appointment of the more "détentish" Seaborg to replace McCone at the AEC—the United States and the Soviet Union expanded their arsenals and resumed underground and atmospheric testing, ending a three-year moratorium. (U)

Moreover, the superpowers were far from agreement on how to implement a test ban—in particular over how to ver-

[28] Howard Margolis, "Red Armed Policy Seen Like US's," *Washington Post*, 2 February 1965, McCone clipping file, HIC; Patrick Glynn, *Closing Pandora's Box*, 215–16; Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, chap. 12; Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, 101–15; *Intentions and Capabilities*, 139–40; Ball, *Politics and Force Levels*, 57; Harland B. Moulton, *From Superiority to Parity*, 242–43; Lindgren, 112. (U)

[29] Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 63. (U)

[30] Sources for this introductory discussion are: Divine, *Blowing On the Wind*, 316–17, 331; Firestone, 82–85; Giglio, 77, 216; Glynn, 183; Jacobson and Stein, 327; Michael Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Question*, 159–67; Oliver, *Kennedy, Macmillan, and the Nuclear Test-Ban Debate*, chaps. 1–2; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 472–73, 495; NIE 4-2-61, "Attitudes of Key World Powers on Disarmament Issues," 6 April 1961, SNIE 11-9-61, "The Possibility of Soviet Nuclear Testing During the Moratorium," Harold Brown (Department of Defense), "Questions Bearing Upon the Resumption of Atomic Weapons Testing," 15 May 1961, "Report of the Ad Hoc Panel on Nuclear Testing" (the Panofsky Panel), 21 July 1961, Maxwell Taylor memorandum to the president, "Intelligence Aspects of Nuclear Testing," 8 September 1961, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 35–37, 48–51, 60, 106–7, 168–69; McCone, "Memorandum of Discussion at National Security Council Meeting...," 28 March 1962, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 1. (U)

ify compliance. Washington, which did not know whether the Soviets were violating the testing moratorium with secret underground experiments, anticipated "cheating" and wanted at least 10 on-site inspections of nuclear facilities each year. Moscow argued that any more than three would constitute espionage. Khrushchev also wanted a test ban linked to general disarmament, which Kennedy thought should follow a treaty on testing. The last major difference concerned accountability. The Soviet leader, jaded on the United Nations, favored treaty oversight by a tripartite commission representing Western, neutral, and communist nations equally. President Kennedy opposed that arrangement because the requirement for unanimity would subject American positions to a Soviet veto. He insisted that, whatever the membership of the commission, it be able to conduct inspections whenever it wanted. (U)

The interplay between intelligence and policy that McCone as DCI had to manage was most apparent in the issues of monitoring and verification. Monitoring is an intelligence function that involves observing behavior, counting weapons, and measuring tests. Verification is a policy issue comprising an official judgment, based on empirical monitoring intelligence but replete with diplomatic and security implications, that a country is or is not complying with treaty obligations. (U)

McCone dealt with both matters. As the national intelligence officer of the US government, he did not want to be put in the position of monitoring agreements with sources and methods he did not believe were fully up to the task. Human and technical sources could not produce definitive intelligence about Soviet strategic forces, nor could they show for certain whether Moscow was abiding by the treaty. To provide data for verifying compliance, McCone wanted a treaty that required many on-site inspections. If it did not contain that provision for intelligence collection, then as a policy matter he would advise the administration not to accept it. When a proposed treaty without an extensive inspection regime appeared to be emerging from negotiations, McCone expressed his disapproval guardedly, but he knew the president and other arms control supporters would persist and saw no point in trying to obstruct them. Doing so would only damage his relations with the administration, probably irreparably. Quite to the contrary, after the treaty was signed, he worked to persuade the Senate to ratify it. Afterward, he stepped back from the nuclear decision-making circle and concentrated on assuring that the community adequately monitored Soviet compliance—an ostensibly policy-neutral enterprise that actually was laden with policy implications. (U)

As the Kennedy administration formulated its diplomatic strategy for achieving a test ban, McCone maintained the same skepticism and caution he had shown while heading Eisenhower's AEC. He saw his role as that of the experienced realist trying to moderate the New Frontiersmen's noble intentions—which, by his thinking, at times bordered on naïveté—with a healthy dose of concerned objectivity. He did not trust the Soviets and had little confidence in monitoring regimes that did not include on-site inspection. He did not believe that intelligence sources and methods—whether imagery, signals intercepts, or agent reporting—could replace on-the-ground examination of test sites, and he thought most disarmament proposals were quixotic. Moscow's basic position, as he later characterized it, was "after you [the United States] disarm[,] we can have any kind of an inspection you want."[31] ~~(S)~~

In his first statement on the subject after becoming DCI, McCone advised senior policymakers in mid-December 1961 (shortly after the Geneva test ban conference reconvened) that the United States should not "exchange moral leadership for proper security forces." The administration needed to resume atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons to maintain superiority over the Soviet Union. During the three-year moratorium, he claimed, the Soviets had made a "quantum jump" in nuclear technology and possessed weapons as sophisticated as those of the United States in most areas and more so in others. Meanwhile, the AEC had turned much of its attention from weapons development toward peaceful applications of nuclear energy, and American nuclear scientists had moved into other endeavors; as a result, US laboratories were left poorly prepared to respond to a new Soviet testing program. During the next few months, McCone advised the administration to take seriously Soviet advances in ABM development, and directed senior Agency managers to monitor proposed disarmament treaties to ensure that US negotiators "kept uppermost in mind the absolute necessity for inspection procedures which are workable and as foolproof as possible."[32] ~~(S)~~

[31] [redacted] (CIA) memorandum, "Meeting of the Committee of Principals, 8 July 1963," *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 773; transcript of McCone meeting with Adrian Fisher (ACDA), 23 June 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 10. ~~(S)~~

[redacted]

At first, McCone doubted that the US and Soviet governments could overcome their differences over inspections. As he pointed out to the NSC, the Soviets had reversed their position since 1959, when Khrushchev had told Eisenhower that he would permit inspections. Even if the superpowers compromised—for example, by prohibiting atmospheric tests while permitting them underground—McCone questioned whether such an agreement would halt proliferation, one of the long-term goals of a test ban treaty. Any nation that wanted to develop nuclear weapons (he mentioned West Germany, India, Japan, and Israel) could do so with subterranean tests alone. Moreover, McCone insisted, pursuing a test ban would spell an end to the program for developing peaceful uses of nuclear energy (called PLOWSHARE) because monitoring systems could not distinguish between tests for weapons or for other purposes. "[W]e must choose between a test ban or our PLOWSHARE program.... [W]e cannot have both."[34] ~~(S)~~

The formal venue in which McCone dealt with the test ban was the Committee of Principals, established in 1958 by President Eisenhower to coordinate the US government's review of arms control and disarmament policy. The Committee originally had six members: the secretaries of state and defense, the chairman of the AEC, the president's national security and science advisers, and the DCI. During the Kennedy administration, the chairman of the JCS and the directors of USIA and ACDA joined the group. Other officials attended meetings depending on the subjects under discussion; usually around two dozen or more people were present. The committee met sporadically, sometimes not for weeks or months at a time. (U)

McCone attended 13 meetings of the committee while he was DCI, most during his first two years when the issue of nuclear weapons was most salient. His level of participation varied. At some meetings he said nothing; at some he confined himself to intelligence questions; and at others he discussed negotiating postures and policy strategies. McCone regularly drew on the knowledge of the Soviet nuclear program he had gained as AEC chairman and occasionally on his experiences as a defense contractor during World War II and under secretary of the Air Force during

[32] McCone untitled memorandum about 18 December 1961 meeting at the Department of State, and Herbert Scoville, "Memorandum for the Record...State Department Meeting on 18 Dec. 1961...," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 1; Bundy, "Memorandum of the 497th Meeting of the National Security Council," 27 February 1962, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 336; Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...Proposed Treaty on General and Complete Disarmament," 6 April 1962, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 330. ~~(S)~~

[redacted]

[34] "Minutes of Meeting of the National Security Council," 28 March 1962, and "Memorandum of Meeting with President Kennedy...Disarmament Proposals," 27 July 1962, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 413, 512; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record, Meeting of Principals," 26 July 1962, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 2; McCone, "Memorandum of NSC Meeting," 27 July 1962, ibid., box 6, folder 2; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of Principals...17 April 1963...," ibid., box 2, folder 6. ~~(S)~~

1950–51. Among numerous examples, he counseled ACDA Director Foster to make sure that any disarmament treaty not require the United States to close down defense contractors' facilities. In a command economy like the Soviet Union's, factories were kept running even at a very low level of production so they could be brought up to full output on short notice. McCone had noticed this characteristic of Soviet military plants when he toured Russia in 1959. In contrast, "our society does not seem to have the capability of doing these things."

> When we were required to start up reserve plants after the outbreak of the Korean War, it proved to be both a laborious and time-consuming undertaking. I was disappointed in those days to find idle aircraft, engine, tank, and armament plants, which had been maintained for years to provide instant mobilization potential, not usable until large amounts of money had been spent and a great deal of time consumed in re-equipping, modifying, etc....You must find some way in your negotiations to safeguard us against such a disadvantageous position.[35] ~~(S)~~

On another occasion, McCone suggested that the administration exploit intelligence about a possible new Soviet weapons systems for propaganda gains. After the community learned that Moscow had developed an ABM capability, he advised the Department of State that disclosure of such information "would have [a] profound effect on world opinion." It would show that the peaceful pronouncements of Soviet leaders were disingenuous; they had constructed a defensive screen behind which their menacing offensive buildup continued unabated. US revelation of what the Kremlin had done "could not, in my opinion, be countered any more successfully than we were able to counter the importance of Sputnik I or the first man in space." However, the DCI—who earlier had failed to persuade the president to start a Manhattan Project for a US antiballistic missile—had no more success with this suggestion.[36] ~~(S)~~

McCone also was a member of a short-lived group of officials, at the deputies level and below, that planned a program to explain and justify the US government's resumption of atmospheric testing. The group was a subcommittee of the NSC's Committee on Atmospheric Testing, which made detailed policy decisions on such tests. The DCI and his colleagues recommended that the administration not adopt "a defensive or apologetic attitude" toward the resumed testing and instead, to forestall opposition, give a forceful presentation of its decision just before the first explosion.[37] (U)

Resisting the Arms Control Advocates (U)

The United States and the Soviet Union continued their diplomatic fencing over the test ban until the Cuban missile crisis of October–November 1962, when Kennedy and Khrushchev realized how quickly and easily superpower conflicts could escalate. Slow movement toward a test ban occurred in late 1962 and 1963 amid what one historian has called "the interplay between relief and suspicion." American public opinion, influenced by the anxieties of the "Thirteen Days," strongly favored a test ban, and Kennedy was frustrated that nuclear proliferation was diminishing his ability to influence international affairs—"[a] world in which there are large quantities of nuclear weapons is an impossible world to handle," he told the British foreign secretary. Washington and Moscow feared that communist China was close to developing its own atomic weapon, and Kennedy believed that the superpowers needed to cooperate to delay or prevent that from happening. According to AEC Chairman Seaborg, that fear was the "principal driving force" behind the president's pursuit of a treaty. Kennedy also calculated that a US-Soviet agreement would weaken the international communist movement by worsening tensions between Moscow and Beijing, and he resolved to stabilize the nuclear situation so the United States could confront the Soviet Union more aggressively and flexibly in other areas. With the removal of the missiles from Cuba, the Soviets had come to accept the principle of international verification, and even the traditional obstacle to a treaty—on-site inspection—seemed surmountable after Kennedy indicated he was willing to accept fewer inspections and permit underground testing. Finally, a ban on above-ground testing would impede the Soviets more than the United States. Even though the United States had fewer high-yield weapons (which required atmospheric testing) than the Soviets, the administration concluded that developing more low-yield weapons (which could be tested underground) had greater strategic value.[38] (U)

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[35] McCone letter to Foster, 6 April 1963, McCone Papers, box 1, folder 14. ~~(S)~~

[36] McCone letter to George C. McGhee (chairman, Policy Planning Council, Department of State), 13 April 1962, McCone Papers, box 1, folder 14; Elder, "McCone as DCI (1987)," 162–63. ~~(S)~~

[37] Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 133n; Oliver, *Kennedy, Macmillan, and the Nuclear Test-Ban Debate*, 67. (U)

Talks at a five-year-old multinational disarmament conference in Geneva resumed in late 1962, but few observers expected any immediate accomplishment. Meanwhile, influential advocates of the unlimited development of nuclear weapons—notably physicist Edward Teller—insisted that the United States should develop a 100-megaton warhead as soon as possible. Aware of McCone's earlier opposition to a test ban, Teller met with the DCI to present his case that such a powerful device was needed to defeat a Soviet ABM system. Presumably he hoped that McCone would press the point in policymaking circles. Replying cautiously, the DCI recommended that the controversial Teller refrain from speeches and television appearances and not raise the nuclear issue's public profile right then. The administration's policy, McCone assured him, was under careful review, and Teller would be consulted before any decision was reached.[39]

McCone did not like the course the review appeared to be taking. He especially worried that the administration might be "reckless" in seeking a disarmament breakthrough without making sure it could be verified. A prohibition on testing would keep the United States from improving its nuclear weapons without guaranteeing that the Soviets would not cheat. "There is a great danger," he wrote, "of engaging in a treaty, living under it for a number of years, and permitting our laboratories to go downhill (which they undoubtedly would do) while the Soviets covertly pursue developments in their laboratories." The DCI also feared that such a treaty would not prevent weapons development by certain nations that, in his judgment, probably would not sign it or, if they did, would not abide by its restrictions—notably France, China, Israel, and India. Although any progress in nuclear disarmament theoretically would lessen world tensions, "stopping testing does not slow down the arms race, does not remove the dangers of a nuclear holocaust, and does not end the proliferation problem." "The Russians could no longer handle the Chinese situation," he told the president, "and we and the British could no longer handle the de Gaulle situation, and hence the proliferation problem."[40]

[redacted]

In February 1963, McCone told the president of his strong reservations about the concessions American negotiators had made and predicted that the treaty then taking shape would run into trouble in Congress. "[T]he people on the Hill are concerned about the continual lowering of our numbers.... [A]t one time [James] Killian argued that 100 on-site inspections per year was the absolute minimum." Now, however, the administration was considering whether to accept fewer than a dozen. Kennedy agreed with the DCI's assessment of congressional attitudes but indicated that the "China problem," as he put it, was the only reason for pursuing the test ban. He questioned the need for the United States to develop any other nuclear weapons besides an ABM system—to which McCone, aware of the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory's interest in a sizable series of tests,

[38] Oliver, *Kennedy, Macmillan, and the Nuclear Test-Ban Debate*, 136, 138, 150–51; Giglio, 217; Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 181; Firestone, 56–57, 67–68, 109; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 893–94; "Editorial Note," *FRUS, 1961–1963, XXII, Northeast Asia*, 341. (U)

[39] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Dr. Teller," 12 November 1962, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 3. McCone did not disapprove of developing a 100-megaton weapon on principle and believed that it had significant military value. When the JCS in mid-1963 requested development of a high-yield bomb to be dropped from a B-52, the DCI opposed the idea because the delivery system was vulnerable—not because the bomb was, as an ACDA official called it, a "horror weapon." McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion on the Development of a High-Yield Nuclear Weapon...," 21 May 1963, and "ACDA Position on US Development of Very High Yield Weapons," 12 July 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 706–7, 794–95.

[40] McCone untitled memorandum, 8 April 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 668–70; ACDA memorandum to Committee of Principals, "US Position for a Test Ban Treaty," 17 February 1963, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 3 (McCone's marginal jottings on his copy—especially the frequent question marks—clearly convey his doubts about the US position); McCone, "Memorandum of Discussion with William Foster...," 8 February 1963, and untitled memorandum, 8 April 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 637–39, 668–70; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the President...4 April 1963," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 4. McCone discussed Israel's nuclear program several times with Kennedy administration principals. See, e.g., *FRUS, 1961–1963, XVIII, Near East, 1962–1963*, 437, 528, 589–91.

[redacted]

took exception. Indicating that the laboratory directors felt unrepresented at the White House, McCone recommended that the president meet with them—a suggestion with which Kennedy readily agreed.[42]

McCone had recurrent run-ins with William Foster and ACDA.[43] He believed Foster wanted a treaty almost for its own sake, and he suspected that ACDA was interested in building its own mechanism (mainly with contract studies) for producing finished intelligence on arms control outside USIB channels. McCone did not believe he could allow that "rather dangerous practice," as he termed it. ACDA was a consumer of intelligence, not a producer. With an institutional interest in a test ban, it might make assessments on strategic forces that could lead the administration to sign a "bad" agreement. He also did not want ACDA dealing with USIB members on its own. "[I]nformation received could very easily be misleading and representative of a unilateral department viewpoint," he wrote to Foster. "This would be most particularly true of Defense, since DIA was responsive to the JCS, and the JCS had definite unanimous and stated opinions on all of ACDA's activities."

At the same time, McCone did not want to give the impression that he was trying to undercut ACDA by raising bureaucratic obstacles to its work or by not providing it with the intelligence he was required to under executive order. Doing so might suggest that McCone was letting his personal skepticism about arms control influence his management of the intelligence process. To accomplish all these objectives, McCone made sure that CIA provided ACDA with full support and served as its contact with the community. He designated a senior DI officer [redacted] of ORR) to serve as the Agency's liaison to ACDA, and, in his capacity as USIB chairman, he established protocols for ACDA contacts with USIB members.

Besides using the bureaucracy, McCone also attempted to apply private pressure to slow momentum for a test ban. He told McGeorge Bundy in April 1963 that he was most anxious not to have to oppose a test ban treaty; in fact, as long as he was in the administration, he would not do so openly. In view of his private convictions and past public statements, however, he could not support a test ban as currently envisaged. Perhaps, McCone suggested, he should resign. Well aware of the repercussions, especially among the DCI's congressional allies, Bundy headed him off, reminding McCone that he had already made his position clear to the president and that, in any case, the entire issue lay outside his competence as DCI. Should McCone need political insulation, Bundy added, he would provide it. Following this discussion, McCone did not play the resignation card again.[44]

Perhaps knowing how McCone had publicly undercut the Eisenhower administration's support for a test ban, President Kennedy made sure that would not happen again. In May 1963, he "reinforced" with McCone what the DCI should and should not say in his upcoming testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee's Preparedness Subcommittee. Its chairman, John Stennis, opposed a test ban, and the White House worried that McCone's answers to his questions might embolden opponents of a treaty. The DCI stuck to the script he was given, and afterward the president praised him for the "firmness and clarity with which you explained why you did not wish to complicate your professional task by discussing your personal opinion on policy issues outside your official responsibility." "I knew that when you and I discussed this matter," Kennedy added, "that this was the right stand to take, but what I know now is that it was effective[,] too. Many thanks."[45] (U)

Movement Toward a Treaty (U)

Following signs of progress in bilateral relations in other areas during the first months of 1963, Khrushchev received a communication from President Kennedy and British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan in May spelling out a new joint initiative to stop nuclear testing and prevent further proliferation. Khrushchev's testy reply was hardly

[42] Editorial note about McCone meeting with the president on test ban policy, 8 February 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 646; McCone, "Memorandum of Meeting with the President…20 February 1963," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 3; Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 188.

[43] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Meeting with Mr. William Foster…," 18 April 1963, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 6; [redacted] "The Development of Strategic Research at CIA," 311–16.

[44] Elder, "McCone as DCI (1987)," 173–74; Elder/McAuliffe OH2, 31.

[45] President Kennedy letter to McCone, 24 May 1963, *JFK Wants to Know*, 267. Historian John Prados has written that McCone detailed an Agency analyst to the Senate Armed Services Committee during the summer of 1963 to help Stennis develop a case against the treaty. According to Elder, however, Stennis requested that CIA send a expert to assist the committee staff with technical details, and that the analyst went with clear instructions not to take sides on the treaty issue. Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, 154; Elder, "McCone as DCI (1987)," 174. (U)

encouraging and fed continued opposition from powerful members of Congress to any form of test ban treaty. A poll of senators taken that month found only 57 supported a treaty that followed the administration's proposals—10 fewer than needed for ratification. In his reply to Khrushchev's missive, Kennedy ignored the Soviet leader's invective and focused instead on the one positive suggestion—that American and British emissaries go to Moscow for talks. Kennedy also decided it was time to give a major "peace" address. His landmark speech on 10 June at American University paved the way for test ban negotiations to begin in the Soviet capital in July. Signaling his seriousness, the president chose the venerable, tough-minded W. Averell Harriman to lead the US delegation.[46] (U)

In the weeks before the talks began, the administration worked on resolving internal policy differences and formulating negotiating tactics. McCone confronted some of the arguments for an agreement, and evidence of possible Soviet tests enabled him to question the ban's enforceability. Among other points, he staunchly opposed using the planned multinational nuclear force as a bargaining chip to win agreement on a nonproliferation treaty. He believed the security of Western Europe depended on creation of such a missile force as a deterrent against several hundred Soviet offensive missiles. Moreover, McCone thought the United States should not sign an agreement that prevented the British and French from improving their own nuclear deterrents. Otherwise, the United States would be forced to defend Europe unilaterally for decades to come. When Secretary Rusk privately suggested that the treaty would "save the world billions and billions of dollars" in military expenditures, the DCI responded that he "could not see how the treaty in itself stopped the arms race, because it did not inhibit the scientific research and development in arms nor stop [the] manufacture of arms." "The point," he added for the record, "was apparently dismissed."

[redacted] In late June, the DCI approved an estimate that included this judgment: "Communist China would almost certainly refuse to sign [a treaty], and French and Israeli adherence would be doubtful."[47] (S)

McCone commented privately that despite his and the JCS's opposition, it was "[o]bvious to me...that the thrust of opinion [elsewhere in the administration] was in favor of reaching [an] agreement even though consideration [sic; considerable] concessions would have to be made." For bureaucratic cover, he wanted the record to reflect that he had not formally registered a view on the treaty. "At no time," he wrote after a meeting of the Committee of Principals, "did I express support of the treaty. At no time was I asked my opinion concerning the treaty.... That I opposed the treaty...was not within my province to express myself"—not that anyone in the administration had any doubt about where he stood.[48] (S)

In early July, the NSC instructed Harriman to seek a comprehensive ban but, if one were unattainable, to settle for a prohibition on atmospheric, oceanic, and space testing. A test ban, the NSC asserted, was in the national interest, both as a precedent for solving other international problems and as a first step toward curtailing nuclear proliferation. McCone knew that from an intelligence standpoint the second point was debatable, but at this late stage in the process he declined the president's invitation to comment.[49] (S)

When Harriman arrived in Moscow in mid-July he found that, despite the Soviets' history of opposing a limited test ban, Khrushchev wanted one. While the negotiators talked, most of the Committee of Principals met at the

[46] "Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union," DEPTEL 2590, 30 May 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 707–10; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 898–904; Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 211–18; Oliver, *Kennedy, Macmillan, and the Nuclear Test-Ban Debate*, 185–90; Mandelbaum, 172–76. (U)

[redacted]

[47] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of The Principals," 21 June 1963, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 4; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion at Meeting of Principals, 14 June [1963]," ibid., box 1, folder 1. McCone came very close to submitting a formal dissent in early July. In a draft memorandum to McNamara, he asserted that a test ban would put the United States at a permanent disadvantage in large, high-yield weapons while enabling the Soviet Union to build defenses against the smaller, less destructive American devices. It does not appear that the DCI sent a final version of the document to the secretary of defense. McCone, "Comments on Conclusions of the White Papers...on Nuclear Testing Problems," 2 July 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 759–60. (S)

White House each evening to monitor developments as Harriman reported them and to revise the US delegation's instructions accordingly. McCone did not attend all of those sessions, but, as one of a small group of top officials outside the White House cleared to read Harriman's cables from Moscow (hand-delivered and marked "FOR YOUR EYES ONLY"), McCone kept abreast of the talks' progress.[50] (U)

After 11 days of intense negotiations, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union reached a preliminary accord on 25 July. They signed the "Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space, and Under Water" on 5 August. The agreement—more commonly known as the Limited Test Ban Treaty—prohibited signatories from conducting nuclear explosions in those environments. Underground testing could continue, however, and the reduction of nuclear stockpiles was not addressed. Communist China was left unchecked; it refused to sign the treaty, and the Soviet Union would not agree to take joint action with the United States against Beijing's nuclear program. An "escape clause" allowed signatories to withdraw from the treaty if they thought their national interests were threatened, and no supranational oversight body was established.[51] (U)

McCone's status as a former AEC chairman and prominent Republican made him an asset to the White House in securing ratification of the treaty. Short of resigning, the DCI had no option but to support the accord. His prior record on the issue aside, he served in an administration determined to move ahead in arms control, and, with improved monitoring technology available to the United States, he found opposing a limited test ban to be politically, and to some degree technically, untenable. Moreover, in the time since McCone headed the AEC, two important issues had been, in his judgment, resolved. First, the United States did not need large megaton weapons, which could only be tested in the atmosphere, to preserve its strategic advantage. It could accomplish the same with more, smaller-yield warheads that could be tested underground. Second, an effective ABM system could be developed without further aboveground testing. Consequently, McCone told Congress, he endorsed the treaty with the proviso that

> we pursue underground testing, that we keep our laboratories vital, that we plan a comprehensive atmospheric program, anticipating that the Soviets will violate the treaty, and that we maintain our proving grounds [in the Pacific region] in a state of readiness at all times. I have always supported an atmospheric test ban, but contrast this sharply to a comprehensive test ban with [an] inadequate verification system.[52] (S)

Closing the case for the treaty, McCone added that a test ban served the national interest because it at least partly reduced the proliferation of weapons and represented a diplomatic achievement between the superpowers. He was less sure about those advantages, however, and wanted to keep administration officials from being lulled into a false sense of security. CIA, he informed the NSC, had no hard evidence that Khrushchev's conciliatory moves were anything but tactical calculations. McCone questioned "the current happy relationship" with the Soviet premier; "I think there is a lot of illusion...in Washington today...we don't seem to have very much to pin our hopes on, except for a lot of polemics."[53] (S)

Most of the American people and the Congress wanted a test ban, and a lobbying campaign—in large degree orchestrated from the White House—overcame most opposition from congressional conservatives, military leaders, and disarmament champions who thought a partial ban did not go far enough. President Kennedy again used McCone as an emissary to Capitol Hill and the Republican Party. He had the

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[49] "Summary Record of the 515th Meeting of the National Security Council," 9 July 1963, and "Instructions for Honorable W. Averell Harriman," 10 July 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 779–88; Knoche untitled memorandum to McCone, 9 July 1963, and McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...NSC Meeting...on 9 July 1963," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 5. (S)

[50] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 734–35; McCone calendars, entries for July 1963; Firestone, 108; "Memorandum of Conference with President Kennedy," 23 July 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 835–37; messages to and from the negotiators in ibid., 799–863; Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 237. The other cleared officials were Rusk, McNamara, Foster, Under Secretary of State George Ball, and Llewelyn Thompson, a former ambassador to the Soviet Union then serving as ambassador-at-large. (U)

[51] Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 905–9; Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 302–6; Oliver, *Kennedy, Macmillan, and the Nuclear Test-Ban Debate*, 211–13; Mandelbaum, 177–78. (U)

[52] "DCI Talking Paper re Test Ban," 26 July 1963, McCone responses to questions from Senate Armed Services Committee, 29 July 1963, and McCone memorandum, "DCI Position on Test Ban Treaty," 16 August 1963, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5; "CIA, Air Force Leaders Back A-Test Treaty," *New York Times*, 17 August 1963, McCone clipping file, HIC. In later years, McCone told interviewers that he supported the treaty because he was convinced that by then the United States had technical collection systems that could detect Soviet violations. McCone/ OH, 19; McCone OH, 29; McCone/McAuliffe OH, 31. (S)

DCI muster support in Congress and brief Gen. Eisenhower and presidential aspirant Nelson Rockefeller, the governor of New York, on the treaty after it was signed. McCone pointed out to the former president that, except for the provision banning nuclear testing in outer space, the proposed treaty was the same as the one his administration had proposed in 1959 and 1960. The general replied that Soviet advancements in ABMs had altered the situation since then, but he said he would endorse the treaty if McCone and the JCS, independently and without direction from the White House, also supported it. Rockefeller was uncommitted, and the Kennedy administration worried that he appeared to be receiving briefings from the treaty's detractors. McCone, along with Rusk and Harriman, also briefed the JCS. Their final position paralleled the DCI's.[54] (S)

After members of the Senate Foreign Relations, Atomic Energy, and Armed Services Committees held hearings on the treaty, including testimony from McCone—who stressed the four safeguards described above—the Foreign Relations Committee approved the treaty on 29 August by a 16–1 vote, and the full Senate ratified it on 24 September, 80–19. The treaty went into effect on 10 October, when the instruments of ratification were exchanged at ceremonies in Washington, London, and Moscow.[55] (U)

Distrust and Verify (U)

For the rest of his directorship, McCone's and the community's involvement with the test ban issue focused on monitoring Soviet compliance with the treaty. During the treaty's first year, McCone continued to voice concerns about the intelligence aspects of monitoring. He warned that the United States must not lock itself into a limited inspection regime when new intelligence sources might indicate that previously unknown or unsuspected test locations needed to be inspected.

[redacted]

Complicating the question of US intelligence capabilities was the need to protect sources and methods—one of the DCI's statutory responsibilities. Occasions might arise when Congress, the American public, and US allies would not be convinced that the Soviets were or were not complying with the treaty unless the US government publicized information

[53] McCone untitled memorandum on the test ban treaty, 30 July 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 864–65; [redacted]

[54] "Memorandum of Conference with President Kennedy," 22 July 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 831; McCone calendars, entries for 24 and 31 July 1963; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Discussion with Governor Rockefeller…31 July 1963," McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5; Elder, "McCone as DCI (1987)," 179; "Editorial Note," *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 865–66; "Statement of Position of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the Three-Environment Nuclear Test Ban Treaty," 12 August 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII/VIII/IX, Arms Control; National Security Policy; Foreign Economic Policy: Microfiche Supplement*, doc. 218. (S)

[55] Giglio, 218; Parmet, 311–16; Firestone, 87–89, 110–13, 123ff.; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 909–13; Philip J. Briggs, "Kennedy and the Congress: The Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, 1963," in *John F. Kennedy: The Promise Revisited*, 38–50; Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, chap. 20; Mandelbaum, 180–81; "Editorial Note," *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 886. (U)

[redacted]

that might compromise agents or technical systems. Preventing such revelations was one of the main reasons McCone insisted that the United States not rely on intelligence as a substitute for comprehensive on-site inspections to verify Soviet compliance. In comments at meetings of the Committee of Principals during 1964, he addressed details of conducting those inspections—including the wording of phrases pertaining to them in subsequent protocols. He wanted to avoid giving the Soviets more chances to violate the spirit of the treaty by taking advantage of ambiguous language in its letter.

President Kennedy put McCone on a committee that reviewed proposed American tests to ensure they conformed to the provisions of the treaty. He continued in that function after Lyndon Johnson became president. The other members were Rusk, McNamara, Seaborg, Foster, Maxwell Taylor, and Jerome Weisner, the White House science adviser. This responsibility drew on McCone's nuclear expertise and was not directly related to his role as DCI. For instance, in February 1964 he argued against conducting an underground excavation test under the PLOWSHARE program because it might release radioactive debris in detectable quantities. By his reading, the treaty permitted only fully contained tests. McCone's interpretation of the agreement was questionable, but President Johnson decided for political and diplomatic reasons to suspend the proposed explosion. As Bundy advised the president, "You don't want the Russians accusing you of breaking a treaty [in an election year]." The AEC did not conduct the test until December.[58] (U)

A leadership change in Moscow in October 1964 disrupted activity on arms control for a while. Until the political situation in the Kremlin stabilized, McCone cautioned ACDA Director Foster, the United States should not raise the issue of nuclear disarmament. He believed the Soviet policy elite was so preoccupied with internal politics and relations with the Eastern European satellites that it could not discuss the issue meaningfully. On one occasion during this period, McCone uncharacteristically spoke theoretically about how disarmament would have a long-term beneficial effect on the Soviets. In comments reminiscent of Eisenhower's censure of the "military industrial complex," the DCI opined that if Soviet industry was redirected to make consumer products instead of "the sterile goods of war," the Soviet people "would be more affluent, they would have more tact, they would move away from their sterile society and into a different type of society." He thought Washington and Moscow might even consider exchanging intelligence on each other's capabilities as one of several steps toward ending the arms race. For the DCI, the problem was getting the superpowers to agree on the essential first step—a verification system that really worked.[59]

The largest Soviet underground test yet, on 15 January 1965, fortified McCone's suspicions about Moscow's willingness to observe the treaty's limits. Just a few days after the DCI told a congressional committee that through all of 1964 the Soviets apparently had not violated or taken advantage of loopholes in the treaty,

At a later meeting of the Committee of Principals, McCone "was particularly strong in his feeling that this was…a test ban violation," according to Seaborg, and evidently wanted the US government to say so explicitly in a press release. Instead, the administration took a more subdued approach, merely announcing that the detonation had occurred while quietly asking the Soviets for an explanation. When news of the test appeared before the official announcement, an irate President Johnson chastised McCone, Ball and McNamara for the unauthorized disclosure, which he feared might derail further arms control efforts. Johnson, wrote Seaborg, was "direct and vociferous

[58] NSAM No. 269, "Procedure for Approval of Certain Nuclear Tests," 31 October 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VII, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 898–99; Abram Chayes (Department of State legal adviser) memorandum to U. Alexis Johnson, "White House Meeting Today Concerning Project Sulky," 7 February 1964, NSAM No. 282, "Project Sulky," 11 February 1964, and "Editorial Note," *FRUS, 1964–1968, XI, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 13–15, 153–54. (U)

in his complaints" to them "as the leaks had involved their departments" and "must be stopped." The administration concluded a few weeks later that the explosion was part of a PLOWSHARE experiment. McCone's initial reaction to the test was hasty and overdrawn, bespeaking his unmitigated distrust of Soviet intentions.[60]

"No other accomplishment in the White House gave Kennedy greater satisfaction," presidential speechwriter Theodore Sorensen wrote soon after the test ban treaty was ratified. Averell Harriman concluded years later, however, that it had been a hollow achievement. "When you stop to think of what the advantages were to us of stopping all testing in the early 1960s when we were still ahead of the Soviets[,] it's really appalling to realize what a missed opportunity we had." Yet while McCone was AEC chairman and DCI during the years the test ban was being discussed, he never advocated using a treaty to freeze the US nuclear advantage. One foreseeable consequence of the US government not having done so soon became a reality. The treaty forced testing underground, allowing the Soviets to develop, produce, and deploy even deadlier weapons. As noted earlier, they quickly seized the opportunity. The treaty also would have scant impact on the problem of proliferation, in the judgment of the Intelligence Community. "[I]f India, Israel, Sweden or other technically competent nations show as much determination to develop such weapons as have France and China, the types of pressure which the USSR and the US have been willing to use to date against potential proliferators would probably not be successful," an October 1964 NIE stated. Meanwhile, the Johnson administration continued sending proposals for a comprehensive test ban treaty to negotiators in Geneva. The effort would not bear fruit until 1968, when the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons.[61]

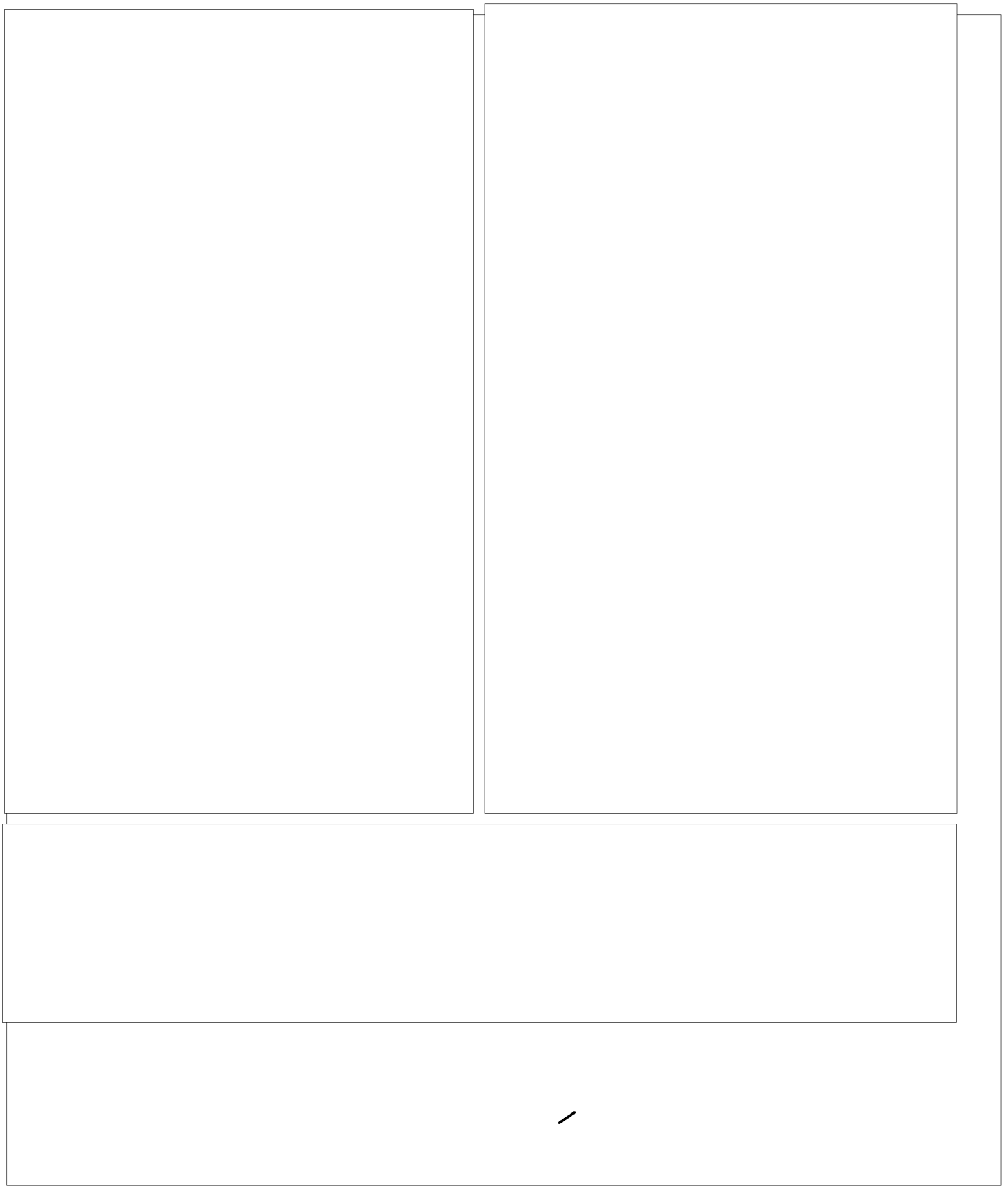
Taunting the Bear: Anti-Soviet Covert Actions (U)

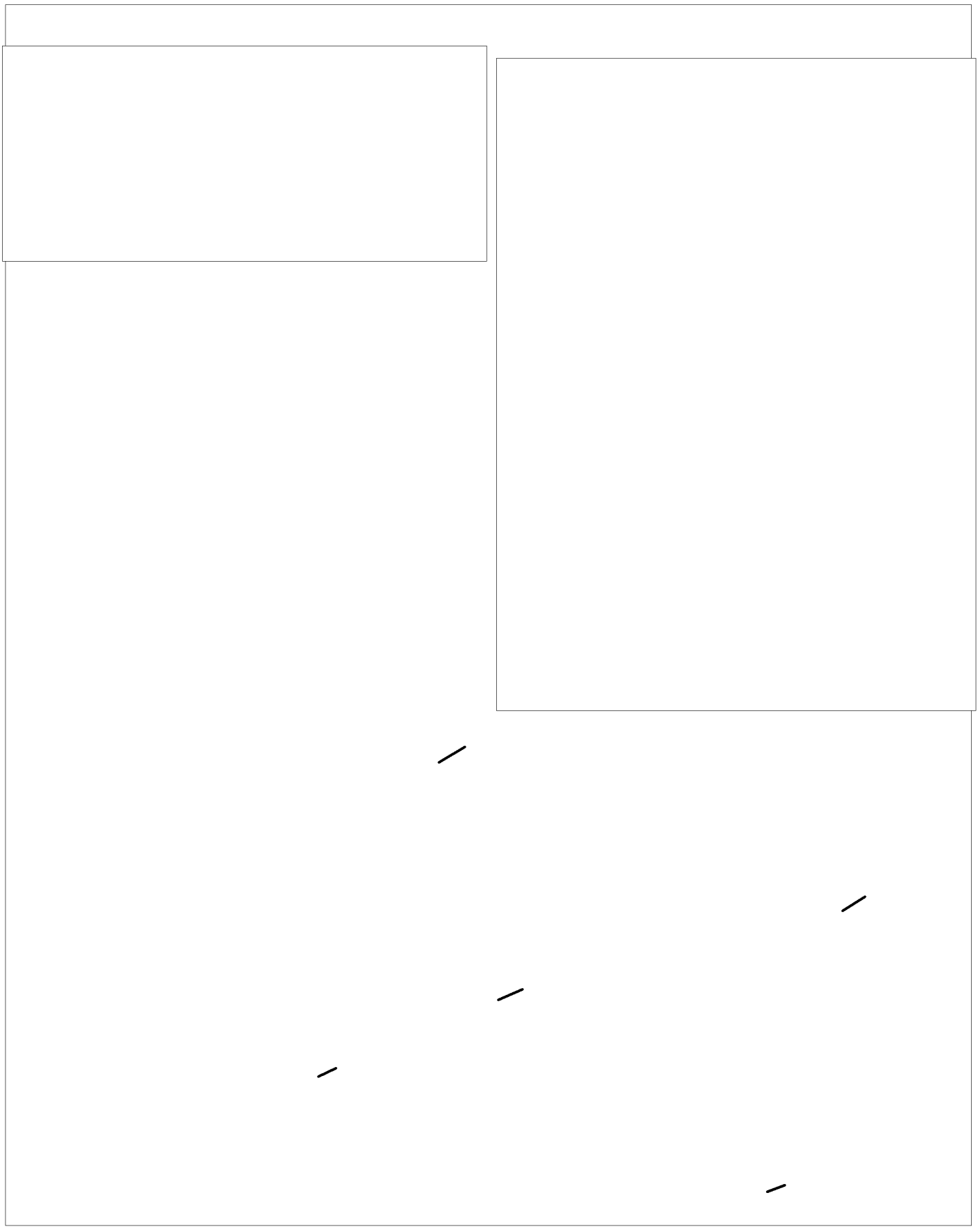
During McCone's tenure, CIA's covert action operations against the Soviet Union were redirected outward, just as its espionage activities were, and for the same reasons.

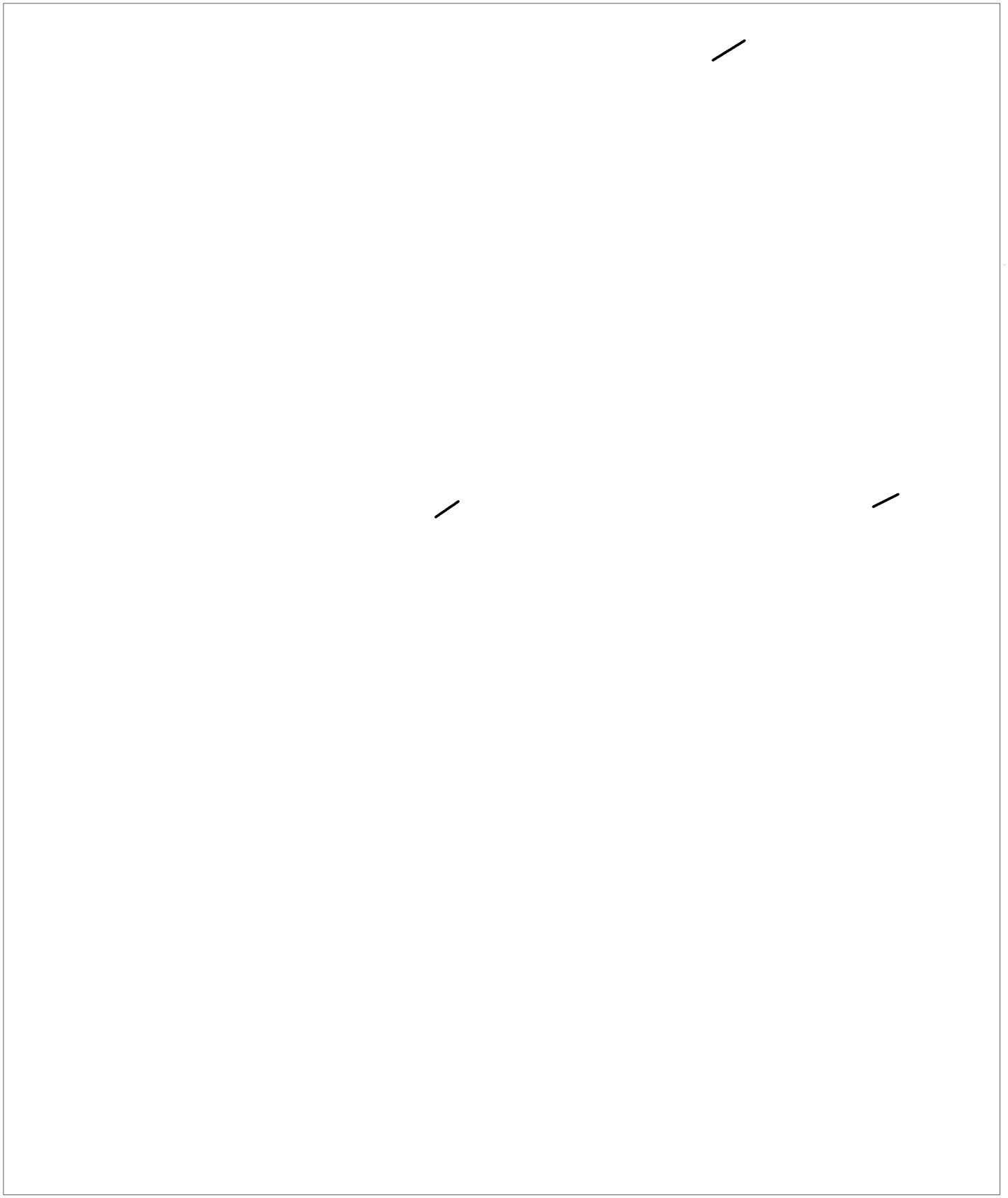
[60] Transcript of McCone testimony before Senate Armed Services Committee, 11 January 1965, 60, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 19; Kirkpatrick memorandum about DCI meeting with PFIAB on 4 February 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 19, folder 382; Seaborg, "Notes of Meetings," 19 January 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XI, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 170–71; Glenn T. Seaborg with Benjamin S. Loeb, *Stemming the Tide*, 221–25.

[61] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 836; Gregg Herken, *Counsels of War*, 185; NIE 4-2-64, "Prospects for a Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Over the Next Decade," 21 October 1964, 2; Seaborg, *Stemming the Tide*, chaps. 18–23.

[6] *Semi-Annual Report of the Central Intelligence Agency to the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, 1 October 1962–31 March 1963*, 34.







The Monolith Cracks (U)

The split between the Soviet Union and the PRC was one of the salient factors in US policy toward those countries during the early 1960s.[74] Moscow and Beijing's mutual hostility had multiple causes rooted in history, ideology, and national interest. These sources included the two countries' longstanding rivalry over territory in central Asia, their contest for leadership of the international communist movement, ideological differences over the nature of Marxism, personal antagonism between Khrushchev and Mao Zedong, and the resentment of Chinese rulers over what they regarded as inadequate Soviet aid, always begrudgingly given, and the Soviets' tepid support of the PRC in its dispute with the Republic of China on Taiwan. By 1963, after Moscow declined to help Beijing in its border dispute with India in 1962 and compromised with Washington over the missiles in Cuba, the estrangement was public and complete. The two regimes had become, in Ambassador Charles Bohlen's paradigm, the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks of the communist world.[75] While McCone was DCI, assessments by CIA and the Intelligence Community that the split was wide and enduring contributed to the Kennedy administration's decision to exploit it—to drive the communist powers further apart by effecting a détente of sorts with the Soviet Union while isolating the PRC internationally as a dangerous revolutionary force. CIA—notwithstanding McCone's uncertainties about the severity of the split—helped execute the policy through various covert endeavors. (U)

CIA analysts first began describing differences between the Soviet Union and the PRC in 1952. During the rest of the 1950s, the Agency's judgments about the split, although not uniform, went further than the rest of the community in concluding that Sino-Soviet solidarity was eroding—especially after Stalin's death in 1953.[76] Coordinated community assessments were more guarded. An NIE in 1954 set the general tone for the next several years:

> Communist China is more an ally than a satellite of the USSR. It possesses some capability for independent action…We believe that despite potential sources of friction between the two powers arising from occasional conflicts of national interests, the cohesive forces in the relationship will be far greater than the divisive forces throughout the period of this estimate [mid-1959].

Such judgments paralleled those of most policymakers downtown, who until around 1960 thought conclusions about a schism were, in former CIA analyst Harold Ford's words, "based heavily on tea-leaf interpretations of what Soviet and Chinese media were saying." Bilateral disputes were over tactics, not strategy, and would come and go as situations changed; animosity was highly personalized between Khrushchev and Mao, and thus transient; and fundamental agreement on the basic point continued—the West, and especially the United States, was the prime enemy who would be vanquished through socialist revolution.[77] (U)

Events in 1960 and 1961—the Kremlin's sudden withdrawal of advisers from the PRC, and Khrushchev's denunciation of Mao and his foreign proxies—provided the definitive proof of grave discord that had been missing. As Sir Percy Cradock, a senior member of the US-UK Joint Intelligence Committee, has aptly written, "All this marked a new stage of the struggle: secret family quarrels, with indi-

[74] General information in this section comes from: Gordon H. Chang, *Friends and Enemies*, chap. 7; Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power: U.S. Relations with China since 1949*, 115–34; Harold P. Ford, "Calling the Sino-Soviet Split," *Studies* 41, no. 4 (1997): 41–55; idem, "The Eruption of Sino-Soviet Politico-Military Problems, 1957–60," in Raymond L. Garthoff, ed., *Sino-Soviet Military Relations*, 100–113; Hilsman, *To Move a Nation*, 340ff; Peter Jones and Sian Kevill, comps., *China and the Soviet Union, 1949–84*, chaps. 3–5; Noam Kochavi, "Washington's View of the Sino-Soviet Split, 1961–1963: From Puzzled Prudence to Bold Experimentation," *I&NS* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 50–79; Alfred D. Low, *The Sino-Soviet Dispute*, chaps. 1–7; Constantine Pleshakov, "Nikita Khrushchev and Sino-Soviet Relations," and Chen Jian and Yang Kuisong, "Chinese Politics and the Collapse of the Sino-Soviet Alliance," in Odd Arne Westad, ed., *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945–1963*, 226–94; and Donald S. Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956–1961*. The Pinyin transliteration system for Chinese names has been used except in direct quotations or titles of documents. (U)

[75] James C. Thomson (Department of State) memorandum to Harriman, "Secretary's Policy Planning Meeting, January 2, 1962; Discussion of the Sino-Soviet Conflict and US Policy," 12 January 1962, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XXII, Northeast Asia*, 177. (U)

[76] Much of CIA's early analysis on this subject was produced under the aegis of the Sino-Soviet Studies Group in a special set of papers called the "Esau Studies"—an allusion to the feuding brothers Jacob and Esau in the Book of Genesis. ONE, ONI, the Senior Research Staff on International Communism, and FBIS also prepared many assessments of aspects of Sino-Soviet relations during the 1950s and early 1960s. (U)

[77] NIE 11-4-54, "Soviet Capabilities and Probable Courses of Action Through Mid-1959," 15 September 1954, *CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union, 1947–1991*, 46; Ford, "Calling the Sino-Soviet Split," 42. (U)

rect abuse and the occasional sound of muffled blows, were succeeded by open disagreement and public polemics. The West now had something to bite on...."

When this assortment of open source and secret information was collated and examined, a new analytic line rose to dominance in the community during McCone's years as DCI: the competing interests of the communist powers overrode their ideological affinities and made their differences irreconcilable. "There is still one Communist faith," stated an estimate in August 1960, "but there are now two voices of Communist authority.... The Sino-Soviet relationship is not a Communist monolith." ONE chief Sherman Kent wrote McCone in late 1961 that

> the Sino-Soviet conflict is at bottom a clash of national interests. While each professes devotion to Communist unity, each seeks to mobilize the entire world Communist movement in the service of its own aims.... Barring a radical change in Chinese outlook or leadership, we now believe that the chances of a full break in party relations between the two during the next year or so have increased very substantially.

"Sino-Soviet relations are in a critical phase just short of an acknowledged and definitive split," an NIE in early 1962 concluded. "There is no longer much chance of a fundamental resolution of differences." A year later, an NIE forecast that "the Chinese will almost certainly continue...to expand their influence at Soviet expense.... A formal schism could occur at any time." In 1964, the sense of the community was that Sino-Soviet relations might vacillate somewhat, but "the rift is so deep and the national interest of each party so heavily engaged that there is virtually no chance of reconciliation under the present leaders. The international movement may now be on the eve of a formal split." "Soviet leaders appear to have concluded that they will be locked in a severe struggle with China for a protracted period," went another estimate that year, "[and they will] pursue their own interests...despite the cost of...consequent fracturing of the international movement."[79] (U)

Assessments such as those ran contrary to the traditional thinking of some senior CIA officers—mainly longtime students of communist theory and Soviet affairs in the DDP and the DI—and, at least for most of the time, of DCI McCone. Like most members of the US national security establishment, McCone had believed for many years that the Soviet Union and the PRC were steadfast allies. To McCone, the early evidence of a split was too sketchy, too inferential, too contrary to continued signs of cooperation. As AEC chairman, McCone told the NSC in 1960 that he "took the schism...with a grain of salt," noting how fervently the Soviets supported China's application for UN membership and representation at meetings of the International Atomic Energy Agency.[80] (U)

As DCI, despite briefings such as the one from Kent quoted above, McCone maintained his skepticism. In 1963, he told the NSC that he did not think the "very great" differences between the communist superpowers were "very deep" or that a "final break" would occur. Inside CIA, McCone urged Agency analysts not to become fixed to their latest judgments and to look at and weigh carefully all evidence of either reconciliation or rupture. "[W]e must study the indicators with great care and great objectivity and not be influenced by a preconceived conclusion in this matter." Current assessments about a schism—for example, the DI's statement in July 1963 that "[w]e can...expect an accelerated emergence of two competing and hostile Communist world centers, with accompanying disruption of world Communism"—must not become the new conventional wisdom. With the nation's vital interests at stake in several

[78] Percy Cradock, *Know Your Enemy*, 167–68; Helms memorandum to Carter, "Inquiry from Senator Russell Relative to Sino-Soviet Dispute," 31 July 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 3, folder 9.~~X~~

[79] Ford, "Calling the Sino-Soviet Split," 42–50; Kochavi, "Washington's View of the Sino-Soviet Split," 54–57; NIE 100-3-60, "Sino-Soviet Relations," 9 August 1960, *FRUS, 1958–1960, XIX, China, 1959–1960*, 704; Kent memorandum to McCone, "An Appraisal of Soviet Intentions," 21 December 1961, *CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union, 1947–1991*, 72, 74; NIE 11-5-62, "Political Developments in the USSR and the Communist World," 21 February 1962, *FRUS, 1961–1963, V, Soviet Union*, 375; NIE 13-63, "Problems and Prospects in Communist China," 1 May 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XXII, Northeast Asia*, 366; NIE 10-2-64, "Prospects for the International Communist Movement," 10 June 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXX, China*, 62; *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, Soviet Union*, 24. The change in community analysis occurred quickly once it began. Only three months before NIE 11-5-62 was published, a special estimate concluded that a rupture in relations would be counterproductive for both communist powers, and therefore was unlikely. SNIE 13-3-61, "Chinese Communist Capabilities and Intentions in the Far East," 30 November 1961, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XXII, Northeast Asia*, 173–74. The assessments of the [redacted]IC underwent a similar evolution. Craddock, *Know Your Enemy*, 225–33. (U)

[80] Editorial note about 464th NSC meeting on 20 October 1960, *FRUS, 1958–1960, XIX, China*, 730. (U)

areas affected by a split between the communist powers—arms control, regional controversies, possible US-Soviet conflict in Berlin and elsewhere—"hard facts and positive information" were needed more than ever.[81] (S)

McCone saw some convincing reasons why both Moscow and Beijing would set aside their differences—not the least of which was the struggle against their shared American enemy—and he questioned whether Khrushchev was acting as if a split really had occurred. In the premier's discussions with Harriman in Moscow during the test ban negotiations in July 1963, for example, McCone thought Khrushchev was telling the United States that the communist powers' dispute could be straightened out. The DCI noted that Khrushchev said he would still assist China and had not mentioned abrogating their mutual defense treaty. "Frankly," McCone told his senior analysts,

> I have been alarmed over what he said to Harriman, and I fail to give the very great optimistic, hopeful turn to the events of the last two weeks which are being carried around by some in Washington. Except for Mao's statement which seemed to draw the color line, yellow and black versus white, we don't seem to have very much to pin our hopes on, except for a lot of polemics.[82] (S)

One bit of controversial information that McCone and most Agency analysts considered but dismissed was the assertion of KGB defector Anatoliy Golitsyn that the Sino-Soviet split was part of a massive disinformation plot—a "strategic deception"—orchestrated in Moscow. After counterintelligence chief James Angleton told PFIAB in 1962 about Golitsyn's idea, CIA officers had assured the board that there was no evidence for the defector's idiosyncratic assessment. Nonetheless, upon hearing from Golitsyn personally, McCone ordered a panel of Agency specialists on the Soviet Union and China to study the question again. His action did not indicate that he accepted the defector's theory. Rather, he seems to have regarded Golitsyn's interpretation as additional intelligence that Agency estimators should factor into their judgment on the nature and extent of the rift. The panel of experts—dubbed the "Flat Earth Committee" by detractors of Golitsyn's "handler," Angleton—concluded, in line with previous CIA assessments, that the defector's theory was unsupportable, and thereafter McCone did nothing else to lend credence to it. (The Golitsyn case and McCone's relations with Angleton are discussed in Chapter 13.)[83] (S)

At least in analytical terms, McCone maintained a "prove it" attitude about the split throughout his directorship. In 1964, he told the NSC about new clandestine information that indicated the Sino-Soviet schism was deeper than the countries' public statements suggested. He further noted that the Soviets had deployed more troops along the Chinese border, and that allies of Beijing, such as North Korea, were castigating Moscow for "deviationism." In early 1965, however, he told a congressional oversight committee that Khrushchev's ouster in October 1964 eliminated a major irritant between the two countries. Moreover, he testified, "[C]ertain defense treaties [between Moscow and Beijing] are still in existence...they have not abrogated those, and...until some such move as that takes place[,] it is a little hard to take the position that the rupture is irreparable."[84] (S)

McCone's reservations about Sino-Soviet tensions did not lead him to order the reconsideration of community or Agency assessments, as he had in one instance with Vietnam, nor to temper CIA's covert activities to exploit the dif-

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[81] Bromley Smith, "Summary Record of the 516th Meeting of the National Security Council," 31 July 1963, *FRUS, 1961–63, XXII, Northeast Asia*, 373; CIA memorandum, "Implications of the Sino-Soviet Rupture for the US," OCI No. 1585/63, 18 July 1963, MORI doc. no. 262441; McCone untitled memorandum to Kirkpatrick, 25 February 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, V, Soviet Union*, 634 [redacted] (S)

[82] McCone memorandum to Cline and Kent, "This afternoon's briefing of the NSC," 31 July 1963, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5; "DCI Morning Meeting Minutes, October 17, 1964," ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 348. As it turned out, the PRC regarded the test ban treaty as a grievous sellout that threatened to cripple its own nuclear program. (S)

[83] [redacted] [Bronson Tweedy (former DDP officer),] "Anatoliy Mikhaylovich Golitsyn—Review," CI Staff Study No. 5, CI 211-76 (March 1976), 56; [redacted] oral history interview by [redacted] 12 June 1984, 24; Kirkpatrick memorandum to Helms and Cline, "Group to Consider the Implications and Possible Courses of Action in Connection with the Developing Situation Between Moscow and Peking," Action Memorandum No. A-266, 8 July 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 2, folder 8; Tom Mangold, *Cold Warrior*, 85–86, 89–91; David Wise, *Molehunt*, 114; Carter untitled memorandum to Golitsyn, 28 May 1962, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 1 (S)

[84] "Summary Record of National Security Council Meeting No. 525, April 2, 1964," National Security Files, NSC Meetings 1964, LBJ Library; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Rusk, September 12th[, 1964]," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 13; "Soviet, Peking Worlds Apart, McCone Says," Washington *Evening Star*, 15 November 1964, McCone clipping file, HIC; transcript of McCone testimony before Senate Armed Services Committee, 11 January 1965, 48, 88, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 19. (S)

ferences between the communist powers. The Agency's operational initiatives supported an overall administration policy designed to fall somewhere between, in Dean Rusk's words, "tinkering...as though we were playing with toys" and "retreat[ing] behind the business that 'well, we ought not to [try to widen the rift] anyhow.'" The Department of State directed all US missions to treat the Sino-Soviet conflict in ways that would highlight the "inconsistency [in] relations" between the two countries, "deny communists [a] monopoly in interpreting their problems," and "counter communist efforts [to] paper over [their] serious differences and therefore maintain [the] fiction of non-existent monolithic unity." The long-range purpose of the administration's efforts was clear from President Kennedy's comment at a press conference in December 1962: "We would be far worse off—the world would be—if the Chinese dominated the Communist movement, because they believe in war as the means of bringing about the Communist world.... [W]e are better off with the Khrushchev view than we are with the Chinese Communist view, quite obviously." US policy, aided by CIA's operations and informed by its analyses, preferred the Soviet Union over the PRC.[85] (U)

[redacted]

[redacted]

On the analysis side, CIA's response to the communist rift showed the timeliness and responsiveness that characterized the DI's work under the direction of McCone and Cline. The latter was perhaps the most forceful advocate inside the Agency of the view that the Sino-Soviet split was deep and permanent. He effectively managed the DI's production on the issue so that it comprehensively addressed current developments, responded to customer requests, investigated high impact/low probability scenarios, and conducted retrospective reinterpretations of events in the communist world during the past several years. Policy-relevant analyses included anticipating the regional impact of the schism, especially on Japan, and examining the probable response to US actions to promote pluralism in Bloc countries. DI research on foreign communist and leftist parties helped the DDP [redacted]

[redacted]

McCone read or was briefed on the key DI products on the split and often relayed their content to senior policymakers—without editorializing.[87] (S)

The Johnson administration started out continuing its predecessor's conciliatory approach to Moscow and isolating Beijing, and using CIA to carry out the clandestine aspects of that "divide and conquer" policy. However, Agency activities became mired in the uncertainties of the war in Vietnam. If the Communist Chinese were the principal backers of North Vietnam, did it make sense for the United States to further antagonize them by accentuating the schism, thus inducing them to step up their aid to Hanoi? If the North Vietnamese were Soviet proxies, would US rapprochement with Moscow drive Beijing to increase its support of the North as a way to irritate the Soviets? If the two communist powers were both helping Hanoi against their common capitalist/imperialist enemy, did that mean that the split remained deep enough to exploit through covert and other means? If the split still existed, would massive American

[85] Transcript of Rusk news conference, 10 December 1962, quoted in Kochavi, "Washington's View of the Sino-Soviet Split," 68; State Airgram 5667, 22 November 1962, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XXII, Northeast Asia*, 350 n. 1; *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1963*, 900. (U)

[redacted]

[87] Cline memorandum to Kirkpatrick, "DD/I Inventory of Work Bearing on Implications of Sino-Soviet Rift," 5 August 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 21. Among several vehement expressions of Cline's view on the split, see his memorandum, "Sino-Soviet Relations," 14 January 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XXII, Northeast Asia*, 340. (S)

military action against North Vietnam mend it by uniting the East against the West, or widen it by forcing the Soviets to choose between the tangible benefits of "peaceful coexistence" with the United States and its revolutionary kinship with the Vietnamese communists? As the Johnson administration wrestled with these questions, CIA's covert activities in exploiting Sino-Soviet tension made little headway in McCone's last year.

Khrushchev's Ouster and Intelligence Failure (U)

Nikita Khrushchev (U)

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev fell from power on 15 October 1964 in what CIA called "a carefully planned and skillfully executed palace coup" prompted by "a long accumulation of grievances and dissatisfaction with his leadership." His replacement by a "collective leadership" from the Politburo caught the US government off guard. The Intelligence Community had been aware of the problems besetting the Soviet leader and had noted "friction and jockeying" in the Kremlin inner circle. For example, assessments in mid-1963 noted that Khrushchev confronted an array of difficulties—a stagnant agricultural sector, a restless intelligentsia, a collection of restive satellite countries beleaguered by worsening political and economic difficulties, Politburo discontent over his handling of the Cuban missile crisis and relations with Communist China—and that "his predominance [in the Soviet leadership] has diminished somewhat." McCone himself told an official audience around the same time that domestic and foreign concerns were critical enough to restrain Soviet adventurism. The community, however, had not foreseen the emergence of a coalition of rivals strong enough to bring Khrushchev down. Its last forecast of the premier's durability, in early 1964, concluded that his "internal position is now probably stronger and his freedom of action apparently greater than a year ago."[88]

McCone was embarrassed by this collection and analysis lapse on the most important international leadership issue of the time. The DCI himself learned about Khrushchev's removal in a telephone call from Moscow either on the 15th or the 16th. "[W]hat appeared to have happened came as a complete surprise to me and to almost everybody else," he said in a confidential briefing.

Without hard evidence, the analysis could only speculate on the meaning of the Kremlin's "cryptic" announcement and posit "indications" that the ex-premier had not stepped down voluntarily. Subsequent assessments of Khrushchev's departure were full of conditionals and qualifiers ("appears to have," "if these were," "seemed," "best guess") that showed that the US government's Kremlinology was little more than ill-informed conjecture. This relative ignorance of internal Soviet politics showed glaringly in an unenlightening Agency analysis that the new Soviet leaders "would be either less troublesome or more dangerous to the West." In an apparent effort to put the best light on the intelligence failure, McCone publicly claimed a few weeks later that Khrushchev's opponents "did not themselves believe they had the strength to remove him until they had assembled" in Moscow on 14 October and were just as surprised as anyone else when their plot succeeded the next day.[89]

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[88] OCI, "Khrushchev and the Soviet Leadership" and "Top Soviet Leadership," *Current Intelligence Weekly Review*, 20 April 1962 and 19 April 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, V, Soviet Union*, 407, 669–70; NIE 11-63, "Main Trends in Soviet Foreign Policy," 22 May 1963, ibid., 687–89; McCone comments to Army War College National Strategy Seminar, 11 June 1963, ibid., 704–5; numerous OCI analyses on Soviet leadership issues during 1963–64 in HS Files, Job 00-01588R, box 4; OCI, "The Coup Against Khrushchev," *Current Intelligence Weekly Summary*, 23 October 1964, 1, Office of Russian and European Analysis (OREA) Files, Job 80-00341A, box 8, folder 1; CIA memorandum, "Soviet Policies and Problems on the Eve of the Moscow Negotiations," 3 July 1963, cited in Bird, *The Color of Truth*, 249; NIE 11-63, "Main Trends in Soviet Foreign Policy," 22 May 1963, 5–7; NIE 11-9-64, "Soviet Foreign Policy," 19 February 1964, DI memorandum, "The Coming Struggle for Power in the USSR," 19 March 1964, and OCI Memorandum, "Khrushchev at 70: An Appraisal of His Leadership Style," 17 April 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, Soviet Union*, 25, 43–44, 59–64.

[89] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with General Eisenhower...," 30 October 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 13; McCone OH, 21; OCI Memorandum, "Soviet Leadership Developments," *Current Intelligence Digest*, 16 October 1964, 1, OREA Files, Job 80-00341A, box 8, folder 1; OCI Memorandum, "Implications of Khrushchev's Downfall," 17 October 1964, and DI Memorandum No. 2051/64, "Khrushchev's Fall and Its Consequences," 22 October 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, Soviet Union*, 137ff., 148ff.; Richard Corrigan, "McCone Calls Nikita's Fall Big Surprise," *Washington Post*, 15 November 1964, McCone clipping file, HIC.

Khrushchev probably fell from power, McCone explained to the NSC two days after the fact, because of his erratic behavior and inconsistent public statements, his flawed leadership that contributed to the Sino-Soviet split and tensions with the Warsaw Pact countries, and his advocacy of reallocating resources toward consumers and away from heavy industry and the military. The DCI had to concede that CIA analysts knew little about the relationship between the two Soviets now running the Kremlin, Alexei Kosygin and Leonid Brezhnev, but he doubted that their power-sharing arrangement would last long and predicted that one of them, or possibly a third figure, would emerge as both premier and first party secretary—as Khrushchev had after Stalin died. McCone anticipated no sharp shifts in Soviet foreign policy in the near term and later told a Senate oversight committee that the leadership change seemed to be having the salutary effect of making Moscow suspend its subversion efforts in the Third World.[90]

The sense of the Intelligence Community was the same. In estimates McCone approved during the first part of 1965, the community forecast that Soviet actions abroad would follow the lines of the previous two years. A collective leadership, with its inherent power struggles, was more prone to policy fluctuations, but the new Soviet rulers were unlikely to seek confrontation with the West or, on the other hand, to make significant concessions to it. Risk aversion, not adventurism, would be their watchwords.[91]

What To Do Next? (U)

The inadequate information and tentative analyses about the Soviet leadership typified American intelligence on the Soviet Union during McCone's tenure. The community was getting better at strategic weapons assessments because of CORONA, [redacted] led to—at times—speculative analysis, making it harder for the Johnson administration to devise a well-founded Soviet policy. (U)

The administration saw Khrushchev's ouster as an opportunity to move toward détente with the Soviet Union, but McCone did not believe a change was warranted. Speaking almost as a lone voice in the senior policymaking circle, he argued in late 1964 and early 1965 that with Brezhnev, Kosygin, and their comrades preoccupied with internal maneuvering and keeping control over the Bloc countries, new initiatives that might ensnare the United States in unexpected problems or create openings for Soviet ripostes should be avoided. Because the US strategic and political position was so much stronger than the Soviets', the administration ought not to do anything—including back-channel feelers—that would help them inadvertently. McCone's colleagues criticized this view as "Eisenhowerish," however, and it went against the administration's belief that Moscow's predicament might make it more receptive to diplomatic overtures. Washington, according to this line of reasoning, would be shortsighted to let matters drift when so many issues of mutual interest—nuclear weapons, Cuba, China, Third World conflicts—needed attention.[92]

In the closing months of McCone's directorship, Vietnam intruded into the superpower relationship, causing serious estrangement. The two sides' actions reinforced one another. The new Soviet leaders reengaged their country in Indochina through diplomatic contacts and affirmations of support to local communists, and the Johnson administration escalated the war through bombing and troop deployments. The Soviet Union's moves did not surprise Washington. Even before the administration's military actions, the Intelligence Community had forecast that Moscow—largely out of reluctance to surrender the field to Beijing—would become more active in the region. The Soviet government, however, was more willing to antagonize the United States (and the PRC) over Vietnam than American analysts had believed.[93] (U)

[90] Cline, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of an Executive Group of the National Security Council, 16 October 1964," and McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting in Cabinet Room...16 October 1964," *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, Soviet Union*, 124–26; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the National Security Council...17 October 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 10; transcript of McCone testimony to Senate Armed Services Committee, 11 January 1965, 91, ibid., box 3, folder 19. Two years earlier, CIA had identified Brezhnev and Kosygin as possible successors to Khrushchev. OCI, "The Khrushchev Succession," *Current Intelligence Weekly Review*, 19 October 1962, *FRUS, 1961–1963, V, Soviet Union*, 538–39.

[91] David Klein (NSC) memorandum to Bundy, "Discussion on Things Soviet at CIA Last Night," 7 January 1965, and NIE 11-9-65, "Main Trends in Soviet Foreign Policy," 27 January 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, Soviet Union*, 206–7, 215–16; NIE 11-4-65, "Main Trends in Soviet Military Policy," 14 April 1965, 1–2.

[92] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with Mr. James Donovan—10 December 1964," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 14; Klein memorandum to Bundy, "Discussion on Things Soviet at CIA Last Night," 7 January 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, Soviet Union*, 207–8.

By McCone's departure in April 1965, the brief period of "peaceful coexistence" was over. Throughout his dealings with Soviet affairs in the 1950s and 1960s, McCone doubted whether such a condition, by that name or any other, ever could have been established. After all, peaceful coexistence, as its architect Khrushchev had said, "is the form of struggle appropriate to the present epoch."[94] McCone was consistently realistic about the Soviet Union's long-range intention of winning that struggle against the West. He, CIA, and other members of the community, however, misjudged the means Moscow would use and the level of determination it would possess—most notably, when they doubted that it would seek nuclear superiority during the next several years. That inaccurate forecast stemmed largely from insufficient intelligence about the "main adversary," which in turn led to erroneous assumptions about Soviet strategic intentions. Despite improvements in human and technical collection while McCone was DCI, that gap in knowledge persisted for years. (U)

[93] NIE 11-9-65, "Main Trends in Soviet Foreign Policy," 27 January 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, Soviet Union*, 32; OCI report, "The Soviet Union Since Khrushchev," SC No. 00665/65A, 9 April 1965, ibid., 278; SNIE 11-11-65, "Soviet Attitudes Toward the US," 26 May 1965, ibid., 289. (U)

[94] Department of State, Policy Planning Council, "Soviet Policy in the Light of the Vietnam Crisis," 15 February 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, Soviet Union*, 249. (U)

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CHAPTER

11

Confronting the Main Adversaries (II): The People's Republic of China (U)

President Kennedy continued Eisenhower's "two Chinas" policy for dealing with the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China.[1] The approach treated them as separate states, striking a balance between their interests and containment of the communist regime in Beijing through regional alliances, diplomatic pressure, and military assistance to the Nationalist government on Taiwan. For example, the Kennedy administration refused to support the designs of ROC President Chiang Kai-shek to return to the mainland through military invasion, while at the same time it worked to prevent PRC admission to the United Nations. Despite Chiang's insistence that deteriorating conditions inside China (such as a catastrophic famine in 1961) presented the best opportunity yet for military strikes or large-scale paramilitary operations, Kennedy abided by his statements during the 1960 campaign and would not condone such tactics. (He conveyed his position to the PRC through a back channel in Warsaw.) Nor would he go to war over what he regarded as insignificant pieces of real estate in the Taiwan Strait—the islands of Quemoy, Matsu, and the Pescadores, causes of recurrent tension since the 1950s. (U)

On the ROC's side, the president [redacted] supported small harassment operations against the mainland, and in the case of UN membership, he went further than his predecessor in siding with the ROC by secretly pledging to use the US veto in the Security Council to prevent the PRC's entry. A good deal of the administration's sufferance of the Nationalists resulted from its fear of the powerful China Lobby and its allies in Congress. More broadly, Washington's hardline policy toward the PRC was but one aspect of the general posture of toughness it struck toward communists worldwide. (U)

Kennedy generally regarded Mao Zedong's China as a greater threat to global peace than the Soviet Union—as an undisciplined revolutionary state committed to spreading its virulent brand of communism to the Third World, and especially Southeast Asia. Mao, the president declared in August 1963, led a "Stalinist" government that "has called for...international war...to advance the final success of the Communist case." Beijing's actions had produced "a more dangerous situation than any we have faced since the end of the Second World War."[2] The danger grew more pronounced as Beijing developed nuclear weapons and grew further estranged from Moscow; it might be tempted to assert its influence over the communist world by brandishing its strategic weaponry. Yet, intelligence on the PRC's intentions and capabilities was sketchy, increasing the likelihood that US policymakers, working without sufficient knowledge, might provoke a confrontation with grave international consequences. (U)

The Unclear Intelligence Picture (U)

For John McCone and CIA, this situation called for intensifying collection on military and political targets and devising covert actions to weaken Beijing's hold on the mainland and subvert its stature among developing nations and foreign communist movements. McCone—strongly anticommunist, politically connected to the China Lobby, and personally acquainted with Nationalist leaders—wanted the Kennedy administration to be firm with the PRC. Commenting on a Department of State policy paper in 1962, he wrote: "It seems a little bland...to recommend only the very long term policy of avoiding provocation and hoping things will be better after Mao and his colleagues...die.... This strikes me as simply adopting an attitude of hopefulness rather than facing up to what may be much more pressing short term strategic convulsions in Asia thrust on us by the Chinese Communists."[3] Historically, however, US policymakers had perceived that of the two "main adversaries," Communist China posed the lesser threat. Moreover, the PRC, although designated a Priority National Intelligence Objective for several years, in reality had only recently emerged as a target distinct from the Sino-Soviet Bloc. ~~(S)~~

[1] See the Appendix on Sources for references to materials on US policy toward the "two Chinas" in the 1960s that were consulted in this work. The Pinyin transliteration system has been used for Chinese names and places except in direct quotations, titles of documents, and references to Nationalist leaders. Similarly, Taiwan and Taiwan Strait are used rather than Formosa and Formosa Strait, names that have fallen into disuse since the 1960s. (U)

[2] *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1963*, 752. (U)

[3] McCone letter to Rusk, 25 May 1962, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 29, folder 23. ~~(S)~~

Consequently, a significantly smaller proportion of CIA's clandestine and analytical resources was dedicated to the Communist Chinese target than to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

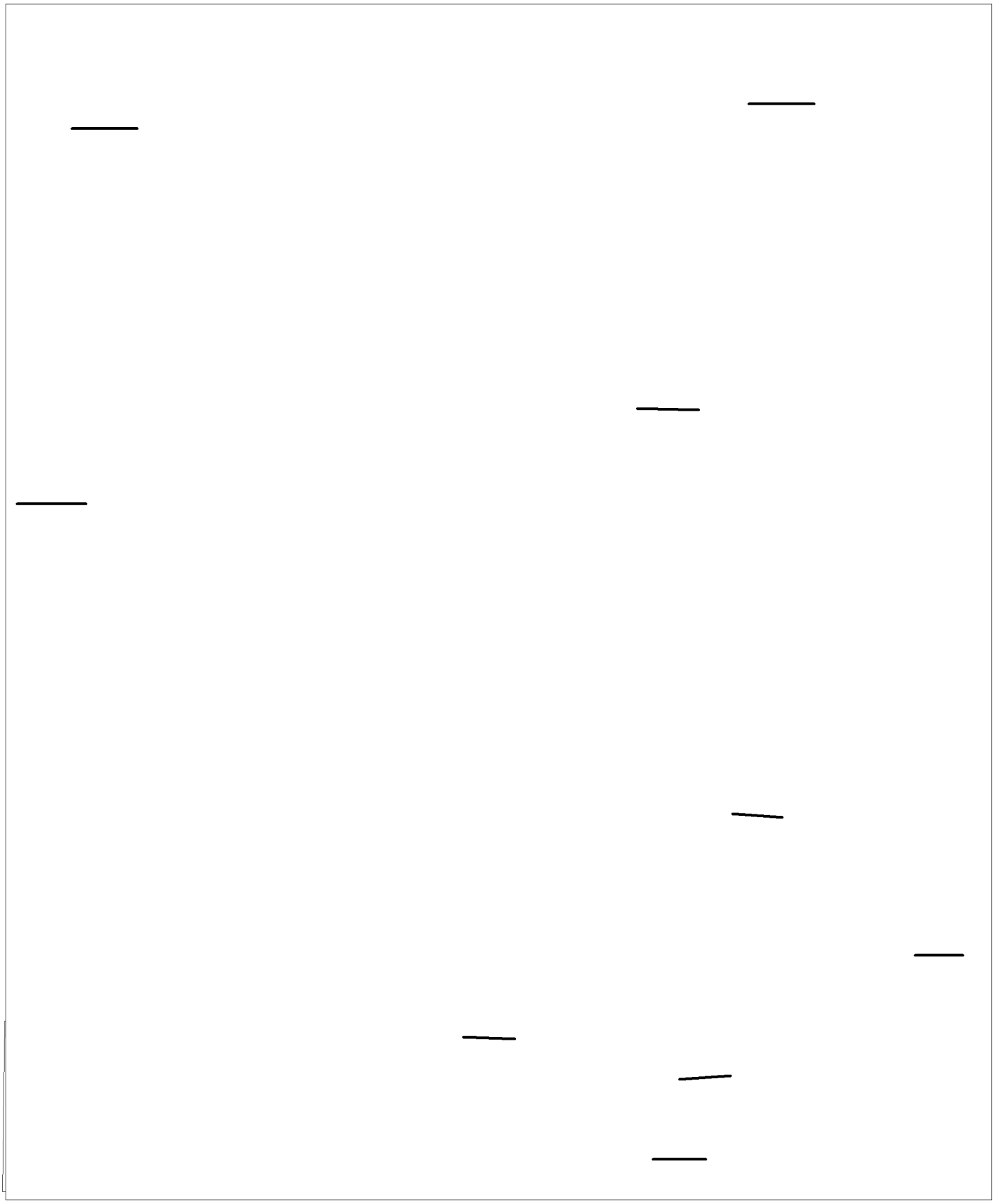
Rally of Mao supporters in the PRC (U)

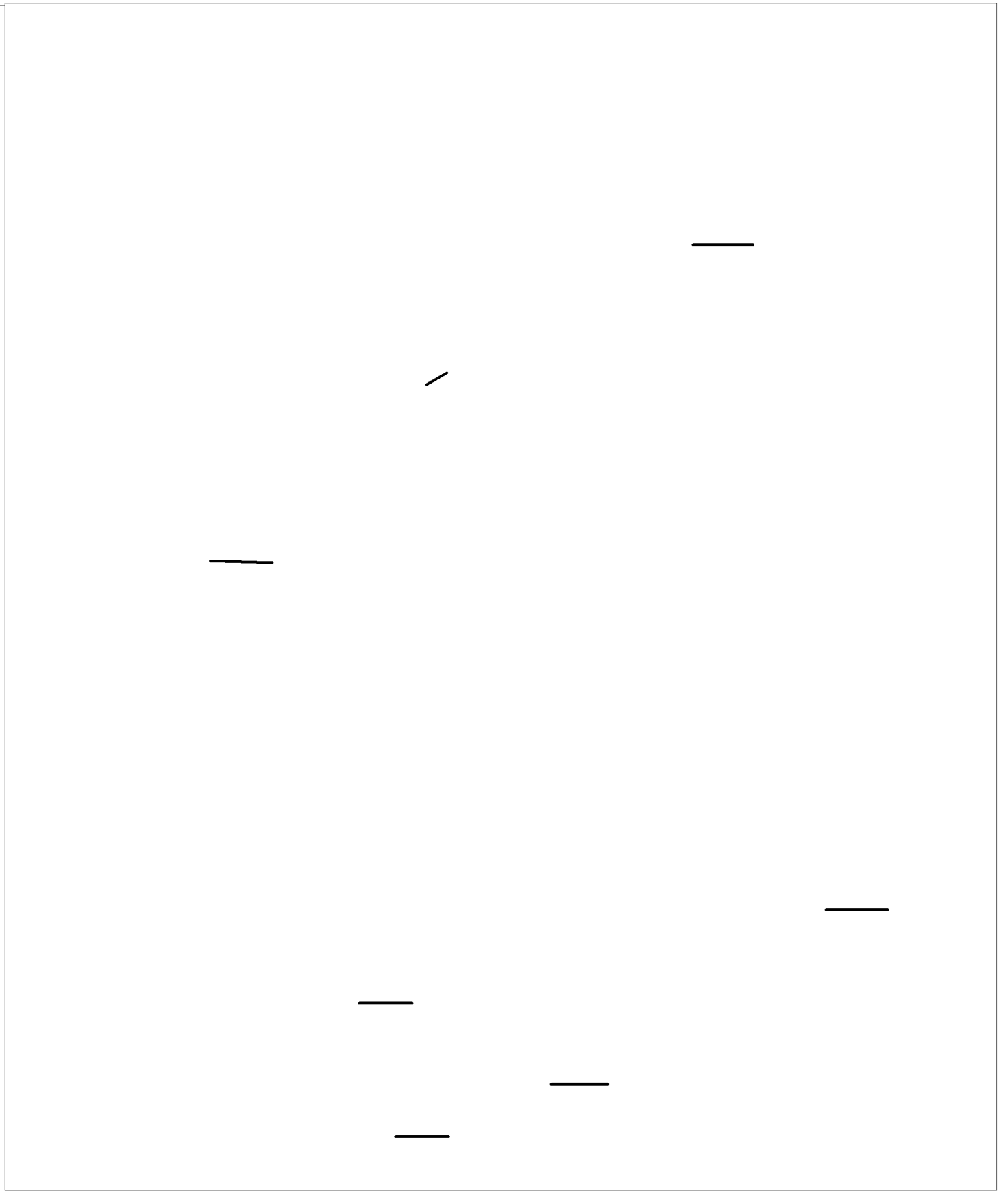
HUMINT and TECHINT (U)

The PRC was an even harder target than the Soviet Union because CIA access to potential intelligence sources was more limited and controlled. The PRC was not admitted to the United Nations until 1971, and the United States did not open a diplomatic mission in Beijing until 1973.

[4] Lay, vol. 6, 761; Helms memorandum to Kirkpatrick, "Fiscal Year 1964 Foreign Intelligence Plans and Programs," 9 May 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 25; *Annual Report for FY 1964*, 31–32 and tables following 4; memorandum to Helms, "Five Year Plan—Intelligence Collection and Political Action against China in the Next Five Years...," 9 December 1965, DDO Files, Job 78-03805R, box 1, folder 22; "CIA and China in the Time of Mao," unpublished manuscript (1999), 39, copy in HS Files. In 1964, FE Division chief William Colby reorganized

[7] Lay, vol. 6, 746ff; USIB, Critical Collection Problems Committee, material on the PRC, ICS Files, Job 82R00370R, box 2, folder 3.





Assessments (U)

CIA analysis of the PRC during McCone's tenure remained the stepchild it had been in the 1950s. Since the middle of that decade, most assessments of China appeared in the context of Sino-Soviet relations, tensions over Taiwan, and possible renewed hostilities in Korea. The DI paid relatively little attention to internal Chinese affairs. Policymaker interest in the PRC as a discrete issue subsided further around 1960 after the Soviet Union ended military aid and Mao's "Great Leap Forward" failed.[13]

Personnel allocations in the DI for PRC-related accounts during McCone's tenure are less clear than with the Soviet Bloc because many officers worked in components dealing with the Far East overall or in functional elements whose geographic responsibilities are not readily apparent from available sources or whose staff temporarily shifted assignments to China affairs when needed.

Lacking broad knowledge of political, economic, and military matters in the PRC, CIA and Intelligence Community analysts produced assessments that, although logical and thoughtful, did not advance insights that gave more than episodic help to US policymakers. Early in McCone's tenure, the estimates' conclusions were substantially more moderate than the policies they were meant to inform. In mid-1962, for example, while the administration was raising fears of Chinese belligerence during another tempest in the Taiwan Strait, USIB published a forecast that "over the next few years Communist China will follow relatively conservative and rational policies of the kind recently instituted." Three years later, however, with more intelligence in hand, community analysts reached judgments that were more hardline: Beijing would move more forthrightly to eject Western influence from Asia and supersede Moscow as leader of the communist world. Chinese foreign policy "in some ways resembles an international guerrilla struggle, which attempts to wear down the enemy's strength by attacking the weak points"—a metaphor that, given what was occurring contemporaneously in South Vietnam, did not inspire confidence that US policy toward the PRC would succeed.[15]

Beijing's Nuclear Puzzle (U)

As in previous years, US policymakers during McCone's directorship took the most interest in the PRC when its nuclear weapons program was an issue. The key intelligence question McCone and the community had to answer was: When will the Communist Chinese test their first nuclear device? The PRC's strategic weapons program began in 1955 when Mao—amid a dispute with the United States and the ROC over some offshore islands—authorized a full-scale development effort. Three years later, with major

As early as December 1960, CIA forecast that the PRC probably would detonate its first nuclear device in 1963. In April 1962 analysts concluded that the first test most likely would occur in early 1964.[16]

Intelligence and estimates on these subjects found a ready audience downtown. That was especially so by early 1963, when President Kennedy told his national security policymakers that he regarded PRC acquisition of nuclear weap-

[14] "The Development of Strategic Research at CIA, 1947–1967," 317.

[15] SNIE 13-3-61, "Chinese Communist Capabilities and Intentions in the Far East," 30 November 1961, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XXII, Northeast Asia*, 172; NIE 13-4-62, "Prospects for Communist China," 2 May 1962, 2; NIE 13-9-65, "Communist China's Foreign Policy," 5 May 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXX, China*, 169.

ons as "probably the most serious problem facing the world today." "The President was of a mind," Bundy informed McCone, "that nuclear weapons in the hands of the Chinese Communists would so upset the world political scene it would be intolerable to the United States and the West." The PRC's stature in Asia would rise, as its neighbors looked to it as a model of economic development and as a regional power broker. As discussed in the previous chapter, Kennedy's concern that Mao's revolutionary regime would join the nuclear club was the impetus behind his drive for a test ban treaty throughout the year.[17]

McCone was determined to prevent an intelligence failure like that of 1949, when the timing of the Soviet Union's first atomic test caught the United States by surprise.[18] His service as chairman of the AEC prepared him for this issue; his familiarity with nuclear technology shows clearly in his writings and statements on the subject as DCI.

McCone directed his deputies in January 1963 to undertake an all-out, all-source collection effort against the PRC. The Chinese nuclear threat, he noted, was "foremost in the minds of the highest authority and therefore should be treated accordingly by CIA.... There should be no hesitation on the part of CIA to recommend any and all types of clandestine activities directed toward the securing of additional information" about Beijing's nuclear program.

The new intelligence gave community analysts more assurance that their earlier forecasts were accurate; in July they again predicted that the PRC's first nuclear test most likely would occur in early 1964 at the soonest, but they conceded that it could happen before.

The conditionality of the SNIE's

[16] John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *China Builds the Bomb*, passim; Foot, chap. 7; Peebles, *CORONA Project*, 223–24; NIE 13-60, "Communist China," 6 December 1960, 13; NIE 13-2-60, "The Chinese Communist Atomic Energy Program," 13 December 1960, 3–4, 18–23; NIE 13-2-62, "Chinese Communist Advanced Weapons Capabilities," 25 April 1962, 3–4.

[17] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting between DCI and Mr. Bundy...," 11 January 1963, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 4; Chang, chap. 8.

[18] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting between DCI and Mr. Bundy...," 11 January 1963, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 4; Kirkpatrick memorandum to Helms, Cline, and Scoville, Action Memorandum No. A-161, "All-out Intelligence Effort against Communist China," 11 January 1963, Helms memorandum to McCone, "Ideas on Clandestine Collection Against Communist China," 24 January 1963, Colby memoranda to Helms, "Ideas on Clandestine Collection Against Communist China," 14 February 1963, and "Progress in Clandestine Collection Against Communist China," 3 May 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 10; "CIA and China in the Time of Mao," 31–33, Colby memorandum to Helms, "Progress in Clandestine Collection Against Communist China," and "CIA and China in the Time of Mao," 33.

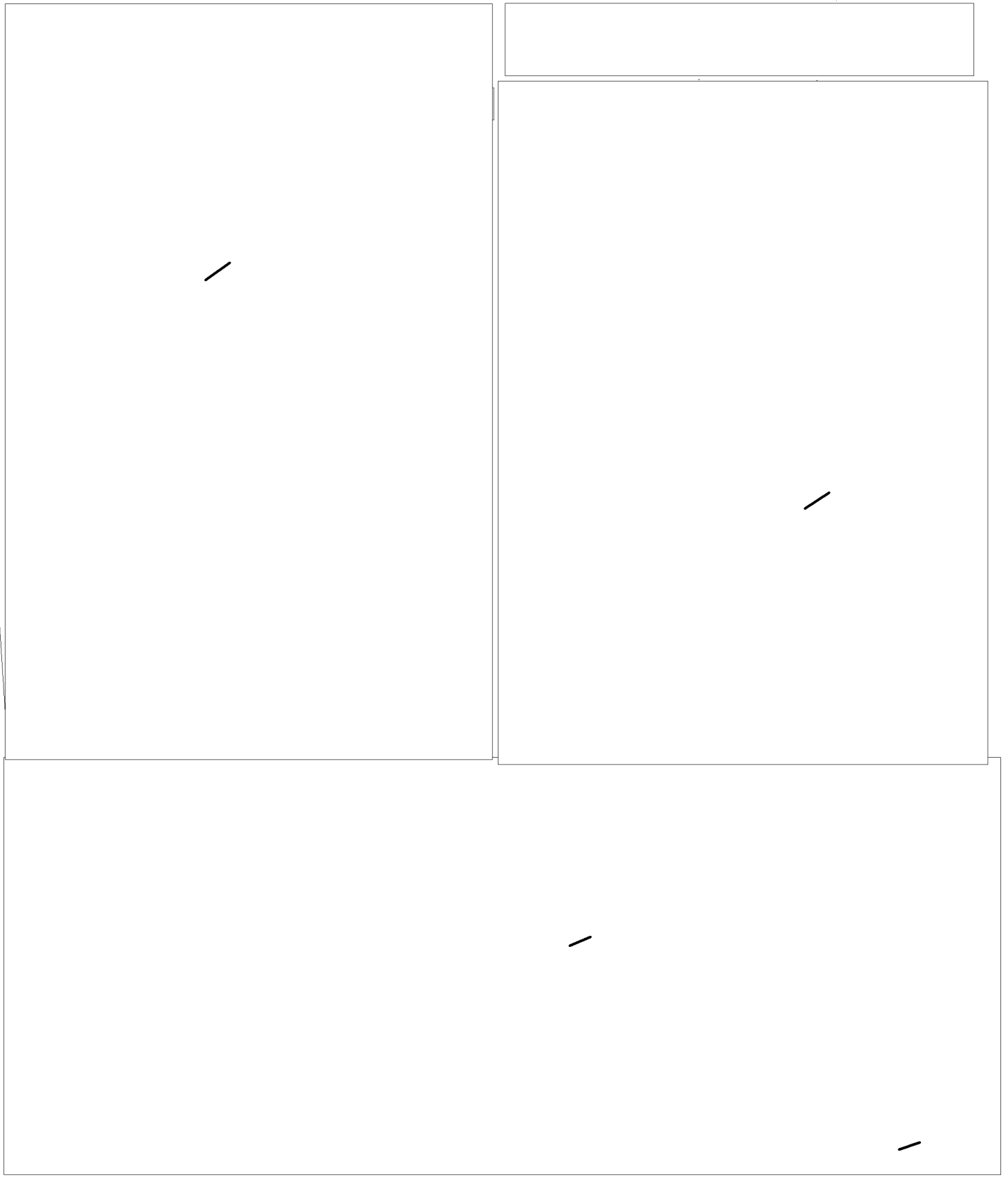
[19] Colby memorandum to Helms, "Preliminary Study of Nuclear Targets on the China Mainland," 21 June 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 10; vol. 6, Append. F, tab 4; McCone untitled memorandum to Carter about requirements on Chinese nuclear weapons, 31 October 1964, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5.

judgments was well justified. The document incorrectly reported the discovery of a plutonium production reactor and inaccurately predicted that China would not have enough weapons-grade uranium 235 before 1966 (it did so by early 1964).[20]

Overt and Covert Reactions (U)

Gripped by uncertainty and fearful of the consequences of Chinese nuclear success, the Kennedy and Johnson administrations considered diplomatic, military, and clandestine steps to impede or halt the PRC's program. Throughout 1961–63, President Kennedy and senior officials proposed to their Soviet counterparts—without success—ideas for joint US-Soviet action against Beijing.

[20] SNIE 13-2-63, "Communist China's Advanced Weapons Program," 24 July 1963, 1–2. Some of the flaws in the community estimates during the early 1960s—principally single-outcome forecasting and a failure to gauge Chinese technical skills and determination—are discussed in Willis C. Armstrong et al., "The Hazards of Single-Outcome Forecasting," *Studies* 28, no. 3 (Fall 1984): 57–70, reprinted in H. Bradley Westerfield, ed., *Inside CIA's Private World*, 238–54.



The First Test: Forecasts and Follow-Up (U)

Imagery was the key source. Relying on satellite and aerial photography—the former benefiting from improved camera resolution and larger film supplies on each mission—community analysts by mid-1964 had identified five suspect installations and concluded that two of them, Paotou and Lop Nor, were the most likely sites for the first test explosion. Lop Nor attracted special attention after CORONA photography showed construction of a tower that could hold a bomb. In July, McCone told President Johnson that the community could not foretell when the Chinese would detonate a nuclear device but that the presence of those installations in various stages of assembly and operation indicated that PRC scientists had overcome at least some of the problems caused by the Soviet cutoff of technical assistance in 1960. The president suggested that U-2 photography would give more precise information, but McCone and Rusk advised against such a mission on technical and diplomatic grounds.

With intelligence gaps remaining on such a sensitive subject, community analysts were circumspect. A special estimate issued in late August 1964, "The Chances of an Imminent Communist Chinese Nuclear Explosion," noted that while Lop Nor was being readied for a test, a shortage of plutonium suggested that one would not occur until after the end of the year. Some members of the community disagreed with that judgment—the 15th anniversary of the founding of the PRC, 1 October 1964, had been suggested as a possible date—but no representative took a footnote. Two scientists who advised CIA on strategic issues told McCone that Agency analysts were screwing up by assuming the Chinese device had to use plutonium, not uranium, and thus would take longer to prepare. Perhaps, having heard that opinion, McCone was bolder in his forecasts when he met with Western European heads of government in September, saying the Chinese may conduct a test within 30 to 60 days. At this point, McCone changed his mind about sending a U-2 over Lop Nor, but Rusk and Bundy countered that the consequences of losing a plane were too great to justify the risk.

With a Chinese test drawing nearer, McCone and other officials in the community advised the president that the US government could prevent the PRC from achieving a propaganda victory and avoid being blamed for another intelligence failure by announcing that the administration already knew a test would occur soon. Such a statement would, as one American diplomat said at the time, "reassure neighboring countries that the US was watching and aware." Johnson agreed, and Rusk told the press on 29 September that "for some time it has been known that the Communist Chinese were approaching the point where they might be able to detonate a first nuclear device." This announcement marked the first time that information derived so evidently from satellite imagery had been made public. Meanwhile, CIA

[27] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President [and Rusk, McNamara, and Bundy]...5 October [1964]...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9; Burr and Richelson, "A Chinese Puzzle," 46; SNIE 13-4-64, "The Chances of an Imminent Communist Chinese Nuclear Explosion," 26 August 1964, *CORONA: America's First Satellite Program*, 239–44; Michael R. Beschloss, ed., *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964–1965*, 43; Senior Review Panel memorandum to DCI William Casey and DDCI John McMahon, "Study of Intelligence Judgments Preceding Significant Historical Failures," 16 December 1983, ER Files, Job 86B00269R, box 11, folder 72; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Rusk, 12 September 1964," and "Memorandum of Discussion at Luncheon, 15 September [1964,]" McCone Papers, box 2, folder 13; record of conversation between McCone and UK Prime Minister Sir Alec Douglas Home, 21 September 1964, Richard J. Aldrich, ed., *Espionage, Security and Intelligence in Britain, 1945–1970*, 107–8; Bundy untitled memorandum about meeting with Rusk, McNamara, and McCone on 15 September 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXX, China*, 94.

continued planting stories in Asian media designed to minimize the psychological and political impact of a Chinese test, and the Department of State told US embassies in the region to prepare material for use in overt propaganda and official statements.

At this key juncture, President Johnson and his national security advisers ruled out a preventive military or paramilitary strike.[29] The president, who had not evinced the same anxiety over Chinese nuclear weapons as his predecessor, maintained his policy of avoiding confrontation with Beijing. His attitude to the PRC's nuclear threat was that, in his words, "different dangers require different policies and different actions" than toward the Soviet Union. Over the preceding several months a consensus had developed among administration policymakers that Beijing's acquisition of a nuclear capability would not change the status quo in East Asia enough to justify military action. Attacks on mainland strategic sites while the United States and the PRC were not fighting each other would be politically and militarily risky and might cause the Chinese to increase their support to North Vietnam. PRC reprisals against Taiwan also could not be ruled out. In any case, damaged facilities would be rebuilt, leaving the United States with a Hobson's choice of attacking again or acquiescing in embarrassment. (U)

Accordingly, the administration judged that intensifying current policies and programs was the best way to contain the Communist Chinese threat. Those steps included continuing (but futile) efforts to enlist Moscow in diplomatic moves against Beijing. Some officials still considered military and paramilitary options, including an overt, nonnuclear airstrike by the US or ROC air forces, covert ground attacks using American and Nationalist agents inside China, and sabotage operations by airdropped ROC commandos. The last scenario was deemed the most workable and received "serious analysis" at the time, according to a contemporary document, but did not go forward because it had several prominent flaws beyond the likely diplomatic fallout. Details about target facilities were not known for certain, the Soviet Union probably would not support the action, and the destruction of Chinese stocks of fissile material would be only temporary. With the efficacy of attacks far from assured and with the election less than two months away, President Johnson—running on a "peace platform" against Republican hawk Barry Goldwater—was not about to order military action inside the PRC. McCone agreed that the timing for attacks was wrong just then but said the US government should not categorically rule out a preemptive strike. (U)

CORONA photographs of Lop Nor taken on 8 October removed any doubt that the first Chinese test would occur within days.[30] Beijing had grounded all aircraft near the site, removed workers and equipment from the compound, constructed bunkers and instrument platforms. On the 16th, a atomic bomb exploded there. Because the community had followed the prior events so closely and the US government had announced that the test was imminent, its political

[28] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President [and Rusk, McNamara, and Bundy]...5 October [1964]...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9; Elder, "McCone as DCI (1973)," 1289; Burr and Richelson, "A Chinese Puzzle," 46; idem, "Whether to 'Strangle the Baby in Its Cradle,'" 89–90; Department of State Airgram CA-43 to US Embassy in Bangkok et al., "Status of Program to Influence World Opinion with Respect to a Chinese Communist Nuclear Detonation," 20 July 1964, on National Security Archive Web site at www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB38, doc. 14; Chester Bowles (US Ambassador to India) letter to Bundy, 16 September 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXV, South Asia*, 153; McCone memorandum about meeting with Helms, 8 September 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 13. (U)

[29] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Department of State, Policy Planning Council, "An Exploration of the Possible Bases for Action Against the Chinese Communist Nuclear Facilities," 14 April 1964, and "The Implications of a Chinese Communist Nuclear Capability," c. April 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXX, China*, 39–40, 57–58; Bundy untitled memorandum about meeting with Rusk, McNamara, and McCone on 15 September 1964, and Komer untitled memorandum to Bundy, 18 September 1964, ibid., 94, 96–99; Burr and Richelson, "Whether to 'Strangle the Baby in Its Cradle,'" 76–88; Robert H. Johnson (Department of State, Policy Planning Council) memorandum, "A Chinese Communist Nuclear Detonation and Nuclear Capability...," 15 October 1963, Rusk memorandum to the president, "Items for Evening Reading," 1 May 1964, Johnson memorandum, "The Chinese Communist Nuclear Capability and Some 'Unorthodox' Approaches to the Probability of Nuclear Proliferation," 1 June 1964, and Johnson memorandum to Henry Owen (Department of State), "Thursday Planning Group Discussion of 'Communist China and Nuclear Proliferation,'" 2 September 1964, on National Security Archive Web site at www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB38, docs. 10, 12, 13, and 15; Shane Maddock, "LBJ, China, and the Bomb: New Archival Evidence," *Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Newsletter* 27, no. 1 (March 1996): 1–5; Chang, chap. 9; Warren I. Cohen, *America's Response to China*, 191–92; Nancy B. Tucker, "Threats, Opportunities, and Frustrations in East Asia," inWarren I. Cohen and Nancy Bernkopf, eds., *Lyndon Johnson Confronts the World*, 99–115; Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 211. (U)

[30] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Donald Chamberlain (OSI) memorandum to Carter, "Estimated Imminence of a Chinese Nuclear Test," 15 October 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXX, China*, 107–8; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the National Security Council...17 October 1964," and Cline, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of an Executive Group of the National Security Council, 16 October 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 10; Peebles, *CORONA Project*, 226–27; Burr and Richelson, "Whether to 'Strangle the Baby in Its Cradle,'" 91–92; Armstrong et al., "The Hazards of Single-Outcome Forecasting," 246; Seaborg, *Stemming the Tide*, 112–17; *Journals of Glenn Seaborg*, vols. 7–9, entry for 16 October 1964, 254. (U)

impact was muted. As Ray Cline later said, the administration had "pretty well prepared the world for expecting this event [without] becoming unduly alarmed by it." The White House released a statement, composed well in advance, that minimized the accomplishment. ~~(S)~~

Washington Post

In retrospect, the community's main misjudgment was presuming that because the weapon would be plutonium-based, the Chinese would not be able to test a bomb as soon as they did. Instead, by developing a uranium-based device first, the Chinese were able to "join the atomic club" sooner than expected. (They did not explode a plutonium-based nuclear device until June 1967.) Moreover, Beijing's ability to develop fissile material on its own, rather than acquiring it from the Soviets, suggested that the proliferation problem was more serious than anticipated. Despite indications that a second test might occur soon after, the administration continued its display of calm confidence.[31] ~~(S)~~

The days of mid-October were fairly frantic for McCone, with the Chinese test coming right after Nikita Khrushchev's ouster as Soviet premier. The DCI participated in a flurry of briefings of policymakers and congressional leaders. He assured the NSC that Beijing would not have a sophisticated delivery capability for many years and that it was not then developing intercontinental missiles.

The failure of that high-priority mission put McCone in an embarrassing situation. According to DDS&T Albert Wheelon:

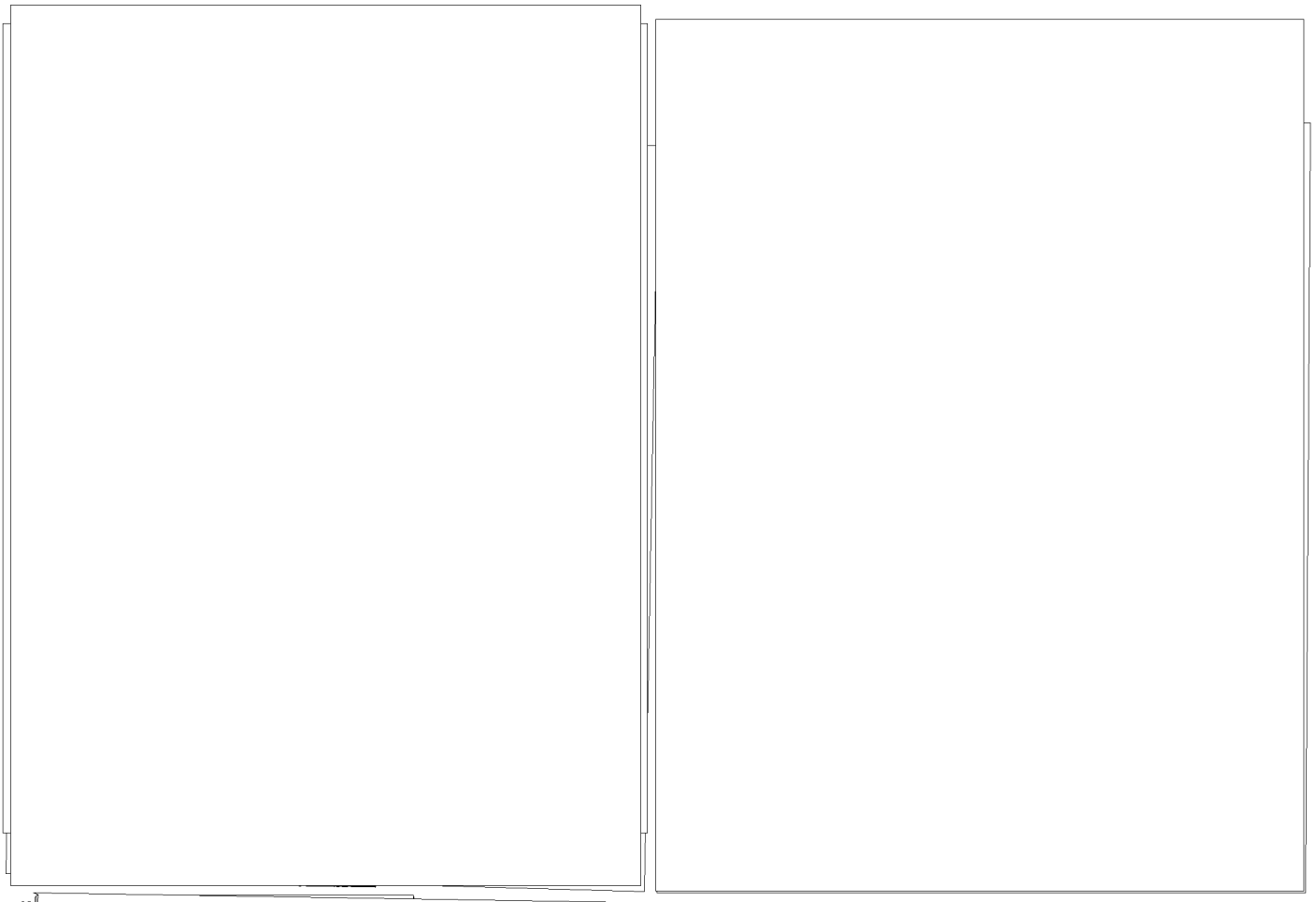
> I had counseled McCone and [President] Kennedy that it was a long way in, and I was not sure we could make it. Air Force Brigadier General and Director, Office of Special Activities [OSA], Jack Ledford and I were at a Christmas party at McCone's house on a snowy night. McCone dragged us into his study to say, "I just want to reiterate to you two how important

[31] The conclusions of a proliferation task force convened in December bolstered the policy. Headed by former Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric, and including Allen Dulles, John J. McCloy, and George Kistiakowsky, the panel considered several options for curtailing the spread of nuclear weapons, among them attacking the PRC's strategic weapons facilities. In the end, it advised the president to use diplomatic means instead. The administration also continued to spurn recurrent Nationalist Chinese proposals to attack the mainland in force sent to brief President Chiang Kai-shek 10 days after the PRC's test, heard such a plan from the ROC leader, who displayed "a rather intense feeling of frustration and anxiety." NSAM No. 320, "Task Force on Nuclear Proliferation," 25 November 1964, and "A Report to the President by the Committee on Nuclear Proliferation," 21 January 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XI, Arms Control and Disarmament*, 126, 173–82; Burr and Richelson, "Whether to 'Strangle the Baby in Its Cradle,'" 93–94; US Embassy Taipei cable no. 347 to Department of State, 24 October 1964, on National Security Archive Web site at www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB38, doc. 20. (U)

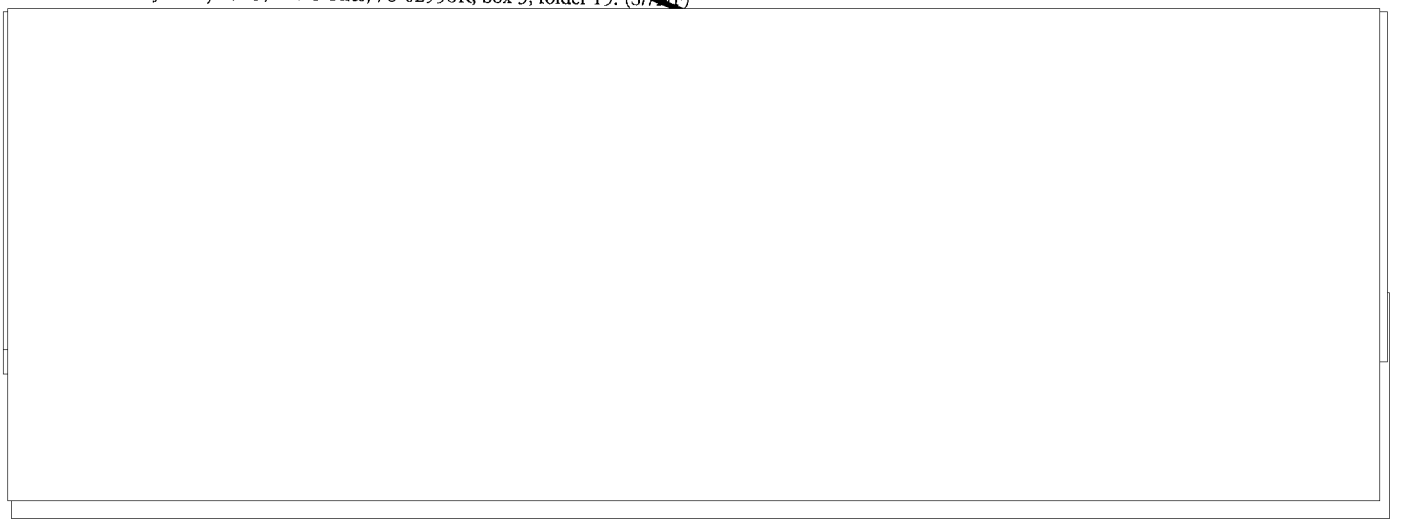
A little over two weeks after McCone left the Agency, the PRC exploded its second atomic device.[34] (S)

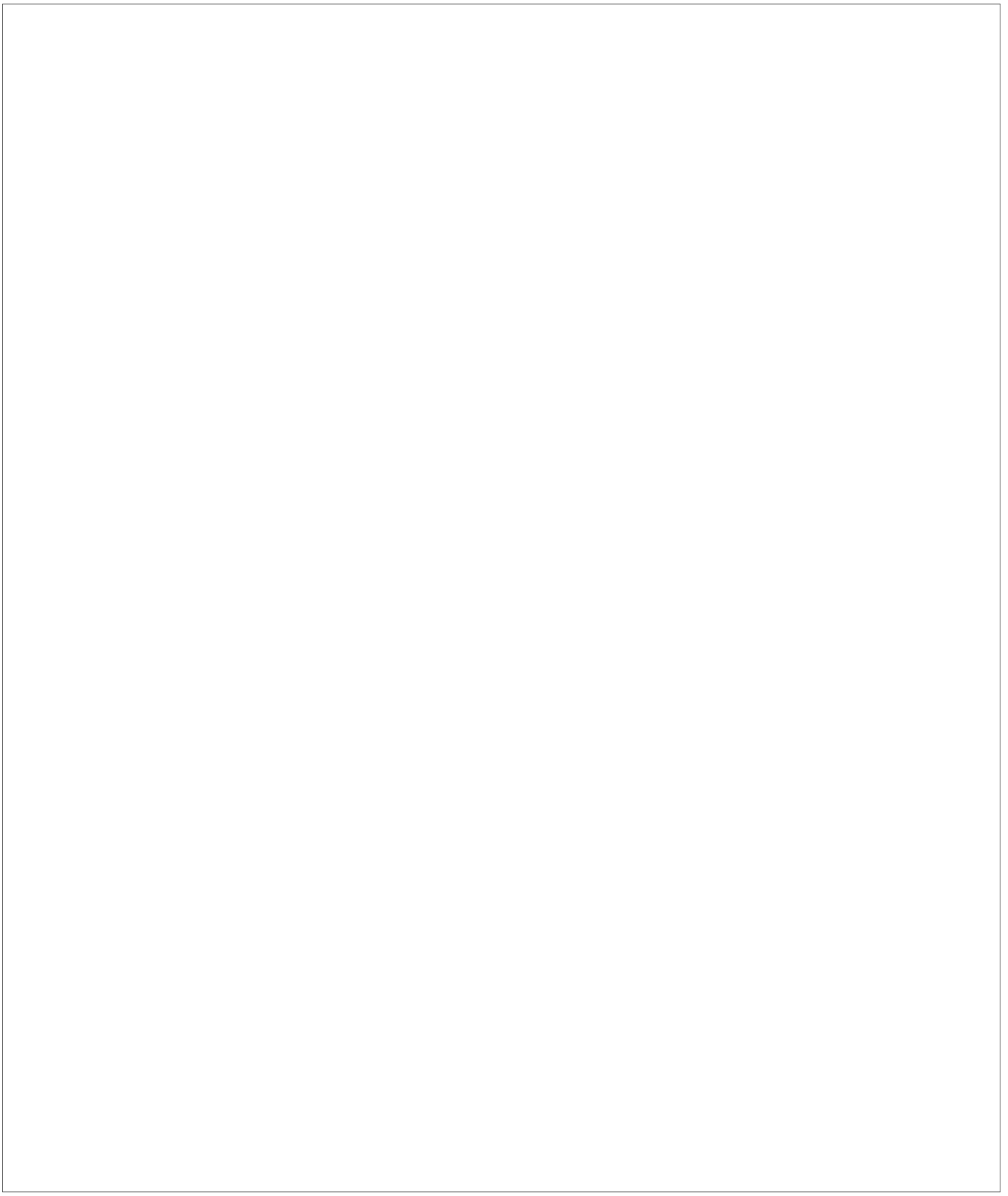
As usual, I went to the morning meeting and asked Ledford to come with me. John McCone walked in and looked around the room with those blue eyes of his and said, "Who authorized that mission?" I said [to myself], "Well, today is as good a day as any to quit this outfit." I responded, "I have a piece of paper with your signature, and Mac Bundy's and Bob McNamara's, and Dean Rusk's on it, telling me to do it." DDCI Carter, said, "That's right, sir, you ordered that mission." One could have heard a pin drop in that room. McCone closed his book, got up, and left…The subject was never mentioned again.[33] (U)

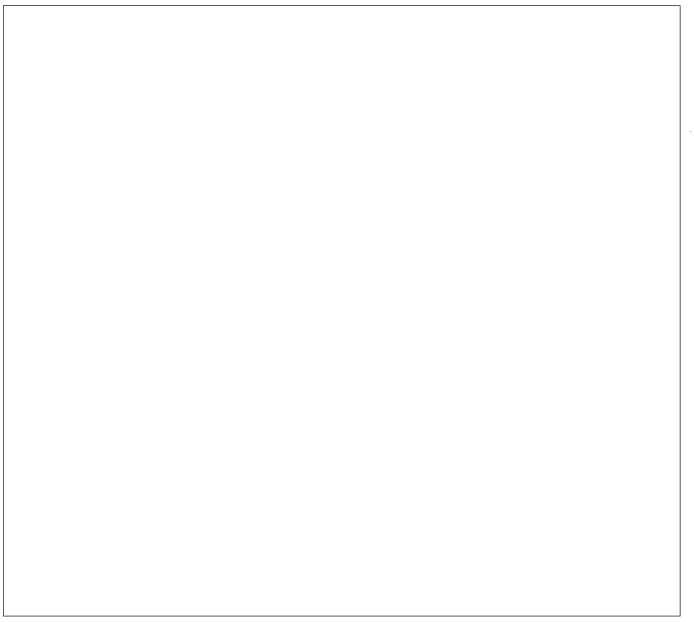
Throughout the post-test period, NRO continued its accelerated schedule of satellite launches to monitor developments at existing Chinese sites and to look for new ones.



35 CIA Staff, "Covert Propaganda Operations Against Mainland China," under "Far East" tab in file "Covert Action Accomplishments 1 April–11 August 1963," HS Files, HS/CSG-675, Job 83-00036R, box 4, folder 17; FitzGerald memorandum to Meyer, "Briefing Material on Covert Action Operations Against Communist China," HS/CSG-309, 28 February 1961, ibid., box 2, folder 9; Meyer memorandum to McCone, "CIA's Covert Action Program," 26 November 1963, ibid., box 10, folder 15; *Annual Report for FY 1965*, 113–14; Colby memorandum to McCone, "Covert Action Program Against Communist China," 3 July 1963, memorandum to Meyer, "Comments on C/FE Memo to D/P of 29 May 1963," 3 June 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 10; Karamessines memorandum to Helms, 11 September 1963, DDO Files, Job 79-07173A, box 1, folder 2; White House background paper, "Visit of Chinese Minister of Defense Chiang Ching-kuo…September 21–28, 1965: Background Paper…U.S.-GRC Consultations Concerning Possible Action Against the Mainland"; Helms memorandum to Bundy, "Covert Exploitation of Sino-Indian Hostilities," 15 January 1963, DDO Files, 78-02958R, box 3, folder 15. ~~(S/NF)~~







Still an Enigma (U)

As American involvement in Vietnam increased during the early Johnson presidency, policymakers put more pressure on CIA to improve its collection against the PRC. Following along lines McCone had laid out, USIB in mid-1965 reaffirmed the need for the Intelligence Community to develop a collection and analytical prowess against the PRC "commensurate with that against other highest priority targets." Progress was halting, however. Secretary of State Rusk spelled out the persistent problem in late 1965: "The difficult policy decisions and judgments we make concerning Peking are continually handicapped by insufficient information on its capabilities, intentions, actions, and strategy." The turmoil of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s only made the Chinese target harder to work against, and collection efforts ended the decade in disarray. Despite efforts to fill the intelligence gap made during the tenures of McCone and his immediate successors, China was "still an enigma" in 1970, the Agency reported to PFIAB. Real advances in collection and analysis had to await the PRC's emergence in the early 1970s from its self-imposed isolation.[41] (S)

munist China...," ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 19, folder 386; Helms memorandum to DDP, DDI, and DDS&T, "Review of Intelligence Activities Against Com-
(for Fiscal Year 1970), 25, ER Files, Job 80B01086A, box 3. (S)

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CHAPTER

12

McCone and the Secret Wars (I): Espionage and Covert Action (U)

John McCone's management of CIA's clandestine activities was conditioned on three facts. First, unsteeped in the argot and methodology of espionage and counterintelligence, he was more interested in analysis and technical collection than in secret operations. (One COS recalled that during McCone's introductory tour of stations and counterpart services in Europe in late 1961, the DCI asked him, "What, exactly, is a double agent?")[1] Second, nothing in McCone's background endeared him personally or professionally to careerists in the DDP. His years of federal service notwithstanding, he had not traveled in the same social circles as the elite Easterners and OSS veterans at the top of the operations hierarchy, and he was regarded as more of an "outsider" by the Clandestine Services than by other Agency components. (U)

Third, after the Bay of Pigs, the Kennedy White House was determined to control covert actions far more closely than when Allen Dulles was DCI. The bureaucratic changes the administration instituted for overseeing covert actions left the DCI with a reduced role in them—a limitation McCone worked to surmount. The administration created a simpler NSC apparatus than its predecessor used and gave more authority to the Special Group to plan and review CA operations. The Special Group, in turn, set up two subgroups: the Special Group Augmented, which directed efforts to topple Fidel Castro, and the Special Group Counterinsurgency, which by late 1962 oversaw secret projects in nearly a dozen Southeast Asian and Latin American countries. Authority over covert action was concentrated in the hands of Robert Kennedy, McGeorge Bundy, and, through much of 1962, the president's military adviser, Maxwell Taylor. CIA's independence decreased further in 1963 when the White House directed it to seek approval for all covert actions costing more than [redacted] on a "cost and risk" basis. Before then, station and division chiefs had approval authority except in sensitive cases, which they referred to the ADDP, the DDP, or the DCI, who decided whether to raise a project with one of the Special Groups. (Espionage operations were exempt from this outside review and authorization).[2]

McCone's lack of familiarity with clandestine operations and predilection for technology and analysis, along with the administration's close management of covert actions, meant that the new DCI's approach to managing the DDP would be more "hands off" than it would be with analysis and science and technology. He had no interest in being and no brief to adopt Allen Dulles's role as the "Great White Case Officer." McCone's DDP, Richard Helms, characterized McCone generally as "a very good manager...a quick study...a man with a firm hand." In the realm of clandestine activities, that meant the DCI delegated day-to-day responsibility to the respected and canny Helms, counting on his "chief operations officer's" experience in espionage and counterintelligence, keen political sense, and skepticism about covert action to restrain gung-ho operators, conspiratorialists, and other overly zealous Cold Warriors. At the same time, McCone became well-versed in operational details when he needed to be, insisting that his deputies regularly inform him about large or politically sensitive projects. For example, he routinely met with Helms after the morning staff meeting for a private briefing on close-hold operations, and he expected the Watch Office to notify him of developments in clandestine operations. Thus prepared, he would intrude himself in those activities, formally or informally, to whatever extent he or the White House deemed necessary.[3]

Like most "manager-reformer/outsider" DCIs, McCone valued technical collection over traditional espionage, but unlike some later representatives of that type (such as James Schlesinger and Stansfield Turner), he did not denigrate HUMINT. Even though McCone spent much more of his time on overhead reconnaissance than field operations, he

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[1] [redacted] 235. (U)

[2] Anna Karalekas, "History of the Central Intelligence Agency," in [redacted] *The Central Intelligence Agency*, 63, 79, 82–83; Department of State, "US Covert Actions and Counter-Insurgency Programs," in *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXIV, Africa*, xliii–xliv; Parmet, 213–14; Ranelagh, 411; [redacted] The 1963 pronouncement on covert action approval modified procedures Allen Dulles had instituted in June 1960, by lowering the money threshold by [redacted] and requiring White House (not just DCI) authorization. Dulles memorandum to DDCI, DDP, and DDS, "Approval of Clandestine Service Projects," 1[illegible] June 1960, HS Files, Job 83-000739R, box 5, folder 2. [redacted]

[3] Helms/McAuliffe OH, 1; Carter-Knoche OH, 79; Cline memorandum to Helms, "Operational Information for Watch," 14 May 1964, DDI Files, Job 89T01385R, box 1, folder 4. [redacted]

recognized that "spies in the sky" had significant limitations and must be used in conjunction with the recruitment and exploitation of well-placed, reliable human sources. Just as the CORONA program was gaining momentum, he cautioned senior Agency managers not to become transfixed by that achievement. "While satellite photography represents the best, and probably the most dependable[,] information available to us," he wrote to Helms, "we should be careful that we do not depend solely and exclusively on this source." The Soviets could deceive the satellites easily and inexpensively, McCone believed, so he urged the DDP to "exert every possible effort" to collect HUMINT on Soviet missile sites. In the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, in which aerial reconnaissance had proved vital, the DCI warned the Intelligence Community against "drifting into a frame of mind that high-level photography is all we need, that it will show everything that must be seen." Without balanced collection, intelligence services "run the risk of making a serious error."[4] (S)

Despite the Bay of Pigs fiasco, McCone neither chose nor was required by the White House to restructure or downsize the politically weakened DDP.

In addition, the Kennedy administration's push for CA and counterinsurgency operations in the Third World, where it had the greatest interest in containing communist influence, kept the Western Hemisphere, Far East, and Africa Divisions very busy. (S/NF)

Changes to the Clandestine Services (U)

McCone instituted or endorsed readjustments in the ways DDP staffs and area divisions did business. The changes were intended to impose greater policy oversight, administrative rationality, operational effectiveness, and cost consciousness.

As chairman of USIB, McCone knew what requirements had been levied on CIA stations, and, as DCI, he could follow how collectors acted on them inside the Agency. When apprised of situations that hampered the DDP's ability to fulfill the community's needs, he sought remedies. In some cases, the stations used clandestine assets to acquire information that could be obtained overtly. McCone urged staff- and division-level managers to screen requirements more carefully in order to allow case officers to make the best use of their assets. The DCI also worked with his counterpart at DIA, Gen. Joseph Carroll, in finding ways to limit bureaucratic conflicts and duplication of collection by DDP and military intelligence components.

Some improvements were

[4] McCone memoranda to Carter, 22 May 1962, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5, and 11 December 1962, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 4. (S)

[6] Helms memorandum to McCone, "CIA Representation Abroad," 10 April 1962, DDO Records, Job 78-07173A, box 1, folder 1; *Annual Report for FY 1965*, charts after 1; Kirkpatrick, "Memorandum for the Record...DCI's Presentation to the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, 26 June 1963," and "Memorandum for the Record...DCI Meeting with President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board...13 September [1963]," DDO Files, Job 78-03805R, box 3, folder 12A; Kirkpatrick, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, 4 February 1965," CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 131. (S)

instituted in but problems in Vietnam persisted as the US military presence there expanded.[7]

To enable CIA to conduct more effectively the paramilitary operations the White House wanted, McCone ratified establishment of the Special Operations Division (SOD) in July 1962. An internal survey conducted at the time McCone became DCI identified deficiencies in personnel, logistics, research and development, and management of the Agency's paramilitary programs and capabilities. One of the study's findings was that activities were so complex, extensive, and expensive that they needed to be centralized. Accordingly, SOD was created through a merger of the of the former Development Projects Division and the SOD became a self-contained unit that planned and ran land, sea, and air operations. It also proved more effective at getting the area divisions to use their expertise than had been the case under the previous arrangement, largely because it now had its own resources.[8]

McCone and his senior executives confronted a large management problem with the which directed a far-flung network of aviation cover companies the Agency used to support field operations.

Following up on an IG recommendation that greater control be exercised over them, McCone in February 1963 approved DDCI Carter's establishment of an Executive Committee for Air Proprietary Operations (ExComAir), chaired by the general counsel. Eventually the DCI himself would review all major new projects and capital expenditures for the air proprietaries.[9]

Domestic Operations (U)

In the domestic collection area, McCone—acting on recommendations of the Kirkpatrick Working Group and DDP officer C. Tracy Barnes—in 1962 authorized the establishment of the Domestic Operations Division

By then, McCone—who appreciated work on science, technology, and nuclear issues—was persuaded that it would be most effective as a collection unit for the DI rather than as a support unit for the DDP. Friction between and the FBI was minimized by proscribing the former from counterintelligence activity, caused recurrent tensions between the two organizations that were unresolved when McCone stepped down.[10]

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[7] Karamessines untitled memorandum to Chief, FI Staff, 9 May 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 2, folder 2; McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, 20 July 1962, McCone Papers, box 1, folder 14.

[8] "Status of Agency Paramilitary Posture and Capabilities," ca. April 1962, HS Files, HS/CSG-1875, Job 83-00036R, box 3, folder 8; 213.

[9] Meyer memorandum to Helms, "Policy Coordination Status of Covert Action Projects," 16 January 1963, tab D, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 19; Carter memorandum to Chairman, ExComAir, "Functions and Responsibilities of the ExComAir," Action Memorandum No. A-268, 2 August 1963, and Helms memorandum to DDP division and staff chiefs, "Clandestine Services Air Activities," 16 October 1963, HS Files, HS/CSG-2164, Job 83-00739R, box 5, folder 2; Kirkpatrick Diary, vol. 5, entry for 18 April 1963; "Air America, 1946–1972," History Staff Miscellaneous Historical Studies No. MISC-9, vol. 5, 392–93.

With one politically sensitive organization—the Peace Corps—McCone continued a strict "hands off" policy. "While Communist propagandists will always allege that the Peace Corps is used for intelligence activities," he wrote to President Johnson, "I remain determined that no opportunity be afforded them to establish any justification for their allegation." Accordingly, CIA would not employ any Peace Corps personnel until two years after they left that agency.[12]

Mail Opening and Drug Testing (U)

McCone's former associates disagree over how engaged he was with two of CIA's most notorious clandestine operations inside the United States: examining mail sent to and from the Soviet Union (HTLINGUAL),[13] and testing LSD and other mind-altering drugs on unwitting American subjects (MKULTRA).[14] According to the Church Committee in 1976, no Agency documents show that McCone knew of the mail opening program, and McCone's testimony to that effect was consistent with the statements of James Angleton of the CI Staff and Howard Osborn, former head of the Soviet division and the Office of Security. McCone and Executive Assistant Elder have said the reasons he did not know CI Staff was reading American and Soviet mail were that HTLINGUAL was a small operation in place since

[11] (DCI assistant) memorandum to Bross, "Deputies' Meeting, 26 December 1961," Action Memorandum No. 2, Bross memorandum to McCone, " 12 January 1962, untitled memorandum to McCone, 23 January 1962, Earman memorandum concerning McCone meeting with on 19 February 1962, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 1; Bross memorandum to Archibald Roosevelt (CA Staff), "Deputies Meeting, 25 January 1962," and memorandum to Bissell, "Deputies' Meeting, 25 January 1962," Action Memorandum No. 4, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 34.

[12] FitzGerald, "Memorandum of Conversation...Meeting with David Rockefeller," 27 March 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 9; McCone letter to 22 January 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 5; numerous entries of meetings with US businessmen on McCone calendars, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 8, folder 10; DCI Directives 2/3 and 2/8, both effective 25 July 1963, DCI Files, Job 86T00268R, box 2, folder 12; McCone letter to President Johnson, 24 August 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 12. Former Peace Corps personnel could work for Agency proprietaries under two conditions: "the employing or using activity must not be engaged in covert activities" and the employee "must not be engaged directly by, or receive direction from, CIA." CA Staff Notice No. 20-18, 1 April 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 12.

[13] In early 1952, CIA—with the concurrence of the US Post Office—began scanning the exteriors of letters sent from the United States to the Soviet Union. During the first three years of the operation, Agency security officers occasionally opened some letters without Post Office knowledge. In late 1955, James Angleton, head of the CI Staff, took over the program and proposed that CIA review all mail to and from the Soviet Union that went through New York and open about two percent of the letters (approximately 400) monthly. Richard Helms, then the Chief of Operations in the DDP, approved this phase of the program, which began in early 1956. HTLINGUAL was terminated in 1973. For brief periods, US mail to and from Cuba and Communist China was examined under similar programs. US Senate, *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities*, 7 vols. (hereafter *Church Committee Report*), vol. 3, 567–624; Commission on CIA Activities Within the United States, *Report to the President* (hereafter *Rockefeller Commission Report*), chap. 9; Fischer, 98–99. (U)

[14] Prompted by reports that the Soviets were experimenting with "mind-control" substances, CIA began investigating the intelligence applications of mind-altering drugs in the late 1940s. The project, called BLUEBIRD, initially worked on developing countermeasures to interrogation techniques using drugs. In 1951, a larger project named ARTICHOKE looked into the operational use of unconventional interrogation methods, including drugs and hypnosis. Reports that the Chinese had "brainwashed" prisoners during the Korean War gave further urgency to these inquiries. From 1953 on, the Agency's efforts were combined with similar undertakings by the US military, as well as research on behavior modification and poisons, into an umbrella program managed by the DDP's Technical Services Staff (later, the Technical Services Division). *Rockefeller Commission Report*, 226–28; "Behavioral Drugs and Testing," CIA memorandum prepared for Rockefeller Commission, 11 February 1975, ER Files, Job 79M01476A, box 10, folder 187; *Church Committee Report*, vol. 1, 387–422; US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research of the Committee on Human Resources, *Project MKULTRA, the CIA's Program of Research in Behavioral Modification*, passim; 101–04; John D. Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate"*, passim.

1952, was never presented to the DCI for renewal, was not a line item in the Agency budget, and did not produce anything worth bringing to McCone's attention. Richard Helms, on the other hand, has said that HTLINGUAL "was well known to John McCone, even though he denies ever having known about it." McCone's careful attention to CIA's role in the investigation of Kennedy's assassination supports Helms's assertion. Some of the information the Agency developed on President Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, came from examinations of his mail under HTLINGUAL, and it seems implausible that the DCI would not have been told, even in passing, about the program after the assassination (see Chapter 14). Furthermore, DDCI Carter was told in February 1965 that congressional inquiries into mail surveillance might touch on HTLINGUAL, and it seems unlikely that he would not have forewarned the DCI about the details of such a potentially damaging controversy. The preponderance of evidence indicates, therefore, that McCone most likely was aware of at least part of the program—the mail examinations if not the openings—possibly by late 1963 or early 1964.[15]

Similarly, recollections differ about the surreptitious drug tests.[16] The evidence indicates that McCone not only knew about them but disapproved of them sufficiently to order their suspension. According to the Church Committee report, McCone did not learn all the details of MKULTRA until Helms—possibly in anticipation of a critical IG report on the program—informed him in mid-1963. According to Helms, McCone raised no objection to unwitting testing at the time. McCone testified to the Church Committee, however, that no one had told him about the project in a way that "would have turned on all the lights."

Some confusion might have arisen in McCone's mind over the nature and scope of the MKULTRA program. MKULTRA technically was only an accounting device used to designate a broad range of investigations into human psychology and behavior managed by DDP's Technical Services Division under Dr. Sidney Gottlieb. Work with pharmacological and biological agents was only part of the program, and most of the money was spent on prosaic and largely ethical psychological tests, literature surveys, and chemical analyses (most of which took place in American universities and research institutions without CIA's sponsorship made known). The most troubling aspect of MKULTRA was the administration of psychotropic drugs to unwitting subjects in what were called "normal life settings"—which included hospitals, prisons, and safehouses


Sidney Gottlieb (U)

These tests, although few in number and relatively inexpensive, represented a key facet of MKULTRA. Any formal briefing given McCone on the overall project presumably would have explained the program's very broad, and mostly benign, scope and glossed over the details of the secret experiments.

After the IG in 1963 recommended closing the safehouses in San Francisco and New York, McCone suspended testing on unwitting subjects but put off a final decision on the program as a whole. During the next year, Helms recommended to Carter (as acting DCI) that blind testing be resumed. Helms warned that "an apparent Soviet aggressiveness in the field of covertly administered chemicals" was "inexplicable and disturbing" but that the Agency's "positive operational capability to use drugs is diminishing, owing to a lack of realistic testing." The experiments, Helms believed, could not be validated without unwitting subjects. He also worried that "decreasing knowledge of the state of the art...results in a waning capability on our part to restrain others in the intelligence community (such as the Department of Defense) from pursuing operations in this area." However, Carter—who told his own deputy in late 1963 that "I am scared to death of this

[15] *Church Committee Report*, vol. 3, 581; Elder OH, 9; McCone letter to Elder, 21 January 1975, ER Files, Job 79M01476A, box 14, folder 316; Helms OH, 1; John Newman, *Oswald and the CIA*, 283–87; DCI morning meeting minutes for 24 February 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 349.

[16] Sources for this paragraph and the next two are: *Church Committee Report*, vol. 1, 401–02, 406; notes of Carter meeting with Knoche on 18 November 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 3; Kirkpatrick Diary, vol. 5, entry for 29 November 1963; Earman, "Summary of Inspector General's Report of Inspection of MKULTRA," 26 July 1963, and "Memorandum for the Record...MKULTRA Program," 29 November 1963, MORI doc. nos. 146197 and 146165; Helms memorandum to Carter, "Testing of Psychochemicals and Related Materials," 17 December 1963, Carter untitled memorandum to Helms, 24 December 1963, Helms memorandum to McCone (signed by Carter), "Sensitive Research Programs (MKULTRA)," 9 June 1964, Knoche untitled memorandum to Elder, 23 July 1964, and Helms memorandum to McCone, "Unwitting Testing," 9 November 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 18, folder 8; McCone calendar entry for 13 November 1964 (meeting with Carter, Helms, Earman, and Gottlieb); DDCI Daily Log, 2 December 1964, ibid., box 13, folder 10.

one"—ordered the suspension continued, pending the DCI's decision. Carter also refused to endorse the use of non-Americans in the tests. McCone took no further action, which effectively killed what would become MKULTRA's most controversial aspect.

The Wall of Separation (U)

McCone encountered resistance from senior DDP managers when he tried to increase DI participation in operational planning but interdirectorate cooperation had improved by the end of his tenure.[17]

Wisner's Breakdown (U)

McCone's circumspect handling of the delicate problem of the venerated Frank Wisner's psychological decline went some way toward allaying DDP concerns that this brusque stranger from the business world would be insensitive to the morale and loyalty of the closed Clandestine Services community. Wisner was CIA's premier covert operations officer during its first decade.[19] He was an OSS veteran who had headed the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), the US government's covert action arm, from 1948 to 1951 and had

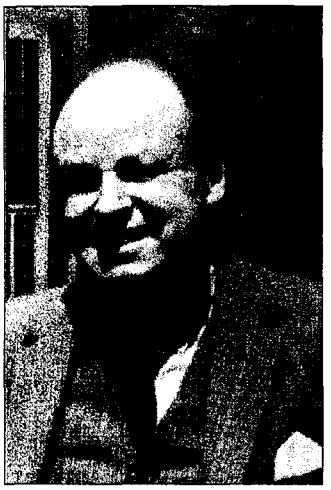
[18] Robert Amory, the DDI at the time of the Bay of Pigs, later expressed the "if only you'd asked me" resentment many analytical officers felt about being cut out of planning for the operation:

> I was never in on any of the consultations either inside the Agency or otherwise.... At least on paper I knew more about amphibious warfare than anyone else in the Agency. I had made 26 assault landings in the South Pacific, Southwest Pacific and so on—and of about the same size, many of them, as the Bay of Pigs. Whereas the Marine they had advising them had made one...and that was Iwo Jima, which was three divisions abreast.

Andrew, 261. (U)

[19] Information on Wisner comes from his official personnel file, and Thomas, *The Very Best Men*, chaps. 1, 2, 4, 10, 11, 21.

become DDP before OPC merged with the Office of Special Operations, which ran espionage operations, in 1952. Wisner was a brilliant, energetic, and fervid anticommunist, committed to rolling back the Soviet Union on all fronts, but especially in his own area of expertise, Eastern Europe, through an agglomeration of paramilitary, political, propaganda, and psychological operations dubbed "the mighty Wurlitzer."



Frank Wisner (U)

[redacted]

and senior officers, McCone temporarily took Wisner on as a special assistant, after which he would resign and become a consultant to the DCI and DDP on operations. McCone and his deputies placed few demands on Wisner. After Wisner left the Agency in August 1962, he wrote some reports on intelligence and political topics, working out of an office in the old East Building. He spent most of his time running his farm, managing his investments, collecting Greek artifacts, and reviewing books on espionage. In March 1965, he sent a letter to McCone conveying his distress that NBC Television was planning to run a documentary on CIA that contained "inaccuracies, distortions, and...ugly myths, many of which are of demonstrably communist origin." McCone politely agreed with Wisner, but he had already done his share of complaining to magazine publishers and network producers. McCone did not see Wisner again. In October 1965, Wisner had another breakdown and killed himself.[20]

Liaison Activities (U)

Lastly, McCone fulfilled his duties as the US government's top-ranking intelligence "diplomat" through dozens of meetings with high-level foreign leaders and liaison representatives overseas and at Headquarters. He took 10 business trips outside the United States during his tenure—five to Western Europe, three to Southeast Asia, and two to Latin America—and he held policy and intelligence discussions with heads of government, cabinet ministers, service chiefs, and military commanders. On these trips, McCone was highly conscious of status and protocol, preferring to deal only with officials of commensurate rank and to discuss only the most important bilateral intelligence topics. According to Helms, who accompanied the DCI several times, McCone was so accustomed to dealing with the top level of leaders in the United States and foreign countries that he did not seem to think meeting relatively junior foreign officers for operational discussions was time well spent, despite the benefits to the liaison relationship. He did not want trips to include successions of courtesy calls and a social whirl of parties and sightseeing. Instead, he insisted they deal with official matters of substance, and be scheduled for maximum efficiency and thoroughly documented. As a gesture of appreciation to helpful foreigners, McCone instituted a practice he had followed in the private sector of sending birthday greetings to people overseas who worked closely with the Agency. He enjoyed at least cordial relations with the major Western and Asian services, except for France's. Relations with the French had been poisoned by a KGB defector's charges that the Soviets had riddled the French government with agents (see Chapter 13).[21]

[20] Wisner letter to McCone, 12 February 1962, ER Files, Job 80R01676R, box 32, folder 9; Wisner letter to McCone, 4 July 1962, Elder, "Memorandum for the Record on Conversation Between Mr. McCone and Mrs. Frank Wisner," 21 June 1962, [redacted], and McCone, "Memorandum of Discussion with Frank Wisner on July 10, 1962," McCone Papers, box 5, folder 7; Carter [redacted] Memorandum, 7 September 1962, ER Files, Job 80R01676R, box 13, folder 5; DDCI Daily Log, 3 October 1962, ibid., box 13, folder 9; Thomas, *The Very Best Men*, 315–20.

Covert Action and Intelligence Policy (U)

Befitting his roles as intelligence director and presidential adviser, McCone deeply involved himself in numerous high-profile covert action programs that were important elements of the Kennedy administration's national security policy.[22] The administration regarded covert political operations as essential weapons in the struggle against the Soviet Union and the PRC for influence in the Third World. That predisposition, combined with longstanding bipartisan support for such activities and Allen Dulles's active patronage of them, meant that McCone did not need to "sell" the Agency's CA capabilities to the nation's new policymakers.

McCone, along with the chairman of the JCS, the deputy secretary of defense, the under secretary of state for political affairs, and the president's national security adviser, was a member of the NSC's Special Group (renamed the 303 Committee in 1964), which usually met twice monthly to review and authorize covert action proposals.[23] The Special Group was, as Richard Helms later described it, "the mechanism that was set up...to use as a circuit breaker so that these things did not explode in the president's face and that he was not held responsible for them." During the Kennedy administration, the Special Group approved or reconfirmed

alone. Sensitive proposals had to have McCone's approval (or, in McCone's absence, the DDCI's) before they were submitted for Special Group consideration. The DCI met weekly with Carter, Elder, Helms, CA Staff chief Cord Meyer, and appropriate DDP division representatives to review the plans.[24] McCone required proposals to include a budget statement indicating if the funds were available in the area division or the directorate, or if some adjustment of accounts or further congressional authorization were necessary. In mid-1962, the DCI assured PFIAB that, in a not-so-subtle contrast with his predecessor's sometimes haphazard approach, "all covert action programs are now handled in an orderly, correct manner."

McCone did not, however, descend to the field-level management in which Dulles reveled. Instead, he remained at the policymaking stratum, helping formulate the goals and outlines of the larger or more potentially problematic covert actions and monitoring their execution. He left their implementation to his expert deputies, Helms and Meyer. Over the course of his directorship, McCone tended increasingly to submit only large CA proposals and sensitive election operations for Special Group review. Otherwise, he let the DDP operate under prior directives when its responsibility and authority were clear. (Those lower-profile projects were vetted with the local ambassador or with Department of State leadership.) In late 1963, however, McCone directed the DDCI to undertake what would now be called a "zero-base" review of all CA projects—then numbering

[21] McCone calendars; DCI trip files in McCone Papers, box 5, folders 1–4, and box 8, folder 11; Helms/McAuliffe OH, 1; DDP staff meeting minutes, 17 May and 22 June 1962, and Helms memorandum to McCone on guidance to stations concerning DCI trips, 11 July 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 40; DDP divisions' memoranda of important contacts' birthdays, ibid., folder 28.

[22] Sources for the first three paragraphs of this section are: 213; Meyer memorandum to McCone, "CIA's Covert Action Program," 26 November 1963, HS Files, Job 83-00036R, box 10, folder 15; Meyer memorandum to Helms, "Policy Coordination Status of Covert Action Projects," 16 January 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 19; "Covert Action Briefing Data, Total CA Budget—FY 1964–67"; Michael Warner, "Sophisticated Spies: CIA's Links to Liberal Anti-Communists, 1949–1967," *IJIC* 9, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 429; NSAM No. 57, 28 June 1961, *FRUS, 1961–1963, VIII, National Security Policy*, 112; Church Committee, *Alleged Assassination Plots*, 150; Elder memorandum to DDCI, DDP, and Chief/CA Staff, Action Memorandum B-9, 22 May 1962, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 2, folder 6; Kirkpatrick memorandum to DDP, DDI, DDR, and DDS, "Preparation of Material and Briefings for the 5412 Group," 18 June 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 3, folder 16; DDP staff meeting minutes, 17 and 31 May 1962, ibid., box 1, folder 40; Helms, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting on CA Matters with the Panel of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board," 25 July 1962, McCone Papers, box 13, folder 2; Helms memorandum to Carter, "Covert Action Project Funds, FY 1964 and FY 1965," 4, in "Covert Action Project Funds FY 1964 and FY 1965 (With Historical Perspective, December 1947–January 1964)"; *Annual Report for FY 1964*, budget chart after 4, and *Annual Report for FY 1965*, budget chart after 1; McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, 13 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 3; CIA memorandum, "Coordination and Policy Approval of Covert Operations," 23 February 1967, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 4, folder 7; *Church Committee Report*, vol. 1, 52, 56–57; Jessup OH, 20; Elder/McAuliffe OH2, 14. Early in 1962, the International Organizations Division (IO) merged into the CA Staff, and Cord Meyer, head of IO, became chief of the combined unit.

[23] After the existence of Special Group 5412 was disclosed in the book *The Invisible Government* in 1964, it was renamed the 303 Committee. Jessup memorandum to Bundy, "Proposed Name Change for Special Group (5412)," 19 May 1964 and NSAM No. 303, "Change in Name of Special Group 5412," 2 June 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXIII, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy...*, 451–53; "Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee, 4 June 1964," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 7.

[24] This procedure did not preclude standard informal coordination with other agencies, nor did it apply to Directorate of Research, Task Force W (MONGOOSE), or counterinsurgency activities. The latter two were handled by the Special Group Augmented and the Special Group Counterinsurgency, as described in previous chapters. (U)

-to determine which activities warranted Special Group reauthorization. Of the projects the DCI approved for Special Group discussion, those examined below illustrate aspects of McCone's leadership, including his roles in formulating foreign policy, contacting the business community, taking on bureaucratic rivals, sensing political and diplomatic concerns, and keeping ties to the Kennedys. ~~(S)~~

Latin America (U)

"Latin America required our best efforts and attention" because it was "the most dangerous area in the world," President Kennedy said in 1963. Most foreign policy problems "paled in comparison with the prospect of the establishment of a Communist regime" in the Western Hemisphere. In the decade preceding the Kennedy presidency, 13 Latin countries had undergone violent or extra-constitutional changes of government. The new administration—fearing that the impoverished and oppressed masses of the region would embrace leftist panaceas—undertook a two-track approach to encourage economic development and social reform. Overtly, a Marshall Plan-style initiative called the Alliance for Progress provided billions of dollars in foreign aid and technical expertise, and the US military ran training and assistance programs for local armed forces and security services.

Helms told his staff in early 1962 that "it is imperative to realize the extent to which WH [Division] is the 'wave of the future'" for the Agency.[25] ~~(S)~~

McCone underscored the point with three direct actions. He ordered a full IG survey of WH Division for presentation to him in the first week of his tenure. He participated in regional COS conferences in 1962 and 1963. Lastly, he approved a

McCone closely followed the Agency's CA operations in *Chile*—the second largest set of such projects in the Western Hemisphere after Cuba.[27] The US government had long regarded Chile as an exemplar of democracy and capitalism in a region largely run by juntas and *hacenderos*, and the country became the showcase for the Kennedy and Johnson administrations' nonviolent efforts to combat Latin radicalism. Those initiatives in Chile included both large amounts of overt foreign aid—more dollars per capita than to any

[25] Memorandum about President Kennedy's meeting with Ambassador to Peru J. Wesley Jones, 25 January 1963, memorandum about Kennedy's meeting with UK Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, 30 June 1963, and Kennedy untitled memorandum to Rusk, 29 October 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XII, American Republics*, 159, 609, 880; DDP staff meeting minutes, 5 April 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 40; Barber and Ronning, Appendix A. ~~(S)~~

[26] Meyer memorandum to McCone, "CIA's Covert Action Program," 26 November 1963, HS Files, Job 83-00036R, box 10, folder 15; Helms memorandum to McCone, "CIA Civic Action Activities in Latin America," 26 April 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 15; McLean, vol. 1, xix, vol. 2, 239, 245, 263; Knapp, 216; Meyer memorandum to Elder, "Covert Action Project Funds, FY 1964," 2 December 1963, HS Files, Historical Study MISC-13.5, folder "CA Policy Planning Documents"; 1962 Western Hemisphere chiefs of station conference materials in McCone Papers, box 8, folder 11; J.C. King memorandum to McCone, "Western Hemisphere Division Comments on the Covert Intelligence Annex (III) to the South America Assessment Team Report," 16 March 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 3, folder 10; "Covert Action Project Funds, FY 1964 and FY 1965," tab 4.

[27] The principal sources for this discussion are:
T.F. Schmidt, "Election Operation in Chile," *Studies* 35, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 43–48; "Chile—Special Group Actions" in appendix to "Covert Action Project Funds FY 1964 and FY 1965"; William V. Broe (DDP) memorandum to Helms, "U.S. Government Involvement in 1964 Chilean Election," 6 November 1970, ER Files, Job 80R01284R, box 7, folder 11; Peter Jessup (NSC), minutes of Special Group meetings on 19 December 1963, 1, 12, and 14 May, 21 August, and 11 September 1964, McCone Papers, box 1, folders 6 and 7; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Discussions with President Johnson, December 27th[, 1963]," ibid., box 6, folder 6; King memorandum to McCone, "Political Action Program in Chile," 3 January 1964, DDO Files, Job 80-01690R, box 1, folder 24; King memoranda to McCone, "… Agency Action for the 4 September 1964 Chilean Presidential Election," 19 and 27 March 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 18, folder 370; CIA memorandum to Special Group, "Support for the Chilean Presidential Elections of 4 September 1964," 1 April 1964, National Security Council/303 Committee Files, Subject Files/Chile through 1969, LBJ Library; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Group, 30 April 1964," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 7; Church Committee, *Hearings before the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities of the United States Senate. Volume 7. Covert Action*, Appendix A, "Covert Action in Chile, 1963–1973," 151–64, 204; CIA, "CIA Activities in Chile," 18 September 2000, posted on CIA public Web site at www.internet.cia/cia/publications/chile, 2–3, 5; *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXI, South and Central America; Mexico*, docs. 245–277 on 545–608; Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 109–16; Paul E. Sigmund, *The United States and Democracy in Chile*, chap. 2; idem, *The Overthrow of Allende and the Politics of Chile, 1964–1976*, chap. 3. ~~(S)~~

nation except Vietnam-

An NSC memorandum in 1962 declared that "We are not prepared to risk a Socialist or FRAP [Frente de Acción Popular] victory, for fear of nationalization of U.S. investments...and the probably Communist influence in a Socialist (or FRAP) government." If the FRAP won the presidency in the September 1964 election—a distinct possibility, given the slumping economy and feuding among the nonsocialist parties—it would be the first time in history that an avowedly Marxist government gained power in an independent country through democratic processes. US policymakers believed a socialist regime in Chile would give the Soviet Union a satellite in Latin America that potentially was more useful than Cuba for starting a radical "chain reaction" in unstable countries in the region, including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and Colombia.[28] (S)

Salvadore Allende campaigning in 1964 (U)

McCone and the Special Group/303 Committee reviewed and approved a succession of DDP proposals to prevent a leftist—most likely Salvadore Allende de Gossens—from becoming president of Chile in 1964.

The presidential election project alone cost nearly $3 million. McCone and the Special Group initially agreed to DDP proposals to give money to the Radical Party (actually a moderate organization), the Christian Democrats, and the governing Democratic Front coalition, as well as to anti-Allende civic organizations. After the Democratic Front began falling apart and the FRAP showed alarming strength in local elections in 1963 and early 1964, the Special Group approved the Agency's reorientation toward the Christian Democratic candidate, Eduardo Frei Montalvo.

McCone at first questioned the wisdom of the shift in resources. He noted that Chilean business interests seemed less concerned about the election's outcome than the US government and that the Christian Democrats' platform had some of the same policies as that of the Socialists. The Special Group decided, however, that the expenditures were vital, as many observers gave FRAP candidate Allende (who received Soviet and Cuban funds) a fair chance of winning and embarking on policies of nationalization, land reform, and other "progressive" measures. When the ballots were counted, Frei had won 56 percent of the vote—the first absolute majority in any Chilean presidential election since 1942. The magnitude of his victory was widely regarded as a popular repudiation of communism. (S)

[28] Although McCone shared this interpretation, he did not try to sway Agency estimators, who judged in late 1963 that the FRAP's chances for victory had slipped. NIE 94-63, "The Chilean Situation and Prospects," 3 October 1963, 1–2. (S)

[redacted]

[30] Jessup minutes of Special Group meetings on 20 April, 1 and 12 May, and 11 September 1964. McCone Papers, box 1, folder 7; transcript of McCone telephone conversation with Ball, 7 May 1964, ibid., box 10, folder 6; transcript of McCone meeting with [redacted] 11 May 1964, ibid., box 7, folder 10; Broe memorandum to Helms, "U.S. Government Involvement in 1964 Chilean Election," 6 November 1970, ER Files, Job 80R01284R, box 7, folder 11; King memorandum to McCone, [redacted] 15 May 1964, ibid., Job 80R01580R, box 18, folder 365; Elder memorandum to DCI William Colby, "Special Activities," in "Family Jewels" compendium, 459; *Annual Report for FY 1965*, 117–18. ~~(S//NF)~~

[31] [redacted]

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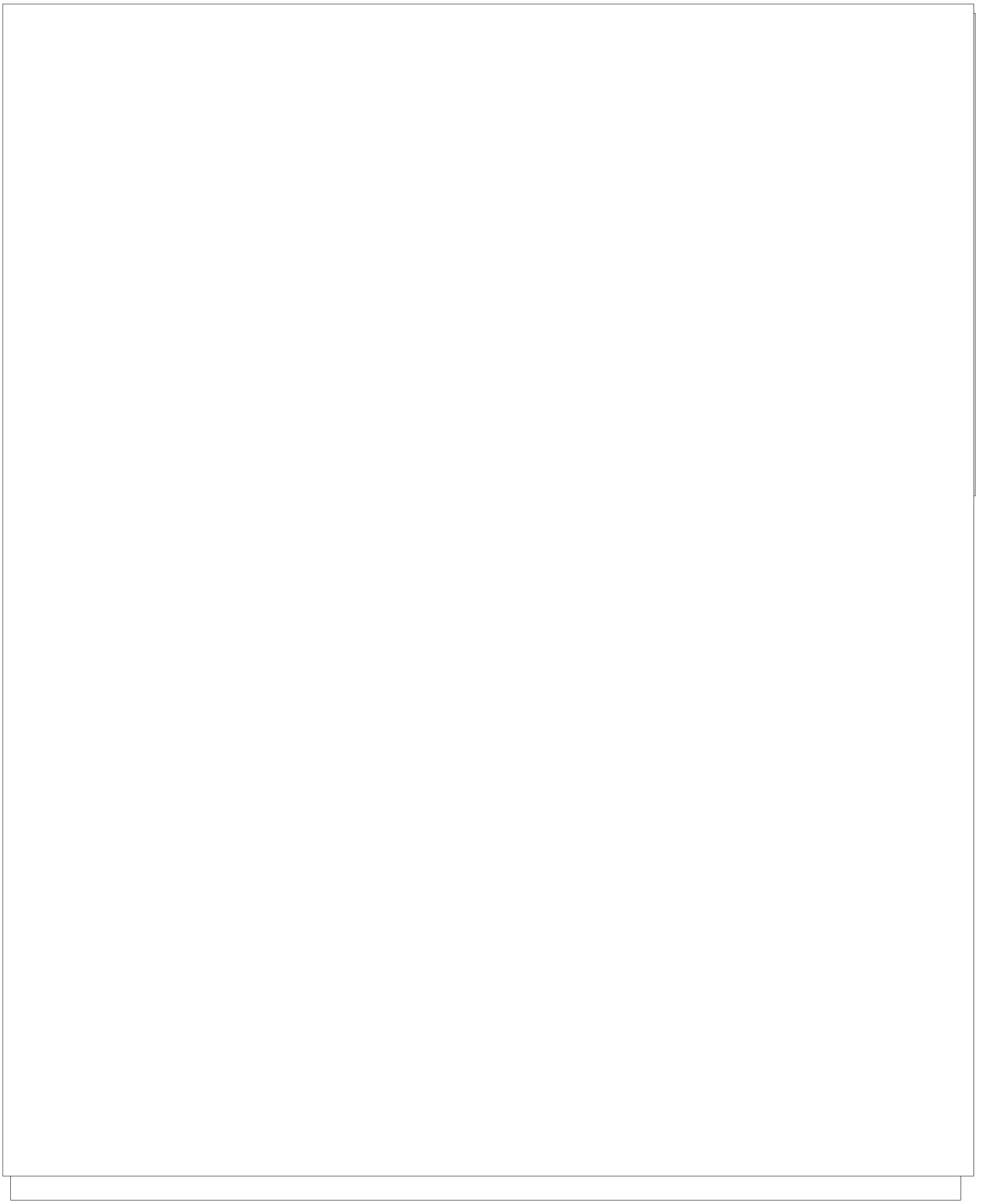

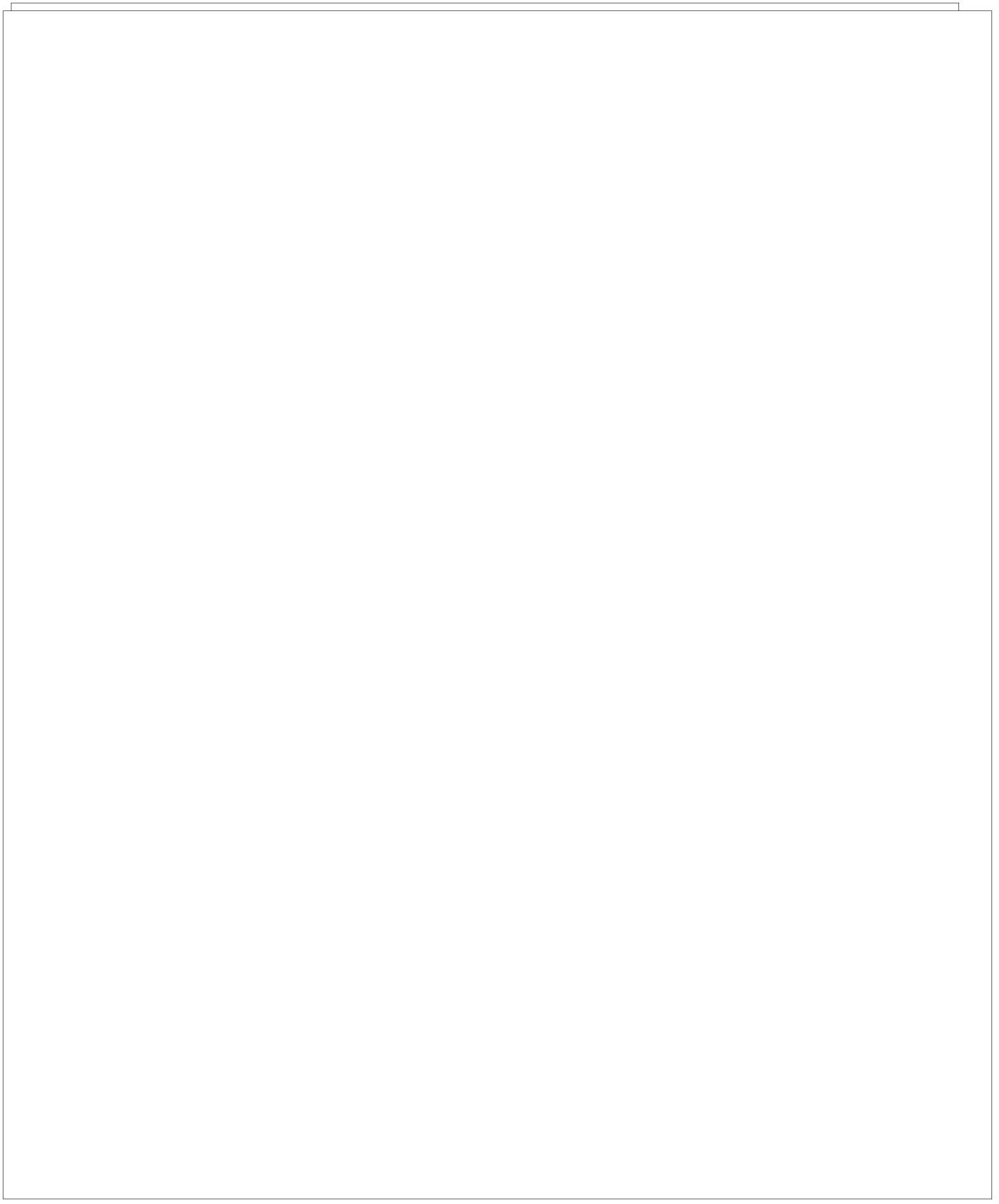

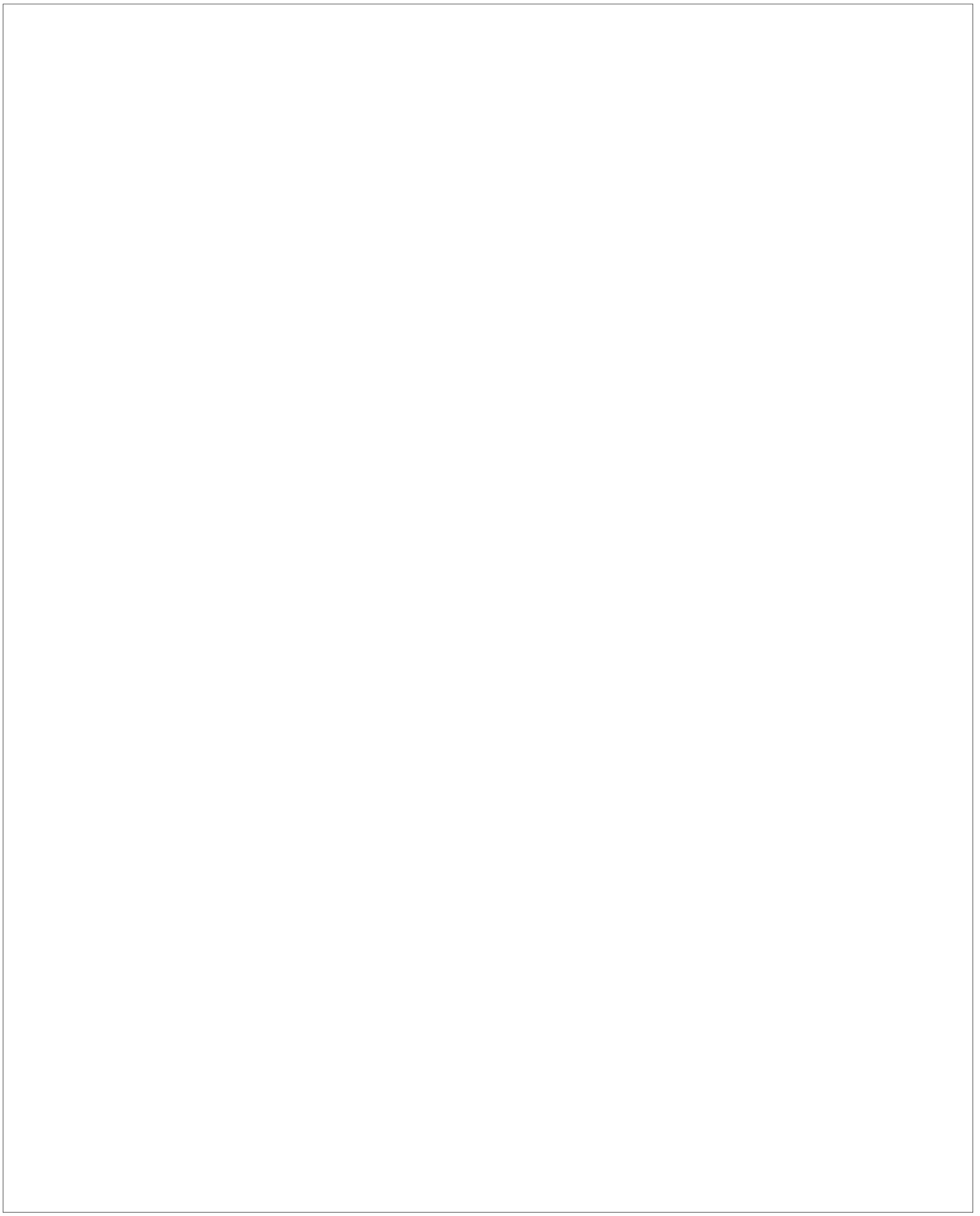

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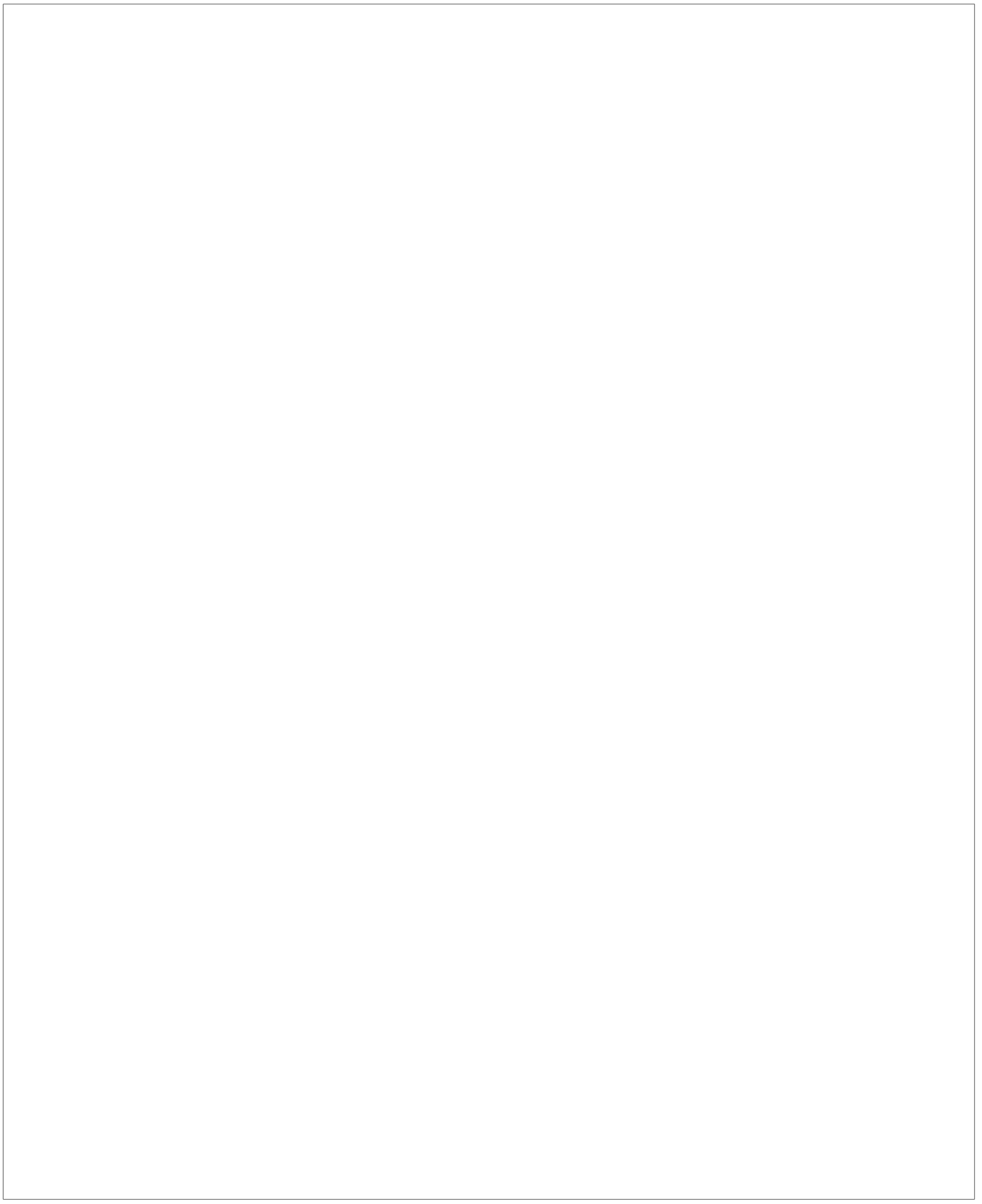

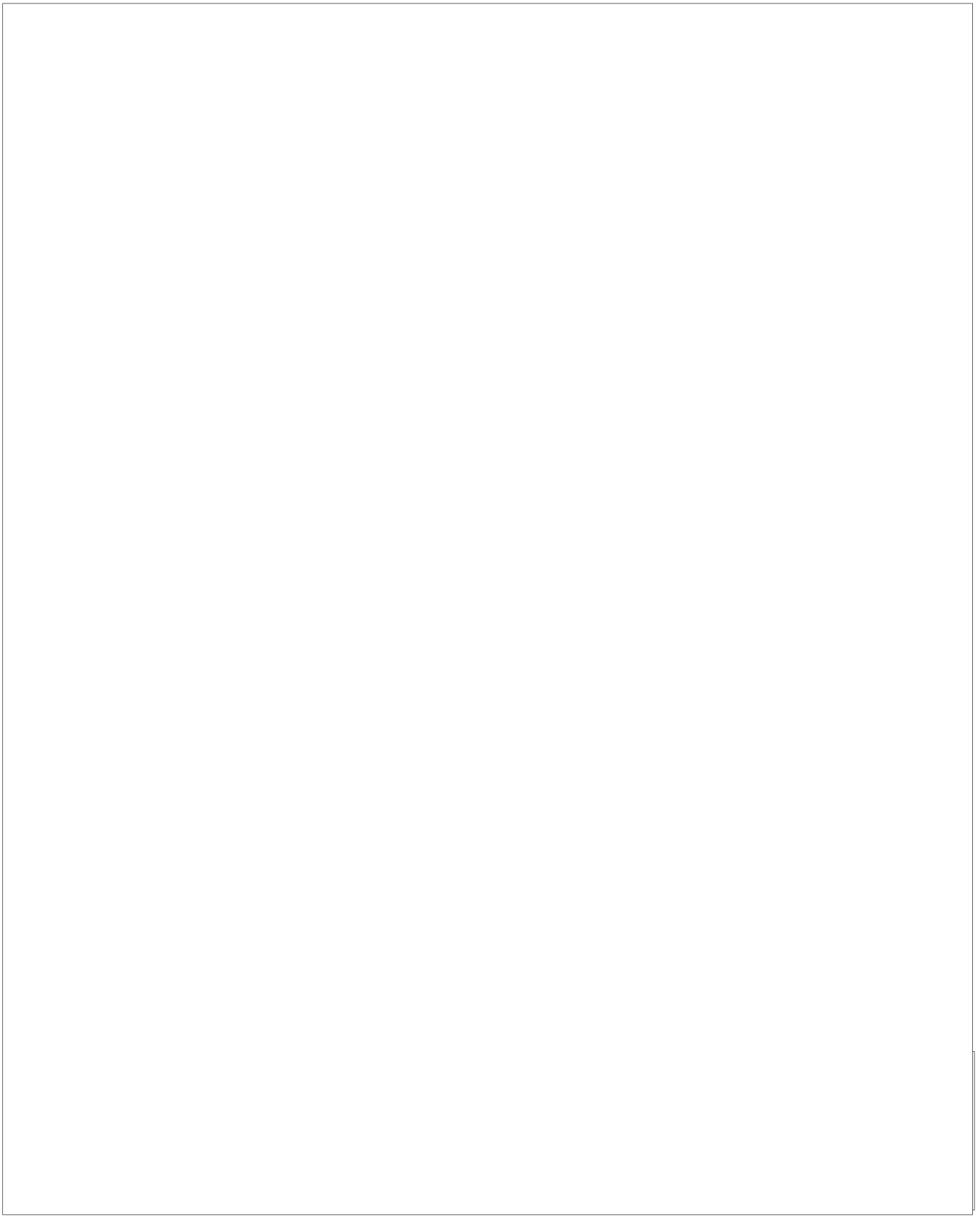

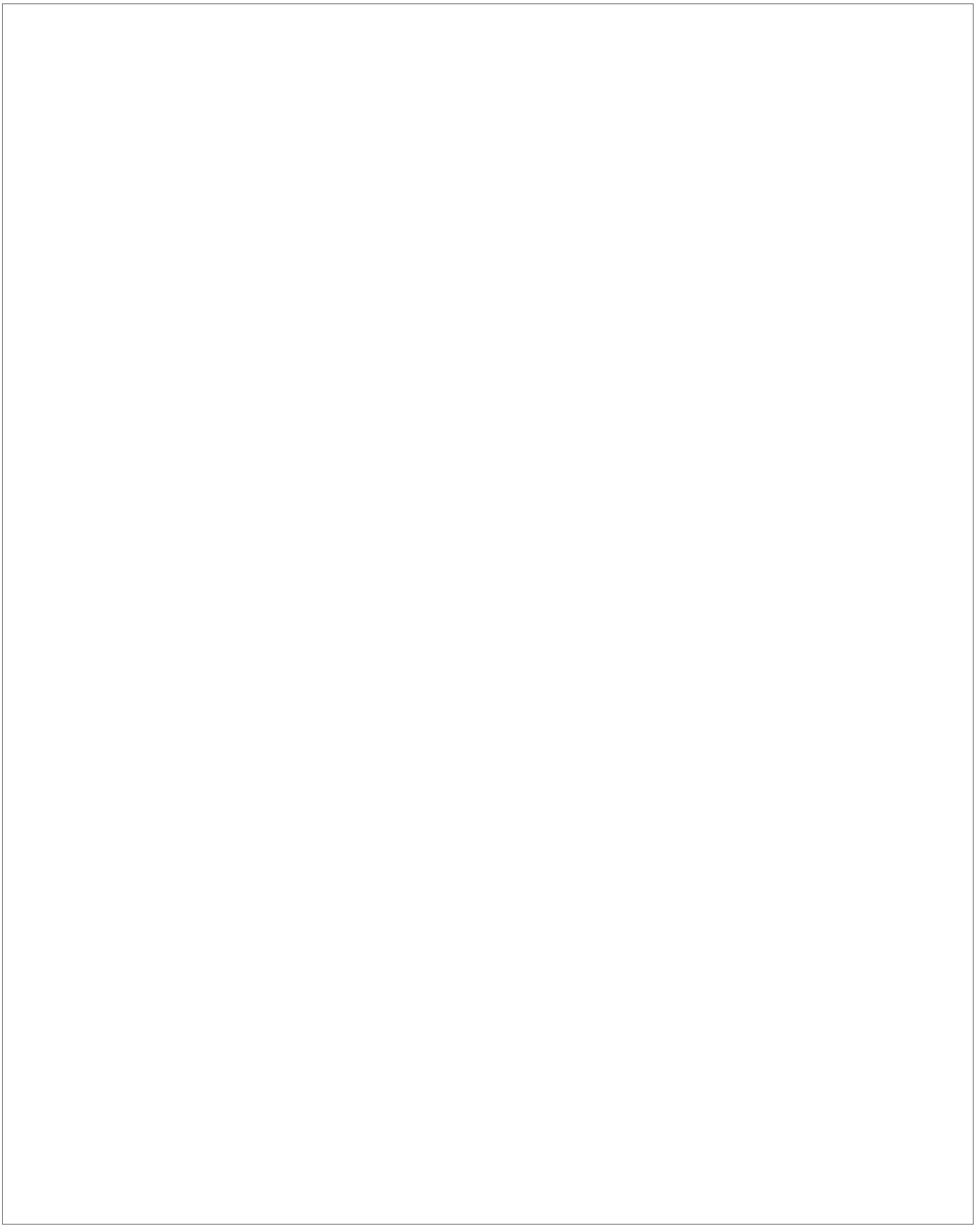

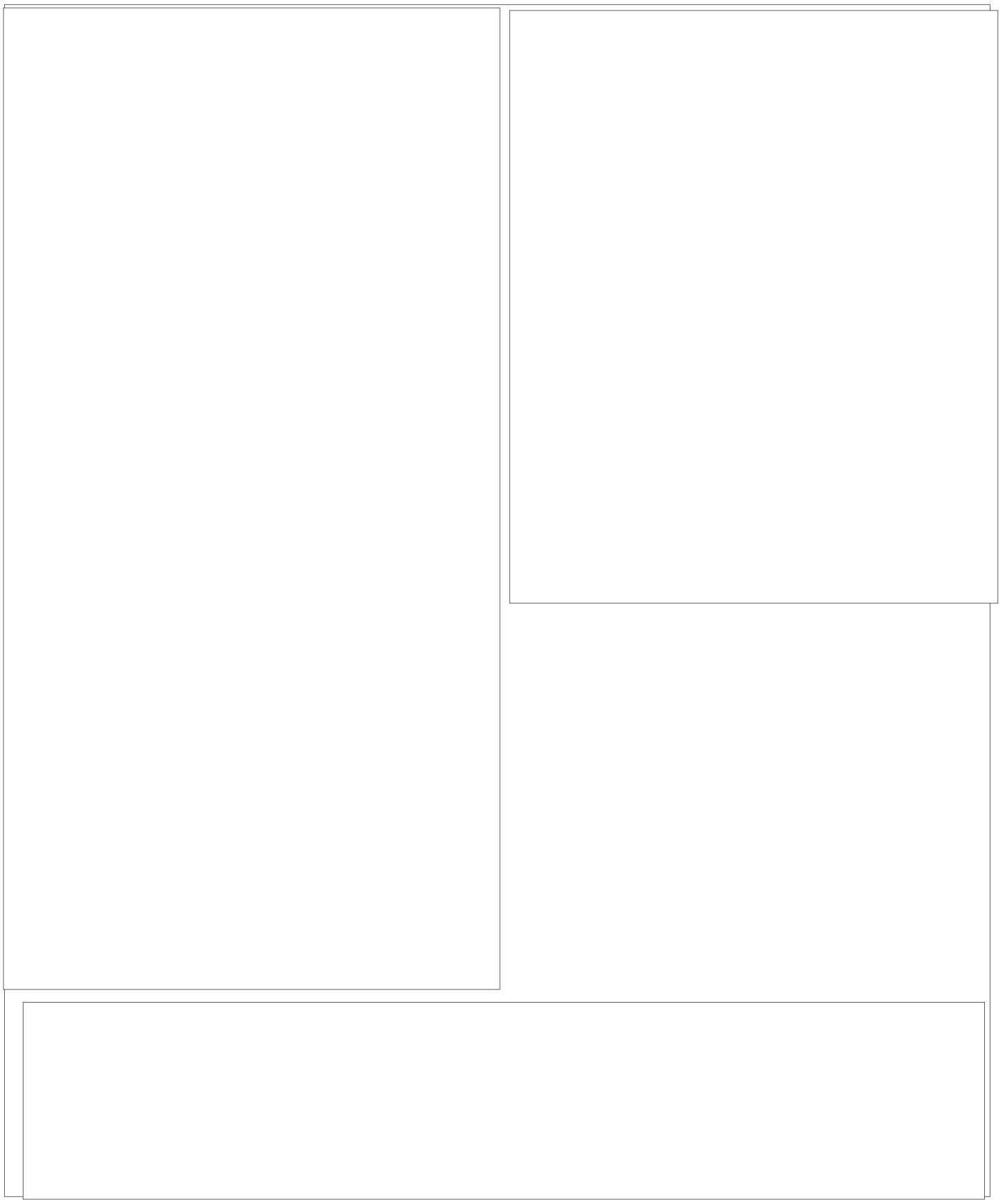

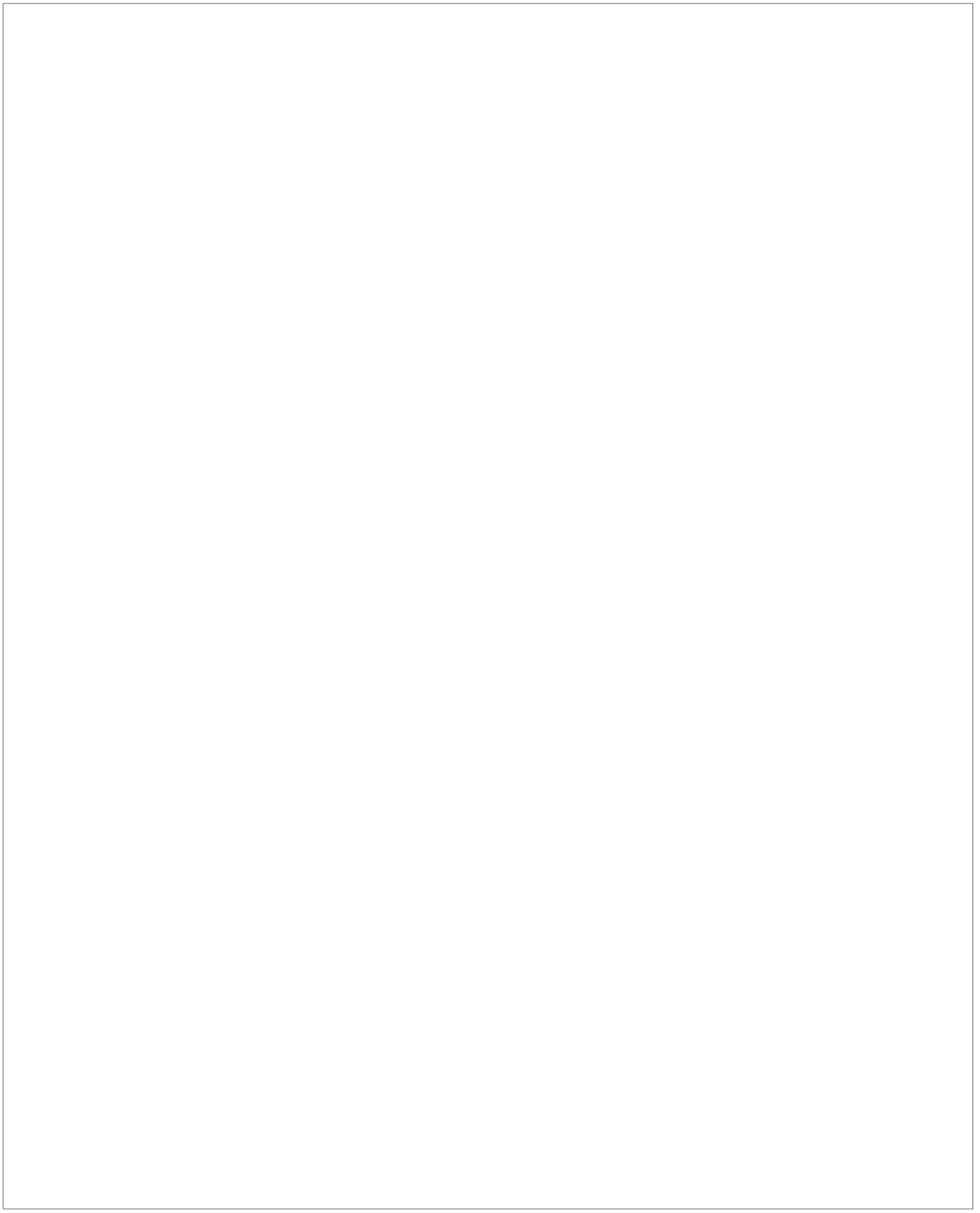

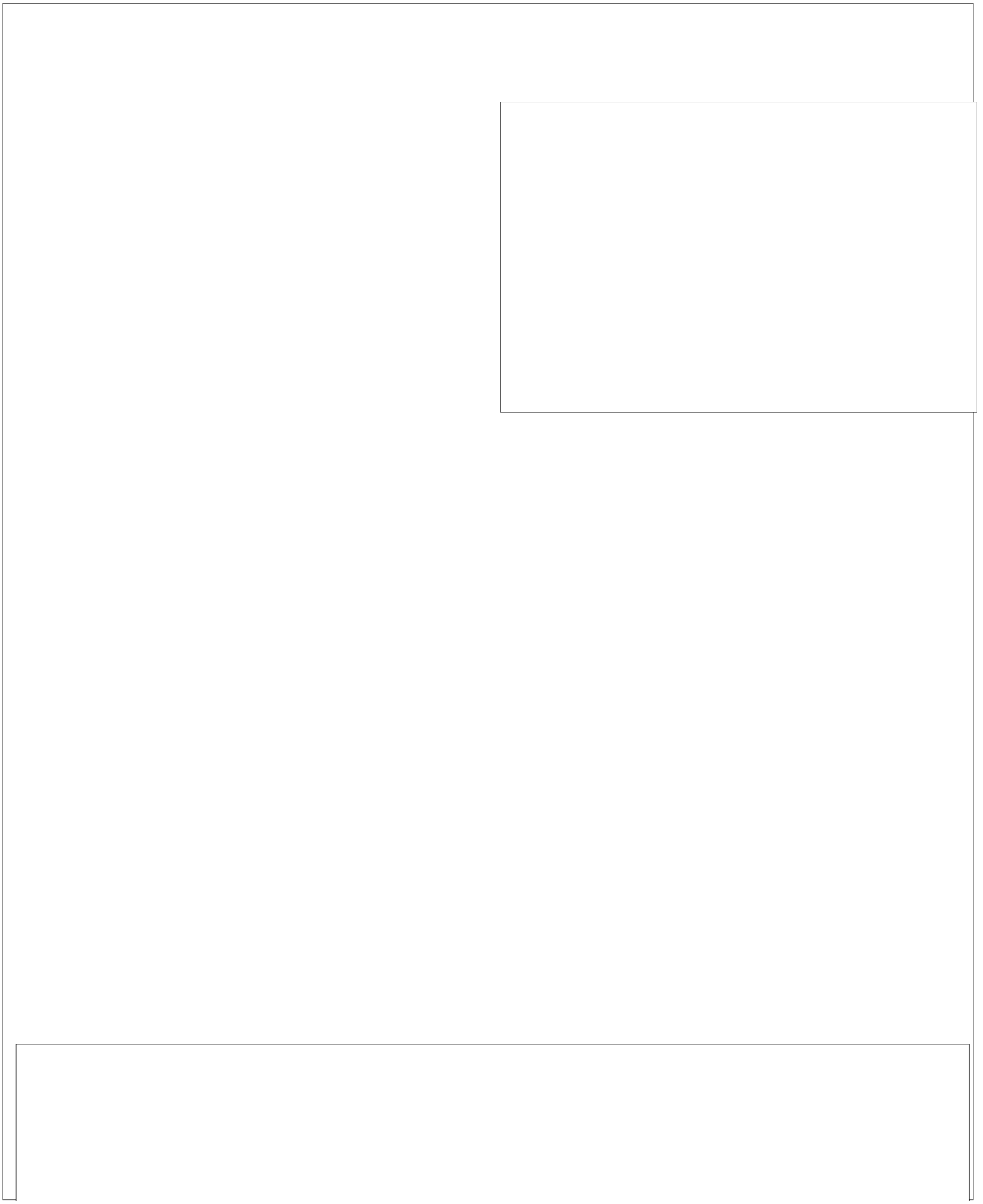

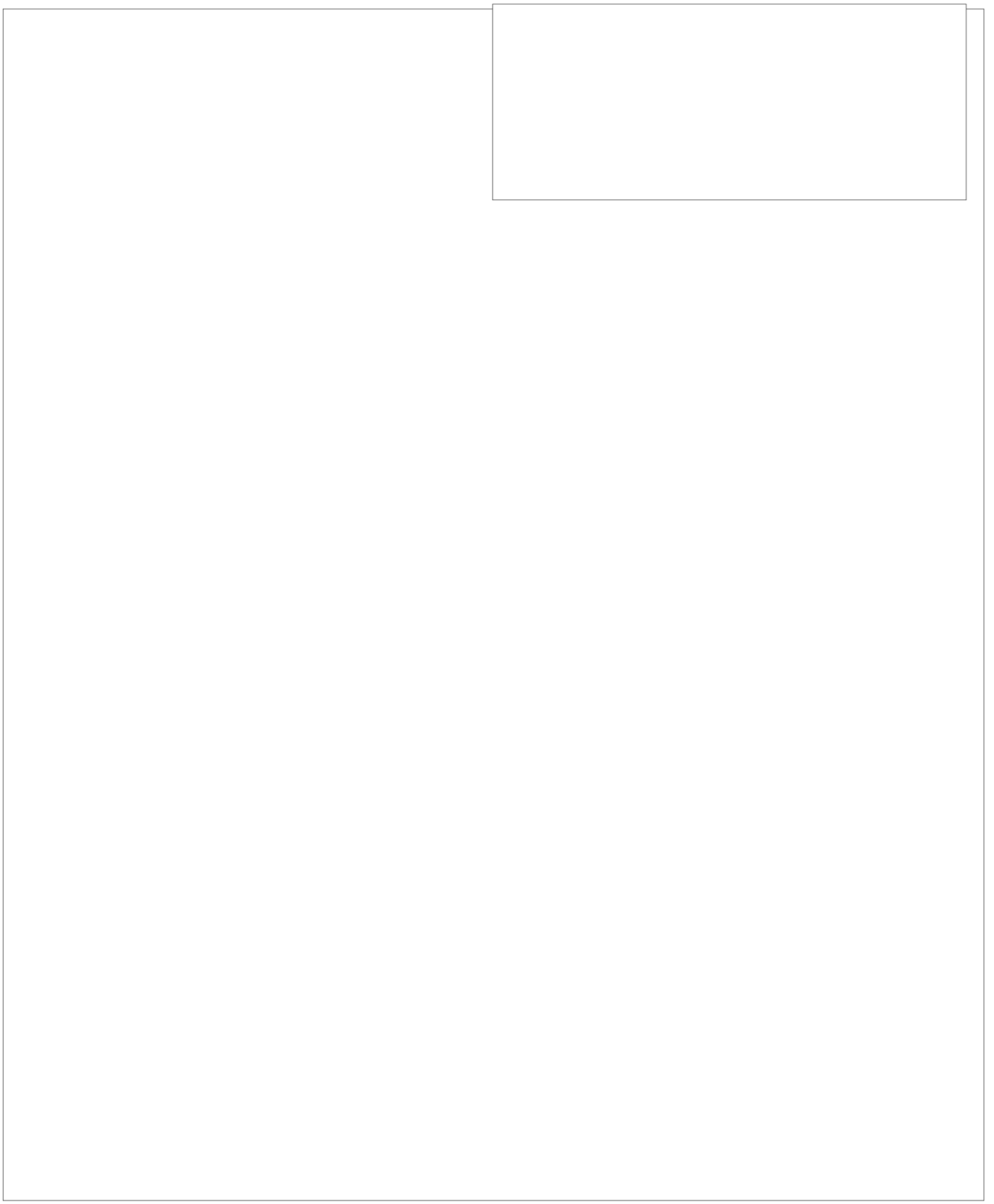

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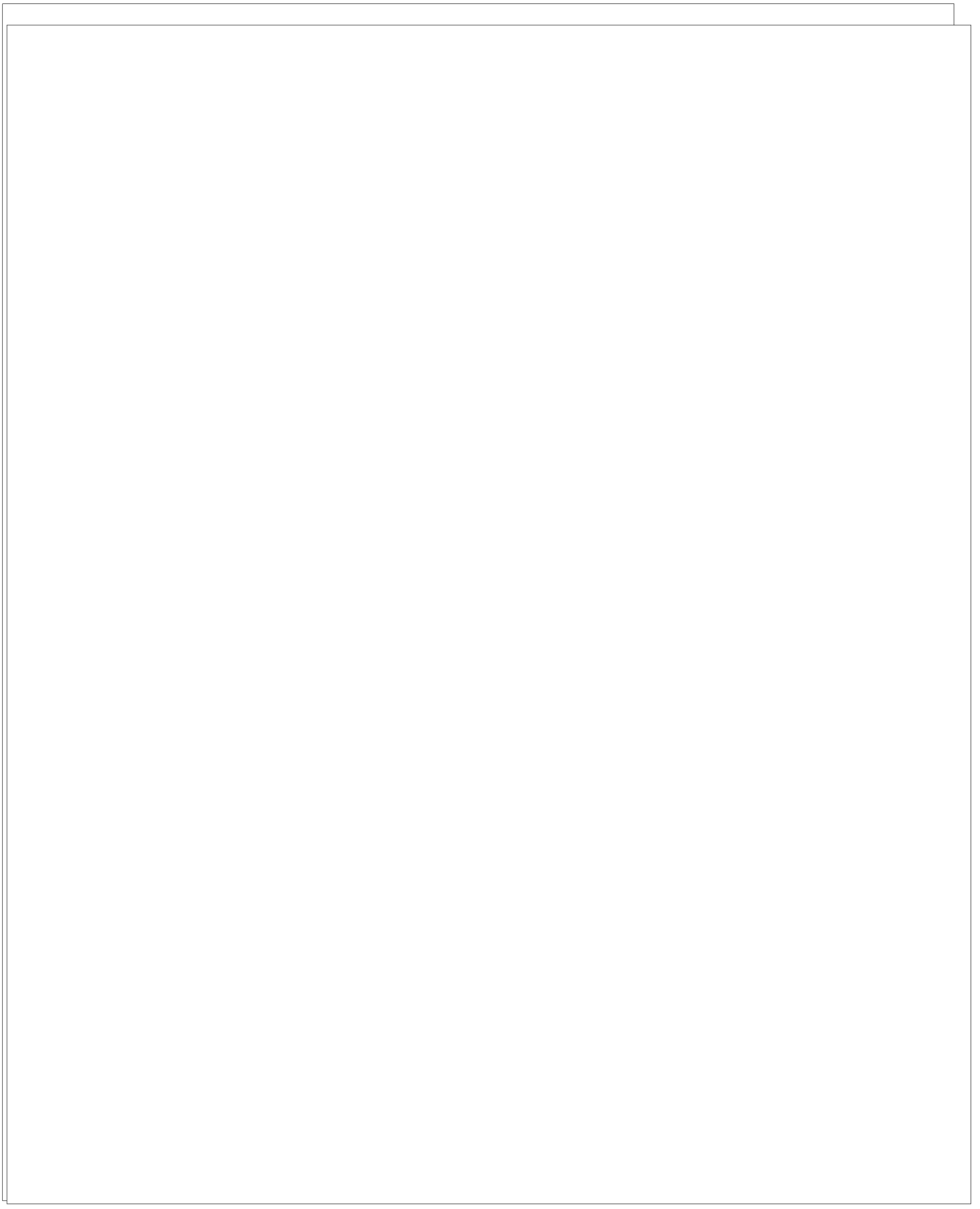

Phase One of the Funding Flap (U)

McCone inherited a looming disaster—the compromise of CIA's huge covert action funding network—but did little to avert it. Despite clear indications that the Agency's apparatus of legitimate and notional foundations would soon be exposed, he did not pay much attention to the troublesome situation until Rep. Wright Patman's (D-TX) investigation in mid-1964, according to Walter Elder.[87] Even then, McCone and his deputies did not act decisively enough to protect operations that might have been spared when the New Left publication *Ramparts* broke the story in 1967. The DCI's lapse seems startlingly uncharacteristic, given his long record as a successful manager and the importance he placed on scrutinizing CIA's budget. His hesitant and ineffective response to the problem is ascribable to a combination of factors—principally lack of information from subordinates; compartmentation that left Agency components not fully cognizant of each other's shortcomings; bureaucratic reluctance to raise difficulties with superiors; previously successful improvisations that lulled program executives into complacency; and the Kennedy administration's desultory interest.

Wright Patman (U)
Photo: Wide World

The funding flap had been years in the making.[88] To protect the security of some political covert actions, CIA throughout the 1950s built a complex edifice of American agents and proprietary organizations that passed secret subsidies to mostly foreign recipients needing attributable and plausible sources of money.

This system was highly susceptible to compromise. As tax-exempt entities, CIA conduits had to file both private and publicly available records with the Internal Revenue Service, and a number of partial exposures had occurred already. Adding to the network's vulnerability was the fact that several Agency components had responsibility for different aspects of projects paid for through the network.

[87] Elder, DH, 11–12.

[88] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Warner, *Hearts and Minds*, 47–63, 70–71; ary 1967 Ramparts and Associated Exposures," April 1967, 3–8, 11, HS Files, HS/CSG-1206, Job 85-00036R, Box 6, Folder 165; memorandum to Kirkpatrick; *Church Committee Report*, vol. 1, 192;

Some senior officials in the new Kennedy administration, particularly in the Department of State and the Bureau of the Budget, worried that a "cultural U-2 incident" might result from the "real hazard" of the increasingly thin cover of the funding network and that important foundations might be embarrassed by disclosure of their CIA ties. These early worries produced no action, however, owing to indifference at the top. The president and the attorney general apparently saw no need to reform the funding of the Agency's CA programs and did not ask then-DCI Allen Dulles to reply substantively to questions about the funding network that Dean Rusk had posed in early 1961. Following the White House's lead, the Special Group declined to impose serious changes on individual CA projects or the scope and emphases of covert action as a whole during an NSC audit in August 1961. Accordingly, when McCone took over as DCI, "higher authority" had not flagged the covert subsidy situation as a serious problem he needed to address.[89]

During the next two years, Agency officers jousted over the issue but did not seek resolution at a level high enough to engage the DCI even indirectly.[90] OGC, Cover and Commercial Staff, and the now reorganized CA Staff exchanged many interoffice communications—the lawyers warning of the danger that official and journalistic probes of American tax-exempt foundations posed to the Agency's covert funding network, the operators giving assurances that they had quietly handled similar problems before and trying to keep OGC out of the day-to-day running of the network. These discussions replicated what had occurred among administration officials: vague high-level concerns eliciting from program managers a combination of nonchalance, bureaucratic defensiveness, and partial solutions to narrowly construed difficulties.

Compartmentation limited the extent to which Meyer's CA Staff could implement the mandate it received from the new DDP, Richard Helms, to impose tighter controls on the sprawling network. In mid-1962, Helms had ordered the new CA Staff to create a to survey all covert actions, amass central data files on projects, and recommend improvements to both operations and overall procedures. Despite this effort, neither nor would comprehend how vulnerable the Agency was until too late. Making the situation worse was Meyer's failure to indicate to the DDP or DCI, even as late as early 1964, that something was amiss. Despite compartmentation, Meyer knew about security problems from OGC, and he met with McCone regularly about other CA projects. He chose, however, to handle the issue from his limited vantage point, without informing the DCI and top Agency management. Even when McCone dealt with CA funding matters in the cases of , he did so in response to specific developments and not because he was aware of a larger security problem.

Accordingly, McCone was incensed when he first heard about the covert funding dilemma on 31 August 1964, when Rep. Patman in open session of Congress identified a cut-out and seven other funding facilities (the so-called "Patman Eight") the Agency used in some CA projects. Patman, who had started investigating one of CIA's foundation cut-outs earlier in the month, had grown dissatisfied with the Agency's lackadaisical responses to earlier, private requests for confidential information. Acting DCI Carter (McCone was on vacation) and senior IRS officials tried to placate Patman, who thought he had been "trifled with," and convinced him not to reveal anything else about the operations. The media already had the main story, however, and McCone first heard about the flap in news reports. At his staff meeting on 1 September, he vented his anger over Patman's revelation and the failure of operations managers to alert him and other senior officers about a controversy that had been building for three weeks. Without naming

[89] "Memorandum for the Record...Minutes of Special Group Meeting, 9 February 1961," 9 February 1961, and Bundy memorandum to David Bell (Bureau of the Budget), "Questions arising from CIA support of certain activities," NSAM No. 38, 15 April 1961, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 19, folder 14; Meyer, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting pursuant to NSAM No. 38 re Overt Financial Support for Certain CIA Activities...," 29 June 1961, CCS Files, Job 78-04100R, box 1, folder 1; Meyer, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with Bureau of the Budget and State Department Officials on 5 May re NSAM No. 38," 9 May 1961, DDO Files, Job 78-01450R, box 4, folder 9; CA Staff/ briefing book for PFIAB meeting on 13 April 1967, HS Files, HS/MISC 13.7, especially 61–62, 104, 154, 156; Warner, *Hearts and Minds*, 65–67.

[90] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Warner, *Hearts and Minds*, 65–67, 73–

names, he declared that "it was inexcusable that a matter this sensitive and which has absorbed the staff since 10 August, was not brought to the attention of higher levels in the Agency until it was too late and the damage had been done." In McCone's mind, his deputies had violated the implied executive contract he made with them: In exchange for receiving substantial administrative independence, they must keep him fully informed of their activities and warn him of potential problems. The scenario must have seemed to McCone like a small-scale repeat of the Cuban missile crisis, when he had also returned from a holiday to find a huge mess, which his subordinates, in his judgment, had mishandled.[91]

Early that afternoon, McCone personally had to explain the debacle to President Johnson, by then already disgruntled with the DCI and the Agency over Vietnam (see Chapter 15). McCone seems to have tried to shift the blame to Patman by stressing the "great damage" that the publicity would produce, rather than to admit that CIA's missteps had caused the difficulty in the first place. When the president asked him what the Agency intended to do, he could only reply rather feebly that "there was little we could do except keep quiet" and find other ways to fund the Agency's covert action clients.[92] As a hard-driving manager accustomed to working with plans and projections, McCone must have had difficulty admitting to his superior that the organization he had been picked to run effectively had failed at a basic executive responsibility: developing alternatives for administering sensitive programs when they ran into trouble.

McCone immediately put Agency officials to work repairing the damage.[93] DDCI Carter unsuccessfully approached the editor of the *Washington Post* about delaying an editorial criticizing the Agency's use of foundations. Cover Staff stopped using the "Patman Eight" foundations, and Patman was persuaded to rein in an aggressive committee consultant who wanted to investigate all of them. CIA's Legislative Counsel got permission to review and edit the transcripts of the Patman committee's open hearings. McCone told Meyer to prepare a comprehensive study of the CA funding process. The review concluded that sudden shifts in payment mechanisms would cause more problems than they would solve but that minor adjustments should be explored. Meyer also chaired a high-level internal study group that proposed useful procedural fixes but still operated under the tacit premise that future embarrassing leaks, while inevitable, would emerge slowly and sporadically and could be controlled. According to Elder, when McCone told the CA Staff to find another way to finance some of its activities, the officers "saluted loyally...[and] probably gave it an honest try[,] but they simply couldn't find another way to do this."

This disposition against a major overhaul became the consensus within the Agency and the administration. McCone did not reject out of hand Rusk's suggestion in September 1964 that the Agency could handle many so-called covert actions through overt sources such as AID, but other administration principals were inclined to leave well enough alone. After hearing Meyer present his postmortem in late October, some members of the 303 Committee expressed vague unease with CIA's use of foundations for cover, but overall the policymakers agreed that the Agency had no other choice. With minor modifications in train and the Patman investigation under control, the furor over funding subsided during McCone's remaining months as DCI. He took no further interest in it because he was preoccupied

[91] US House of Representatives, *Hearings before Subcommittee No. 1 on Foundations, Select Committee on Small Business, Eighty-Eighth Congress, Second Session...*; "Probe Told CIA Funds Go Through Foundation," Washington *Evening Star*, 31 August 1964, "Patman Says CIA Gave Money to a Foundation in 'Secret' Pact," *New York Times*, 1 September 1964, "Fund Called CIA 'Conduit,'" *Baltimore Sun*, 1 September 1964, and "Hearing Looks Into CIA Role In Tax Probe of Charity Fund," *Washington Post*, 1 September 1964, Intelligence—General clipping file, box 3, HIC; Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...A-DCI Meeting with Representatives Patman and Roosevelt—31 August 1964," ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 16; Warner OH, 32–34; DCI morning meeting minutes for 1 September 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 348; Warner, *Hearts and Minds*, 68–69.

[92] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President—1 September 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9.

[93] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Warner, *Hearts and Minds*, 71–73; Carter memorandum about conversation with Alfred Friendly (*Washington Post*), 2 September 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 16; Warner memorandum about Carter and Warner meeting with Patman and Harry Olsher, 2 October 1964, Political and Psychological Staff Files, Job 68-00608R, box 1, folder 19; and "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with tabs B–D, with attached Meyer memorandum, "Funding Covert Operations," 25 September 1964, Houston memorandum to McCone, "Funding Covert Operations," OGC 64-3887, 14 October 1964, CCS Files, Job 78-04100R, box 1, folder 7; Working Group on Covert Funding, minutes of meetings on 1 and 8 October, 3 and 21 December 1964, ibid., folders 1 and 7; Elder OH, 11–12; McCone, "Memorandum of Discussion with Secretary Rusk," 1 September 1964, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5; "Causes and Lessons of February 1967 Ramparts and Associated Exposures," 14; Meyer, "Memorandum for the Record...Appearance Before the 303 Committee," 5 November 1964, McCone Papers, box 1, folder 7. For a warning flag that Eastern elite opinion had shifted against the Agency on the funding issue, see the *New York Times* editorial "Misusing C.I.A. Money," 4 September 1964, 28.

with Vietnam and other issues and was planning to leave Langley anyway. When he resigned, an attitude of quiescence prevailed as the threat of a massive security breach in the subsidy system seemed less likely. Reality would strike hard two years later when *Ramparts* published its exposé. ~~(S)~~

McCone as Operations Overseer (U)

Most critics of the Intelligence Community, during McCone's directorship and today, do not question the need for the United States to conduct espionage against foreign adversaries. The usual complaint is that CIA and its counterparts do not collect *enough* foreign secrets—that they do not deploy enough clandestine agents against the right targets and rely excessively on technical collection. Except when intelligence assets are compromised and diplomatic embarrassment results, controversies over HUMINT operations generally are confined to the community and deal mostly with competition for resources and debates over the proper mix of spies and satellites. McCone took part in his share of such discussions, but he left clandestine collection mainly to DDP veterans he believed he could trust. Given his unfamiliarity with field tradecraft, he was wise to do so, and for the most part, his deputies rewarded his confidence. (U)

Then, as now, covert action was the more problematic activity for the DCI because it crossed the boundary between intelligence activity and foreign policy implementation. Even some experienced intelligence practitioners question whether CA should be the responsibility of an agency whose primary missions are collection and analysis. Involving CIA in political action and paramilitary activities, the argument goes, gives the Agency a stake in policies that inhibits its ability to inform decisionmakers objectively. For McCone, inclined as he was to serve simultaneously as the president's chief intelligence officer and as a foreign policy formulator, that conflict of purpose did not arise. He took seriously his responsibilities as a member of the Special Group/303 Committee, for, also then as now, covert action stood to get CIA—and the DCI—in more difficulty than any other intelligence activity. With the notable exception of the 1964 funding flap, and to the extent that he could influence developments in the CA area, McCone continued the programs he assumed from Allen Dulles, implemented new ones suggested by the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, and kept the Agency, and himself, out of trouble. ~~(S)~~

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McCone and the Secret Wars (II): Counterintelligence and Security (U)

John McCone had more experience in counterintelligence and security when he became DCI than in espionage and covert action. He had overseen the security practices of his shipyards during World War II, and as chairman of the AEC, he was entrusted with protecting some of the country's most sensitive secrets and was familiar with the investigations of Soviet atom spies. This firsthand background with intelligence attacks made McCone very security conscious and, amid the many counterintelligence events of the early 1960s, willing to give the Agency's counterintelligence professionals—especially CI Staff chief James Angleton—a large measure of latitude. McCone respected Angleton's intellect and admired his tenacity, but he did not have a close working relationship with the reclusive and suspicious spy hunter. They met alone only about a dozen times and around 30 times in total during McCone's 41 months at Langley. They apparently never lunched together at Headquarters. Angleton found other ways to engage the DCI more informally—occasionally dropping by McCone's Northwest Washington residence in the early evening.[1] (S)

Some journalists have portrayed McCone as beguiled by Angleton, who supposedly took advantage of the DCI's innocence of the secret world to spin captivating theories and pursue shadowy projects. Given McCone's personality and management style, however, he hardly was susceptible to manipulation or willing to tolerate Angleton's supposed "no knock" privilege. Rather, the DCI kept himself informed of, and, as appropriate, involved himself in, important counterintelligence developments—such as high-level Soviet defections, suspected penetrations of the Intelligence Community, and sensitive liaison relationships. Otherwise, he let Angleton, who reported to Richard Helms, run counterintelligence largely as the two saw fit. In the area of community security, in contrast, McCone was much more engaged. He responded quickly to compromises and instituted procedures to reduce the likelihood of breaches. Like DCIs before and since, however, he could not stop enterprising journalists from gaining access to classified material. (S)

James Angleton (U)

Penetrations and Deceptions (U)

The extent to which McCone allowed Angleton to shape his perception of counterintelligence affairs was most evident in the case of Anatoliy Golitsyn—a middle-ranking KGB officer who defected to the United States in December 1961. After initially providing a trove of useful intelligence, Golitsyn made sensational allegations about Soviet "moles" and deception and caused years of disarray in several Western services. Golitsyn was the first KGB staff officer to defect to the West since 1954. According to Walter Elder, "Angleton represented [Golitsyn] to McCone as being quite special, and McCone was intensely curious."[2] At the time he came to the West, Golitsyn claimed his information was too important to tell to any American except the president, the attorney general, and the DCI. Golitsyn's CIA handlers put him off for awhile, but—not assuaged after two meetings with Robert Kennedy and playing on the Agency's fear that he might "go on strike"—he wangled an interview with McCone in July 1962. Golitsyn set the tone for their relationship in his third sentence by complaining that "I had expected that our meeting would take place earlier." The

[1] McCone calendars. Angleton also went on fishing trips with DDCI Carter. Carter untitled memorandum to McCone, 29 April 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 2; author's conversation with Mary Carter O'Connor (Carter's daughter), 4 June 1998. (S)

[2] Mangold, 56, citing interview with Elder on 26 June 1989. Details about Golitsyn's biography, defection, handling, and allegations are in his operational file [redacted] [Bronson Tweedy,] "Anatoliy Mikhaylovich Golitsyn," [redacted] Useful open-source accounts of the case are: Gordon Brook-Shepherd, *The Storm Birds: Soviet Post-War Defectors*, chap. 11; Mangold, chaps. 6–10; Wise, *Molehunt*, chap. 3; David C. Martin, *Wilderness of Mirrors*, 108–15, 148–50 et seq.; Thomas Powers, "The Riddle Inside the Enigma," *New York Review of Books*, 17 August 1989, reprinted in Powers, *Intelligence Wars*, 109–25; Riebling, chap. 9; Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, 177, 184–85, 367–68, 405. (S)

The defection and treatment of KGB officer Yuri Nosenko and the internal "molehunt" that Golitsyn's allegations set off will be discussed respectively in the next two chapters. The Nosenko case is closely related to the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and the large-scale molehunt did not begin until toward the end of McCone's tenure. (U)

DCI tried to mollify Golitsyn by stressing the importance of his information, soliciting his views on Soviet internal affairs and foreign policy, and assuring him that "[w]e do not want to do anything at all, and will not do anything at all, that will be embarrassing to you or restrictive to you." (McCone noted elsewhere around this time that Golitsyn was "temperamental and difficult to handle and at times resentful of our tactics.") At this first encounter, the defector proposed organizing anti-Soviet counterintelligence and counterpropaganda initiatives with other Western services. McCone was receptive and directed Helms and the CI Staff to work with Golitsyn on developing his project.[3]

McCone met with Golitsyn 10 more times—on several occasions alone—during the next 27 months and arranged for Golitsyn to see Robert Kennedy again because, Elder recalled, "[he] was acting like a prima donna and his ego needed soothing." The former KGB officer used some of these meetings to describe Moscow's purported strategic deception program—which included dispatching false defectors to discredit him—and to solicit McCone's support for a $15 million organization to study the Soviet regime and the KGB. During a luncheon in the DCI's private dining room in mid-December 1962, McCone heard Golitsyn expound his theories that Khrushchev's de-Stalinization policy was a myth, that the Soviet Union's purported "splits" with the PRC and Yugoslavia were actually deception operations, and that the Cuban missile crisis was a propaganda ploy. At another meeting in late November 1962, after Golitsyn accused Agency officers of assorted improprieties toward him, McCone "stood up to him somewhat angrily and demanded proof," which the defector never provided.[4]

McCone and Golitsyn's CIA and FBI handlers put up with the defector's arrogance and irascibility for a time, because he appeared to provide sensitive information corroborating previous reporting and leads to other potential sources.[5] Elder has characterized the thinking of McCone, Helms, Angleton, and the management of the DDP's SR Division at the time: "Golitsyn was threatening to go out in the world on his own. We felt he was the best defector we ever had. His *potential* was at least the best.... Besides, no one put the case to McCone that he should *not* see Golitsyn." Even a critical study prepared by the post-Angleton CI Staff in 1976 described Golitsyn's substantiated intelligence as "a tremendous collection...[with] invaluable insights...some of it was highly significant."

[6] Golitsyn's reporting, extensive in its own right, soared in value in the absence of other comparable HUMINT.

[3] "Golitsyn," 20; memorandum to 13 July 1963, Golitsyn McCone, "Memorandum for the File...Discussion with the Attorney General...27 December 1961," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 1; transcript of McCone meeting with Golitsyn and Helms, 9 July 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 34. Golitsyn saw the attorney general again in November 1962 because he was dissatisfied with his dealings with McCone. The DCI thought Golitsyn might settle down if he met with the FBI but could not convince J. Edgar Hoover to see him. The FBI chief refused to violate his personal policy of not meeting with defectors, agents, or criminals and believed Golitsyn wanted an interview "simply on the basis of ego." Helms, speaking for the DCI to the FBI liaison to CIA, Samuel Papich, noted that the attorney general had said "one should play up to the ego of an individual such as [Golitsyn]," but Papich (and Hoover) were unmoved. In February 1965, Bureau counterintelligence officials reported to Hoover that Golitsyn was too caught up in his theories to be trusted, and may even be a fabricator. In July 1965, Hoover ordered all official Bureau contact with the defector to cease. Helms, "Memorandum for the Record...Mr. Hoover and " 16 October 1962, McCone Papers, box 13, folder 2; Hoover letter to Helms, 6 October 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 1, folder 19; Mangold, 56, 67 citing interviews with Elder on 11 August 1988 and 26 June 1989; "Golitsyn," 32, 58. The Agency clarified policies in defector handling and instituted some new ones as a result of problems with Golitsyn. Karamessines memoranda to Carter, "General Policy of Defector Handling" and "Special Handling of Defectors Whose Information is Predominately CI in Nature," 7 June 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 4. McCone was more directly involved when USIB made further modifications regarding treatment of defectors from hostile services after irregularities arose with handling Golitsyn's "nemesis," Yuri Nosenko, in 1964.

[4] Mangold, 67 citing interview with Elder on 11 August 1988; McCone calendars for 1962–64; Helms, "Memorandum for the Record.. Luncheon Conversation," 17 December 1962, McCone Papers, box 13, folder 2; "Golitsyn," 26; memorandum to McCone, "Interrogation of Soviet Defector— 14 December 1962, with attachment, (OIG) memorandum, "IG Interrogation— 11 December 1962, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 19, folder 2.

[5] According to documents smuggled out of the former Soviet Union by ex-KGB archivist Vasili Mitrokhin, the KGB thought Golitsyn's defection was extremely damaging, forcing it to suspend dozens of operational contacts. The service put Golitsyn's name on its "hit list" of traitors. Andrew and Mitrokhin, 184–85, 367. (U)

[6] GRU officer Oleg Penkovskiy was still in place, but he reported mostly on Soviet strategic and military subjects. (U)

[redacted]

McCone and the DDP also used Golitsyn as an analytical resource on the Soviet Union during and after the Cuban missile crisis. In October 1962, the CI Staff had Golitsyn assess probable Soviet reaction to President Kennedy's speech imposing a quarantine on Cuba. Golitsyn thought Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev would go to the brink but then step back, knowing he could not win concessions in Berlin without a war he was not prepared to start. In mid-January 1963, the DCI asked Golitsyn to evaluate Moscow's apparent failure to anticipate Washington's reaction to the deployment of offensive nuclear missiles in Cuba. Golitsyn presented his views in a hastily arranged interview with the CI Staff's chief analyst, Raymond Rocca. He judged that the Soviet maneuver was political, not military; Khrushchev had intended to force the West to negotiate over Berlin and other issues and to sow dissension among Western allies. According to Golitsyn, the Soviets had calculated all along that eventually they would have to remove the missiles, but they were willing to pay that price to make diplomatic gains. They did, however, misjudge how fast and how far the confrontation would escalate. Golitsyn's assessment tracked generally with McCone's and probably enhanced his credibility with the DCI.[8] (S)

By early 1963, however, McCone's curiosity about Golitsyn was satisfied, at least temporarily, and officers in SR Division—already weary of Golitsyn's incessant and increasing demands—had concluded that he had nothing else useful to offer. He had passed on almost all of his firsthand knowledge, and he now purveyed new information largely from "analysis" of operational material US and foreign services gave him. ADDP Thomas Karamessines went so far as to write that "there is no question…that we allowed the defector to blackmail us into control…no defector, irrespective of his value, should be allowed to place us in that position." Except for Angleton and the CI Staff, there was little resistance at Langley when Golitsyn accepted an invitation from Britain's MI-5 to help it hunt Soviet agents in London. Golitsyn had wanted to move to the United Kingdom for several months, having, according to Elder, "realized he had run out of credit here. Furthermore, he realized we were not going to bankroll his $15 million project to bring down the Communist Party of the USSR." After querying the British, McCone approved the relocation. Angleton wanted Golitsyn back, however, and may have contrived (through a leak to a British tabloid) to force him out of England. After Golitsyn returned to the United States in August, McCone and Helms accepted Angleton's unprecedented proposal to take on the defector as a counterintelligence adviser completely under CI Staff control. McCone appeared to agree with Helms that this troublesome and seemingly intractable case—which still seemed to have potential counterespionage benefits—would be best handled outside SR Division lest it disrupt regular espionage operations.[9] (S)

Golitsyn soon was back in McCone's office elaborating on the Soviet "master plan": the Sino-Soviet split was bogus, concocted by Moscow; the KGB had penetrated the Agency's Soviet division (with an agent codenamed "Sasha");

[redacted]

McCone sent an urgent "EYES ONLY" cable to [redacted] asking him to

[7] "Golitsyn," 55; Mangold, 56 citing interview with Elder on 26 June 1989; McCone, "Memorandum on Counterintelligence Activities," 20 July 1962, and Angleton, "Highlights of Counterintelligence Information Obtained from Anatoliy Mikhaylovich GOLITZYN," 18 July 1962, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 2; [redacted] SR Division) untitled memorandum to Helms on Golitsyn and Nosenko cases, December 1965, 9, DDO Files, Job 89-00395R, box 4, folder 75. (S)

[8] Karamessines memorandum to Carter, "Reactions to President Kennedy's Speech and Comments on Cuban Crisis by Soviet State Security Defector Anatoliy Mikhailovich Golitzyn," 24 October 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 1, folder 15; Helms memorandum to McCone, "Soviet Estimate of U.S. Reactions on Cuba" with attachments, ibid., Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 16. It is not known if Golitsyn tailored his conclusions to impress McCone. He might have heard that administration officials were carping at McCone for proving them wrong about the missile deployment, and, with his characteristic penchant for manipulation and self-promotion, he could have seen an opportunity to ingratiate himself with the DCI. (S)

respond to each of the allegations. [redacted] later paraphrased his reply as, "No. No. No. No. And no." With those assurances, the DCI did not follow up on Golitsyn's claims.[10] (S)

[redacted]

[9] "Golitsyn," 26, 28–29, 31, 58–59; [redacted] "History of CI Staff," 64–68; Karamessines memorandum to CI Staff, "The Damage Report on the Felfe Case, and Lessons for the Future," 8 February 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 1, folder 22; Mangold, 68–81, quote from interview with Elder on 26 June 1989; [redacted] Nigel West, *The Circus: MI5 Operations, 1945–1972*, 83, 85, 112–14. Because Golitsyn provided intelligence about a number of countries, before this time SR and WE Divisions and the CI Staff handled him jointly. Golitsyn had patrons [redacted] but his information did not prove very useful to them [redacted] a result of Golitsyn's information. "Golitsyn," 77; Michael Smith, *New Cloak, Old Dagger*, 68–69; West, chap. 5 passim. The disarray within the British secret services that Golitsyn contributed to is described in Tom Bower, *The Perfect English Spy*, chap. 12, and West, chaps. 7–9 (S)

[10] "Golitsyn," 31, 35–36; memorandum on McCone-Golitsyn meetings on 23 August and 4 September 1963, Golitsyn [redacted] "History of CI Staff," 178– [redacted] Mangold, 86 citing interview [redacted] on 15 May 1989. Golitsyn also met with Attorney General Kennedy—for the last time—to detail his theories. (S)

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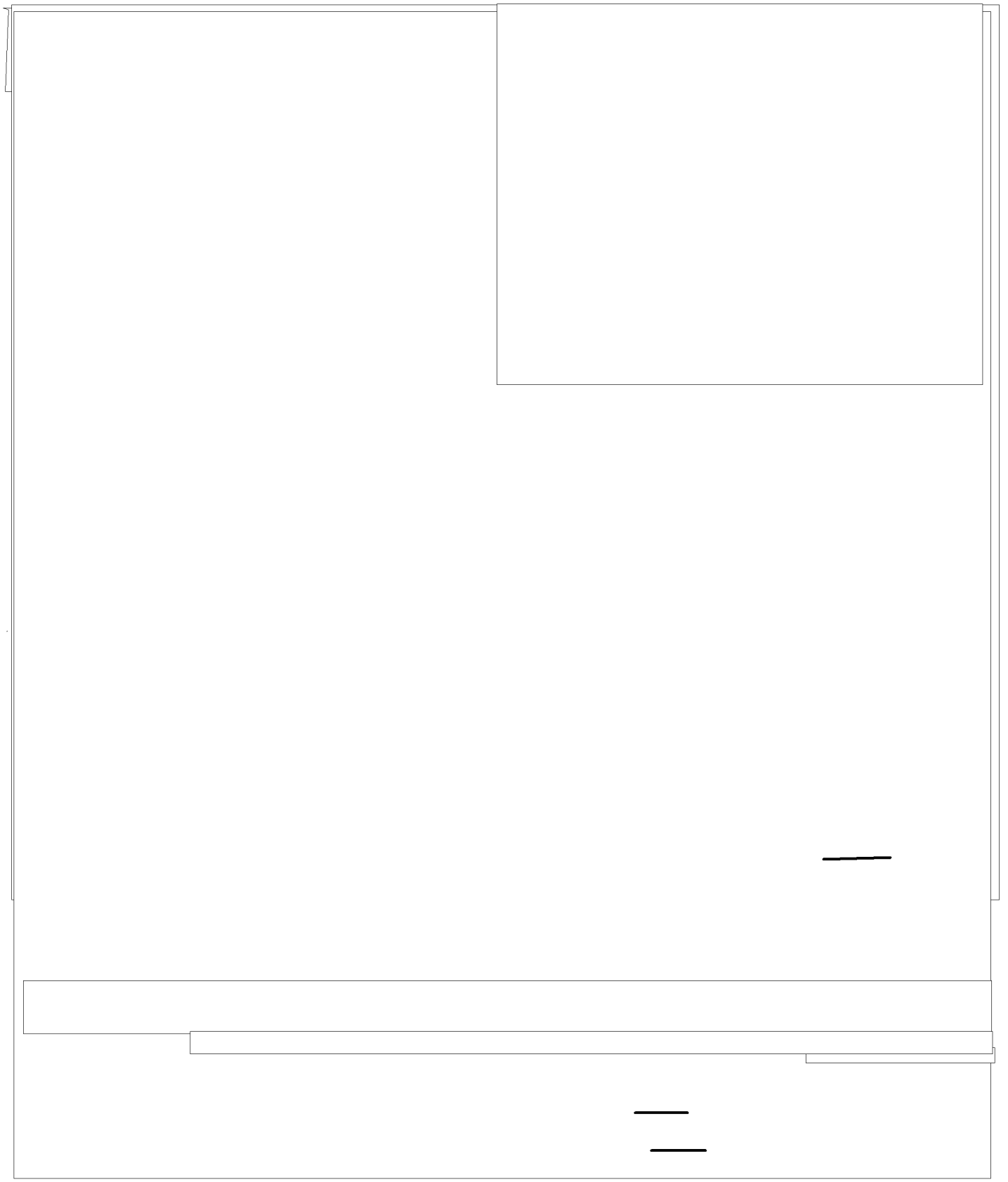

[redacted]

White House Damage Control: The Profumo Affair (U)

McCone—evidently for reasons of national security, diplomacy, domestic politics, and friendship with the Kennedys—took what [redacted] later described as an "inordinate interest" in a foreign sex and espionage scandal that brought down a British government. The principals in the episode were the British secretary of state for war, John Profumo; a Soviet naval attaché and GRU officer, Yevgeny Ivanov; and a teenage English prostitute, Christine Keeler, who was servicing both men. Publicity about Profumo's infatuation with Keeler broke in October 1962, when she sold her story to a London tabloid. Profumo disputed everything she said about their relationship and tried to suppress news coverage. His denial of impropriety to the House of Commons in March 1963 soon was shown to be false, causing a public furor over possible breaches of security. In early June, Profumo admitted to Prime Minister Harold Macmillan that he had lied. He then resigned from the Cabinet. Macmillan—whose government had already been shaken by several other counterintelligence contretemps and had reached its nadir of public support—convened an official inquiry, which concluded that the Profumo-Keeler-Ivanov link had not damaged British national security.[21] McCone later agreed with a British official's characterization of the affair as "more of a bedroom farce [than] serious espionage." At the time, however, the DCI declared that "this matter [is] of great concern to highest authority," and Walter Elder said it caused "great excitement" at Langley and the White House. As it unfolded, the scandal revealed deep anxiety about its potential for compromising secrets and embarrassing the Kennedy administration.[22] [redacted]

Three US angles to the Profumo Affair—US-UK diplomatic relations, possible compromises of US intelligence secrets, and some of John Kennedy's private indiscretions before he was elected president—explain McCone's "inordinate interest" in the scandal and his participation in

[redacted]

high-level meetings with FBI and Department of Defense and Department of State officials about it in mid-June 1963.[23] The diplomatic context in which the episode unfolded was the so-called "special relationship" Kennedy and Macmillan enjoyed as leaders of the Atlantic community and the two most powerful countries in NATO. In keeping with the president's interest in affirming and protecting that political bond, McCone would have wanted to discover anything that might weaken or discredit it.

The first concerned fleeting and innocuous contact between one of Keeler's friends and ambassadors David Bruce and Charles Bohlen at a high-society function to which all had been invited. Kennedy apparently already knew about the incident, probably from Bruce, and seemed unconcerned.

[21] Giglio, 268; Parmet, 115–16; Anthony Summers and Stephen Dorril, *Honeytrap*, 121 et seq.; Philip Knightley, *An Affair of State*; Anthony Summers, *Official and Confidential*, 305–9; Alistair Horne, *Harold Macmillan. Volume II: 1957–1986*, 471–97. The extent of Macmillan's political disgrace is trenchantly summarized in a telegram from Ambassador David Bruce to the president and secretary of state; see *FRUS, 1961–1963, XIII, Western Europe and Canada*, 1132–34. The scandal's impact on British-Soviet relations, and Ivanov's role as a disinformation agent during the Cuban missile crisis, are summarized in Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 102–12.

Ivanov's own account, portraying himself as a brilliantly successful operator who ensnared Profumo and tried to blackmail the Royal Family, is *The Naked Spy*. Keeler gives her version in the pulpish *Scandal* and the more thoughtful *The Truth At Last: My Story*. Some British intelligence officials thought the whole business was a Soviet political action operation designed to discredit their government and did not take the espionage element too seriously.

The other counterintelligence episodes that damaged Macmillan's reputation included Soviet penetrations of the Admiralty, the conviction of George Blake in 1961, and the defection of Harold "Kim" Philby in 1963. Conon Molody (alias Gordon Lonsdale) was a Soviet illegal who ran the Portland spy ring, so named because it collected secrets from the Underwater Weapons Establishment at Portland, England. The ring's members included Morris and Helen Cohen (alias Peter and Helen Kroger), who were Soviet atomic spies in the United States until 1950. They fled the country the day Julius Rosenberg was arrested and arrived in England in 1954. Molody and the Cohens were convicted in March 1961. William John Vassall, a clerk in the Admiralty, stole secrets for the Soviets until his arrest in September 1962. He was sentenced the same day that President Kennedy announced the Cuban missile crisis. Philby and Blake are too well known to require discussion here. All the above cases are conveniently summarized in Norman Polmar and Thomas B. Allen, *Spy Book: The Encyclopedia of Espionage*, 72–73, 128–29, 341, 433–36, 446, 574. The discomfiture they caused the Macmillan government is well described in Horne, 456–67. (U)

Summers and Dorril, 251, 254; Knightley, 205–6. Benjamin Bradlee, editor of the *Washington Post* and a Kennedy confidante, said the president "devoured every word written about the Profumo case" and "ordered all further cables from Bruce on that subject sent to him immediately." Bradlee, 230.

[23] McCone calendars, entries for 19–21 June 1963; Alan Belmont memoranda to Clyde Tolson (both FBI) about McCone meetings with McNamara and DIA director Joseph Carroll on 20 June 1963, FBI Freedom of Information Act file on Profumo, No. 65-68218, on FBI Web site at www.foia.fbi.gov/bowtie. (BOWTIE was the FBI's codename for Profumo.) There is no record in McCone's papers about his meeting on 20 June with McNamara and Hoover—the only time he ever met with them together.

[24] Gene Grove, "Outcry Grows; Queen Won't See Profumo," *New York Post*, 7 June 1963, Profumo clipping file, HIC; Hersh, *The Dark Side of Camelot*, Archibald Roosevelt, *For Lust of Knowing: Memoirs of an Intelligence Officer*, 469–70; Knightley, 205–6.

[25] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Brief Meeting with the President…21 June 1963," and "Memorandum for the Record…Discussion with the President, Secretary McNamara, General McKee (USAF)…," 19 June 1963, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 4; Elder memorandum to Bundy, "Ward-Keeler Case," 21 June 1963, with attachment, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 19, folder 5; Kirkpatrick Diary, vol. 5, entry for 21 October 1963; Summers and Dorril, 247–49, 251; Roosevelt, 469–70; Hersh, *The Dark Side of Camelot*,

The timing of the possible Air Force security breach helps explain some of the worry it caused in Washington. The early 1960s were proving to be one of the worst periods in Western counterintelligence history, with numerous incidents indicating serious problems inside several services: the defections of three NSA officers to the Soviet Union in 1960; the arrests of George Blake, the Portland spy ring, and John Vassall in Britain during 1961–62; the discovery of Soviet penetrations of the West German intelligence service in 1962 and the Swedish military in 1963; the arrest of a US Navy yeoman, attached to the US Navy headquarters in London with top secret and special NATO clearances, in September 1962 for spying for the GRU; "Kim" Philby's defection to Moscow in January 1963; the indictment of a Soviet spy ring in July 1963 in New York on charges of stealing US military secrets; and the investigation of Sgt. Jack Dunlap, an NSA courier and probable GRU penetration at Ft. Meade. This succession of cases prompted several official inquiries into the US Intelligence Community's security practices and heightened the administration's and the DCI's wariness about further incidents.[27]

President Kennedy's reputed personal connection to the Profumo affair became a potentially messy diplomatic and public relations issue for the administration—and, it appears, for McCone, whose role as the president's chief intelligence officer now took on an unprecedented aspect. The scandal broke in the United States just as the administration was showcasing the Anglo-American relationship. The *New York Herald Tribune* and the *Washington Post* mistakenly reported that US intelligence services had uncovered Profumo's indiscretion and tipped off their British counterparts. Second, and far worse from the White House's perspective, the *New York Journal-American* claimed that one of "the biggest names in American politics" who held "a very high elective office" had been involved with the Keeler ring.[28] The White House was alarmed because just before and after the 1960 presidential election, John Kennedy allegedly had had assignations with one or two of Keeler's friends. The administration—not to mention Her Majesty's Government—would be humiliated if news of the president's purported encounters with some of the same women in Britain's sex-for-secrets imbroglio appeared just after he made a state visit there. In late June, Robert Kennedy summoned the *Journal-American* reporters to his office to confirm that they were referring to his brother during the 1960 campaign and pre-inaugural period, and to demand that they reveal their sources. They refused. Soon after, the attorney general threatened the paper with an antitrust suit, and it dropped its coverage of the affair.[29]

Given McCone's friendship with Robert Kennedy—the chief protector of the president's reputation—and his responsibility as DCI for assessing the security damage of the Profumo episode, it seems likely that McCone knew the truth about John Kennedy's past link to the Keeler circle, used CIA resources to find out what the and the FBI had uncovered about it, and passed on what he learned to the attorney general. President Kennedy's reckless encounters with women of dubious note—a Mafia moll (Judith Exner) and a suspected East German agent (Ellen Rometsch), among others—were widely known in official and unofficial Washington at the time and already had caused difficulties for the administration. With McCone's official duties and his intimate connections to the

[27] At a meeting with McCone, Gen. Carroll, and Alan Belmont of the FBI on 20 June 1963, McNamara "said he felt like he was sitting on a bomb in this matter as he could not tell what would come out of it." The airmen told Air Force investigators that they had met Keeler in nightclubs but were not sexually involved with her or any of her friends. The airmen eventually were cleared. D.J. Brennan memoranda to William Sullivan (both FBI), 20 and 26 June 1963, Belmont memorandum to Tolson, 20 June 1963, and Hoover memorandum to Tolson et al., 27 June 1963, FBI Profumo FOIA file. The three NSA defectors were Bernon Mitchell, William Martin, and Victor Hamilton. The Navy yeoman was Nelson Drummond, who was convicted in August 1963. The Swedish military officer was air attaché Stig Wennerstrom, posted to Washington. Dunlap committed suicide before he was charged with espionage. Polmar and Allen, 176, 179, 356, 372, 592; Bamford, *The Puzzle Palace*, 177–200; Lawrence P. Jepson II, *The Espionage Threat*, DOS-2400-219-88, 17–18. A contemporary look at some of these counterintelligence incidents was given in "Who's Spying for Whom? World Puzzle and a Shake-up," *US News and World Report*, 29 July 1963, Intelligence—General clipping file, box 3, HIC.

[28] Some observers speculated at the time that the FBI may have been the source of the *Journal-American* story on 29 June 1963 by James Horan and Dom Fraser, "High U.S. Aide Implicated in V-Girl Scandal." That Hearst-owned newspaper was stridently conservative and anti-Kennedy, had ties to the FBI dating to the McCarthy era, and had run stories on the British side of the scandal. (U)

[29] Giglio, 268–69; Parmet, 115–16; Hilty, 251–52; Hersh, *The Dark Side of Camelot*, 392–93; Knightley, 206; Summers and Dorril, 67–70, 196–204; Thomas, *Robert Kennedy*, 254; Stanley Grogan (OPA) untitled memorandum to Helms, 7 June 1963, DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 2, folder 16. Kennedy met with Macmillan the second week of June; the *Journal-American* story ran on the 29th.

president's family, it is not surprising that he would have the Agency quietly find out all it could about any American involvement in the scandal—partly for diplomatic and security reasons, but also in large measure to aid the White House in squelching a particularly ill-timed scandal. In part because of the DCI's apparent assistance, "once again Bobby handled a presidential lapse," one of John Kennedy's biographers has written. No American officials were tied to the Keeler ring, and later that summer US intelligence services concluded that the Profumo incident had not damaged American security interests. Despite all the attention he paid to the Profumo-Keeler episode at the time, however, McCone professed to have "no recollection" of it when questioned during the 1980s.[30] (S)

"The Last of the Romanovs" (U)

McCone had to help contain the security and political damage from another runaway counterintelligence case, that of Col. Michal Goleniewski [redacted] Goleniewski was one of the West's most valuable CI sources during the Cold War, but his role as a useful asset ended when he became mentally deranged. He was a Polish intelligence officer who worked as a KGB mole in his own service, [redacted]

[redacted]

Goleniewski had psychological problems, however, that emerged fully after he defected—notably his fanciful claim to be the last Russian *tsarevich* and heir to the Romanov name and fortune. Seized by this delusion and resentful at the treatment CIA officers had given him, Goleniewski stopped cooperating with debriefers in 1963, holed up in his New York apartment, refused to return a handgun the Agency had given him, and began writing long, rambling letters to US government officials—among them the chairman of the House Immigration Subcommittee, the president, the attorney general, the FBI director, and the DCI. CIA renegotiated Goleniewski's contract in his favor in October 1963, and, when that incentive failed, took the opposite tack and suspended it in early 1964.[32] (S)

Soon after, Goleniewski's story appeared in the press, with the *New York Journal-American* taking the lead in publicizing "what looms as a greater scandal than the famous Alger Hiss case." Goleniewski made sensational public charges about KGB penetrations of the US government: at least 19 employees were Soviet spies, including four at CIA, a dozen at the Department of State (most posted to the embassy in Warsaw), and three scientists working on classified projects; the Agency had lost more than $1 million in

[30] Summers and Dorril, 249–50, 253, 257–60; Giglio, 268–69; Parmet, 116; Elder memorandum to McNamara, "Ward-Keeler Case," 20 June 1963, [redacted] anonymous memorandum, "The PROFUMO Case," undated but probably summer 1963, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 5. Robert Kennedy also received information about the scandal from the FBI. See, e.g., C.A. Evans (FBI) memorandum to Belmont, "Christine Keeler[,] John Profumo...," 24 July 1963, FBI Profumo FOIA file 65-68218. In contrast to the Profumo affair, the attorney general evidently did not enlist McCone in helping contain two other potential scandals: the president's encounters with Rometsch, a capital "party girl" suspected of working for the East German *Stasi*; and his affair with Mary Meyer (the estranged wife of CA Staff chief Cord Meyer), whose diary describing their relationship was acquired (and, in some accounts, destroyed) by Angleton after her murder during a robbery. Given the potential intelligence angle in the Rometsch case, it may seem odd that Robert Kennedy did not involve McCone. Her relationship with the president, however—unlike Keeler's with Profumo and Ivanov---was purely personal. Summers, 309–12; Burleigh, 246–49. (S)

[redacted] The best open-source account of the case is in Martin, *Wilderness of Mirrors*, 95–99, 103–6. Goleniewski's version appears in Guy Richards, *Imperial Agent: The Goleniewski-Romanov Case*. Walter Phorzheimer, curator of the HIC, summarized the book in a memorandum to senior Agency managers, "New Book: *Imperial Agent: The Goleniewski-Romanov Case* by Guy Richards," 10 November 1966, MORI doc no. 297931. (S)

[32] "Goleniewski Case," 13–19, 24–26; [redacted] and [redacted] (EE Division) memorandum to Helms, [redacted] memorandum to McCone, [redacted] (OGC), "Memorandum for the Record. [redacted] Service of Senate Committee Subpoena, March 6[, 1964]," and [redacted] Houston, "Memorandum for the Record...Goleniewski Case," 6 March 1964, ibid., folder 4; anonymous file memorandum, "Michal Goleniewski," c. April 1965, ibid., Job 78-03805R, box 1, folder 21; "Defector Here Says He Is Son Of Czar," *New York Times*, 16 August 1964, 54, Goleniewski clipping file, HIC; Helms memorandum to McCone, [redacted] Letter to Director of Central Intelligence, dated 24 January 1964," 18 February 1964, McCone memorandum to Bundy, "Lieutenant Colonel Michal GOLENIEWSKI," 17 March 1964, [redacted] memorandum to Carter, "FBI Interview with Robert Speller," 10 March 1965, and [redacted] memorandum to Carter, "Possible Publication of Mr. Guy Richards' Book Entitled 'The Goleniewski Story,'" 24 August 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 9, folder 202; DDCI Daily Log, 16 July 1964, ibid., Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 10. (S)

operational funds in Vienna that wound up in the hands of communist organizations; and lax security practices guaranteed that more enemy agents remained undiscovered. This counterintelligence *cause célèbre* caught the attention of the House Un-American Activities Committee and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. The latter subpoenaed Goleniewski, but he refused to appear, pleading illness. (He later accused CIA of preventing him from testifying by keeping him under detention in a New York safehouse.) The defector's story was widely reported and prompted many editorials urging the US government to tighten security. A vituperative anticommunist member of the House Un-American Affairs Committee, John Ashbrook (R-OH), took to the floor to denounce the government for harboring subversives and covering up Soviet espionage in the United States. An eight-year-old list of over 800 security risks at the Department of State was retrieved from the files and resulted in a number of personnel investigations there and the recall of several employees from Warsaw.[33] ~~XX~~

Amid this public row, the Agency's relationship with Goleniewski degenerated further, as did his mental condition. The defector berated CIA to his FBI contacts, spurned the ministrations of DDP officer George Kisevalter (perhaps the Agency's most experienced handler of defectors), and pressured CIA to restore his contract by threatening legal action and full disclosure. He went ahead and told his tale on a radio talk show in New York and cooperated with a headline-seeking book project on the Romanov mystery written by the *Journal-American* reporter responsible for the outlandish stories published so far.[34] ~~XX~~

McCone first got involved in Goleniewski's case in mid-1963 when he approved a special financial and security arrangement—much of it already set in place—and Agency sponsorship of a private congressional bill to grant citizenship to Goleniewski. The defector had written to McCone in April complaining about his treatment and threatening to tell the White House about his situation. The DCI spoke to Goleniewski, whom he regarded as a "psychopathic case," but he thought the Agency should take extra measures to ensure the defector's physical and financial security in recognition of his past value as a counterintelligence source. McCone also had to assuage the irate chairman of the House Immigration Subcommittee, Michael Feighan (D-OH), who was sponsoring the citizenship bill without knowing either all the details of the case or the Agency's procedures for dealing with private legislation for defectors. The DCI and other CIA officers persuaded Feighan to encourage Goleniewski to be more cooperative. That approach did not work. Goleniewski went public several months later, and the congressman took his side in the dispute, at least until the Romanov fantasy eclipsed the CI aspect.[35] ~~XX~~

As the situation unfolded, McCone kept the White House, Congress, and USIB informed, and oversaw how Carter, Helms, and General Counsel Lawrence Houston managed the increasingly difficult case. A new CIA angle briefly arose in January 1965 when [redacted] Herman Kimsey, publicly contended that the Agency possessed finger and sole prints and dental charts that corroborated Goleniewski's claim to royal lineage. McCone also had to deal with some residual antipathy from the FBI, which CIA had kept out of the Goleniewski case until after the Pole arrived in the West. One unexpected benefit from the problems with Goleniewski was a series of improvements in the Agency's defector handling procedures.[36] ~~XX~~

Overall, McCone and his deputies made the best of a bizarre situation that was imploding at the same time CIA had to cope with unprecedented public and media criticism and the DCI's relations with the White House were growing more tenuous (see Chapter 15). By placating a recalcitrant asset, keeping members of the Intelligence Community apprised of the case's problems, and anticipating the consequences of adverse publicity, McCone and CIA executives minimized political damage to the Agency while enabling

[33] Besides the sources cited above, see also the many news articles in the Goleniewski clipping file, HIC. The tone of the *Journal-American* stories is conveyed in these representatively lurid headlines: "US Secret Agencies Penetrated by Reds"; "4 US Envoys Linked to Red Spy Sex Net"; "CIA Hiding Red Defector From Probers"; and "Where Reds Put Spies" (2–5 March 1964). The source of these reports is unknown, but the Agency's IG attributed the leak to "congressional circles." "Goleniewski Case," 18. ~~XX~~

[34] David Wise, "HR 5507, a Prize Defector, Now the Boomerang," *New York Herald Tribune*, 8 March 1964, and transcripts of Guy Richards and Goleniewski interviews on Barry Farber talk show on WOR Radio, New York, 30 March and 10 August 1964, Goleniewski clipping file, HIC. (U)

[35] "Goleniewski Case," 13; [redacted] memorandum to McCone, "Background Material on [redacted] for Meeting with Representative Michael A. Feighan...," 12 August 1963, DDO Files, ~~job 78-02958R~~, box 1, folder 8; transcript of McCone meeting with Feighan, Murphy, and others, 23 August 1963, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 5; H.R. 5507, Private Law 88–59, "An Act for the Relief of Michal Goleniewski," 28 August 1963, *Congressional Record—House*, 3 March 1964, 4113. ~~XX~~

US and Western services to exploit Goleniewski's knowledge effectively. (U)

Persistent Suspicions about Francis Gary Powers (U)

McCone undertook a vigorous—perhaps heavy-handed—inquiry into the U-2 incident involving Francis Gary Powers immediately after the Soviets released the captured pilot in a prisoner exchange in February 1962.[37] McCone believed that more lay behind the shootdown in May 1960 than either Powers would admit or most technical evidence indicated. Personal and patriotic sentiments, institutional interests, and security concerns motivated McCone's energetic quest for an answer, and, when one he deemed satisfactory was not forthcoming, they drove his vindictive actions against the pilot. ~~(S)~~

Francis Gary Powers on trial in Moscow in 1960 (U)

Influencing McCone's aversion to Powers was his knowledge that some senior Agency and community officials had always doubted Powers's story. Just after the incident, CIA officers told journalists that Soviet antiaircraft missiles could not reach as high as the Kremlin claimed they had and that the plane had suffered a flameout or other malfunction that caused it to drop within range of Soviet air defenses and fighters. Then-DCI Allen Dulles gave that evaluation to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 31 May 1960 and the following month to C.L. Sulzberger of the *New York Times*, who noted in his diary that

> Dulles is sure Gary Powers was not shot down at normal altitude (about 70,000 feet). The U-2, when it reaches rarefied altitudes, tends to get a flameout. We think Powers glided down to try and restart his motor. He was then shot down around 30,000–40,000 feet. Present Soviet defenses don't go above 60,000 feet. We think Powers parachuted.

According to a secret Department of State report in June 1960, the U-2 debris displayed in Moscow's Gorky Park was in much better condition than would have been expected had it been damaged by a missile and then plunged nearly 13 miles to earth. [redacted] In October 1960, the FBI began a full investigation of Powers and his family, exchanging information with CIA well into 1961. The Bureau's conclusion about Powers's loyalty was redacted from documents released in his FBI FOIA file, but McCone would have been privy at least to the content of the unexpurgated originals. Other information in Powers's file indicates that the Bureau remained suspicious toward him.[38] ~~(S)~~

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[36] Helms memorandum to Carter, "Inspector General's Review of the Handling of the Defector Michal GOLENIEWSKI," 11 June 1964, and [redacted] memorandum to Carter, "Possible Publication of Mr. Guy Richards' Book Entitled 'The Goleniewski Story,'" 24 August 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 9, folder 202; "Ex-CIA Official Claims Polish Defector to Be Son of the Last Czar," *Washington Daily News*, 19 January 1965, and "Defected Polish Spy Can Prove He Is Son of Czar, Ex-CIA Man Says," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 January 1965, Goleniewski clipping file, HIC. The Agency terminated Goleniewski's contract in late 1965 but continued to pay him a small annuity: [redacted] memorandum to Helms, 13 December 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 9, folder 202; [redacted] memorandum to Raborn, [redacted] Michal N. Goleniewski," 6 September 1965, appendix to [redacted] "Poland: External Operations, vol. 2. Goleniewski persisted with his Romanov claims until he died in 1993. Guy Richards took up the search for the missing *tsarevitch* and had two books about it published in the 1970s, *The Hunt for the Czar* and *The Rescue of the Romanovs*. Recent investigations have thoroughly discredited Goleniewski's contention. William Clarke, *The Lost Fortune of the Czars*, chap. 10. ~~(S)~~

[37] The exchange of Powers for Soviet spy Rudolph Abel, conducted in Berlin on 10 February 1962, was almost fully negotiated before McCone became DCI, and he did not express an opinion on it. ~~(S)~~

[38] CIA memorandum, "Operational Hypothesis of Events of Downed U2C Aircraft," 26 May 1960 (marked "Coordinated with USAF"), HS Files, Job 90T00782R, box 1, folder 3; "Statement by Mr. Allen W. Dulles...to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 31 May 1960," 12, DCI Files, Job 98B01712R, box 1, folder 7; Michael R. Beschloss, *Mayday: The U-2 Affair*, 355–56, 359; Riebling, 155–58; [redacted] OGC Files, Job 86-00168R, box 3, folders 1944–45, and Job 82-00451R, box 4, folders 162–64; Powers's FBI FOIA file No. 105-87346, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 8, folder 9; Pocock, *Dragon Lady*, 50–51. Intelligence from Oleg Penkovskiy apparently did not factor into McCone's thinking about Powers. The defector's account of the shootdown, included in the first material he gave the Agency in 1960, did not specify the altitude of Powers's U-2 when it was hit. Schecter and Deriabin, 6–7, 118–19; Penkovskiy, *The Penkovskiy Papers*, 355–57; [redacted] ~~(S)~~

So did many Americans. Instead of returning home to a hero's welcome, Powers faced a barrage of criticism. *Newsday* asked whether he was "A HERO OR A MAN WHO FAILED HIS MISSION?" A US senator said "I wish that this pilot who was being paid thirty thousand dollars a year had shown only ten percent of the spirit and courage of Nathan Hale." An American Legion official called Powers "a cowardly American who evidently valued his own skin far more than the welfare of the nation that was paying him so handsomely." The president of the Fund for the Republic opened a study of the decline of character in the United States by asking, "Should we be alarmed by the difference between the behavior of Airman Powers and of Nathan Hale?"[39] (U)

McCone, sternly moralistic and patriotic, shared these sentiments and must have found Powers's public apology at his trial—"I am deeply repentant and profoundly sorry"—especially hard to take.[40] The widely published photograph of Powers with his head slumped to his chest, probably taken during a moment of fatigue and despondency, nevertheless was seen by many Americans as a symbol of craven collaboration and no doubt set badly with the DCI. Beyond his personal feelings, McCone may have sensed that the Agency's reputation might suffer if he did not try to make Powers pay a price for seeming to cooperate with the enemy. He may also have wanted to deter other reconnaissance flyers from placing survival over national security and giving the Soviet Union more propaganda victories. (U)

Unresolved counterintelligence and security questions added to McCone's animus toward Powers. Since mid-1960, both CIA and the FBI had investigated leads and theories to explain the loss of Powers's U-2. These included a break in communications security that could have allowed the Soviets to monitor transmissions between pilots and the U-2 control base in Adana, Turkey; sabotage of the aircraft in [redacted] and hijacking of the spyplane by a purported special Soviet intelligence unit codenamed *Molniya* ("lightning" in Russian). Soviet interest in acquiring a U-2 was well known in the community, and, farfetched as it sounded, the hijacking theory at least had the merit of resolving the dispute over the U-2's altitude when it was damaged. Although the Soviets claimed it had been flying at 70,000 feet, the consensus of US intelligence officials at the time was that Soviet antiaircraft missiles could not reach it. That meant that either the U-2 had lost power and dropped within the missiles' range or that it was forced down some other way—according to the *Molniya* theory, because Soviet operatives had somehow drugged Powers.[41] (U)

Another, more likely, possibility troubled McCone as much: Powers had defected and perhaps even had been a Soviet agent with the mission of delivering a U-2 behind the Iron Curtain. Former DDCI John McMahon—at the time a high-ranking official in the U-2 program—has said that just after Powers was shot down, McCone thought the pilot had defected. Nothing McCone had learned since May 1960—including a favorable CIA security review of Powers that he probably saw or knew about—had changed his mind. A defection would have partly explained some of the U-2 incident's anomalies: Powers's failure to use his ejection seat, which would have set off the aircraft's camera-destruct mechanism; the relatively good condition of the wreckage; Powers's reportedly comfortable treatment while in prison; and—from a counterintelligence standpoint, probably the most disquieting improbability—his emergence relatively unscathed from what experts considered an unsurvivable freefall and parachute drop from an extreme height. As the former director general of Britain's Royal Air Force medical service publicly commented at the time:

> It is utterly impossible for a pilot to bail out [at that altitude] without using ejection equipment. He would be destroyed instantly by the slipstream and air pressure. Should he survive this, he could not last more than 45 seconds without the oxygen equipment attached to the ejection seat, and the 50-below cold would make life impossible.[42] (U)

According to Lawrence Houston, McCone [redacted] suspected that Powers had flown his plane to a lower altitude and then parachuted before Soviet missiles shot it down. The fact that, as Houston put it, "we [CIA] were getting slightly different stories" from Powers during intensive debriefings by technical and operations officers in February 1962 made McCone even

[39] Beschloss, *Mayday*, 351; James J. White, "Francis Gary Powers—The Unmaking of a Hero, 1960–1965," unpublished manuscript (1974), 7, copy in History Staff files. (U)

[40] Powers made the statement on the advice of his Soviet defense counsel. (U)

[41] Riebling, 156–57; Beschloss, *Mayday*, 358; Peter J. Huxley-Blythe, "What About U-2 Mystery?" [December 1960] in Powers FBI FOIA file. (U)

more skeptical. Of course, McCone did not want the Agency's suspicions of Powers to leak out. Just after Powers was released, a journalist asked the DCI whether the pilot was a defector. McCone responded, "[O]f course a small segment of people in the U.S. may think so, but there was nothing so far that would give credence to that belief." The DCI did not hint that he was in that "small segment of people."[43]

McCone disagreed with the findings of the CIA damage assessment team that debriefed Powers for two weeks after his repatriation and largely exonerated him. That was the same team that had met in the summer of 1960 to estimate what Powers knew about the overflight program and could have told Soviet interrogators. After the 1962 debriefings, the team concluded that Powers's disclosures had caused much less harm than previously thought and indicated it was satisfied with his behavior in captivity.[44]

At Houston's suggestion, McCone quickly convened a board of inquiry to consider whether the US government should charge Powers with dereliction of duty. The board's members were retired federal judge E. Barrett Prettyman, the chairman; John Bross from the DDP; and Lt. Gen. Harold Bull, a consultant to ONE. McCone directed the board to answer three questions: Did Powers fulfill the terms of his contract with CIA? Did he conduct himself in captivity as a patriotic American should? Did the Agency's management of the U-2 program need improvement? The Prettyman panel spent nine days reviewing a large body of information, ; testimony from 23 witnesses, including Powers, military personnel associated with him, and medical experts; a film of Powers's trial; and photographs of the U-2's wreckage and an analysis of them by the plane's builder, "Kelly" Johnson of Lockheed. In a 14-page letter to McCone, the board stated its conclusions: "[T]he evidence establishes overwhelmingly that Powers's account was...truthful...that throughout this incident Powers acted in accordance with the terms of his employment and instructions and briefings...and that he complied with his obligations as an American citizen." Accordingly, Powers was entitled to back pay of approximately $52,000. Around the same time, a group of Air Force experts, convened by the secretary of the Air Force at McCone's request, supported Johnson's analysis (and Powers's description) that a nearby explosion could have broken off the aircraft's wings.[45]

McCone was unconvinced and kept looking for reasons to penalize Powers. His concerns about Powers's supposed misjudgments and possible security breaches came through clearly in questions he posed to Houston just after reading the Prettyman report. McCone wanted to know if Powers could have been in touch with outsiders after he received the mission brief; if Soviet aviation activity during the flight was unusual, suggesting the Soviets already knew about it; and if Powers's actions after his plane was damaged made it harder for him to activate the destruct mechanism. Houston's respective answers were: possibly, apparently, and probably not. With President Kennedy's assent, McCone reconvened the Prettyman board to reconsider the only evidence that

[42] John McMahon oral history interview by Chantilly, VA, 4 December 1997, 32 (hereafter McMahon, OH); Riebling, 157–58; Fulton Lewis, "Washington Report," 24 August 1960, Powers FBI FOIA file.

Several reports about Powers's private contacts, suggesting that he might have defected, were all found to be provocations. For example, CIA had determined by September 1960 that a British report that the Soviets had recruited Powers in late 1959 was false. An Agency counterintelligence officer called the information "the last checkable lead on any reference to disloyalty on the part of Powers." It is not known if McCone was aware of the report or the evaluation. (March 1972), 208; memorandum to Bissell, 26 September 1960, DDO Files, Job 64-00352R, box 1, folder 11.

For Soviet versions of the shootdown—from an air defense analyst who prepared the technical questions used in Powers's prison interrogations, and from Khrushchev's son—that corroborate Powers's account, see Alexander Orlov, "Russia, 'Hot' Front of the 'Cold' War," *Geopolitical Forecasts: Past, Present, Future* (1997), FBIS Translated Text FTS19981007000076, 27–33; and Sergei N. Khrushchev, *Nikita Khrushchev and the Creation of a Superpower*, 365–83.

[43] Beschloss, *Mayday*, 356–57 citing interview with Houston on 17 January 1983; Grogan untitled memorandum, 12 February 1962, McCone Papers, box 8, folder 1.

[44] Pedlow and Welzenbach, 183–84; Grogan untitled memorandum, 12 February 1962, McCone Papers, box 8, folder 1.

[45] Pedlow and Welzenbach, 184–85; Houston memorandum to McCone, "Board of Inquiry for Francis Gary Powers and Terms of Reference," ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 22, folder 2; McCone directive concerning Board of Inquiry, 19 February 1962, ibid.; memorandum to Houston, "Summary of Events—Board of Inquiry Task Force," ibid., folder 1; Prettyman, Bross, and Bull letter to McCone, 27 February 1962, ibid., folder 2; Board of Inquiry debriefing of Powers, Job 84B00459R, box 1; Beschloss, *Mayday*, 352–54; Chris Pocock, *The U-2 Spyplane*, 242–43; Johnson, *Kelly: More Than My Share of It All*, 128–29; White, "Powers," 17–18; 23. Powers's contract with CIA provided for him to continue receiving his pay under the terms of the Missing Persons Act while he was in prison. Warner memorandum to Dulles, "Continuance of Pay of Francis G. Powers," OGC 61-1454, 24 August 1961, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 34, folder 13.

contradicted Powers' testimony

In early March 1962, the Agency issued a public statement—approved by McCone—that seemed to accept Powers's version of the shootdown. The pilot had "lived up to the terms of his employment...and...his obligations as an American"; "no evidence has been found" of Soviet espionage activity (i.e., Powers did not try to defect) or of sabotage. On the Prettyman board's conclusion the statement said:

> Some information from confidential sources was available. Some of it corroborated Powers and some of it was inconsistent with parts with Powers's story, but that which was inconsistent was in part contradictory with itself and subject to various interpretations. Some of this information was the basis for considerable speculation...that Powers' plane had descended gradually from its extreme altitude and had been shot down by a Russian fighter at medium altitude. On careful analysis, it appears that the information on which these stories were based was erroneous or was susceptible to varying interpretations. The board came to the conclusion that it could not accept a doubtful interpretation in this regard which was inconsistent with all the other known facts.[47] (S)

The statement, however, did not dispel completely the impression that Powers somehow had done something unpatriotic. For Powers and his supporters, the devil was in its nuances and omissions. The statement did not declare unequivocally that, in the Agency's judgment, his disclosures to the Soviets had not harmed national security, nor did it vouch for what Powers claimed he had and had not told his captors. Also, the Agency withheld other, more sensitive findings favorable to Powers. Consequently, at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing in early March 1962, one of the members asked McCone, "Don't you think he is being left with just a little bit of a cloud hanging over him? If he did everything he is supposed to do, why leave it hanging?" McCone declined this opportunity to endorse the Prettyman Board's findings, to acknowledge that Powers had concealed secrets while in captivity, or to officially absolve him. Powers appeared at an open hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee, chaired by longtime Agency ally Richard Russell, and won praise from the members and generally favorable press coverage. In April, the Air Force reinstated Powers—a decision in which CIA, the Department of State, and the White House concurred—and Lockheed hired him as a test pilot the following December.[48] (S)

The swing in public sentiment toward Powers must have irked McCone, who then took other steps against him. In late June 1962, the DCI decided that commercial publication of a book by Powers about the shootdown "would be harmful to Powers and not in the best interests of the Agency" and sent the general counsel and a high-ranking DDP officer to dissuade the pilot. They reported that after discussing the matter with Powers, "he was reluctantly receptive to our guidance." Powers wrote to McCone, however, that he might reconsider writing a book later. In April 1963, the DCI awarded the Intelligence Star to all American U-2 pilots except Powers, and he may have advised President Kennedy not to meet with Powers, even though a year before the president had welcomed two captured Air Force reconnaissance pilots released by Moscow.[49] (S)

The Agency's investigation into John F. Kennedy's assassination gave McCone further reason to wonder about Powers. Lee Harvey Oswald was stationed at a U-2 base in Japan during 1957–58, before he defected to the Soviet Union in

[46] McCone and Houston memoranda, 28 February 1962, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 22, folder 2; McCone, "Memorandum of Discussion with the President...February 28, 1962...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 1; Prettyman, Bross, and Bull letter to McCone, 27 February 1962, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 22, folder 2. (S)

[47] CIA, "Statement Concerning Francis Gary Powers," ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 22, folder 2; Pedlow and Welzenbach, 185; Pocock, *Dragon Lady*, 52. According to John McMahon, McMahon, OH, 31. (S)

[48] CIA, "Statement Concerning Francis Gary Powers"; White, "Powers," 17; Pedlow and Welzenbach, 185; Beschloss, *Mayday*, 352–54; George C. Wilson, "Powers' Capitol Testimony Adds Little to Knowledge of U-2 Affair," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, 12 March 1962, 317, Powers clipping file, HIC; David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, *The U-2 Affair*, chap. 15. A DDP regulation authorized captured U-2 pilots to disclose their Agency affiliation. The pilots were never ordered to commit suicide if they were about to be captured. The Senate committees did not release many of their exculpatory findings about Powers. (S)

1959, and speculation arose that he had divulged technical information about the U-2 program that would have helped the Soviets shoot down Powers's aircraft. By May 1964, CIA had concluded that Oswald did not have access to such information. After that possibility was discounted, McCone thought he had another reason to suspect that Powers had done something wrong.[50] (U)

Toward the end of his directorship, McCone appears to have decided to wash his hands of the Powers matter. In March 1965, he approved awarding the pilot the Intelligence Star. Two days before McCone stepped down, DDCI Marshall Carter presented Powers with the award, which bore the year 1963 engraved on the back.[51] (S)

Improving Community Security (U)

The rash of counterintelligence and security incidents involving US citizens that erupted in the early 1960s required strong action from McCone in his capacities as DCI and chairman of USIB. Including those cases mentioned above, over a dozen US government personnel, most of them in the military or from NSA, were implicated in espionage activity for hostile services during 1961–65.[52] Much of the response to those specific incidents was handled by the organizations in which the perpetrators worked. Members of USIB also took broader steps at the community level to tighten and rationalize interagency security. (S)

McCone's statutory responsibilities for protecting sources and methods did not grant him specific authority to implement rules outside CIA, but he tried to rectify that situation through bureaucratic means.[53] He made substantial progress in overcoming agencies' jealous protection of their prerogatives and in encouraging them to recognize their mutual interests. Three of his first accomplishments along those lines were bringing to closure protracted negotiations over a system of uniform security control markings and procedures for disseminating and using intelligence, having USIB promulgate policies for exchanging counterintelligence and security information among member agencies, and establishing consistent counterintelligence and security practices at installations overseas. (S)

The DCI's main instrument was the Intelligence Board Security Committee (IBSEC), established in 1959 but energized during his tenure. Under the chairmanship of either the DCI or CIA's director of security, IBSEC also implemented PFIAB's recommendations for changes in security practices following the Dunlap case.[54] Those recommendations included imposing stricter standards for personal conduct (especially "abnormal sexual activity"); developing

[49] Helms memorandum to Carter, "Telephone Call From the Attorney General," 29 May 1962, DDO Files, Job 78-02888R, box 3, folder 8; Powers letter to McCone, 6 July 1962, and Carter untitled memorandum, 7 July 1962, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 330; Kirkpatrick, Executive Memorandum 19, "Writings by Francis Gary Powers," 27 June 1962, ibid., Job 80B01676R, box 1, folder 10; [redacted] memorandum to Houston, "Francis Gary Powers," 6 July 1962, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 1, folder 6; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record, Subject: Special Group Meeting—5412—26 April 1962," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 2; McCone letter to the president, 3 March 1962, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 30, folder 4; CIA, "Statement Concerning Francis Gary Powers"; White, "Powers," 18, 22; Warner [redacted] OH, 27–28; Pedlow and Welzenbach, 185–86. (S)

According to John McMahon, Robert Kennedy asked McCone to pressure Powers not to write a book about the shootdown. David Wise and Thomas B. Ross were about to have *The U-2 Affair* published when they heard that Powers was going to write his own story. They did not want any competition and complained to the attorney general, who in turn told McCone that it was inappropriate for the pilot to write anything. McMahon [redacted] OH, 33. Kennedy's intervention notwithstanding, the DCI had his own motives for keeping Powers quiet. Powers eventually told his version in *Operation Overflight* (1970), [redacted] The book does not mention McCone, and there are no references to it in his papers. (S)

[50] Helms memorandum to Hoover, "Lee Harvey Oswald's Access to Classified Information about the U-2," 13 May 1964, MORI doc. no. 272226. (U)

[51] Pedlow and Welzenbach, 185–86; Beschloss, *Mayday*, 397; Polmar, *Spyplane*, 144–45; Carter untitled memorandum to McMahon, 27 March 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01284A, box 25, folder 1; "CIA Honors U-2 Pilot Francis Gary Powers," *Los Angeles Times*, 5 May 1965, 5, Powers clipping file, HIC. (S)

On 1 May 2000, 40 years after Powers was shot down and captured, and 23 years after he died in a helicopter accident, the Air Force awarded him the Distinguished Flying Cross and the National Defense Service Medal. "US Finally Honors U-2 Spy Plane Pilot Gary Powers," Reuters story no. a3399, 1 May 2000. (U)

[52] Jepson, 41–42; Stan A. Taylor and Daniel Snow, "Cold War Spies: Why They Spied and How They Got Caught," *I&NS* 12, no. 2 (April 1997): appendix A; USIB Security Committee, annual report for FY 1964, 14 September 1964, CMS Files, Job 93B01114R, box 2, folder 19. (S)

[53] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: [redacted] Patrick L. Carpentier, "Security as an Intelligence Community Concern," *Studies* 10, no. 4 (Fall 1966): 60–61; *Annual Report for FY 1965*, 106; IBSEC annual reports for 1962–65, CMS Files, Job 93B01114R, box 2, folder 19; DCI Directive No. 1/7, "Controls for Dissemination and Use of Intelligence and Intelligence Information," 21 February 1962, ICS Files, Job 91B01063R, box 1, folder 15; Robert L. Bannerman (Director of Security) memorandum to IBSEC members, "Implementation of Recommendations of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Resulting from the Dunlap Case," 28 July 1964, ibid., folder 8. (S)

[redacted]

more intense security indoctrination programs (including counterintelligence case studies); and resolving any doubts about a suspect employee in favor of protecting national security. After a former NSA cryptanalyst, Victor Hamilton, defected to the Soviet Union in 1963, IBSEC oversaw the response of community components in coordinating medical, security, and personnel information during applicant and employee investigations. ~~(S)~~

Because military personnel committed most of the anti-US espionage uncovered in the early 1960s, McCone sought to tighten security procedures for servicemen in community organizations that fell under his purview as DCI. In practical terms, he could do little about NSA, which answered to the secretary of defense, and the military services' intelligence components were even farther from his reach. After the Dunlap case broke in the summer of 1963, McCone pointed out in a memorandum to Secretary of Defense McNamara how successful CIA's security procedures had been and commended them to the Pentagon. One entity he could deal with more directly was NPIC. He wrote to McNamara that he had determined that all Department of Defense employees assigned to NPIC would be investigated and processed as CIA personnel were, including the taking of a polygraph. The secretary of defense said he was anxious to begin polygraphing new military assignees at NSA but foresaw problems if that were done to Pentagon personnel currently at NPIC. McCone and McNamara therefore agreed that all servicemen detailed to NPIC in the future would be "fluttered" by the Agency's Office of Security.[55] ~~(S)~~

McCone made less progress in establishing uniform personnel security standards throughout the community. Expanding the scope of security investigations was expensive, and the DCI historically did not have responsibility for designating access to classified defense-related material. Discussions among community organizations about standards for access to sensitive compartmented information dragged on for the rest of McCone's tenure. In addition, unfavorable comments from several congressional committees about using the polygraph on federal employees made it hard for McCone to incorporate the device more extensively in screening community personnel.[56] ~~(S)~~

[redacted]

Unauthorized disclosures of classified information in the media became a growing problem during McCone's directorship as journalists took a more adversarial approach toward the national security establishment in general and CIA in particular. McCone was sensitive to unfavorable publicity and "leaks," and he instituted many internal investigations into news stories that appeared to be based on classified information. These time-consuming inquiries almost always proved fruitless. The journalists had First Amendment protection, and their government sources were exceptionally difficult to uncover because so much intelligence was so widely disseminated within the community. Among numerous examples, two stand out as fair illustrations of the challenge McCone and USIB faced. (U)

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[55] Kirkpatrick, "Memorandum for the Record...DCI Meeting with President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, 13 September [1963]," DDO Files, Job 78-03805R, box 3, folder 12A; McCone memorandum to McNamara, 11 October 1963, [redacted] Kirkpatrick memorandum to Lawrence K. White, Action Memorandum A-432, "Security clearances for military personnel assigned to NPIC," 21 October 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 2, folder 4. ~~(S)~~

[56] [redacted]

McCone was willing to go along with another, more drastic, approach to preventing leaks—one identified in the so-called "Family Jewels" report of 1973 as among the most troubling of the Agency's questionable domestic activities.[61] "Project MOCKINGBIRD" was, according to the report, "a telephone intercept activity...conducted between 12 March 1963 and 15 June 1963...[that] targeted two Washington-based newsmen [Robert S. Allen and Paul Scott] who, at the time, had been publishing news articles based on, and frequently quoting, classified materials of this Agency and others, including Top Secret [redacted]"[62] The Office of Security, then under Sheffield Edwards, ran MOCKINGBIRD. According to Walter Elder and a security officer who worked on the operation, Edwards received his orders from McCone, who agreed (under pressure from the attorney general) to authorize the wiretaps of the journalists' homes and office. Because their main source(s) appeared to be

[61] The "Family Jewels" report was a compendium of possibly illegal CIA activities that James Schlesinger ordered OIG to compile soon after he became DCI in February 1973. It included details of domestic spying, drug testing, mail opening, and assassination planning, some of which went on during McCone's tenure. Press disclosures of some of the report's contents precipitated investigations into CIA operations by the Rockefeller Commission and special congressional committees led by Sen. Frank Church and Rep. Otis Pike. (U)

in the Department of Defense, McCone had Elder brief McNamara and the director of DIA. (An employee in ONE was regarded as the most likely leaker inside the Agency.) Besides the DCI and Elder, only three other Agency managers supposedly knew about MOCKINGBIRD—DDCI Carter, Executive Director-Comptroller Kirkpatrick, and General Counsel Houston. (A few security personnel who processed the take from the wiretaps also were witting.)

MOCKINGBIRD did not identify Allen and Scott's specific sources, but it helped reveal the journalists' methods and many of their contacts outside CIA and the Pentagon, including members of Congress and their staffers, administration officials, and current and former federal employees. By showing how far well-connected Washington newsmen cast their reportorial nets, the operation underscored how difficult it was to catch leakers *en flagrante delicto*. Surveillance of Allen and Scott was suspended after a few months, and MOCKINGBIRD was terminated, just after McCone left Langley.[63]

The Man Who Protected the Secrets (U)

The several-year outbreak of counterintelligence and security incidents that began in the late 1950s and continued through McCone's tenure was the worst the Intelligence Community faced until the "decade of the spy" in the 1980s. The cases arose at a politically inopportune time for the DCI, charged as he was after the Bay of Pigs with properly managing CIA's clandestine activities and preventing operational embarrassments. Some of the counterintelligence and security episodes that came to term during his tenure resulted from mistakes and oversights committed before, but as the incumbent, McCone had to accept responsibility for them. He generally handled the controversies appropriately, avoiding undue publicity, allaying policymakers' concerns, and instituting useful preventatives at the community level. Perhaps as important, he appreciated his own limitations in the counterintelligence field, and, except for cases that were especially sensitive or that disrupted liaison relationships, he left CI matters to more experienced lieutenants. That said, while he was willing to entertain the maxim that "no intelligence service can for very long be any better than its counterintelligence component," he did not blithely accept unfounded ideas from even as vaunted an intellect as James Angleton. (U)

On the debit side, McCone's relative inexperience with counterintelligence probably made him defer too much to his operations deputies, Helms and Angleton. Had McCone given the Golitsyn defection more direct attention, some of the early problems it caused internally and with sister services might have been avoided or attenuated. The forbearance McCone and his deputies exhibited toward that difficult case said more about the Agency's poverty of Soviet intelligence sources than anything else. Some espionage operations that hostile services began or kept running in the early and mid-1960s went undetected even when CIA's counterintelligence capabilities arguably were as keen as they ever would be. Lastly, McCone did not recognize that the Agency's CI efforts were too focused on European problems and Soviet operations while the Cold War—including the one fought in the shadows—was fast becoming a multipolar, truly global conflict. Serving under two activist administrations, he helped the Agency take espionage and covert action into new theaters. Counterintelligence at CIA, in contrast—perhaps reflecting its bureaucratic culture of compartmentation and secrecy, and the *idée fixe* of Angleton—remained parochial, inbred, and unadaptive during McCone's directorship. (U)

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[62] Sources for this section are: Project MOCKINGBIRD synopsis and Elder memorandum to Colby, "Special Activities," 1 June 1973, "Family Jewels" report, 21, 457; Project MOCKINGBIRD summaries submitted to the Rockefeller Commission, March 1975, ibid., box 10, folders 182 and 216; Bannerman memorandum to McCone, "Articles by Robert Allen and Paul Scott...," 5 March 1963, with attached memorandum from USIB Security Committee to USIB, "Protection of Intelligence Sources and Methods: Articles by Robert Allen and Paul Scott," 1 March 1963, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 8, folder 168; *Rockefeller Commission Report*, 164; *Church Committee Report*, vol. 2, 102–3. McCone was not questioned about MOCKINGBIRD when he testified to the Church Committee.

[63] Soon after he became DCI, McCone had a run-in with [redacted] over an article they wrote about [redacted] purportedly gave at the White House to congressional leaders in late 1961 or early 1962. The DCI insisted no such briefing took place, but [redacted] stuck to the story. McCone told public affairs chief Stanley Grogan that "[t]his fellow is lying to you...and we can nail him if we get cooperation from the White House." When he met with the reporters in late March 1962, the DCI charged them with "gross carelessness and irresponsibility" in several of their articles—including ones about alleged communists working at CIA, and misjudgments of ONE. [redacted] agreed to check anything they wrote about CIA with Grogan or McCone in the future. Untitled file memorandum about McCone meeting with Grogan, undated but early 1962, and Grogan untitled memorandum about McCone meeting with [redacted] on 20 March 1962, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 8, folder 168. McCone's effort in 1964 to quash the book by investigative reporters David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, *The Invisible Government*, is discussed in Chapter 16.

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CHAPTER

14

Death of the President (U)

John McCone and Lyman Kirkpatrick, the Agency's Executive Director-Comptroller, met with PFIAB through the morning of 22 November 1963. The main topic of discussion was CIA's image problem, which McCone attributed to hostile journalists. The DCI planned to fly to California that afternoon for the Thanksgiving holiday and, before leaving, over lunch, wanted to talk about the PFIAB meeting with his senior deputies. He, Kirkpatrick, Richard Helms, Albert Wheelon, Ray Cline, and Sherman Kent were eating in the French Room, a small space next to the director's office, when Walter Elder dashed in and cried out, "The president's been shot!"[1] ~~(S)~~

McCone turned on the television, watched the news bulletins, phoned the attorney general at his nearby home, and said, "I'm going to Hickory Hill to be with Bobby."[2] The DCI made his call before the overloaded Washington-area telephone system went down 30 minutes after the first news from Dallas. He remembered wondering on the short drive to the Kennedy house "who could be responsible for a thing like this. Was it the result of bigotry and hatred that was expressed in certain areas of the country, of which Dallas was one? Was this an international plot?" (U)

While McCone was with Robert and Ethel Kennedy in their second floor library, the attorney general answered the phone, listened briefly, and then said, "He's dead." McCone recalled feeling shock, disbelief, profound sadness, and great concern for the country. A few minutes later, he and Robert left the house and walked around the lawn, speaking privately. One of the numerous phone calls to interrupt them was from Vice President Lyndon Johnson in Dallas. After expressing his condolences, Johnson told Robert that the assassination might be part of a worldwide plot and indicated that he probably should be sworn in right away. The attorney general was initially taken aback but then agreed, found out the appropriate procedure from the Department of Justice, and informed the presidential entourage in Dallas. He wanted to fly there right away, but McCone said that would take too long and suggested instead that the slain president's body be brought to Washington as soon as possible. Air Force One landed at Andrews Air Force Base that evening, and John Kennedy's body was taken to Bethesda Naval Medical Center for an autopsy. Meanwhile, the controversy over who had killed him, and why, had already begun. ~~(S)~~

Initial Fears of a Conspiracy (U)

McCone returned to Headquarters at around 1530, summoned the CIA Executive Committee, asked the Intelligence Community's Watch Committee to convene at the Pentagon, issued orders for all stations and bases to report any signs of a conspiracy and to watch all Soviet personnel, especially intelligence officers, for indications that the Soviet Union was trying to take advantage of the disarray in Washington. The immediate reaction at Langley, as elsewhere in the US government, was to suspect that a foreign, probably communist-directed, effort to destabilize the United States might be underway. Richard Helms recalled that "[w]e all went to battle stations over the possibility that this might be a plot—and who was pulling the strings. We were very busy sending messages all over the world to pick up anything that might indicate that a conspiracy had been formed to kill the President of the United States—and then what was to come next." One of the first cables was the following message Helms sent to all CIA stations overseas:

> Tragic death of President Kennedy requires all of us to look sharp for any unusual intelligence developments. Although we have no reason to expect anything of a

[1] Sources for this introductory section are: Clifford, 378; Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*, 339, n. 25; Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 608–9; Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *The Kennedys: An American Drama*, 395; C. David Heymann, *RFK: A Candid Biography of Robert F. Kennedy*, 345–47; William Manchester, *The Death of a President*, 256–57; Richard Helms interview in "Kennedy Remembered," *Newsweek* 102, no. 48 (28 November 1983): 75; Kirkpatrick [redacted] OH, 28; McCone calendars, entry for 22 November 1963; transcript of McCone interview with William Manchester, 10 April 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 8; Kirkpatrick Diary, vol. 5, entry for 22 November 1963; Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*, 672 citing interview with Helms; author's conversation with Helms, 16 April 1998. For once at the onset of a crisis, McCone was at Langley while Marshall Carter was away (quail hunting at the Farm). Bamford, *Body of Secrets*, 132. ~~(S)~~

[2] Robert Kennedy was holding a luncheon meeting on organized crime with two Department of Justice officials when FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover called to tell him that the president had been shot. Richard Gid Powers, *Secrecy and Power*, 383; Heymann, 345. (U)

particular military nature, all hands should be on the quick alert at least for the next few days while new president takes over reins.[3] (U)

In addition, McCone directed that a special cable channel be established so that all traffic related to Lee Harvey Oswald—arrested in Dallas soon after the shooting—went to a central repository, and he sent a [redacted] to Parkland Hospital, where John Kennedy had been taken for emergency treatment, to coordinate activities with the Secret Service and the FBI. After the Secret Service obtained a graphic film of the assassination taken by an amateur photographer named Abraham Zapruder, McCone had NPIC officers analyze the footage (particularly the time between shots) and prepare briefing boards for the service.[4] (U)

Lee Harvey Oswald (U)
Photo: UPI/Bettman

Some senior Agency officers looked into possible KGB involvement. The chief of the DDP's SR Division, David Murphy, framed the essential question the day after: "[W]as Oswald, wittingly or unwittingly, part of a plot to murder President Kennedy in Dallas as an attempt to further exacerbate sectional strife and render the US government less capable of dealing with Soviet initiatives over the next year?" Also on the 23rd, Mexico City station reported that less than two months earlier, Oswald had met with a KGB officer possibly from the Thirteenth Directorate—responsible for assassination and sabotage—at the Soviet embassy in Mexico City. Headquarters officers speculated on 24 November that "[a]lthough it appears that he [Oswald] was then thinking only about a peaceful change of residence to the Soviet Union, it is also possible that he was getting documented to make a quick escape after assassinating the President."[5] (U)

The Agency's inability to locate Nikita Khrushchev right after the assassination especially alarmed McCone and his deputies. The Soviet premier's apparent absence from Moscow could have meant that he was in a secret command center, either hunkering down for an American reprisal, or possibly preparing to strike at the United States. "We were very high in tension about any indicators which would support such a theme," Helms said. "It became manifest within 24 or 48 hours, however, that this was not the case."

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[3] Beschloss, *Crisis Years*, 672 citing interview with Helms; DIR 84608, 22 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 47694. (U)

[4] Knoche memorandum to Robert R. Olsen (Senior Counsel, Rockefeller Commission), 29 April 1975, 14, MORI doc. no. 350496; CIA, *The History of the National Photographic Interpretation Center, 1963–1993*, 21; David R. Wrone, *The Zapruder Film: Reframing JFK's Assassination*, 28–29. NPIC had difficulty computing the exact time of exposure of the frames on Zapruder's film because the camera he used was spring-wound, which caused the timing of the frames to vary slightly from the standard of 18 per second. [redacted] CIA had opened counterintelligence and security files on Oswald in early November 1959 after it was notified of his defection to the Soviet Union. Oswald's [redacted] was opened in December 1960 to contain cables, news clippings, and other material accumulated in response to an inquiry from the Department of State about a list of 12 American defectors in Soviet Bloc countries; Oswald's name was on the list. Helms memorandum to J. Lee Rankin (Warren Commission), "Information in CIA's Possession Regarding Lee Harvey Oswald Prior to November 22, 1963," 6 March 1964, MORI doc. no. 48392; House of Representatives Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA), draft report, "Lee Harvey Oswald Was Not Associated as an Agent or in [Any] Other Capacity with the CIA," undated but c. mid-1978, CIA JFK Assassination Records, box JFK24, folder 46; Newman, 54–58; material in Lee Harvey Oswald clipping file, folder 1, HIC.

[5] Tennent H. Bagley (SR Division/CI Branch) memorandum to Karamessines, "Cable from Chief, SR Division, re Possible KGB role in Kennedy Slaying," 23 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 263529; Bagley memorandum to Karamessines, "Contact of Lee OSWALD with a member of Soviet KGB Assassination Department," 23 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 48326; DIR 84920, 24 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 25518. (U)

CIA did not establish that the Soviet with whom Oswald met, Valeriy Kostikov, was from the KGB's "wet affairs" department. According to transcripts of their telephone conversations [redacted] they only discussed Oswald's request for a visa. By early 1964, the Agency had concluded that Oswald's contact with [redacted] than a grim coincidence...." Bagley untitled memorandum about Kostikov, 27 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 378020; Helms memorandum to Rankin, "Valeriy Vladimirovich KOSTIKOV," 16 January 1964, MORI doc. no. 367204; Hoover memorandum to Helms, "Valeriy V. Kostikov...," 15 September 1964, MORI doc. no. 270452; CI Staff, "Summary of Oswald Case Prepared for Briefing Purposes Circa 10 December 1963," MORI doc. no. 48723. Oleg Nechiporenko, one of the KGB officers in Mexico City during Oswald's trip there, has recounted the Soviets' dealings with him in *Passport to Assassination*. (U)

One of the Agency's star Soviet defectors, Peter Deriabin, wrote a lengthy memorandum a few days after the assassination arguing that Oswald was a KGB agent who either was dispatched to kill Kennedy or was sent to the United States on another mission and then committed the murder on his own. Deriabin contended that the Kremlin would have accomplished several objectives by eliminating Kennedy. Among them were removing the West's preeminent Cold Warrior from the scene; constraining US covert actions against Cuba, which would be stigmatized as acts of vengeance; and diverting the Soviet people's attention from domestic problems. Deriabin's conjectures did not find much of an audience at Headquarters. Deriabin memorandum to [redacted] (SR Division/CI Branch), "Comments on President Kennedy's Assassination," 27 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 393150. (U)

news of the assassination deeply shocked their leaders and made them fear US retaliation.[6]

For some time after the assassination, and particularly following Oswald's murder on the 24th, Agency leaders would not rule out a domestic or foreign conspiracy—the latter possibly involving the Soviet Union or Cuba. A Headquarters cable on the 28th stated that "[w]e have by no means excluded the possibility that other as yet unknown persons may have been involved or even that other powers may have played a role." On 1 December, the station in Mexico City, where Oswald had visited the Soviet and Cuban consulates a few weeks before the assassination, was told to "continue to follow all leads and tips. The question of whether Oswald acted solely on his own has still not been finally resolved." Two weeks later, Headquarters told the station to "continue watch for...evidence of their [Soviet or Cuban] complicity..." McCone suggested two possible culprits if Oswald had not acted alone. "Castro's been so frightfully intemperate in some of his talks," he told a senior Pentagon official, and "it would be within his capability if he thought he could get away with it, I think. Khrushchev, no. On the other hand, I don't know how completely Khrushchev controls the KGB." If either theory proved credible, Helms remembered, "[w]e could have had a very nasty situation. What would be the retaliation? A startled America could do some extreme things...."[7]

Besides determining whether an international crisis was imminent, Agency officers also tried to find out as much as they could about Oswald. Mexico City station reported on the 22nd that he had been at the Soviet and Cuban embassies in the Mexican capital during late September-early October. Most of the assassination-related information about which McCone briefed President Johnson, McGeorge Bundy, and Dean Rusk during the next week concerned the Oswald-Cuba connection. On 23 November, McCone apprised the president and Bundy of the station's trace results. Later in the day, the station reported that the Mexican police had arrested a Mexican national working at the Cuban consulate who supposedly talked to Oswald in September. That evening, McCone told Rusk about all these developments. On the 25th, a Nicaraguan walk-in to the US embassy in Mexico City said that when he was in the Cuban consulate in mid-September, he heard Cubans talk about assassination and saw them give Oswald money. Within a few days, however, this alarming report was shown to be a fabrication. McCone discussed the incident with the president and Bundy on 30 November and 1 December. Between 23 November and 5 December, the DCI briefed Johnson on assassination developments and other intelligence matters every day but two—in varying measures, to communicate news about the investigation, to demonstrate how CIA was involved in it, and to create a bond with the new president.[8]

McCone also participated in two rituals surrounding John Kennedy's death. On Saturday the 23rd, he went to the White House to pay last respects to the president, and on Monday the 25th, he attended the state funeral at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington. That morning, CIA and the FBI received numerous reports that attempts would be made to assassinate foreign leaders invited to the funeral. McCone personally told one of the supposed targets, French President de Gaulle, about the threats against him. Fifty-eight CIA security officers joined the detail at the funeral, along the route of the procession, and at Arlington

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[6] Kirkpatrick OH, 29; Helms interview in "Kennedy Remembered," 75. Khrushchev had reappeared by the morning of the 23rd, when he met with US Ambassador Foy Kohler. Moscow Embassy cable to Secretary of State, EMBTEL 1759, 23 November 1963, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 2, folder 9.

The Soviet Union immediately tried to dispel notions that it was behind the assassination. Less than 15 minutes after Kennedy's death was announced, the TASS news service issued a bulletin that rightwing extremists in the United States were responsible. Eastern European stations picked up and spread the story. According to former KGB officer Oleg Kalugin, who was stationed in New York at the time, "the Kremlin leadership was clearly rattled by Oswald's Soviet connection." KGB Headquarters sent "frantic cables...ordering us to do everything possible" to quell suspicions of Soviet involvement in Kennedy's death. "We were told to put forward the line that Oswald could have been involved in a conspiracy with American reactionaries displeased with the President's recent efforts to improve relations with Russia.... [T]he message we were to convey was clear: 'Inform the American public through every possible channel that we never trusted Oswald and were never in any way connected with him.'" Moscow tried to play down Oswald's tie to the Soviet Union by insinuating that he was a Trotskyite or a Marxist of some undetermined sort, and not a "real" communist. Walter Elder recalled thinking that the Soviets' denials were too scripted; "it was almost like they were reading from a manual." Reviewing the early Soviet "line" on the assassination a few months later, Agency analysts suggested that "the charge against the extreme right was perhaps a 'conditioned reflex'.... Hoodwinked by its own preconceptions and wishful thinking[,] the Kremlin almost inevitably concluded that President Kennedy had been struck down by his most radical right-wing opponents." Other Soviet publications further confused the picture by propagating assorted conspiracy theories. *Izvestia*, the government newspaper, and *Red Star*, the army periodical, speculated that organized crime was involved, while *Pravda*, the Communist Party organ, and *Nedelya*, a news magazine, proposed that Oswald was not the assassin. Media in satellite countries disseminated those notions also. Oleg Kalugin with Fen Montaigne, *The First Directorate*, 58; Elder quoted in Evan Thomas, "The Real Cover-Up," *Newsweek* 122, no. 46 (22 November 1993): 76; CIA memorandum to the Warren Commission, "Rumors About Lee Harvey Oswald," 23 March 1964, 2–3, 6, 8, MORI doc. no. 355927; Armand Moss, *Disinformation, Misinformation, and the "Conspiracy" to Kill JFK Exposed*, 16–17, 23–26. (U)

[7] DIR 85655, 28 November 1963, DIR 86064, 1 December 1963, and DIR 88680, 13 December 1963, CIA JFK Assassination Records, box JFK36, folder 39; transcript of McCone conversation with Brockway McMillan, 27 November 1963, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 7; Helms quoted in Thomas, "The Real JFK Cover-Up," 78.

Cemetery. Later that day, the DCI went to a reception for visiting dignitaries hosted by President Johnson at the Department of State.[9] (U)

Because of their relationship, McCone had frequent contact with Robert Kennedy during the painful days after the assassination. Their communication appears to have been verbal, informal, and, evidently in McCone's estimation, highly personal; no memoranda or transcripts exist or are known to have been made. The DCI no doubt passed on to the attorney general the same information about Oswald, the Soviet Union, and Cuba that he gave to Johnson and other senior administration officials. In addition, because Robert Kennedy had overseen the Agency's anti-Castro covert actions—including some of the assassination plans—his dealings with McCone about his brother's murder had a special gravity. Did Castro kill the president because the president had tried to kill Castro? Had the administration's obsession with Cuba inadvertently inspired a politicized sociopath to murder John Kennedy? In 1975, according to one of the Warren Commission's lawyers, McCone

> said he felt there was something troubling Kennedy that he was not disclosing.... McCone said he now feels Kennedy may very well have thought that there was some connection between the assassination plans against Castro and the assassination of President Kennedy. He also added his personal belief that Robert Kennedy had personal feelings of guilt because he was directly or indirectly involved with the anti-Castro planning.

As head of CIA when much of that planning took place, McCone also might have had such feelings. A distraught Kennedy even had McCone affirm that the Agency itself was not involved in the assassination. When New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison made that allegation in 1967, Kennedy was prompted to recall that soon after the assassination he had asked McCone "if they [the Agency] had killed my brother.... I asked him in a way he couldn't lie to me, and [he said] they hadn't."[10] (U)

Managing CIA's Part in the Investigation (U)

The FBI took the lead in the federal investigation of President Kennedy's murder. CIA supported the Bureau by obtaining information from clandestine and liaison sources outside the United States and from foreign contacts inside, principally in the Cuban refugee community in Florida. The Agency concentrated first on Oswald's activities in Mexico City in September and October 1963, and then on his residency in the Soviet Union during 1959–62 and his possible ties to Soviet intelligence. Within a week, Headquarters received [redacted] about Oswald and forwarded them to the White House, the FBI, the Department of State, and the Secret Service. After 29 November, CIA also began assisting the Warren Commission's inquiry.[11] (U)

[8] CIA memorandum, "Summary of Relevant Information on Lee Harvey Oswald at 0700 on 24 November 1963," MORI doc. no. 48657; McCone memoranda dated 23 and 24 November and 2 and 3 December 1963, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6; McCone note to Bundy, 28 November 1963, ibid., box 8, folder 1; Birch D. O'Neal (CI Staff) untitled memorandum about Nicaraguan source, 26 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 378043; DIR 85089, 26 November 1963, DIR 85258, 27 November 1963, DIR 86063, 30 November 1963, MEXI 7289, 7 December 1963, and DIR 87666, 7 December 1963, MORI doc. nos. 263758, 12962, 356157, 47986, and 274952; DIR 86064, 1 December 1963, CIA JFK Assassination Records, box JFK36, folder 39; *Church Committee JFK Assassination Report*, 24, 27–30; McCone telephone conversation with President Johnson, 30 November 1963, *Taking Charge*, 78; McCone calendars, entries for 23 November–5 December 1963. The bogus Nicaraguan walk-in was just one of many false sources that US intelligence services had to evaluate right after the assassination. As Headquarters officers noted in a cable to Mexico City station, "We and other agencies are being flooded by fabrications on the [Oswald] case from several continents, some originating with people on the fringes of the intelligence business. Such fabrications are not usually done for money, but out of sickly fancy and a desire to get into the intelligence game." DIR 85616, 27 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 47629. (S)

Also on 23 November, OCI prepared a special edition of the *President's Intelligence Checklist*, dated the 22nd and bearing this dedication: "[I]n honor of President Kennedy[,] for whom the President's Intelligence Checklist was first written on 17 June 1961." These were the only contents of that memorial issue:

> For this day, the Checklist Staff can find no words more fitting than a verse quoted by the President to a group of newspapermen the day he learned of the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba.
> Bullfight critics ranked in rows
> Crowd the enormous plaza full;
> But only one is there who *knows*
> And he's the man who fights the bull.

President's Intelligence Checklist, 22 November 1963, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 2, folder 9; see also Andrew, 10 of photograph section. (U)

[9] McCone calendars, entries for 23 and 25 November 1963; James J. Rowley (Chief, Secret Service) letter to McCone, 9 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 29, folder 14; transcript of McCone interview with Manchester, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 8; Manchester, 575. (S)

[10] David W. Belin, *Final Disclosure: The Full Truth About the Assassination of President Kennedy*, 217; Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 616 citing Walter Sheridan (Department of Justice) oral history interview, 12 June 1970. Early intercepts of Cuban diplomatic communications indicated that Havana was mystified about Kennedy's killing. Bamford, *Body of Secrets*, 133. (U)

[11] Anonymous CIA memorandum, "What collection requirements were issued to the field with regard to Kennedy's assassination?," undated, MORI doc. no. 476431; [redacted] report, "We Discover Lee OSWALD in Mexico City," 13 December 1963, MORI doc. no. 48683, 6. (U)

As DCI, McCone's role between the assassination and the release of the commission's report 10 months later was, in his words, "to see that the investigation and the review of the CIA's relationship, if any, with Oswald were thoroughly studied and all relevant matters conveyed to the Warren Commission." According to Helms, McCone's function was "see[ing] to it that sufficient manpower and funds and other resources of the Agency were put to work in support of the Warren Commission and the FBI." McCone "certainly...maintained a continuing and abiding interest in these proceedings" but turned over daily management of the Agency's assassination-related activities to Helms, who kept the DCI, the DDCI, and the executive director informed. McCone's calendars indicate that after a flurry of meetings and discussions during the two weeks following Kennedy's death, he settled back into a routine schedule with his usual concentration on Intelligence Community affairs and foreign policy issues.[12]

Helms, in turn, designated the chief of the Mexican branch in WH Division, John Whitten, to run CIA's initial collection and dissemination efforts, and an officer in the CI Staff's Special Investigations Group, Birch O'Neal, to handle liaison with the FBI. After Whitten issued a report in December on Oswald's activities in Mexico City, Helms—at James Angleton's request, according to Whitten—shifted responsibility for Agency support for the FBI and the Warren Commission to the CI Staff. Helms did so for three reasons: Whitten's paper was not regarded as quality work; the assassination investigation had a counterintelligence element; and Angleton's shop provided a tightly controlled channel of communication.

The CI Staff's chief analyst, Raymond Rocca, was the Agency's senior point of contact for day-to-day business related to the assassination. When needed, other Agency officers—notably Helms and the top managers in the SR and WH divisions (David Murphy and J.C. King, respectively)—dealt directly with the commission and the FBI. According to Rocca, the CI Staff concentrated on Soviet leads while WH worked the Cuban angle. McCone evidently had no problem with this bureaucratic arrangement or with any other part of Helms's management of CIA's role. "[I]f he had been dissatisfied," Helms observed later, "he would have made his dissatisfaction clear[,] and I wouldn't have forgotten it."[13]


Raymond Rocca (U)

The shift of responsibility to the CI Staff also had the potential benefit of improving CIA coordination with the FBI, which had long dealt with Angleton's unit. Agency-Bureau relations had grown tense after the assassination because of jurisdictional disputes. Early on, McCone tried to assure J. Edgar Hoover that the FBI was in charge of the investigation and that CIA would be as helpful as it could be. In a short telephone conversation on 26 November, the DCI took almost every available opportunity to conciliate the bureau chief:

> I just want to be sure that you are satisfied that this Agency is giving you all the help that we possibly can in connection with your investigation of the situation in Dallas. I know the importance the President places on this investigation you are making. He asked me personally whether CIA was giving you full support. I

[12] McCone deposition to HSCA, 17 August 1978 (hereafter McCone HSCA deposition), 5–6, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 4, folder 11; *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 4, 11, 57.

[13] *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 4, 11, vol. 11, 57, 475–77; James Angleton deposition to HSCA, 5 October 1978, 76ff., and Raymond Rocca deposition to HSCA, 17 July 1978, 6 passim, HS Files Job 03-01724R, box 4, folder 11 (hereafter Angleton HSCA deposition and Rocca HSCA deposition); anonymous CIA memorandum, "CIA Personnel Involved in Oswald Case during Existence of Warren Commission," undated, MORI doc. no. 287755; Rocca memorandum, "Conversation with David W. Belin, 1 April 1975," MORI doc. no. 404002; [redacted] memorandum to Angleton, [redacted] "Inaccuracies and Errors in Draft of GPFLOOR Report," undated but c. 1 January 1964, MORI doc. no. 269997. Rocca did not recall meeting with McCone during the post-assassination period. Rocca HSCA deposition, 27.

The Agency's assassination inquiry was a major test of its data retrieval capabilities—particularly the computerized name-trace system developed for it by IBM and known as [redacted] which combined punch cards and microfilm. In his appearance before the commission, McCone encouraged federal agencies to computerize their records to facilitate investigations. [redacted] "The [redacted] System," unpublished manuscript (June 1998), copy on file in the History Staff; Jeremiah O'Leary, "McCone Claims Computers Could Aid in Investigations," Washington *Evening Star*, 5 October 1964, A1, JFK Assassination clipping file, HIC; Directorate of Operations, Information Management Staff, [redacted] A History of Applied Technology" (May 2001), 21–22, 65.

said that they were, but I just wanted to be sure from you that you felt so.... [Y]ou can call on us for anything we have.... I think it is an exceedingly important investigation and report[,] and I am delighted that the President has called on you to make it.[14]

Despite McCone's ingratiating diplomacy and the CI Staff's liaison role, relations between the two agencies worsened during the postassassination period. The Bureau's four-volume report, issued in early December, did not mention CIA, referred to just two pieces of information that the Agency had provided, and contained much material that CIA officers had not seen before but that was germane to their own inquiries, such as extensive information on Oswald's stay in the Soviet Union. In mid-December, Hoover voiced suspicions that McCone had questioned the Bureau's investigative abilities and might have leaked derogatory information to the press. The FBI director concurred with a deputy's recommendation that a "firm and forthright confrontation" be held with the DCI for "attack[ing] the Bureau in a vicious and underhanded manner characterized with sheer dishonesty." Sam Papich, the FBI liaison to CIA, met with McCone on 23 December to discuss a private allegation that the Agency was claiming it had uncovered evidence that Oswald was part of a conspiracy—specifically, that he had received money in Mexico City in September as prepayment for killing John Kennedy. McCone then "had endeavored to leave the impression with certain people that CIA had developed information not known to the Bureau and, in essence, made the Bureau look ridiculous." According to Papich, the DCI became "very visibly incensed and left the impression that he might at any moment ask [me] to leave." McCone then denied that he had talked to any journalist about the assassination and had not been critical of the FBI's handling of the investigation, but that he had told President Johnson about the original report on Oswald in Mexico City. The encounter with Papich "left [McCone] in an angry mood."[15] (U)

That dispute soon was superseded by recurrent problems over information sharing between the Agency and the Bureau. Not only did "a certain amount of pride of ownership" inhibit CIA-FBI communication, according to McCone, but senior Agency officials took issue with the Bureau's uncoordinated disclosures of information to the public and to the Warren Commission, which became the premier entity investigating the Kennedy assassination. In December, they were particularly concerned that release of the FBI report on the assassination would compromise sensitive CIA surveillance operations against the Soviet embassy in Mexico City by revealing that the Agency knew about Oswald's visit there. In mid-January 1964, Helms asked Hoover to direct his officers not to pass CIA-originated information to the commission without first obtaining clearance and coordination from Langley. Further animosity arose when the two organizations reached opposite conclusions about the bona fides of a KGB defector, Yuri Nosenko, who claimed to have seen Oswald's KGB file compiled while the American was in the Soviet Union. A disagreement over CIA's plan to ask defectors it handled to review FBI information was resolved when the Bureau agreed to allow such vetting as long as its own sources were protected and the Agency did not retain any original reports.[16]

Dealing With the Warren Commission (U)

Meanwhile, McCone and CIA had to work out a *modus vivendi* with the Warren Commission. Lyndon Johnson at first opposed creation of a presidential panel to examine the killing.[17] He preferred to let the FBI and Texas law enforcement authorities quietly handle the matter. With rumors

[14] Riebling, 202–3 for examples of CIA-FBI conflict; transcript of McCone-Hoover telephone conversation, 26 November 1963, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 4.

[15] D.J. Brennan memorandum to W.C. Sullivan (both FBI), "Relations with Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)," 23 December 1963, Lee Harvey Oswald FBI FOIA File No. 62-80750-4186; memorandum to McCone, "Screening the FBI Report on the Oswald Case," 6 December 1963, MORI doc. no. 15959; David Hess, "Documents Reveal FBI-CIA Clash," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 9 December 1977: 3A; Jeremiah O'Leary and James R. Dickenson, "Assassination Sparked Bitter FBI Quarrels," *Washington Star*, 8 December 1977, A1. (U)

[16] McCone HSCA deposition, 50; memorandum to Helms, "Plans for the [Oswald] Investigation," 11 December 1963, MORI doc. no. 48728; Helms memorandum to Hoover, "Assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy," 14 January 1964, MORI doc. no. 278018; Helms memorandum, "Meeting with Chief Justice Warren," 31 January 1964, MORI doc. no. 379972. At the time Oswald was in Mexico City, CIA, "Comments on Book V, SSC Final Report, *The Investigation of the Assassination of President Kennedy: Performance of the Intelligence Agencies*" (August 1977), tab F, 1–3, CIA JFK Assassination Records, box JFK36, folder 11.

[17] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: McCone untitled memorandum, 24 November 1963, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6; transcripts of Johnson's conversations with Hoover, Joseph Alsop, James Eastland, Abe Fortas, Richard Russell, John McCormack, Charles Halleck, and Gerald Ford on 25, 28, and 29 November 1963, *Taking Charge*, 31–34, 46–47, 49–52, 58–72; Lyndon B. Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, 26–27; Thomas, "The Real Cover-Up," 87; Max Holland, "The Key to the Warren Report," *American Heritage* 46, no. 7 (November 1995): 57; Ted Gest and Joseph P. Shapiro, "JFK: The Untold Story of the Warren Commission," *US News and World Report*, 17 August 1992: 28–35; Walter Pincus and George Lardner Jr., "Warren Commission Born Out of Fear," *Washington Post*, 14 November 1993, JFK Assassination clipping file, HIC; Gerald Posner, *Case Closed: Lee Harvey Oswald and the Assassination of JFK*, 404. (U)

already swirling that some sort of communist, rightwing, or underworld plot was involved, he did not want a lengthy, public inquiry that might produce explosive "revelations" and create pressure on him to act precipitously. At most, he thought, a Texas-based, Texan-run investigative board should be convened.[18] (U)

The president changed his mind as the idea of a blue-ribbon committee caught on with pundits and politicians after Jack Ruby shot Oswald in Dallas police headquarters and inspired fears of a broad conspiracy and questions about the competence of Texas authorities. Now that Oswald would never be brought to trial, Johnson calculated that a presidentially appointed panel of distinguished citizens stood the best chance of preempting potentially demagogic state and congressional probes that might highlight Oswald's links to the Soviets and Cubans, feed other conspiracy theories, or reach contradictory conclusions. "This is a question that has a good many more ramifications than on the surface," the president said, "and we've got to take this out of the arena where they're testifying that Khrushchev and Castro did this and did that and chuck us into a war that can kill 40,000,000 Americans in an hour." The public sentiment that troubled Johnson was reflected in a Gallup poll taken only a week after the assassination; just 29 percent of those surveyed believed Oswald had acted alone. (U)

Accordingly, in Executive Order 11130 issued on 29 November, Johnson announced the formation of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. It was a seven-member, bipartisan board comprising the chief justice of the United States, Earl Warren; two members each from the Senate and the House of Representatives, Richard Russell, John Sherman Cooper, Hale Boggs, and Gerald Ford; and two prominent former government officials, banker-diplomat John McCloy and former DCI Allen Dulles. The president later called them "men who were known to be beyond pressure and above suspicion." The panel was empowered to conduct a full and independent inquiry and enjoyed a broad national mandate. Its members saw their function as bringing their collective experience and reputations to calm the shaken populace—or, in McCloy's words, to "lay the dust...[and] show the world that America is not a banana republic, where a government can be changed by conspiracy." Other state and federal investigations quickly left the scene.[19] (U)

During the next several months, the commission went about what the chief justice called "a very sad and solemn duty," reviewing reports, requesting information from state and federal agencies, staging reconstructions, receiving testimony, and preparing its findings. In September 1964, it released an 888-page report; two months later it followed up with 26 volumes of supporting transcripts and exhibits. It concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin and found no evidence that he or his killer, Jack Ruby, were part of a domestic or foreign conspiracy. The report—described by the *New York Times* as "comprehensive and convincing," with its facts "exhaustively gathered, independently checked out, and cogently set forth"—had the reassuring effect the White House and the commission had sought. After its release, 87 percent of the respondents to a Gallup poll believed Oswald alone had shot Kennedy.[20] (U)

Under McCone's and Helms's direction, CIA supported the Warren Commission in a way that may best be described as passive, reactive, and selective. In early 1965, McCone told the Department of Justice that he had instructed Agency officers "to cooperate fully with the President's Commission and to withhold nothing from its scrutiny," and, through October 1964, CIA provided it with 77 documents and prepared 38 reports of varying lengths in response to its taskings. That cooperation, however, was narrower than those numbers might suggest. CIA produced information only in response to commission requests—most of which concerned the Soviet Union or Oswald's

[18] Johnson displayed his anxiety over conspiracy rumors on the night after the assassination. While watching NBC's television news broadcast, he started talking back to anchormen Chet Huntley and David Brinkley: "Keep talking like that and you'll bring on a revolution just as sure as I'm sitting here." Nancy Dickerson, *Among Those Present*, 96. Senior American diplomats were working to instill calm in both the United States and the Soviet Union. The US ambassador in Moscow, Foy Kohler, warned American leaders about "political repercussions which may develop if undue emphasis is placed on the alleged 'Marxism' of Oswald.... I would hope, if facts permit, we could deal with the assassin as 'madman' with [a] long record of acts reflecting mental unbalance rather than dwell on his professed political convictions." At the same time, Ambassador-at-Large Llewelyn Thompson urged Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Anastas Mikoyan to tone down Soviet rhetoric about reactionary capitalists. Pincus and Lardner, "Warren Commission Born Out of Fear," 2; George Lardner Jr., "Papers Shed New Light on Soviets, Oswald," *Washington Post*, 6 August 1999, JFK Assassination clipping file, HIC. (U)

[19] Executive Order 11130 and White House press release, both dated 29 November 1963, *Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy* (hereafter *Warren Commission Report.*), 471–72; Johnson, *Vantage Point*, 26; Grose, 543; Bird, *The Chairman*, 549. (U)

[20] Edward Jay Epstein, *Inquest: The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth*, 46; Robert Alan Goldberg, *Enemies Within*, 111; Max Holland, "After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination," *Reviews in American History* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 203. The chief justice offered his own bland rendering of the commission's work in *The Memoirs of Earl Warren*, chap. 11. The 26 volumes of evidentiary material are cited herein as *Warren Commission Hearings*. (U)

activities while he was outside the United States—and did not volunteer material even if potentially relevant—for example, about Agency plans to assassinate Castro. Helms told the House of Representatives' Select Committee on Assassinations in 1978 that he "was instructed to reply to inquiries from the Warren Commission for information from the Agency. I was not asked to initiate any particular thing." When queried, "[I]n other words, if you weren't asked for it you didn't give it?," Helms replied, "That's right."[21] (U)

Examining the assassination in a different political climate, the Senate's Church Committee concluded in 1976 that the Agency's inquiry was "deficient" in examining Oswald's contacts with pro-Castro and anti-Castro groups before the assassination, and that senior CIA officials "should have realized" that the Agency's Cuban operations "needed to be considered" by the commission. In 1979, the House assassinations committee levied a similar criticism: "The CIA acted in an exemplary manner in dealing with the Warren Commission regarding its narrow requests for information. In another area, that of Cuban involvement and operations, the CIA's actions might well be described as reluctant."[22] (U)

Transactions between the Agency and the commission were channeled through Helms but were conducted between the CI Staff—mainly by Angleton, Rocca, Arthur Dooley, and Thomas Hall—and the commission's counsel or staff. SR Chief Murphy and his counterintelligence deputies, Tennent Bagley and Lee Wigren, also worked with the commission. Requests for information were rarely raised to the DDP or DCI level. Helms met with commission personnel only five times between January and June 1964. This limited degree of high-level communication resulted largely because most of the commissioners, with whom McCone would have dealt for protocol reasons, did not participate much in the investigation and left most of the work to staffers. No documentary evidence indicates whether McCone ordered the circumscribed approach on his own or at the White House's behest, but DDCI Carter has recalled that McCone said he would "handle the whole [commission] business myself, directly"—including, presumably, establishing, or at least ratifying, the chain of command and degree of responsiveness. Moreover, the DCI shared the administration's interest in avoiding disclosures about covert actions that would circumstantially implicate CIA in conspiracy theories, and possibly lead to calls for a tough US response against the perpetrators of the assassination. If the commission did not know to ask about covert operations against Cuba, he was not going to give them any suggestions about where to look.[23] ~~(S)~~

McCone himself had few personal dealings with commission members or staffers before he testified to the panel in mid-May 1964. In December 1963, he discussed with Sen. Russell the Nicaraguan walk-in to the US embassy in Mexico City who proved to be a fabricator. In January 1964, at McCloy's request, he wrote to President Johnson and suggested he encourage Chief Justice Warren to speed up the commission's pace. In April, he gave some commission members and staffers a tour of the facilities at Headquarters where assassination-related information was retrieved, stored, and microfilmed, and he demonstrated the procedures the Agency followed in responding to commission requests. The DCI later said the chief justice seemed "quite satisfied" with what he saw. In May, McCone discussed with Warren and McCloy the need for the commission to refute conspiracy theories even if doing so gave them unwarranted publicity. "If your report doesn't dispose of it [the "second gunman" scenario] point by point, your report is a whitewash," he warned McCloy. Also in May, the DCI discussed his upcoming testimony before the commission with its general counsel, J. Lee Rankin. Rankin told him the subjects

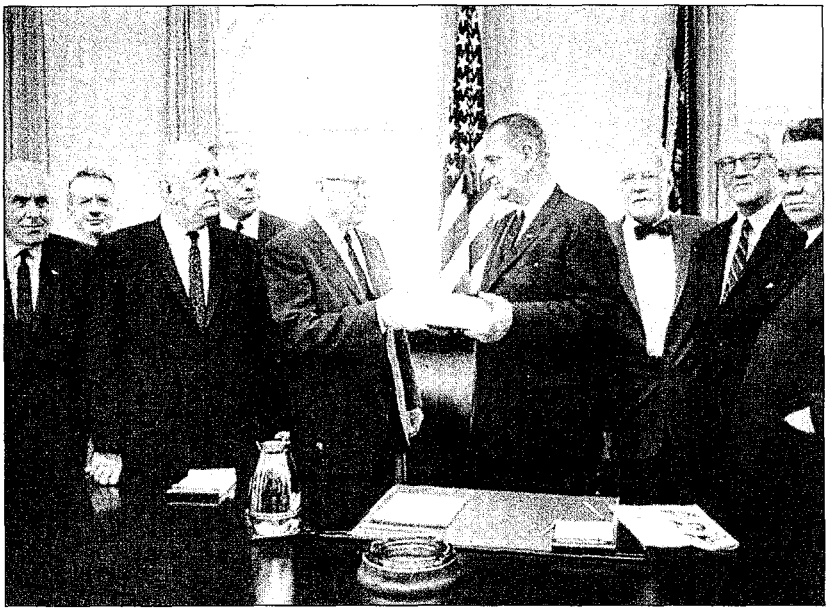
[21] McCone letter to Nicholas deB. Katzenbach (Deputy Attorney General), 24 February 1965, and CIA memorandum, "List of Unpublished and Partly Published Documents of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy," undated but c. January 1965, MORI doc. nos. 362072 and 398897; CIA memorandum, "Chronological Listing of Items Prepared by SR/CI/Research on the Oswald Case and Delivered to the Warren Commission," 5 May 1965, MORI doc. no. 404227; *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 11, 58, 67. (U)

[22] *Church Committee JFK Assassination Report*, 6–7; *HSCA Report*, 253. Under the "protection of sources and methods" rubric, CIA eliminated references to its technical operations in Mexico City in material passed to the commission (see DIR 90466, 20 December 1963, MORI doc. no. 299967), and did not mention the correspondence of Oswald and his relatives that it covered or opened under the CI Staff's HTLINGUAL program (see below). (U)

[23] Knoche memorandum about DCI morning staff meeting on 19 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01580R, box 17, folder 345; "CIA Personnel Involved in Oswald Case During Existence of Warren Commission," undated, MORI doc. no. 287755; Rankin letter to McCone, 16 November 1964, MORI doc. no. 272436; Helms untitled memorandum to Rocca about contacts with the Warren Commission, 22 June 1966, MORI doc. no. 507320; author's conversation with Helms, 28 May 1998; [redacted] vol. 1, 71–78; Carter-Knoche OH, 23; Ed Cray, *Chief Justice*, 420–22. ~~(S)~~

he would be asked about—mainly "your knowledge about Oswald being an agent or informer...[and] your knowledge of any conspiracy, either domestic or foreign."[24]

One reason for all this attention to conspiratorialists was that the ideas of one of the earliest of them, Thomas Buchanan, were circulating widely by the time McCone testified to the commission. Buchanan, an expatriate American communist and former reporter for the Washington *Evening Star*, had published articles in the French periodical *l'Express* and produced a book, *Who Killed Kennedy?*, based on them in May 1964. The book's thesis, which anticipated many criticisms of the commission's findings, contended that a second gunman had fired on Kennedy from the Grassy Knoll because the windshield of the presidential car had a small hole in it. Only that scenario, Buchanan argued, would explain the anomalies regarding the bullets' paths, the timing and locations of the wounds on Kennedy and Texas Governor John Connally, and the contradictions between the emergency staff at Parkland Hospital in Dallas and the doctors who performed the autopsy on the president's body at Bethesda Naval Medical Center. USIA and the Department of State worried about the wide circulation Buchanan's assertions had received in the foreign press. A mutual friend of the DCI and the chief justice, Fleur Cowles Montague-Meyers, lived in England and had warned McCone that Buchanan was effectively making his case for a rightwing conspiracy on British radio and television shows. McCone arranged for Warren to talk to her so the chief justice could best position the commission to respond to Buchanan's charges.[25]



The Warren Commission presents its report to President Johnson. (U)
Photo: Bettmann/CORBIS

McCone does not appear to have had any explicit, special understanding with Allen Dulles, the commission member who worked closest with CIA, that aided the former DCI in steering the inquiry away from controversial Agency operations. McCone later denied that Dulles was the Intelligence Community's protector on the commission, and the latter declined a suggestion from the panel's head lawyer that he "serve as CIA file reviewer" for the commission. Dulles did, however, advise Agency officers of the questions his fellow commissioners most likely would ask. As the only commission member who knew about the Agency's "executive action" operations, Dulles seems to have taken on this proprietary responsibility himself. (It is not known if he told any commissioners in private about CIA's plots to kill Castro.) He worked through Helms, Rocca, Murphy, and other

[24] Transcript of McCone-Russell telephone conversation, 2 December 1963, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 4; McCone correspondence to Johnson, 9 January 1964, cited in Bird, *The Chairman*, 550; transcript of McCone-Rankin telephone conversation, 12 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 6; *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 11, 480; *Warren Commission Hearings*, vol. 5, 122; McCone calendars, entry for 16 April 1964; McCone HSCA deposition, 9; transcripts of McCone-Warren and McCone-McCloy telephone conversations, 4 and 18 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 6; CIA memorandum, "Records Briefing of Chief Justice Warren," 16 April 1964, MORI doc. no. 270242.

[25] [redacted] In addition, the Soviet publication *New Times* hyped published critiques of the Warren Commission report and recycled the speculations of sundry conspiracists that appeared in Western media. "JFK's Murder: Sowers of Doubt," *Newsweek*, 6 April 1964, and "JFK: The Murder and the Myths," *Time*, 12 June 1964, JFK Assassination clipping file, HIC; [redacted] able to Chiefs of Certain Stations and Bases, Book Dispatch 5847, "Countering Criticism of the Warren Report," 4 January 1967, MORI doc. no. 325403; Lewis Lapham (CA Staff) memorandum to McCone, "Thomas Buchanan's Articles and Book on the Assassination of President Kennedy," 16 April 1964, MORI doc. no. 380036; Karamessines memorandum to McCone, "Plans for British and French Publishing Firms to Publish the Thomas Buchanan Articles on Assassination of President Kennedy," 20 April 1964, MORI doc. no. 270237; "Oswald Called Dupe in a Plot on Kennedy," *New York Times*, 8 May 1964: C5; transcripts of McCone-Warren and McCone-McCloy telephone conversations, 4 and 18 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 6; transcript of McCone meeting with Papich, 19 May 1964, ibid., box 7, folder 10; [redacted] 29–31, 93–95, 103–21, 144–49; [redacted] 237–38. No available information indicates that McCone ever thought there were two gunmen; cf. Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 616. Most of the best-selling conspiracy books appeared after McCone left CIA, so he did not have to answer their charges officially.

Agency officers and, as was the case with other commissioners and staffers, did not need to deal with McCone directly.[26] The DCI's calendars and logs of meetings and telephone conversations for the period the commission existed do not show any contacts with Dulles, and McCone recalled talking to Dulles "very infrequently" during that time—perhaps mainly at social functions of the capital elite that they frequently attended. The two men "were not on the best of terms" then, according to Angleton. Their personal relations notwithstanding, McCone and Dulles both wanted to draw the commission's attention away from CIA and encourage endorsement of the FBI's conclusion soon after the assassination that a lone gunman, uninvolved in a conspiracy, had killed John Kennedy. The DCI could rest assured that his predecessor would keep a dutiful watch over Agency equities and work to keep the commission from pursuing provocative lines of investigation, such as lethal anti-Castro covert actions.[27] ~~(S)~~

McCone and Helms spent about two hours before the commission on 14 May 1964. They answered questions about the Agency's information on Oswald, and evidence of a conspiracy behind the assassination, including Soviet or Cuban involvement. The DCI testified that

> [w]e had knowledge of him [Oswald], of course, because of his having gone to the Soviet Union...putting him in a situation where his name would appear in our name file. However...Lee Harvey Oswald was not an agent, employee, or informant of the Central Intelligence Agency. The Agency never contacted him, interviewed him, talked with him, or received or solicited any reports or information from him, or communicated with him directly or in any other manner. The Agency never furnished him with any funds or money or compensated him directly or indirectly in any fashion, and Lee Harvey Oswald was never associated or connected directly or indirectly in any way whatsoever with the Agency.[28] (U)

Although literally true, McCone's statement was incomplete. A former CIA employee, who worked in the Foreign Documents Division of the Soviet component of the DI, told the House assassinations committee in 1978 that in 1962 he reviewed a report on the Minsk electronics plant where Oswald worked while in the Soviet Union. The report, according to the officer, came from CIA's [redacted] field office and was sourced to a former Marine who had defected and was employed at the plant. The record does not indicate if McCone knew of this report and its sourcing chain and chose not to tell the Warren Commission (presumably to conceal an embarrassing but, in the context of the assassination itself, irrelevant link between the Agency and Oswald); if witting CIA officers did not tell him about it (possibly for the same reasons); or if it was forgotten, not located, or not connected to Oswald.[29] ~~(S)~~

[26] Dulles had several contacts with the Agency soon after the commission was set up. By mid-December 1963, he had asked the DI for a summary of world reaction to the assassination, requested an Agency secretary, sought advice from Lawrence Houston on the selection of the commission's lawyers, and spoken to the Office of Medical Services about Oswald's psychological condition. In January 1964, Dulles—apparently provoked by press criticism that the commission had been slow to get started, according to Angleton—asked CIA to suggest questions to be included in an official letter to the Soviet government. Knoche memorandum about DCI morning staff meeting on 19 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01580R, box 17, folder 345; Howard P. Williams (Warren Commission) memorandum to Rankin, "Meeting with Representatives of CIA, January 14, 1964," MORI doc. no. 48366; Bagley memorandum to Murphy, "CIA Work in Support of the Warren Commission," 16 January 1964, MORI doc. no. 404021; Helms memorandum to Rankin, 21 January 1964, with attached questions for the Soviet government, MORI doc. no. 48370. ~~(S)~~

[27] McCone HSCA deposition, 19; Angleton HSCA deposition, 97; Rocca untitled memorandum to Helms about Dulles-Rankin correspondence, 23 March 1964, MORI doc. no. 353885; Murphy memorandum to Helms, "Discussions with Mr. Allen W. Dulles on the Oswald Case," 13 April 1964, MORI doc. no. 367363 (the routing slip bears Helms's note, "I have also discussed these matters with Mr. Dulles and along similar lines"); Grose, 544–56, 559–60. ~~(S)~~

[28] *Warren Commission Hearings*, vol. 5, 120–21, 123, 128–29; "Affidavit of John A. McCone," 18 May 1963, Commission Exhibit 870, ibid., vol. 17, 866. Before the DCI testified to the commission, Agency and Bureau officers reviewed J. Edgar Hoover's testimony and possible statements by McCone to ensure that there were no conflicts between the two directors' positions. CIA officers also prepared a briefing paper for McCone. The paper included guidance on assuring the commission that the Agency had disclosed all information it had on Oswald, and that allegations of CIA ties to Oswald probably were Soviet-sponsored disinformation. The DCI also was advised that, to protect sources and methods, he should not answer on-the-record questions about Oswald's activities in Mexico. The commission's chief counsel and a few staffers already had received such information "on a highly restricted basis." *Church Committee JFK Assassination Report*, 46–49; "Briefing for Presentation to President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy," 14 May 1964, MORI doc. no. 425251; Sullivan memorandum to A. H. Belmont (FBI), "James Angleton...," 13 May 1964, record no. 157-10008-10110, NARA/JFK Assassination Records. By the time he testified, McCone had already had one interview about the assassination—in mid-April with author William Manchester, whom Jacqueline Kennedy had retained to write an account of her husband's death. In February, following accusations from Marguerite Oswald that CIA had "set up [her son] to take the blame" for the assassination, McCone stated publicly that Oswald "was never directly or indirectly connected with CIA." Washington *Evening Star*, 13 February 1964, Oswald clipping file, HIC. (U)

[redacted]

In addition, the Agency had acquired information "from" Oswald without his knowledge through CI Staff's mail-cover and mail-opening program, codenamed HTLINGUAL. As noted in Chapter 12, McCone may not have been aware of that project before the assassination, but insofar as Oswald had been on the target list (because of his former defector status), it would be surprising if the DCI were not told about the program after 22 November. If not, his subordinates deceived him; if he did know about HTLINGUAL reporting on Oswald, he was not being forthright with the commission—presumably to protect an operation that was highly compartmented and, if disclosed, sure to arouse much controversy. Moreover, no information in Oswald's correspondence suggested he was a threat to the president, so the commission had no "need to know" about it.[30] (U)

On a possible Soviet or Cuban role in the assassination, McCone told the commission:

> I have no information...that would lead me to believe or conclude that a conspiracy existed.... We made an investigation of all developments after the assassination which came to our attention which might possibly have indicated a conspiracy, and we determined after these investigations, which were made promptly and immediately, that we had no evidence to support such an assumption.

McCone said the Agency had investigated Oswald's trip to Mexico City but found no evidence he had a relationship with Soviet intelligence or the Cuban government, or that his travel was related to the assassination. The DCI's statements about Oswald and the KGB were based in part on SR Division's conclusion in December 1963 that Oswald was not a Soviet assassin. That report stated that although there were "several rather fascinating inconsistencies, loose ends, and unanswered questions about Oswald," his extensive pro-Castro activity and contact with the Soviet embassy in Mexico City violated a longstanding KGB prohibition on its overseas agents having contact with domestic communist parties or Soviet legations. Furthermore, there was no evidence that the KGB had selected and specially trained Oswald for an "executive action" mission, as was its standard practice.[31] (U)

After the full extent of CIA's regime-change operations in Cuba was revealed during the 1970s, congressional and journalistic attention focused more on what McCone and the Agency had *not* told the Warren Commission—particularly about the plots to kill Castro. To many observers, and some CIA officers as well, these activities clearly seemed relevant to the Kennedy assassination and to the commission's investigation, yet in 1964 Agency officials concluded that they were not. When the House committee asked McCone in 1978 if CIA had withheld from the commission information about the Agency's plots to kill Castro to avoid embarrassment or an international crisis, McCone replied: "I cannot answer that since they (CIA employees knowledgeable of the continuance of such plots) withheld the information from me. I cannot answer that question. I have never been satisfied as to why they withheld the information from me." He said he assumed Dulles, who was DCI when the plots originated, would have told the commission about them. When asked if the Agency had provided the commission with information about covert action, McCone replied in the negative, stating that a "public commission" could not receive such material.[32] ~~(S)~~

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[30] CIA memorandum, "Response to HSCA Request of 15 August 1978, Item 3," 38ff., MORI doc. no. 425365; CIA memorandum, "HTLINGUAL Items Relating to the OSWALD case," 1 May 1964, MORI doc. no. 339017; Angleton memorandum to Papich, "HUNTER Report #10815," 26 November 1963, MORI doc. no. 364172; T.K. Chalmers [redacted] manager of HTLINGUAL) memorandum, "Progress Report, 1962–1963," c. April 1964, MORI doc. no. 285779; Newman, 54–56, 220–23, 227–28, 283–87. (U)

[31] [redacted] memorandum, "Additional Notes and Comments on the Oswald Case," 11 December 1963, MORI doc. no. 340976. The DCI also testified that the Agency had no information that Jack Ruby was connected to pro- or anti-Castro Cubans. (U)

Soon after the commission released its report, two American journalists who often wrote "investigative" articles on intelligence affairs, Robert S. Allen and Paul Scott, accused CIA of deception for not turning over to the commission a "national intelligence estimate warning that it is Kremlin policy to remove from public office by assassination Western officials who actively oppose Soviet policies." Allen and Scott were both right and wrong. The "estimate" actually was an interim study called "Soviet Strategic Executive Action" produced in October 1961. The Agency did not give it to the commission and instead provided a more detailed and more current product, "Soviet Use of Assassination and Kidnapping," dated February 1964. The Office of Security investigated the leak to Allen and Scott and reported to McCone that although the news story was "a serious compromise of a highly sensitive document...damage to clandestine sources and methods would be nominal." In response to an Agency query, a Warren Commission lawyer said "no one [there] was excited about the Allen-Scott piece and to forget it." Robert S. Allen and Paul Scott, "Secret Report Under Wraps," syndicated column in *Northern Virginia Sun*, 22 October 1964; [redacted] (Office of Security) undated memorandum to McCone, "Possible Unauthorized Disclosure (Article by Robert S. Allen and Paul Scott...)," and Rocca memorandum to Helms, "Comment on Allen and Scott Article...," 27 October 1964, with notation on attached routing sheet, CIA JFK Assassination Records, box JFK13, folder 238. (U)

[32] *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 11, 483; McCone HSCA deposition, 10, 11, 16, 49; Scott D. Breckinridge (OIG) memorandum, "McCone Depositions for HSCA," 21 August 1978, MORI doc. no. 306061; Elder memorandum, "Mr. John A. McCone's Deposition to Mr. Robert Genzman, Staff Counsel for the House Select Committee on Assassinations," 22 August 1978, MORI doc. no. 448986. ~~(S)~~

McCone's answer was neither frank nor accurate. By the time he testified to the commission in May 1964, he had known about the Mafia plots to kill Castro for nine months, but he chose not to mention them. (As indicated earlier, it is unclear whether he ever knew about the AMLASH assassination operation.) Moreover, McCone's reference to the commission about "an investigation of all developments *after the assassination* which came to our attention which might possibly have indicated a conspiracy" (emphasis added) precluded providing details about *earlier* covert actions that might have seemed pertinent.[33] (U)

McCone judged that he should defer to the DDP's assessment that the plots to kill Castro had no bearing on the Kennedy assassination, and—consistent with the Agency policy of only giving information on request and the "need to know" principle—did not tell the commission about them. In his mind, the evidence showed Oswald was guilty, and the national interest would not be served by fascinating but fruitless examinations of unrelated covert activities. Principles of plausible deniability and compartmentation would be violated; ongoing operations would be compromised; and sensitive sources and methods would be revealed. Publicity about the US government's regime-change efforts in Cuba would give the communists an unprecedented propaganda windfall that they could exploit for years and probably would have evoked strong condemnation from the international community. By withholding information on "executive action," the DCI could preserve Agency equities and avoid leading the Warren Commission toward a false conclusion about Oswald and Cuba.[34] (U)

McCone's reasoning fit into the consensus that had quickly developed in the highest levels of the US government after the assassination that the public needed to be convinced that Oswald was the lone gunman and that an international or extremist conspiracy had not killed an American president. As Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach wrote to presidential assistant Bill Moyers on 26 November:

> The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large.... Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting the thought that this was a Communist conspiracy or (as the Iron Curtain press is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Communists.... We need something to head off public speculation or Congressional hearings of the wrong sort.[35] (U)

McCone was convinced that neither the Cubans nor the Soviets had sought revenge against John Kennedy, largely because SIGINT had disclosed the stunned reactions of Cuban and Soviet leaders to Kennedy's death. ("They were frightened, and we knew that," a commission staffer remarked afterward.)[36] Once he concluded that Oswald had no current connection with Moscow or Havana—and he did not believe the commission needed to know *how* that determination was made—McCone presumably saw no reason to raise what he regarded as peripheral, distracting, and unsettling subjects like plots to kill Castro. (U)

However defensible the DCI's rationale might have seemed in 1964, it came under harsh criticism later. In 1976, the Church Committee concluded that "concern with public reputation...possible bureaucratic failure and embarrassment...the extreme compartmentation of knowledge of sensitive operations...[and] conscious decisions [by senior CIA officials] not to disclose potentially important information" kept the commission from knowing all it should have. According to the House assassinations committee in 1978, the commission "failed to investigate adequately the possibility of a conspiracy to assassinate the President," in part

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[33] OIG, "Report on Plots to Assassinate Fidel Castro," MORI doc. no. 334698, 69–70. The Agency personnel assigned by Helms to assist the commission were not witting of the AMLASH operation. Officers of the DDP's Special Affairs Staff who knew of the assassination plots were never in touch with the commission. The House assassinations committee concluded that "the only person who knew of these plots and was in contact with the Warren Commission was Richard Helms." *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 11, 58, 67; *HSCA Report*, 4, 253. (U)

[34] Angleton, however, told the House assassinations committee in 1978 that the Intelligence Community "did not have the capabilities" in 1963–64—such as "a code break or a defector"—to determine whether or not Cuba was involved. "Top Spy's Testimony on Murder of JFK," *Newsday*, 20 June 1997, A3. (U)

[35] *Church Committee JFK Assassination Report*, 23. Critics of the Warren Commission often have cited Katzenbach's memorandum as proof of a high-level effort, in assassination scholar Max Holland's words, to "put the machinery of government into gear to make the lone-deranged assassin story a convincing one" and reach "a pre-cooked verdict." More plausibly, however, Katzenbach—who has acknowledged that his language was less than artful—"advocated a process that would put rumor and speculation to rest, because [after Oswald's death] a purgative trial had been rendered impossible." Max Holland, "The Docudrama That Is JFK," *Nation* 267, no. 19 (7 December 1998): 28. (U)

[36] Holland, "After Thirty Years," 209; Pincus and Lardner, "Warren Commission Born Out of Fear," 1. (U)

because of the limited way the Agency cooperated with it.[37] In the long term, the decision of McCone and Agency leaders in 1964 not to disclose information about CIA's anti-Castro schemes might have done more to undermine the credibility of the commission than anything else that happened while it was conducting its investigation. At the time, however, McCone felt the need for clarity and closure all the more acutely because while the commission was going about its business, CIA and the FBI were feuding over a sensational counterintelligence case whose outcome could have destroyed the consoling sense of finality that the DCI and other US leaders were working so hard to fashion. (U)

The Nosenko Incubus (U)

No counterintelligence matter of McCone's tenure was so fraught with potential for conflict as the defection of KGB officer Yuri Nosenko in early 1964 and the ensuing controversy over his bona fides. By claiming to know about the KGB's dealings with Oswald, and by extension a Soviet role in the Kennedy assassination, Nosenko became potentially the most important defector in history. The conclusions of several senior operations officers that Nosenko was a disinformation agent led McCone to approve Nosenko's detention and hostile interrogation, beginning a protracted, much-debated, and ultimately futile three-and-a-half-year effort to "break" him. The harsh treatment of the seemingly valuable intelligence source is only explainable by CIA suspicions that Nosenko was lying when he said the Soviets were not involved in killing Kennedy. "That made the Nosenko case so extraordinary and so different from all the others," Richard Helms has said. "Otherwise, we wouldn't have done all the things we ended up doing." Moreover, McCone's relationship with Robert Kennedy assured that the DCI would be responsive to the attorney general's urging that the Agency learn the truth about Nosenko and Oswald, and perhaps rendered him even more inclined than usual to let the professionals in the DDP do what they thought was necessary to answer the crucial question: Did Moscow order the murder of the president? An affirmative answer could have been a *casus belli* for the United States.[38] (U)


Yuri Nosenko (U)

When he first contacted CIA in Geneva in June 1962 during a disarmament conference, Nosenko was a mid-level officer in the KGB's Second Chief Directorate, which was responsible for counterintelligence and security. He was the Agency's first source on the structure and personnel of the directorate to have actually worked in it. He provided useful leads about Soviet agent and technical operations against US and British targets inside and outside the Soviet Union, agreed to work as an agent in place, and said he would reestablish contact the next time he was in the West. In late January 1964, Nosenko returned to Geneva and met with CIA officers. When asked if he knew about any Soviet role in the assassination, he claimed to have been the KGB officer assigned to Oswald's case when the American defected to the USSR in 1959. According to Nosenko, the KGB had decided Oswald was unstable and unintelligent and declined to have anything to do with him. Furthermore, Nosenko said, he had participated in Oswald's application for a visa to return to Russia in 1963, and he had been assigned to review Oswald's file after the assassination. If Nosenko was telling the truth, his information would dispel suspicions that Moscow had some part in President Kennedy's murder. Nosenko

[37] *Church Committee JFK Assassination Report*, 7; *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 11, 67–69. For its part, the commission was deferential and trusting toward CIA. Staffers later said that their impressions of the Agency in 1964 predisposed them to believe it was telling the whole truth. G. Edward White, *Earl Warren: A Public Life*, 198. (U)

[38] Mangold, 151–52 citing interview with Helms on 23 May 1989. (U)

Nosenko was not the only communist bloc defector to come to the United States soon after the Kennedy assassination with information about Oswald that seemed to exculpate a US adversary. In early May 1964, a "well-placed" Cuban "in close and prolonged contact with ranking officers" of Castro's intelligence service reported that Oswald had been in touch with Cuban operatives "before, during, and after" he visited the Cuban and Soviet embassies in Mexico City in late September and early October 1963. The defector—codenamed AMMUG/1 and described as "very reliable" and "highly sensitive"—did not know specifically whether the Cuban government had used Oswald in any capacity, but his reporting about the surprise with which Castro and Cuban intelligence officers reacted to news of the assassination indicated that Havana was not involved in it. CIA passed on the defector's information to the Warren Commission in mid-May. A commission staffer remarked that the panel "was winding up its investigation" and "saw no need to pursue this [Cuban] angle any further." Unlike Nosenko, AMMUG/1 was deemed bona fide—"an operational gold mine," according to Raymond Rocca. CIA blind memorandum, "... Debriefing of Cuban Source...OSWALD Case," 5 May 1964, MORI doc. no. 363778; Helms memorandum to Rankin, "Role of the Cuban Intelligence Service...," 15 May 1964, MORI doc. no. 426655; Harold F. Swanson (WH Division) memorandum to Rocca, "...Debriefing of AMMUG-1...," MORI doc. no. 515131; Dooley memorandum to Rocca, "Lee Harvey OSWALD," 19 June 1964, MORI doc. no. 470087; Swanson memorandum to Director of Security, "AMMUG-1," 23 June 1964, MORI doc. no. 515150; Rocca memorandum to Helms, "AMMUG/1 Information on Lee Harvey OSWALD," 11 May 1964, MORI doc. no. 377826. (U)

also told his Agency contacts that he wanted to defect. In early February 1964, after he said he had been recalled to Moscow, he was exfiltrated to West Germany. A week after his arrival, McCone ordered Nosenko brought to Washington as soon as possible because the Soviets were publicizing the case. At the time, Nosenko was the highest-ranking KGB officer to fall into CIA's hands.[39]

Between Nosenko's two encounters with CIA, however, serious doubts about his bona fides had arisen in SR Division and CI Staff and extensive questioning following his defection seemed to support those suspicions.[40] Some of Nosenko's leads could be regarded as "giveaways" or "feed material" because CIA and the FBI already knew about them or because the cases were inactive or low-grade; Nosenko gave inconsistent or inaccurate descriptions of his personal history; anomalies in his information about the KGB were identified; he provided what seemed to be "pat" information on subjects he had no reason to know about, while claiming to be unfamiliar with topics he should have known about; and he did not show what was regarded as a defector's "normal" concern for his family and his future.[41] His contention that Soviet intelligence had had no operational interest in Oswald seemed implausible, considering the American had been stationed at an airbase in Japan involved in U-2 missions. Oswald's comfortable living conditions in Minsk, his marriage to the niece of a Soviet army intelligence officer, and the circumstances of his return to the United States could be interpreted as suggesting that he had ties to the KGB. None of Nosenko's information about Oswald and the KGB could be confirmed independently; nor would Nosenko, a counterintelligence officer, necessarily be able to say without reservation whether the KGB's foreign intelligence component had or had not recruited a particular individual. Also, it appeared too serendipitous that of all the thousands of KGB officers in the world, one who had had direct contact with the Oswald case three separate times would seek to defect so soon after the assassination with information exonerating Moscow.

Perhaps the most important factor in the Agency's thinking was the claim of an earlier defector, Anatoliy Golitsyn, that Moscow would send provocateurs to discredit him and divert attention from the search for moles inside CIA and other Western services. Golitsyn had labeled Nosenko as a disinformation agent in 1962, and James Angleton, David Murphy, and Nosenko's case officer, Tennent Bagley—who at first thought Nosenko was genuine—agreed. Nosenko's reappearance 19 months later had potentially monumental consequences. With the United States still suffering from a national trauma, the Warren Commission inquiry underway, and the Cuban missile crisis barely a year old, the Agency had to determine whether the KGB had dispatched a false defector to hide the fact that Oswald was a Soviet-sponsored killer. As Helms testified in 1978, "[i]f it were shown that Oswald was...acting as a Soviet agent when he shot President Kennedy, the consequences to the United States...and...to the world, would have been staggering."

McCone's deputies kept him apprised of the Nosenko case from the day in early February 1964 when the KGB officer said he had been recalled to Moscow.[42] The DCI, in turn, passed on news of developments to the White House—especially to Robert Kennedy, who, according to Helms, was the driving force outside the Agency behind the decisions to extract the truth from Nosenko. From the first,

[39] Murphy memorandum to Helms, "OSWALD Case," 28 January 1964, MORI doc. no. 404019; Angleton memorandum to Hoover, "Yuri Ivanovich NOSENKO, Espionage—Russia," 28 April 1964, MORI doc. no. 367167; FBI memorandum, Special Agent in Charge/Washington Field Office to Director, "Lee Harvey Oswald," 4 March 1964 Nosenko FBI FOIA File No. 65-68530, section 2. CIA CIC Job 94-01306R, box 4, contains several key Agency and Bureau documents about Nosenko: John Hart (formerly SR Division), "The Monster Plot: Counterintelligence in the Case of Yuriy Ivanovich Nosenko"; [redacted] Nosenko and [redacted] An Examination of the [redacted] Case against Yuriy Nosenko"; [redacted] "Why Nosenko Is a Plant—and Why It Matters"; and FBI, "'Norman'" (one of the Bureau's codenames for Nosenko). [redacted] later abridged his so-called "thousand pager" (it actually was around 900); the shorter version was circulated internally in February 1968 as "The Examination of the Bona Fides of a KGB Defector: Yuriy I. Nosenko," MORI doc. no. 306324. *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 2, 487–536, and vol. 12, 475–644, contain much information on Nosenko derived from the House assassination committee's inquiry into his case. See also [redacted] memorandum, "NOSENKO Case," 14 January 1969, DDO Files, Job 89-00395R, box 4, folder 75; and [redacted] vol. 2, 353–56. For published accounts of Nosenko's defection, see the Appendix on Sources.

[40] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Hart, "Monster Plot," 13–16, 199; [redacted] memorandum to Sullivan, "Yuri Nosenko," 11 February 1964, D.E. Moore (FBI) memorandum to Sullivan, "Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko," 14 February 1964, CIA memorandum, "SAMMY: Conclusions and Recommendations," 17 February 1964 (SAMMY was the FBI's first codename for Nosenko), FBI Special Agent in Charge/Washington Field Office to Hoover, "Lee Harvey Oswald," 4 March 1964, Sullivan memorandum to Belmont, "Yuri Nosenko, Espionage," 2 April 1964, Nosenko FBI FOIA File, sections 1 and 6; *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 4, 21.

[41] Statistically, at least, the value of Nosenko's information appeared questionable at first. A tally of the leads he provided, compiled in the spring of 1964, showed that out of 157 cases (63 concerning US citizens and 94 involving foreigners), 104 (52 in each category) were already known or suspected, unproductive or not yet active, lacked access to classified information, or could not be investigated because Nosenko's knowledge was vague or ambiguous. Nosenko FBI FOIA File, section 5. (U)

[42] McCone had no role in authorizing any operational or compensation arrangements for Nosenko after the Russian's first contact with CIA in 1962. Otherwise, the record does not indicate what, if anything, McCone knew about the case before 1964.

McCone received essentially all evaluations of Nosenko's bona fides from skeptics, including ADDP Thomas Karamessines, Angleton, Murphy, and Golitsyn, but he appears initially to have tried to keep an open mind. Possibly he took early warnings about Nosenko as a standard caveat about any defector. In mid-February, he told Rusk he was inclined to believe Nosenko. After hearing about the results of further questioning, however, the DCI told the president that "the Soviet's performance and action were so different from any other defector case that our suspicions had been aroused."[43]

The breadth of Golitsyn's information about Soviet intelligence activities and CIA officers' faith in it added to Nosenko's difficulty in establishing his veracity. McCone, Helms, Angleton, and SR Division managers thought the balance weighed heavily in Golitsyn's favor. Even without his information about Oswald, Nosenko would have had a hard time proving himself. Contributing to McCone's uncertainty was Hoover's conclusion—based largely on a trusted KGB source (codenamed FEDORA) the FBI had at the United Nations and the Bureau's own interviews with Nosenko—by early March that Nosenko's information was "valid and valuable" and that he was a genuine defector. Angleton, however, thought FEDORA was a plant because he corroborated supposedly inaccurate information from Nosenko and therefore must be part of the same deception. At about the same time, in early March, McCone and CIA felt pressure from the Warren Commission after Hoover unilaterally revealed to the commission what the defector had said about Oswald—which supported the Bureau's conclusion that he was a deranged killer acting alone. With the DCI's permission, Helms told the commission that the Agency had serious reservations about Nosenko and asked it to "await further developments."[44]

To resolve the uncertainty about Nosenko, McCone in early April 1964 accepted the recommendations of Helms, Angleton, and Murphy that the defector be confined and interrogated until broken. (Agency officers had suspended informational debriefings of Nosenko a month before.) CIA detained Nosenko under the terms of an "exclusion and parole" agreement with the Department of Justice executed in 1955. The agreement gave the Agency authority to exercise over defectors "control of a kind and degree it believes consistent with the internal security needs of the United States." The documentary record does not indicate what McCone knew about the austere conditions of Nosenko's year-long detention at an Agency safehouse . (Twelve of the 16 months of the Russian's confinement there were during McCone's tenure.) Helms does not recall that McCone ever asked for details of the inquiry, and the DCI does not appear to have been fully aware of much of the dubious logic and inappropriate procedures upon which the case against Nosenko rested. Assured by his senior operations and legal officers that the Agency was handling Nosenko lawfully and in ways they believed stood the best chance of revealing the truth, McCone let the hostile interrogation run its course. There is no reason to doubt that he would have accepted then the argument Helms made to congressional investigators a decade-and-a-half later to justify the severe treatment of Nosenko:

> [T]his became one of the most difficult issues...that the Agency had ever faced. Here a President of the United States had been murdered and a man had come from the Soviet Union, an acknowledged Soviet intelligence officer, and said his intelligence service had never been in touch with this man [Oswald] and knew nothing about him. This strained credulity at the time. It strains it to this day.... You are damned if you hold a fellow too long and treat him badly...and you are damned the other way if you have not dug his teeth out to find out what he knows about Oswald.[45]

McCone soon received further impressions about Nosenko from the FBI and Golitsyn that reinforced his approval for having the defector interrogated. In May 1964, the FBI's liaison officer to the Agency, Sam Papich, told McCone that some Bureau officials "are very much concerned and recognize that [Nosenko] could be a plant." "[H]is story has held

[43] Karamessines memorandum about (Nosenko's first cryptonym; he was later called), 3 February 1964, DDO Records, Job 78-07173A, box 1, folder 2; McCone calendars, entries for 10 and 11 February 1964 showing meetings with Angleton and ; transcript of McCone-Golitsyn meeting, 11 February 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 7; Mangold, 150 citing interview with Elder on 11 August 1988; Angleton HSCA deposition, 49–50; Nosenko and Annex 2, Chronology," 21; *Rockefeller Commission Report*, 170; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussions with Secretary Rusk, 11 February 1964...," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 10; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the President—20 February 1964—Alone," ibid., box 6, folder 7.

[44] Hart, "Monster Plot," 24, 198; Riebling, 210–16; Wise, *Molehunt*, 148–53; "Notes for DDCI," 5 March 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 10; Rankin letter to Helms, 6 March 1964, MORI doc. no. 399794; Angleton memoranda to Hoover, both titled "Sammy," 14 and 16 December 1964, Nosenko FBI FOIA File, section 12; Edward Jay Epstein, *Legend: The Secret World of Lee Harvey Oswald*, 19–21, 41–42.

up—but the cases are peanuts—no real significance. The other leads that he gave us—many of them were known to us.... [The Soviets] have not suffered at all by what he's given us." McCone told Papich that CIA would not decide on Nosenko one way or the other unless the Bureau agreed with its judgment. In June, Golitsyn—after reading files on Nosenko and listening to tapes of his debriefings—reaffirmed his prior assessment that Nosenko was a false defector.[46] In July, Golitsyn told the DCI that he disputed Nosenko's explanation of GRU asset Pyotr Popov's arrest in 1959. Nosenko said KGB security caught a CIA officer mailing a letter to Popov. Golitsyn insisted, however, that Nosenko's account was intended to divert the Agency from the penetration agent who had tipped off the Soviets.[47]

The Warren Commission's patience with the Agency over Nosenko had worn thin by mid-June, when it asked McCone for a definitive assessment of Nosenko's credibility. McCone had Helms tell Chief Justice Warren that CIA thought Nosenko might be a dispatched agent and to advise the commission that his information should be suppressed. One important concern the Agency had was the embarrassment that would result if the commission's report included material from a source later shown to be a controlled Soviet agent. Warren later told McCone that the commission had accepted CIA's advice. In addition, at least three times in July, Agency officers (including Helms, Murphy, and Bagley) told the commission that Nosenko might be a KGB plant. Those sessions settled the question; the FBI's debriefings of Nosenko remained closed in the commission's files and did not contribute to its conclusions.[48]

During the last 12 months of McCone's directorship, CIA officers subjected Nosenko to at least 160 hours of hostile interrogation and an untallied amount of what was termed "neutral" questioning. According to Helms, the DCI did not follow the case closely at this stage but expected to be informed of major developments. Otherwise, once the Warren Commission formally concluded that Oswald had acted alone, McCone showed no further interest in pursuing the Nosenko aspect of the assassination.[49]

Meanwhile, the case remained unbroken. In January 1965, CIA determined that Nosenko—who had not changed his story about Oswald and the KGB—was being deceptive but still could not ascertain why. When McCone left Langley, the Office of Security had nearly completed preparations for placing Nosenko in a specially built detention facility
The USIB Executive Committee approved this phase of the Agency's handling of Nosenko, although it was not given details of the defector's treatment. There is no record that

[45] Hart, "Monster Plot," 199; memorandum from Chief, Operational Support Division to Acting Chief, Support Branch, "Subject: AEFOXTROT," 12 May 1964, CIA JFK Assassination Records, box JFK38, folder 22; (Office of Security) memorandum to Special Agent in Charge/District Field Office, "Emergency Instructions Regarding Custody of ," 10 July 1964, ibid.; Nosenko case summary in ER Files, Job 79M01476A, box 10, folder 228, tab 5; author's conversation with Helms, 20 May 1998; *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 4, 12, 31; Murphy memoranda, "Yuriy I. Nosenko, Briefing of DCI," 2 April 1964, "Discussion with Deputy Attorney General on Nosenko Case," 2 April 1964, and "Discussion with State Department Officials on the Nosenko Case," 6 April 1964, Soviet-Eastern Europe [SE] Division Files, Job 89-00395R, box 4, folder 63; Houston memorandum to Director of Security, "Parole Status of Defectors," OGC 64-0903, 3 April 1964, and Houston memorandum, "Nossenko [sic] Case," 3 April 1964, CIA JFK Assassination Records, box JFK38, folder 22; Immigration and Naturalization Act, Public Law 82-414, Section 212(d)(5), 8 United States Code 1182; Helms testimony before HSCA, 22 September 1978, *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 4, 21; Nicholas P. Stoiaken (Office of Security/Interrogation Research Division) memorandum to Murphy, "NOSENKO, Yuriy Ivanovich," 8 April 1964, MORI doc. no. 286774.

[46] Golitsyn heard of Nosenko's defection from Angleton just after it occurred, and on 11 February told McCone that he could help evaluate the new arrival if he read the files. McCone concurred, and Nosenko's file was added to others that Golitsyn had started to read the previous November. Golitsyn could protect himself by debunking Nosenko, but it is not evident in the record how much McCone, Helms, Angleton, and others factored that self-interest into their evaluations of the two defectors.

[47] Transcript of McCone meeting with Papich, 19 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 10; Hart, "Monster Plot," 200; transcript of McCone meeting with Angleton and 11 February 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 7; "Golitsyn," 36–38; transcript of McCone meeting with 16 July 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 11. The chronology of Popov's compromise is complicated, but it is fair to say first cast suspicion on Popov, who was later found to be carrying the CIA letter. Mishandled FBI surveillance of Soviet operatives whom Popov had reported, Popov's own poor security practices, and reporting from the KGB's assets in the Vienna police and its agent in MI-6, George Blake, contributed to his compromise. The case is thoroughly recounted in former DDP officer William Hood's book, *Mole*.

[48] Murphy memorandum to Helms, "Warren Commission Query Regarding Nosenko," 18 June 1964, MORI doc. no. 354911; Helms, "Memorandum for the Record...Talk with Chief Justice Earl Warren," and McCone letter to Warren, both dated 24 June 1962, McCone Papers, box 13, folder 2; Helms memorandum to President Johnson, 22 March 1968, ibid., box 11, folder 5; Wigren memorandum to Murphy, 8 July 1964, MORI doc. no. 277735; Bagley memoranda, both titled "Use of Nosenko Information in Warren Commission Report," 17 and 28 July 1964, and Murphy memorandum to Helms, "Discussion with Mr. Dulles re the Nosenko Information on Oswald," 8 July 1964, MORI doc. nos. 344453, 344452, and 370732; Riebling, 217 citing interview with Helms on 4 February 1992; Epstein, *Legend*, 47–48; Grose, 550–51.

[49] Hart, "Monster Plot," table following 103.

McCone knew or asked about the mechanics of this much more grueling (and ultimately fruitless) phase of the investigation.[50]

As journalist David Wise pointed out in the late 1970s, there were several permutations to the question of Nosenko's authenticity, most of which were not considered by McCone or any senior Agency officer after the Kennedy assassination.[51] First, as conventional wisdom at CIA ran until the late 1960s, Nosenko could have been a false defector with a false story about Oswald and the KGB. Second, Nosenko might have been a real defector who had made up a story about Oswald to make himself a "bigger catch." The inaccuracies and exaggerations in his story were reevaluated later as consistent with the penchant of defectors to embellish their biographies, access, and knowledge. (U)

Third, Nosenko could have been a genuine defector with accurate information. The FBI believed Nosenko in 1964, and CIA concluded a few years later that his information about Oswald was accurate. Lastly, Nosenko might have been a controlled agent sent to the United States to report truthfully that the Soviets had nothing to do with Oswald or the assassination. Moscow miscalculated, however, in thinking the US government would find that story more believable if it came through clandestine channels from a "defector" with an attractive resumé. (U)

As DCI, McCone never freed himself from the "zero sum" paradigm to which SR Division and CI Staff were wedded: Golitsyn was good, so Nosenko must be bad. The empirically-minded McCone judged that enough facts existed to support that deceptively simple conclusion. As in other counterintelligence matters—an area in which he did not display much intellectual creativity—he deferred to trusted deputies. In 1978, McCone told the House assassinations committee that he thought Nosenko was bona fide after all. He did not say what led him to that conclusion, but he may have been reflecting the Agency's revised view of Nosenko.[52] Reliable KGB information shows that both defectors were genuine—an apparently elementary conclusion that intellectual rigidity and bureaucratic obstinacy kept McCone and a significant number of senior Agency officers from reaching.[53]

Loose Ends (U)

In late September 1964, President Johnson appointed McCone to a four-man committee to advise on implementing the Warren Commission's recommendations for improving presidential security. The commission had proposed that an assassination attempt, an assault against, or kidnapping of a president or vice president should constitute a federal crime; that a cabinet-level committee or the NSC assume the responsibility of reviewing and overseeing presidential protection programs; that the FBI and the Secret Service improve their investigative and intelligence capabilities; and that interagency cooperation and information sharing on security matters be promoted. Others on the presidential committee were C. Douglas Dillon, the secretary of the treasury, who served as chairman; Nicholas Katzenbach, the

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[50] Wigren untitled memorandum to Murphy about Nosenko's interrogation, 8 July 1964, CIA JFK Assassination Records, Miscellaneous Files, box 8, folder 4; CIA (probably Angleton) memorandum, "Agenda for FBI-CIA Discussion of the Status of NOSENKO and Related Cases," 9 December 1964, Nosenko FBI FOIA File, section 13; Helms memoranda to Director/DIA and Director/Department of State/INR, both titled "Yuriy Ivanovich NOSENKO," both dated 22 January 1965, McCone Papers, box 13, folder 3; Moore memorandum to Sullivan "Sammy, Espionage—Russia," 14 September 1964, and Angleton memorandum to Hoover, "Sammy," 18 September 1964, Nosenko FBI FOIA File, section 11.

Nosenko was held from August 1965 until October 1967, when, at DDCI Rufus Taylor's direction, the Office of Security (OS) took over his case. OS officer Bruce Solie handled the "clean slate" investigation. Using an analytical methodology that tended to explain away inconsistencies and inaccuracies in Nosenko's story—the converse of the approach that SR Division and CI Staff had taken—Solie concluded that Nosenko's detractors had not proven their argument. ("[I]t is not considered that based on all available information a conclusion that Nosenko is or is not a bona fide defector can be incontrovertibly substantiated at this time.") Nosenko was then released under supervision, resettled, compensated, and hired as a contractor. [Bruce Solie,] "Yuri Ivanovich NOSENKO," OS 801441/A, 19 June 1967, MORI doc. no. 306305, quote on 7; Nosenko case summary in ER Files, Job 79M01476A, box 10, folder 228; Breckinridge letter to G. Robert Blakey (Chief Counsel, HSCA), 1 September 1978, with attached answers to questions, MORI doc. no. 25880; Robert M. Hathaway and Russell Jack Smith, *Richard Helms As Director of Central Intelligence, 1966–1973*, 107–13; documents in folder "Yuri Nosenko," DCI Files, Job 80M01048A, box 5, folder 9.

[51] David Wise, "'Epstein's Thesis' Hints of KGB Entanglements," *Washington Star*, 23 April 1978: G5. Wise's article was referring to Edward Jay Epstein's book *Legend: The Secret World of Lee Harvey Oswald*. (U)

[52] McCone HSCA deposition, 44.

[53] KGB archivist Vasili Mitrokhin's smuggled material includes damage assessments conducted after Golitsyn and Nosenko defected. Both men reportedly were put on a list of "particularly dangerous traitors" to be "liquidated." Oleg Kalugin claims that he was among the dozens of KGB officers stationed overseas who were ordered home after Nosenko defected. Andrew and Mitrokhin, 184–86, 367–68; Kalugin, 59. (U)

acting attorney general; and McGeorge Bundy, the president's national security adviser. Each member had an assistant from his agency to do the staff-level work; McCone's aide was DDP officer John Mertz.[54] (U)

The Dillon Committee met seven times through the fall and winter and held discussions with J. Edgar Hoover, James Rowley, the chief of the Secret Service, and Kermit Gordon, head of the Bureau of the Budget. The DCI attended only four of the meetings but took an active part in the deliberations when he did. He suggested that a presidential assassination statute contain an "informer clause" similar to those in other federal criminal laws; he thought a high-level interdepartmental standing group should be established to periodically review presidential protection; and he regarded surveys of buildings at sites of scheduled presidential visits as "tremendously wasteful" uses of manpower. As when he testified before the Warren Commission, McCone again pressed for federal agencies to make greater use of what was then called "automated data processing" technology to collate information on presidential security. He brushed aside objections that returning Rowley to his previous job as head of the Secret Service's White House detail would cause personal and public relations difficulties. "The best approach would be to select the best available man as Chief of the Secret Service, after which Mr. Rowley would be required to 'fall into line' or otherwise become a casualty." McCone recommended Michael J. Murphy, Commissioner of the New York City Police Department, to either replace Rowley or assume a new White House position supervising the service.[55] (U)

The Dillon Committee reported to President Johnson in late January 1965 and released a version of its findings to the public in early February (as intended, it had completed its work in time for the next session of Congress to consider its recommendations). Contrary to the Warren Commission, McCone and his fellow members concluded that the Secret Service should retain primary responsibility for presidential protection and remain in the Department of the Treasury. Despite President Johnson's decision not to support any increase in the Secret Service budget—in keeping with his government-wide economy drive—the committee called for a 57 percent increase in service personnel, improved training, and augmented resources. The members also encouraged the White House to seek legislation prohibiting shipments of firearms in interstate commerce except between federally licensed dealers or manufacturers. In other areas, the committee echoed Warren Commission proposals, calling for a federal assassination and kidnapping statute (with an informer rewards provision) covering the president and vice president; expansion of Secret Service agents' investigative and arrest powers; establishment of a cabinet-level group to oversee presidential protection; and improved cooperation among federal agencies and with state and local law enforcement departments. Several of the recommendations that McCone and his fellow committeemen made were soon adopted.[56] (U)

One of McCone's missions as DCI was to keep CIA out of operational controversies, so it is ironic that, as a private citizen, he later gave information to the House assassinations committee that rekindled charges that the Agency had hidden its supposed clandestine relationship with Oswald. In May 1977, columnist Jack Anderson (citing the committee's files) wrote that Antonio Veciana, in the 1960s a member of the anti-Castro commando group Alpha 66, had told congressional investigators that in Dallas in August 1963, he had met with Oswald and a CIA officer who used the name "Maurice Bishop." Anderson's story, which the Agency

[54] Department of the Treasury press release, "President's Committee on Warren Report Holds First Meeting," 29 September 1964, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 3, folder 10; Anthony Lewis, "Panel Takes Up Warren Report," *New York Times*, 30 September 1964, Warren Commission clipping file, HS Files, HS/HC-627, Job 84B00389R, box 7, folder 6; transcript of C. Douglas Dillon press conference, 30 September 1964, MORI doc. no. 373518; *Warren Commission Report*, 454–68. (U)

[55] McCone calendars, entries for September 1964–January 1965 (including a working luncheon with Chief Justice Warren in late November); Gordon Chase (NSC) memorandum, "Meeting on October 13, 1964 of the President's Committee on the Warren Report," 15 October 1964, MORI doc. no. 399844; John Mertz memorandum, "Meeting of President's Committee on the Warren Report, 13 October 1964," MORI doc. no. 340773; Mertz memorandum, "Meeting of the President's Committee on the Warren Report, 24 November 1964," MORI doc. no. 401990; Mertz memorandum, "Meeting of the President's Committee on the Warren Report, 8 December 1964," MORI doc. no. 340762; McCone letter to Dillon, 20 November 1964, NARA/JFK Assassination Records, record no. 176-10020-10002. President Johnson soon scotched the idea of removing Rowley or creating a presidential security overseer, but he did agree to promote the service's director from the General Schedule to the Executive Schedule as part of an overall "upgrade" of the agency. (U)

[56] Mertz memorandum to McCone, "President's Committee on the Warren Report...," 7 January 1965, MORI doc. no. 336749; "Report of the President's Committee on the Warren Report," 2 February 1965, MORI doc. no. 340760. Later in 1965, Congress passed a law that made assassination or kidnapping of, assault on, or conspiracy to harm the president or vice president a federal crime. The Secret Service's budget for FY 1966 was increased 33 percent from three years before; its complement of agents was expanded 50 percent to 600; and its overall staffing was increased by over half to 920. Serving under the renamed director (the title "chief" was abandoned as archaic) were four new assistant directors, including one in charge of all protective security details, and another responsible for intelligence affairs. Servicing the latter was an overhauled, expanded, and automated research bureau that shared information with CIA, the FBI, and other government entities at all levels. Michael Dorman, *The Secret Service Story*, 253–55; Frederick M. Kaiser, "Presidential Assassinations and Assaults," *PSQ* 11, no. 4 (Fall 1981): 552; Philip H. Melanson, *The Secret Service*, 91. (U)

described in an internal report as "a mixture of some fact and a great deal of fiction," did not hold up. A review of CIA records found no reference to Maurice (or Morris) Bishop as a true name, pseudonym, or alias; the Agency never supported Alpha 66; and Veciana was registered as a contact of the US Army, not the Agency.[57] (U)

The House committee picked up the Bishop "lead" and questioned McCone about it in August 1978. McCone recalled a "Maurice Bishop" and believed the man was an Agency employee, but did not know where he worked or what his duties were. CIA management became concerned that the former DCI's statement, even though in context offhand and imprecise, would call the Agency's credibility into question. Scott Breckinridge of the Office of Legislative Counsel met with McCone in early October and brought along photographs of all past and present CIA employees with the surname of Bishop. After hearing that the Agency had no record of a Maurice or Morris Bishop, McCone declined to look at the photographs and said he must have been mistaken when he gave his deposition. He said that the name had come up along with a dozen or so others after five hours of questioning and that although Maurice Bishop "rang a bell" with him, he might have been thinking about someone else. Breckinridge informed the House committee's chief counsel, G. Robert Blakey, in mid-October that "Mr. McCone withdraws his statements on this point." Neither the identity, nor even the existence, of "Maurice Bishop" has ever been established.[58] (U)

A Conspiracy in the National Interest? (U)

Although criticism of the Warren Commission intensified and conspiracy theories proliferated through the 1960s and 1970s, McCone did not alter his view about Oswald's guilt over the years. He told the House assassinations committee in 1978 that he knew of no evidence that would tie Oswald to the KGB, Cuba, or CIA. Had a hostile country been involved, he said, it would have provided Kennedy's killer with an "escape hatch"—for example, a visa such as Oswald had tried to get from the Soviets and Cubans in September 1963. When asked about Jack Ruby's possible role as an "eraser" sent to "rub out" Oswald, McCone replied that the circumstances surrounding that second murder "were so bizarre and unpredictable that it was impossible to detect a rational plot." Besides Nosenko's bona fides, the only matter on which McCone had changed his mind was concealing information about CIA's involvement in plots to kill Castro. With almost 15 years of hindsight, he said that the Agency should have told the Warren Commission about those schemes. He did not explain why he thought differently then. Possibly he believed that greater candor in 1964 could have helped attenuate the damage

[57] Jack Anderson and Les Whitten, "Odd CIA Activity in Dallas in 1963," *Washington Post*, 6 May 1977: C11; George L. Cary (Legislative Counsel) memorandum to DCI Stansfield Turner, "Recent Activities in Dallas, Texas, Concerning the Domestic Contact Division (DCD)," OLC 77-1816, 6 May 1977, MORI doc. no. 384905; John H. Waller (OIG) memorandum to Turner, "Jack Anderson 6 May 1977 Column...," 10 May 1977, MORI doc. no. 449056; *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 12, chap. 3. According to Gaeton Fonzi, the investigator for the House committee who has focused on this Oswald-Bishop-Veciana angle more than any other assassination writer, Bishop was "the secret supervisor and director of all [of] Veciana's anti-Castro activities...the man who had suggested the founding of Alpha 66 and guided its overall strategy. Bishop not only directed the assassination attempt on Castro in Cuba in October 1961, he also engineered the plan to kill Castro in Chile in 1971. Bishop had the connections to pull strings with the US government and get the financial support needed.... [He and Veciana] worked together for thirteen years." Fonzi, *The Last Investigation*, 125. The only persons named either Morris or Maurice Bishop in CIA files were, respectively, [redacted] and the leader of a radical political party in the country of Grenada. Scott Breckinridge letter to Blakey, 8 September 1978, MORI doc. no. 449113. Breckinridge, of the Office of Legislative Counsel, speculated to a House investigator that "Bishop" could be a representative of the US Army. Breckinridge memorandum, "Discussion with HSCA Investigator on Maurice (Morris) Bishop," OLC 78-5300/1, 6 October 1978, MORI doc. no. 449056. As described in Chapter 6 of this work, CIA supported several Cuban exile groups working to remove Castro from power, but Alpha 66 was not among them. (U)

[58] Blakey letter to Breckinridge, 16 August 1978, MORI doc. no. 387344; Breckinridge memorandum, "Morris Bishop," OLC 78-5307, 20 September 1978, MORI doc. no. 344570; Robert W. Gambino (OS) memorandum to Breckinridge, "Agency Employee with the Surname of Bishop," OS 8 2678/A, 29 September 1978, MORI doc. no. 305484; Breckinridge letter to Elder, 2 October 1978, MORI doc. no. 501968; Breckinridge memorandum, "Meeting with Former DCI McCone," OLC 78-5300/2, 9 October 1978, MORI doc. no. 365461; Breckinridge letter to Blakey, 19 October 1978, MORI doc. no. 344565. The House committee also questioned a retired [redacted] about Maurice or Morris Bishop. [redacted] said he recalled a colleague at Headquarters in the early or mid-1960s who went by that alias. When shown the same set of photographs that was prepared for McCone, however, he could not identify the officer. He suggested that the composite sketch that the committee showed him looked like a former chief of his. [redacted] However, [redacted] ired in 1962, and his final posting [redacted] did not bring him into contact with Alpha 66. [redacted] of WH Division also were mentioned as possibly being the real-life "Bishop"—[redacted] but no positive identification has ever been made. The House committee concluded that "it appears reasonable that an association similar to the alleged Maurice Bishop story actually existed...[b]ut whether Veciana's contact was really named Maurice Bishop, or if he was, whether he did all of the things Veciana claims, and if so, with which US intelligence agency he was associated, could not be determined." *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 10, chap. 3 (quote on 52); Breckinridge memorandum, "Meeting with [redacted] OLC 78-4078/3, 19 October 1978, MORI doc. no. 300195; Breckinridge memorandum, [redacted] OLC 78-4078/4, 19 October 1978, MORI doc. no. 305487; Fonzi, 408. The Bishop business was resurrected on NBC's television news magazine program, *Inside Edition*, on 5 February 1992, which divulged some of the contents of the House committee's theretofore secret files—including McCone's statements. (U)

that the Agency's reputation suffered during the "time of troubles" in the 1970s.[59] (U)

Despite the prominence that many conspiratorialists have given to CIA in their speculations about who killed President Kennedy and who has concealed "the truth," they do not accuse McCone of participating in any murder plot or coverup. Even the most fervent critics of the "lone gunman" and "single bullet" theories who posit Agency responsibility for the assassination blame rogue operatives below the senior executive echelon. At most, McCone has been accused of concealing inconvenient or embarrassing facts about CIA's clandestine activities or contacts that might lend credence to theories that Cuba or the Mafia were behind Kennedy's death, or that the Agency had a secret relationship with Oswald.[60] (U)

McCone did have a place in a "benign cover-up," or what also has been termed "a process designed more to control information than to elicit and expose it."[61] The protective response by McCone and other US government officials was inherent in the conflict between the Warren Commission's stated purpose—ascertaining the facts of the assassination—and implied in its mission—defending the nation's security by dispelling unfounded rumors that could lead to destructive international conflict. The DCI was complicit in keeping incendiary and diversionary issues off the commission's agenda and focusing it on what the Agency believed at the time was the "best truth": that Lee Harvey Oswald, for as yet undetermined motives, had acted alone in killing John Kennedy.[62] Max Holland, one of the most fairminded scholars of these events, has concluded that "if the word 'conspiracy' must be uttered in the same breath as 'Kennedy assassination,' the only one that existed was the conspiracy to kill Castro and then keep that effort secret after November 22nd."[63] In that sense—and that sense alone—McCone may be regarded as a "co-conspirator" in the JFK assassination "cover-up." (U)

[59] McCone HSCA deposition, 13–14; Elder memorandum, "Mr. John A. McCone's Deposition to Mr. Robert Genzman, Staff Counsel for the House Select Committee on Assassinations," 22 August 1978, MORI doc. no. 448986; Breckinridge memorandum, "McCone Depositions for HSCA," 21 August 1978, MORI doc. no. 306061. (U)

[60] See the Appendix on Sources for a discussion of this literature. (U)

[61] Pincus and Lardner, "Warren Commission Born Out of Fear," 1. (U)

[62] Such reasoning might explain McCone's request to the Department of Justice in January 1965 that it not exempt the 77 documents the Agency provided to the Warren Commission from the 75-year disclosure period mandated for investigative agencies. He argued that "national security outweighs any other consideration" and that the documents should be withheld for the full period. Katzenbach letter to McCone, 8 February 1965, and McCone letter to Katzenbach, 24 February 1965, MORI doc. nos. 404279 and 363957. (U)

[63] Holland, "After Thirty Years," 203. (U)

CHAPTER 15

Working With a New Boss (I): McCone, LBJ, and Vietnam (U)

On the morning of 23 November 1963, John McCone directed Executive Assistant Walter Elder to tell President Lyndon Johnson's secretary that the DCI would be at the White House at 0900 to give the scheduled intelligence briefing to the president.[1] McCone did not routinely participate in this activity, but he wanted to establish rapport with Johnson, whom he did not know well, and impress upon him CIA's indispensable role in providing information and analysis to the White House. (S)

The DCI and R. Jack Smith, director of OCI, met Johnson as he came into McGeorge Bundy's office at about 0915. For the next 15 minutes, surrounded by clattering typewriters, ringing telephones, and a din of voices, they exchanged compliments and expressions of support, after which the DCI, according to Johnson, "led me on a tour of the troubled globe," went over the *President's Intelligence Checklist*, and answered a few questions. McCone recalled that the president's mood "was one of deep distress over the tragedy, and grave concern over how to get his arms around the problems that confronted him, [and] some concern about how to properly handle the men in the organization whose competence he recognized but also whose allegiance was to President Kennedy." Smith remembered that the president's mind soon began to wander. "Beside the compact, trim McCone, [Johnson] looked massive, rumpled and worried. He had no interest whatever in being briefed, and after some inconsequential chatting, he turned back into Bundy's office. We had no way of knowing it, but we had just witnessed a preview of McCone's future relationship with Lyndon Johnson."[2] (S)

Adjusting Personal and Bureaucratic Relationships (U)

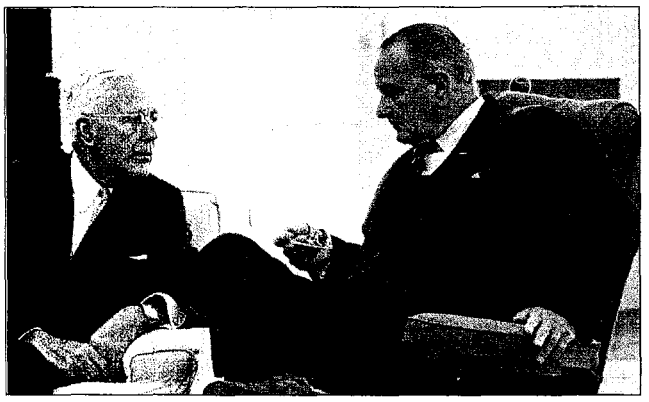
McCone had worked with Lyndon Johnson only sporadically in the past. They had first met in the late 1940s while McCone was on the Air Policy Commission and serving as a special assistant to Secretary of Defense James Forrestal. At the time, Johnson was in the House of Representatives and, after the 1948 election, in the Senate. While McCone was under secretary of the Air Force during 1950–51, he oversaw Korean War procurement and dealt regularly with Johnson, then the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee's Preparedness Subcommittee. By the time McCone became head of the AEC in 1958, Johnson was majority leader of the Senate and worked on legislation related to atomic energy. McCone did not meet with Johnson as vice president outside of NSC meetings and other White House briefings, and the two men had not talked with each other since several months before President Kennedy's assassination. (U)

Until his sudden elevation to the presidency, Johnson's experience with intelligence was marginal and skewed. He had received a few classified briefings in the Senate as chairman of the Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee and as majority leader, but neither the Kennedy White House, Allen Dulles, nor McCone made much of an effort to keep him informed after he became vice president. Johnson, in turn, distrusted the Agency, believing that it had conspired with his political opponents to deny him the presidential nomination in 1960 and that its principal officers were Kennedy loyalists. He paid little attention to CIA products. As vice president, his office received the *Current Intelligence Bulletin*, a less sensitive daily publication than the *PICL*, which President Kennedy did not want distributed outside his immediate circle of advisers. In any event, Johnson preferred to receive information verbally or through the media, savored the VIP and diplomatic gossip he heard from J. Edgar Hoover, and did not relish delving into estimates and analyses.[3] (S)

[1] McCone [redacted] OH, 1–3, 13–14; Knoche untitled memorandum, 23 November 1963, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 345; McCone calendars, entry for 23 November 1963. (S)

[2] McCone [redacted] OH, 17; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with President Johnson, November 23rd...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6; Knoche untitled memorandum, 23 November 1963, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 345; Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, 22; Smith, *The Unknown CIA*, 163; John L. Helgerson, *Getting To Know the President*, 69–70. McCone and Smith did not meet Johnson in the Oval Office because the new president had not yet relocated from his suite in the Executive Office Building. (S)

In the short term at least, McCone had the president's attention.[4] After their initial encounter, the DCI said he would continue briefing Johnson personally and "will see to it that [he] breaks down the commonly held view that it is somehow 'immoral' for the DCI to be seen publicly performing in such a role." In the two weeks or so after the assassination, McCone visited the White House almost every day, updating the new president on trouble spots around the world and apprising him of covert action and technical collection programs. Privately telling McCone that "he had the greatest confidence in me personally," Johnson asked the DCI not to confine himself to intelligence matters but come to him personally with policy suggestions—specifically mentioning that he was dissatisfied with the advice he was receiving on Vietnam, Cuba, and nuclear issues. (S)



McCone with President Johnson (U) Photo: LBJ Library

Soon after taking office, the president told McCone that he "intended to call upon me for a great many activities which would be different from those of the past." One that Johnson specified, serving as a political emissary to prominent Republicans on domestic economic issues, was old hat to McCone, and he continued to brief and consult Gen. Eisenhower regularly. That the president at first regarded McCone as a trustworthy insider and objective counselor is clearly shown by his request that the DCI help him with some delicate personnel matters, including cabinet, senior policymaker, and ambassadorial appointments. Johnson also used McCone as a source of information about the intentions of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, whose relationship with the president was far from cordial. The DCI recounted for the president some personal talks he had had with the attorney general, including the latter's uncertainty about his role in the new administration.[5] (Over time, McCone's close relationship with Robert Kennedy would compound the difficulties the DCI was having with the president.) In subsequent meetings in Washington and at the LBJ Ranch, McCone and Johnson discussed non-intelligence subjects such as the federal budget, the US military presence in Europe, and the president's first State of the Union Message. (The DCI—perhaps with his own "overalls-to-riches" success story in mind—suggested that the speech contain some reference to the individual's personal responsibility for poverty and its alleviation.) (S)

All this "face time" with the chief executive soon proved to be a mixed blessing. McCone found himself drawn deeper into affairs that were peripheral or counterproductive to his mission as head of the Intelligence Community. Scarcely a week after the transition, he complained to his senior deputies that Johnson often tasked him "with matters of no direct relationship to CIA and of possible damage to DCI relationships with SecDef and SecState." As a first step to avoiding these distractions, McCone decided to change procedures for White House briefings, dispensing with daily sessions in lieu of weekly NSC meetings where he would brief on current intelligence only, try to steer clear of policy discussions, and "give the President [the] benefit of give and take with his top advisers."[6] (S)

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[3] Helgerson, 69–70; Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 616; Richard Helms oral history interview by [redacted], Washington, DC, 4 April 1969 (hereafter Helms/[redacted] OH), 8; Knoche untitled memorandum, 23 November 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01580R, box 17, folder 345; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with President Johnson, November 23rd...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6; Andrew, 309–11, 313–14; Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat*, 42–43. A few days after the assassination, Johnson called Hoover "my brother and personal friend" and said "I've got more confidence in your judgment than anybody in town." *Taking Charge*, 58. (S)

[4] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Knoche memorandum about DCI morning meeting on 24 November 1963, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 345; McCone memoranda of discussions with the president on 28 and 30 November 1963, 13 and 29 December 1963, and 5 and 6 January 1964, McCone Papers, box 6, folders 6 and 7. (S)

[5] For details on the Johnson-Kennedy relationship, see Michael W. Schuyler, "Ghosts in the White House: LBJ, RFK, and the Assassination of JFK," *PSQ* 17, no. 3 (Summer 1987): 503–18; Paul R. Henggeler, *In His Steps*, 61–64, 73–91, 175ff.; Jeff Shesol, *Mutual Contempt*; and *LBJ versus the Kennedys: Chasing Demons*, the History Channel, 17 November 2003. (U)

[6] Walter Elder, annex to memorandum about DCI morning meeting on 2 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 345; Carter-Knoche OH, 13–14. (S)

Even with that rationing of contact, McCone wore out his welcome. Although he was purveying highly sensitive information, his access to Johnson diminished as time passed. The DCI misinterpreted the president's predilection for informal policy discussions as an indication that he preferred to receive intelligence information regularly and verbally. Richard Helms recalled, however, that Johnson "finally got bored, closed the door, and that was the end. He just didn't want to do it any more. You couldn't make him do it any more." William Colby, who frequently accompanied the DCI to White House briefings on Vietnam, has recalled that "McCone's pressures for direct access to LBJ aroused the President's protective instincts against being pushed, and he was not impressed with McCone's efforts to dazzle him."[7]

McCone had assessed his principal consumer inaccurately. The president preferred reading short memoranda to listening to formal briefings. The DCI's "crisp, concise sentences, spoken in his usual brisk manner, fell on deaf Johnsonian ears," according to R. Jack Smith. After a professional lifetime of running affairs his way, McCone did not adjust to the fact that he and Johnson operated differently. The DCI, accustomed to a hierarchical corporate environment, was used to listening to prepared staff recommendations at structured meetings and then making a decision, and assumed any chief executive—especially a newcomer to the job—would operate the same way. Instead, the president, steeped in traditional "old boy" politics, preferred to talk over issues casually with friends and associates in relaxed settings and work out a "deal." McCone, according to Walter Elder and Ray Cline, had a much easier time working with the "presidential" Kennedy—the long-range, strategic thinker—than the "congressional" Johnson—the political tactician.[8] McCone later noted that while Kennedy used to insist on seeing him for a weekly recap and forecast of trouble spots, Johnson only wanted to see him if some intelligence matter warranted immediate attention. Nor did Johnson, after a few months, invite McCone's increasingly dissonant thoughts on policy, preferring to rely on the more compliant (and far more powerful) Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara. R. Jack Smith has written that

> [t]he president's chief intelligence officer must have ready access to the president if he is to carry out his mission effectively. Moreover, it must be comfortable access. Both men must feel easy, confident of the other's support.... It cannot be legislated or commanded. It is the product of personal chemistry and compatibility of mind.

Mutual comfort, ease and confidence, and good personal chemistry never characterized McCone's relationship with President Johnson.[9]

McCone and others inside and outside CIA have overstated his lack of access to Johnson, but even if the quantity of contacts remained reasonably high, their quality declined. According to White House records, between 22 November 1963 and 25 April 1965, the DCI met with the president 89 times and spoke to him by telephone 14 times—or more than one direct contact per week. The average was higher under Kennedy, however, and not only did the frequency decline after mid-1964, but McCone increasingly saw Johnson only as a participant in meetings of national security advisers and less often one-on-one.[10]

The DCI failed to persuade the president of the value of personal intelligence briefings and by early 1964 was complaining to Bundy about not seeing Johnson. At Bundy's suggestion, McCone raised the subject of access at a private meeting with the president that April (the scheduled topic was Eisenhower, not intelligence). Johnson, presumably forewarned that McCone was "disturbed" at "not seeing very much" of him, replied that he was available anytime; "all [McCone] had to do was call up." McCone said he had tried to do so several times recently without success. Johnson then noted that he had been very busy of late, that the DCI was welcome to bring special matters to his attention, but that he "did not wish to be briefed just for the purpose of being briefed"; he found the *PICL* "perfectly adequate" and went over it carefully. After their meeting, Johnson—probably assuming that McCone had griped to other officials about not getting into the Oval Office—signaled to the DCI that the matter was closed. At an NSC

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[7] Helms/[redacted] OH, 36; Colby, *Lost Victory*, 182.

[8] McCone admired Johnson's political acumen, however. In an off-the-record discussion with journalist James Reston, he said, "It amuses me, you know, I go out west and he's got this kind of a hayseed reputation. I tell my friends...now listen, this guy's no hick...he's had more experience than any man that's ever been President of the United States." Transcript of conversation with Reston, 9 September 1964, 19, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 11.

[9] Smith, *Unknown CIA*, 163–64; Elder/McAuliffe OH2, 2; Cline, *Secrets, Spies, and Scholars*, 201; McCone/[redacted] OH, 18.

[10] Jeffreys-Jones, *The CIA and American Democracy*, 146; McCone calendars (which list 63 meetings); Helms/McAuliffe OH, 3.

President Johnson reading the new *President's Daily Brief* (U)
Photo: White House

meeting following their talk, the president announced that he had just received a "thorough briefing" from the DCI and then asked if McCone had any intelligence matters to raise with the NSC—implying that those had been the subject of their just-concluded interview. McCone later noted for the record that "my discussion with President Johnson did *not* involve an intelligence briefing" (his emphasis). McCone tried again a few months later, offering to meet with the president at any time to discuss intelligence matters and give him "the full benefit" of Agency expertise. Johnson did not respond. Not until 11 months into Johnson's term did McCone have a private opportunity to discuss purely Agency affairs—organization, budget, personnel—rather than the clandestine activities that supported the administration's diplomatic and military undertakings.[11] (S)

McCone tried, with more success, to impress Johnson with CIA's analytical contributions by adjusting the format of Agency publications to suit the president's preferences. Johnson probably was disinclined to read the *PICL*—a product tailored for his predecessor who had denied it to him—and the backgrounder-like quality of the first issues prepared for him may have seemed insulting. (He did, however, expect his senior staff to read it.) Moreover, whereas Kennedy preferred to see the presidential publication in the morning, and enjoyed a sprinkling of chattiness and humor in it, Johnson wanted a more sober product to peruse in the evening when he did most of his reading. Getting feedback on the content remained difficult during the transition. Kennedy would jot comments on his copy or call Cline, Smith, or even junior officers to discuss stories that had not appeared in the *PICL*, but obtaining comments from Johnson was practically impossible. After awhile, he tended not to read the publication. A presidential aide told a senior DI officer that "if we [CIA] can't penetrate this sort of wall...we'll just have to try something else." In January 1964, the biweekly *President's Intelligence Review*—a summary of the preceding *PICLs*—premiered at the White House. Johnson's military aide, Gen. C.V. Clifton, said the president—"a painfully slow reader" who "just cannot afford the time to digest a daily book"—thought the *Review* was "very valuable" and wanted it "kept up without change."

[redacted]

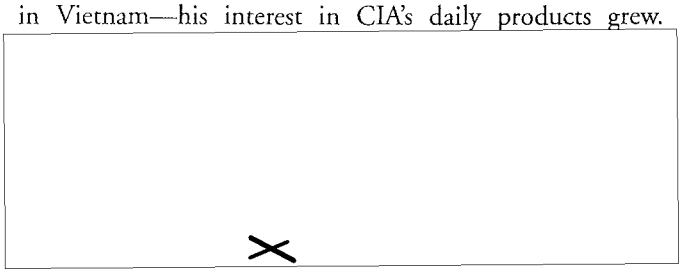
He also had NIEs give more attention to alternative, less probable scenarios as well as the outcomes that the community considered most likely.[12] (S)

Later in 1964, McCone and senior DDI officers decided that there was little use in producing a publication that the president read infrequently. The DCI accepted R. Jack Smith's suggestion that the most graceful solution was to stop publishing the *PICL* and prepare a new publication that conformed as much as possible to Johnson's work habits. After the 1964 election, the Agency dropped the *PICL* and the *Review*, and on 1 December, the first issue of the *President's Daily Brief* (*PDB*) arrived at the White House. The president read it, liked the new format, and wanted publication to continue. As Johnson became more deeply involved in foreign affairs—especially tactical developments

[11] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Breakfast Meeting at the White House—22 April 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 8; idem, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the President...24 July 1964," ibid., folder 9; idem, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President—22 October 1964," ibid., folder 10; idem, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with President Johnson...29 Apr. [1964]...," ibid., folder 8. (S)

[12] Helgerson, 74–75; Ranelagh, 422; Cline, *Secrets, Spies, and Scholars*, 201; [redacted] 29; [redacted]; editorial notes in *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXIII, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy...*, 416, 473–74; McCone memorandum to Bundy, "The Anticipation of Foreign Crises," ibid., 438–40. (S)

in Vietnam—his interest in CIA's daily products grew.



"Got Lots of Troubles" (U)

"Is it more dangerous," a despondent Lyndon Johnson confided to his senatorial mentor, Richard Russell, in late May 1964, "to let things [in Vietnam] go as they're going now, deteriorating every day...than it would be for us to move in?...I don't see any other way out of it." After only six months in power, the president and many officials in his administration were feeling frustrated over the fact that, as McNamara later wrote, he had "inherited a god-awful mess eminently more dangerous than the one Kennedy had inherited from Eisenhower." During the Kennedy presidency, the number of US military personnel in South Vietnam had grown from 875 to over 16,000, but when Johnson took office, their usefulness seemed doubtful. The junta of South Vietnamese generals that had ousted Ngo Dinh Diem in November 1963 was struggling with its new governmental responsibilities, and its members with each other. Counterinsurgency efforts were put on hold. Cronyism, corruption, and incompetence persisted at the high levels of the Saigon regime, which was widely regarded as an American puppet.[14] (U)

Despite these difficulties, President Johnson pledged to his top Vietnam decisionmakers two days after taking office that "I am not going to lose Vietnam. I am not going to be the President who saw Southeast Asia go the way China went." To Johnson, who felt bound politically to carry on his predecessor's policy, the alternatives were clear. As he told a reporter, "There's one of three things you can do [about Vietnam].... You can run or you can fight, as we are doin', or you can sit down and agree to neutralize all of it, but nobody's gonna neutralize North Vietnam.... [S]o it really boils down to one or two decisions: gettin' out or gettin' in." His first directive on Vietnam, issued on 26 November 1963, declared his intention to persist. "It remains the central objective of the United States in South Vietnam to assist the people and government of that country to win their contest against the externally directed and supported Communist conspiracy." He expected consensus among his advisers and demanded that they be as dedicated to this task as he was. "Don't go to bed at night until you have asked yourself, 'Have I done everything I could to further the American effort to assist South Vietnam?'" Privately, though, the president realized the quandary he was in. "I feel like one of those [Texas] catfish," he confided to his press secretary, Bill Moyers. "I feel like I just grabbed a big juicy worm with a right sharp hook in the middle of it."[15] (U)

Different Men, Different Views (U)

McCone devoted more attention to Vietnam than to any other national security issue during the last 18 months of his directorship, and policy disputes over how to fight the war clouded his relationship with Johnson. The conflict's intractability only strengthened the president's determination to defeat the Vietnamese communists without a major military commitment that would derail his domestic policy agenda. This resolve, combined with Johnson's lack of interest in CIA activities, as well as other personal and bureaucratic factors, made McCone's dealings with the White House so difficult that by late summer 1964 he had decided to resign the following year. Meanwhile, during the remainder of his tenure, CIA assisted the US military's expanded role in the clandestine war against North Vietnam and the Viet Cong,

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13 Helgerson, 75–77, 29.

[14] Transcript of Johnson-Russell telephone conversation on 27 May 1964, *Taking Charge*, 363 (including the quote in the section heading); McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, 101. Two CIA papers prepared for McCone give a good overview of the postcoup situation: Chester L. Cooper (ONE) memorandum to McCone, "South Vietnam—Where We Stand," 6 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 680–84; and memorandum to McCone, "Various Aspects of the Post-Coup Situation in South Vietnam," 17 December 1963, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 5. McCone may also have seen a report from Saigon station, TDCS DB-3/658,497, "Situation Appraisal as of 14 December 1963," 16 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 711–13. For references to literature on the Johnson administration and Indo-China, see the Appendix on Sources.

[15] NSAM No. 273, 26 November 1963, and McCone, "Memorandum for the Record of a Meeting, Executive Office Building...November 24, 1963...," *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 636–38; Robert Dallek, *Flawed Giant*, 99–101. (U)

and undertook its own covert initiatives with a mixed record of success. (U)

What role McCone and CIA would have in the new administration's policy toward Vietnam was unclear in the beginning. McCone's early contacts with the president on Vietnam were amicable and candid. During the transition, Johnson sought McCone's advice on several sensitive policy and personnel matters related to the issue, such as who could best lead South Vietnam or which US advisers and ambassadors would be best suited for working on the problem. Johnson at first seemed to appreciate McCone's experience and insights, and the DCI was flattered by the presidential solicitations. McCone sensed a difference, however. After a meeting on 24 November 1963, he wrote: "I received...the first 'President Johnson tone' for action as contrasted with the 'Kennedy tone.' Johnson definitely feels that we place too much emphasis on social reforms; he has very little tolerance with our spending so much time being 'do-gooders'...."[16] (U)

Changes that President Johnson made in his administration's foreign policy making processes further diminished McCone's stature. Largely as a bureaucratic gesture, the president instituted an ostensibly more orderly and formal style of decisionmaking than had prevailed in the Kennedy administration. At the same time, however, he tightly controlled a parallel collection of loosely structured arrangements where the "real" decisions were made. Johnson dispensed with the discursive NSC meetings that Kennedy had favored, expected cabinet officers to be fully in charge of their respective policy domains, and elevated the role of the Department of State in framing and executing US foreign policy. Partly to prevent leaks about policy disputes, he used the NSC mainly as a briefing forum and a ratifier of decisions. The Special Group Counterinsurgency, another Kennedy administration creation, met less frequently under Johnson and did not deal with Vietnam; the full Special Group and a new interagency coordinating committee took over its work.[17] Johnson preferred to address difficult national security issues in more intimate surroundings outside the NSC—ones analogous to the cloakroom manipulations he engaged in as party chief in the Senate. Foremost among these were the Tuesday Lunches that he began hosting in February 1964. Rusk, McNamara, and Bundy were the charter members of that most elite of dining clubs. The president also had a "kitchen cabinet" of colleagues and cronies from Texas and Washington from whom he often sought private counsel.[18] (U)

Overall, these changes emphasized the status of Rusk, McNamara, and Bundy, and reduced McCone's informal avenues of access and influence to the White House. He had good personal relations with Rusk, but he never got along that well with Bundy, and he was still fighting with McNamara over bureaucratic and policy matters. Not surprisingly, the DCI attended only six of the 27 Tuesday Lunches held between late February and late September 1964, when they were suspended for the election campaign. He attended none after they resumed in March 1965.[19] (U)

McCone directly felt Johnson's penchant for hands-on management when the president intruded himself in the selection of a new chief of station in Saigon.[20] On 2 December 1963, Johnson wrote to the DCI about a permanent successor to John Richardson, who had been withdrawn but not yet replaced formally. Either bring in a "top-notch man," the president directed McCone, or "promote the man on the spot." He asserted personal control over the appointment, telling the DCI that he awaited a nomination from among the Agency's "best and most experienced." McCone had intended to have Richardson's replacement start the following June, [redacted] but the presi-

[16] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record of a Meeting, Executive Office Building...November 24, 1963...," *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 637. (U)

[17] Established by NSAM No. 280 on 14 February 1964, the Vietnam Coordinating Committee was headed initially by William Sullivan, Rusk's special assistant for Vietnam affairs. *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 26 n. 2, 79–80. (U)

[18] George C. Herring, "The Reluctant Warrior: Lyndon Johnson as Commander in Chief," in David L. Anderson, ed., *Shadow on the White House*, 87–112; Robert Dallek, "Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam: The Making of a Tragedy," *DH* 20, no. 2 (Spring 1996): 147–62; David M. Barrett, "Secrecy and Openness in Lyndon Johnson's White House: Political Style, Pluralism, and the Presidency," *Review of Politics* 54, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 72–111; Schoenbaum, 412–14; Shapley, 276–78, 283; George C. Herring, *LBJ and Vietnam*, 6–9, 13–14, 22–23; Paul Y. Hammond, *LBJ and the Presidential Management of Foreign Relations*, 7–9; Brands, *The Wages of Globalism*, 5–13, 20–23; David Humphrey, "Tuesday Lunch at the Johnson White House: A Preliminary Assessment," *DH* 8, no. 1 (Winter 1984): 82, 86; Henry F. Graff, *The Tuesday Cabinet*, introduction; Prados, *Keepers of the Keys*, 148–51; John P. Burke and Fred I. Greenstein, *How Presidents Test Reality*, 135; Dean Rusk oral history interview by [redacted] Washington, DC, 28 July 1969, 25, transcript at LBJ Library. (U)

[19] McCone calendars, entries for May–September 1964. Of all his advisers, the president was most impressed with McNamara. "That man with the Stacomb in his hair is the best of the lot," he remarked after the first meeting of the Kennedy cabinet. He also was fond of Rusk, who he boasted "has the compassion of a preacher and the courage of a Georgia cracker. When you're going in with the Marines, he's the kind you want on your side." There are no such presidential encomiums recorded about McCone. Michael H. Hunt, *Lyndon Johnson's War*, 81; Brian Van de Mark, *Into the Quagmire*, 11. (U)

dent wanted the COS position filled right away. On the recommendation of William Colby, McCone chose Peer de Silva, [redacted] De Silva, an Army counterintelligence officer with the Manhattan Project in World War II, joined the Agency in the early 1950s [redacted] Before he left for Saigon, McCone took him to the White House to meet the president. De Silva recalled McCone's advice to him beforehand:

> For God's sake, remember what's been happening here recently—President Kennedy has been assassinated, President Johnson is new in the White House, and the Vietnam problem is getting worse every day. [Ambassador Henry Cabot] Lodge is becoming more and more obstreperous and Johnson wants no more problems out there as there were between Lodge and John Richardson; remember all of these things when we go to the president's office tomorrow. (S)

At their meeting in the Oval Office, President Johnson assured de Silva of his full support but reminded him that one of his primary missions was to get along with Lodge, and not to forget that 1964 was an election year. At the same time, McCone warned Johnson that Lodge "would destroy de Silva if he opposed his assignment, or did not like him, or wished to get rid of him." The president said he would "communicate most emphatically" with the ambassador to prevent that, but McCone replied that Lodge "was absolutely unconscionable in matters of this kind...he had resorted to trickery time and time again during the Eisenhower administration and...never failed to use the newspapers in order to expose an individual or block an action." Johnson averred that he "would exercise the full power of his office to keep Lodge in line," but he would not go so far as

President Johnson's NSC in 1964. McCone is at the far end of the table. (U) Photo: LBJ Library

to remove the ambassador, as McCone wanted, lest he antagonize the Republicans.[21] (S)

More than anything else, it was CIA's dissent from the administration's policy and its forecasts about Vietnam that estranged McCone from Johnson. McCone summarized their differences in a postretirement interview: "I disagreed with McNamara and others who said they could see the light at the end of the tunnel. We in the CIA didn't see any light at the end of the tunnel, and we had a very pessimistic view which was sharply resented by everyone right up to President Johnson." McCone set the analytical tone for his relationship with Johnson over Vietnam just two days into the new presidency by delivering a bleak assessment at a meeting of the senior Vietnam policy group (the president, Bundy, McNamara, Rusk, Lodge, and Ball). Speaking immediately after Lodge sanguinely described the prospects for the post-Diem regime, McCone reported that the Viet Cong had stepped up activity since the 1 November coup and were preparing to exert severe pressure; that the coup leaders were having trouble organizing a government and

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[20] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Johnson untitled memorandum to McCone, 2 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 651; [McCone,] blind memorandum for the president, n.d., EA Division Files, Job 78–00597R, box 1, folder 8; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the President...6 December 1963," and "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President...December 7th[, 1963]...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6; "CIA IG Report on Vietnam," 39–41, OIG Files, Job 74B00779R, box 1, folder 2; Peer de Silva, *Sub Rosa: The CIA and the Uses of Intelligence*, 201, 203–4, 206–7; Ahern, *CIA and the Generals*, 13. (S)

Lodge wanted the acting chief, [redacted] promoted to chief and told McCone in no uncertain terms that he neither needed nor wanted a new COS. Peer de Silva, who was present at this discussion during the DCI's December trip to Saigon, recalled that McCone, "[w]earing a tight little smile...mused that unless the ambassador really had cause for refusing my assignment, he, as director, felt he must insist on my assuming the position...." Lodge letter to McCone, 3 December 1963, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 5; de Silva, 211. (S)

[21] President Johnson—perhaps with McCone's admonitions about Lodge in mind—told the ambassador that "there must be the most complete understanding and cooperation between you and him [the COS].... I am concerned not only to sustain effective cooperation, but to avoid any mutterings in the press. I look to you all to ensure the complete absence of any backbiting and the establishment and maintenance of a relationship of genuine trust and understanding at all levels." Johnson telegram to Lodge, CAP 63633, 7 January 1964, *FRUS, 1964–68, I, Vietnam 1964*, 3. The prideful Ambassador did not take kindly to being so instructed and responded peevishly to McCone's subsequent request that he protect de Silva's [redacted] I certainly cannot take responsibility for keeping any man's name out of the press who works for the US government in Vietnam... [redacted] In fact the whole arrangement is still somewhat obscure to me...." Embassy Saigon cable to Headquarters, SAIG 3085, 13 December 1963, excerpted in "CIA IG Report on Vietnam," 41. (S)

securing help from civilian officials; and that counterinsurgency operations were at a standstill. The DCI concluded that he could see few reasons for optimism.[22] (S)

"McCone's position throughout this period," journalist Thomas Powers has aptly written, "was the one least congenial to Johnson: a strong conviction of the importance of victory, combined with deep pessimism about how we were doing, ending with a claim that only strong measures might recover the situation.... McCone went further than most. In one meeting after another he insisted that if the United States was going in, it had to go in all the way." The president initially respected McCone's frankness and even agreed with the DCI on some points. For example, he likewise thought Lodge "had made a great blunder in disposing of Diem" and said "in the most emphatic way that he felt the appointment of Lodge was a serious mistake," McCone wrote after a private meeting at the White House in late November 1963.[23] (S)

Eventually, Johnson tuned the DCI out, to the detriment of CIA. Indicative of the president's attitude about the Agency was the following story he told at a private dinner (as recounted by Richard Helms):

> Let me tell you about these intelligence guys. When I was growing up in Texas, we had a cow named Bessie. I'd go out early and milk her. I'd get her in the stanchion, seat myself and squeeze out a pail of fresh milk. One day I'd worked hard and gotten a full pail of milk, but I wasn't paying attention, and old Bessie swung her shit-smeared tail through that bucket of milk. Now, you know, that's what these intelligence guys do. You work hard and get a good program or policy going, and they swing a shit-smeared tail through it.[24] (U)

Nor did McCone have any personal advocates inside the Johnson White House. He dealt with much the same national security contingent as he had under Kennedy, and his relations with them, strained since the Cuban missile crisis, did not improve. Evidence of the DCI's outsider status was a clever but caustic memorandum that McGeorge Bundy wrote to President Johnson about him in May 1964. Bundy and Clark Clifford, the head of PFIAB, had agreed on "the ideal method of keeping John McCone really happy about the level of his contact with you: Golf." McCone, Bundy wrote, "is an energetic and agreeable golfer," has "more free time" than either Bundy or Clifford, and "can pay his own Burning Tree greens fee."[25] (U)

While McCone drifted to the periphery of White House discussions of Vietnam, he retained some authority over war-related intelligence activities as chairman of USIB. Southeast Asia became a preoccupation of USIB during the Johnson presidency, the subject of action once a week on average. McCone and the other board members spent about a third of their time on the issue dealing with special estimates; one fourth on SIGINT and other clandestine intelligence about North Vietnamese violations of the Geneva accords; one fourth on overhead reconnaissance requirements; and one sixth on other special studies handled by USIB committees and subcommittees. The estimates, which McCone scrutinized before signing, were often discussed at

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[22] G.J.A. O'Toole, *Honorable Treachery*, 491 citing interview with McCone on PBS documentary *Secret Intelligence*, broadcast in 1989; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...South Vietnam Situation," 25 November 1963, *FRUS, 1961–63, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 635–37; idem, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with President Johnson, 28 November 1963...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6; Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, 43. (S)

[23] Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*, 165–66; "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with President Johnson, 28 November 1963...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6. McCone attributed Johnson's antipathy toward Lodge to conflicts they had while in the Senate. (S)

Johnson's abiding bitterness over Diem's ouster was evident more than two years later in taped Oval Office conversations. To Sen. Eugene McCarthy, he paraphrased the coup proponents' words as "He was corrupt and he ought to be killed," and then said, "So we killed him. We all got together and got a goddamn bunch of thugs and assassinated him. Now, we've really had no political stability [in South Vietnam] since then." Right after, he said much the same thing to Maxwell Taylor: "They started out and said, 'We got to kill Diem, because he's no damn good. Let's...knock him off.' And we did.... That's exactly where it [Vietnam's downhill slide] started!" Conversations with McCarthy and Taylor on 1 February 1966, quoted in James Rosen, "What's Hidden in the LBJ Tapes," *Weekly Standard*, 29 September 2003, 12. If Johnson thought that CIA had been the Kennedy administration's "agent" in eliminating Diem, he may well have blamed it—and McCone—for at least some of his problems. (U)

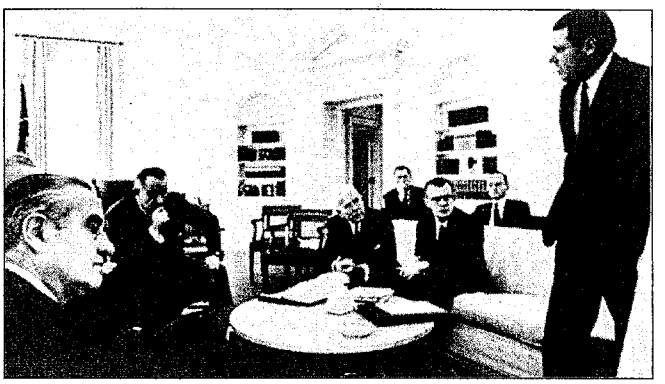
[24] Robert M. Gates, "An Opportunity Unfulfilled: The Use and Perceptions of Intelligence at the White House," *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1989: 42. (U)

[25] Bundy memorandum to the president, 1 May 1964, Memos to the President (McGeorge Bundy), vol. 4, National Security File, LBJ Library. The DCI and the president played golf once, on 24 May 1964. McCone calendars, entry for 24 May 1964. (S)

McCone may have brought on some of this ribbing by being oversensitive about his "hall file" in the White House. In January 1964, for example, he discussed with the US government's chief financial officer, Bureau of the Budget director Elmer Staats, the relatively trivial question of outfitting his official car to prevent the driver and security officer from overhearing his confidential conversations. President Johnson already knew about the matter, and McCone worried that someone else in the White House or the Cabinet would seize on it to accuse him of "taking advantage because of a free hand with our budget." The DCI offered to buy the type of vehicle he wanted and donate it to the government, but Staats indicated there were better ways to handle the situation. Transcript of McCone telephone conversation with Staats, 11 January 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 4. (S)

principals' and deputies' meetings—particularly those that considered possible consequences of US actions. Although he did not always agree with the bottom-line judgments of the analyses he approved, the DCI did not intervene in the estimative process during 1964–65 (as he had in that one regrettable instance in 1963).[26]

The Intelligence Community machinery McCone oversaw as USIB chairman functioned well on the Vietnam issue during the Johnson administration. Requirements were satisfied, and assessments were produced in a timely fashion. BNE and the DI had little apparent impact on policy and strategy decisions, however, because not enough of CIA's senior consumers—most significantly, the president—were listening, or if they were, they did not want to hear what they were being told. Ray Cline has written that "[a]s the Vietnam war became more worrisome, Johnson retreated more and more from orderly reviewing of evidence and systematic consultation.... Intelligence did not have a place at the table"—at least not the sort that McCone brought. Analysts' conclusions clashed with policymakers' geopolitical and ideological conceptions of international communism, their judgments of Moscow's and Beijing's intentions, their anxieties over perceptions of US prestige and power, and, as November 1964 drew near, their interests in securing Johnson's election. Regardless of how well the community performed, the president was still dissatisfied and frustrated with it. With three wire service tickers and three television sets in his office, and copies of the major American daily newspapers nearby, he did not often see what value the intelligence services added to the information mix. "I thought you guys had people everywhere, that you knew everything," he complained to McCone, only half in jest, "and now you don't even know anything about a raggedy-ass little fourth-rate country. All you have to do is get some Chinese coolies from a San Francisco laundry shop and drop them over there and use them. Get them to drop their answers in a bottle and put the bottle in the Pacific." The DCI, not known for his sense of humor, did not appreciate the jibe.[27] (U)



McCone at a Vietnam policy meeting in the White House (U)
Photo: LBJ Library

Epiphany in South Vietnam (U)

In the last weeks of 1963, a perplexed and troubled President Johnson sought to penetrate the many uncertainties about the new regime in Saigon and its ability to reinvigorate the war against the communists. To this end, he dispatched a factfinding mission in mid-December, headed by McNamara and including McCone, Bundy, William Colby, Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Victor Krulak from the Department of Defense, and William Sullivan from the Department of State. During three busy days of briefings, meetings, working meals, and receptions, the DCI saw the principal figures on the Military Revolutionary Committee that governed South Vietnam—the leader of the coup against Diem, Gen. Duong Van Minh ("Big Minh"); the prime minister; the ministers of defense, foreign affairs, and internal security; the chief of military security; and some senior military commanders, including Gen. Nguyen Khanh, who would lead his own successful coup in January. McCone also met with Ambassador Lodge and MACV head Gen. Paul Harkins and toured parts of the Mekong River delta region southwest of Saigon, where the Viet Cong insurgency had made substantial gains during 1963.[28]

Beneath the diplomatic niceties, comforting words, and assurances of support and progress-to-be-made, McCone found the "ground truth" to be disconcerting. A few

[26] Lay, vol. 5, 78–79.

[27] Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 81–83; Cline, *Secrets, Spies, and Scholars*, 201–2; Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest*, 512. (U)

[28] Details on McCone's trip are in several meeting memoranda in McCone Papers, box 3, folder 5; "Report by [USIB] Chairman on Trip to South Vietnam," USIB-M-203, 23 December 1963, ICS Files, Job 82S00096R, box 2, folder 3; and de Silva, 209–11. For accounts by other principals on the trip, see the reports by Krulak, Sullivan, and McNamara in *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 721–35.

sentences from his report to the president capture his downbeat assessment:

> There is no organized government in South Vietnam at this time. The Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC) is in control, but strong leadership and administrative procedures are lacking....
>
> The lack of an outstanding individual to lead and absence of administrative experience within the MRC are ominous indicators....
>
> The political stability of the new government under the MRC is subject to serious doubt....
>
> The military government may be an improvement over the Diem-Nhu regime, but this is not as yet established and the future of the war remains in doubt....
>
> The VC [Viet Cong] appeal to the people of South Vietnam on political grounds has been effective.... The ability of the GVN [government of Viet Nam] to reverse this trend remains to be proven....
>
> [T]here are more reasons to doubt the future of the effort under present programs and moderate extensions to existing programs...than there are reasons to be optimistic about the future of our cause in South Vietnam.[29] (U)

While on the trip, McCone learned how distorted and incomplete US intelligence reporting had been—particularly that coming through military channels. Policymakers already were aware of problems with the amount, accuracy, and timeliness of intelligence about the Viet Cong, but McCone's concerns were different in degree and kind. "It is abundantly clear," he told the president, "that statistics received over the past year or more from GVN officials and reported by the US mission on which we gauged the trend of the war were grossly in error." There was "no excuse for the kind of reporting" that had understated difficulties in Long An Province near Saigon, he complained to Lodge. In a letter to Rusk soon after his return, McCone noted that South Vietnamese province and district chiefs had "grossly misinformed" field officers of the MAAG (MACV's forerunner) and the US Observer Mission, and that American civilian and military officials could not audit the reporting.[30] (S)

In these and other remarks, McCone attributed the intelligence failings to US officials' dependence on liaison reporting, not to distortions in American reporting or assessments, or to bad field management of collection. He was aware that the US military had few reliable, independent sources and that it was inclined to "politicize" its reporting and analysis. Moreover, Lodge had been limiting the station's clandestine contacts with South Vietnamese officials. At this time during the policy debate in Washington, and with a new president just installed in office, however, McCone evidently thought it wiser to blame the ousted Diem regime for any intelligence shortcomings rather than MACV and the embassy. Lacking full authority over the entire US intelligence bureaucracy, the DCI's ability to address the inadequacies of the military departments was limited in any event. (S)

To rectify the situation from CIA's end, McCone proposed dispatching a group of what he called "our 'old South Vietnamese hands'" to independently examine the reporting system, which had failed to show the Saigon government's political weakness in the field.[31] These veterans from the DI and the DDP, many plucked from distant posts for the assignment, were instructed to spread out over the countryside and reacquaint themselves with official, unilateral, and personal contacts, bypass the normal reporting processes, and discern the true lay of the land. The team (codenamed [redacted]) cross-checked reports from existing sources and developed new methods to corroborate data. "This has not

[29] McCone, "Highlights of Discussions in Saigon, 18–20 December 1963," 21 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 736–38. McNamara, in contrast to his rosy public presentiments, in private made a similarly discouraging evaluation. "The situation is very disturbing," he reported to the president. The new government of Gen. Minh was "indecisive and drifting." "Current trends, unless reversed in the next 2–3 months, will lead to neutralization at best and more likely to a Communist-controlled state." "The situation has in fact been deteriorating in the countryside since July to a far greater extent than we realized because of undue dependence on distorted Vietnamese reporting. The Vietcong now control very high proportions of the people in certain key provinces, particularly those south and west of Saigon." McNamara memorandum to President Johnson, 21 December 1963, ibid., 732–33. (U)

[30] Hilsman memorandum to Rusk, "Viet-Nam," 5 December 1963, and McCone, "Highlights of Discussions in Saigon, 18–20 December 1963," *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 676, 737; Colby, "Memorandum for the Record...Presidential Meeting on Vietnam, 21 December 1963," and McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Ambassador Cabot Lodge...[18 December 1963,]" 21 December 1963, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 5; McCone letter to Rusk, 7 January 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 5–6. McCone's trip did not improve his relations with Lodge, who he told the president was "devious." Despite what Lodge had said about not seeking the Republican nomination for president, McCone did not believe the ambassador would set aside his political ambitions and remain in Saigon. McCone memorandum, "Discussion with the President...December 21, 1963," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6. (S)

been CIA's role in the past, as intelligence of this type has come through military channels," McCone wrote the president. "However[,] I believe the next few months are so critical that information covertly developed will complement reporting we receive through the other channels." ~~(S)~~

At first McCone's idea was not well received at the Pentagon, where McNamara insisted that the survey group's membership be expanded to include officers from the Departments of Defense and State. McCone—recognizing that conflicts in reporting were inevitable, given that progress in the war was not quantifiable—nonetheless pointed out that MACV's excessive optimism and the embassy's pessimism threw reporting out of balance, and that the US military's intelligence assets in the South were inadequate and mismanaged. The JCS also complained about inconsistent and incomplete intelligence, so it went along with the survey team idea with the proviso that it would not develop a separate collection and reporting system. When the CIA representatives submitted their evaluation of field intelligence in mid-February, MACV commander Harkins criticized some of the judgments as too harsh. Such independent assessments, he added, risked "misleading the national decision process by forwarding information not coordinated and cleared with other elements of the US reporting mechanism in Vietnam." Two improvements came out of the survey team exercise: the South Vietnamese national police, [redacted] established prisoner interrogation centers in each province; [redacted]

Another Government, Another Debate (U)

After returning from Saigon, McCone predicted that "another coup or even another thereafter might occur" in South Vietnam. He was right both times (although he did not forecast either date). On 30 January 1964, after scarcely three feckless months in power, Gen. "Big Minh" was ousted in a bloodless putsch led by Gen. Nguyen Khanh—inaugurating months of leadership instability in Saigon. The US government was aware of the plotting two days before, but Khanh did not tell the embassy of his plan until just before it was executed. According to William Bundy, at the time the assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, Khanh's coup "was most definitely not anticipated or stimulated by any American."[32] ~~(S)~~

McCone heard about the coup on the 30th while traveling in Western Europe and was not pleased. He had been decidedly unimpressed with Khanh when they met during the DCI's trip to South Vietnam in June 1962, and nothing he learned about the general afterward made him think differently. Khanh, McCone recalled, was "pretty slick" and left him with "a feeling of insecurity...a very uncertain feeling." In addition, as he learned more about the circumstances surrounding the coup, McCone came to believe that the embassy and MACV had kept information from the Agency. He later wrote that US officials in Saigon ahead of time had "a clear indication that Khanh meant action. Why was it not reported by MACV, Lodge, or CAS [Controlled American Source, a cover name for CIA] not informed?...[W]hy was the COS excluded from the play even after the Lodge reporting telegram went out?" "The remaining scenario of events," McCone concluded, "leaves doubt as to whether we [US intelligence agencies] were alert to the indicators, analyzed them for their effect on US policy and attempted to direct them." In short, the Khanh coup was an intelligence failure through and through.[33] ~~(S)~~

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[31] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Memorandum of meeting with Joint Chiefs of Staff," 17 January 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 10; idem, letter to President Johnson, 23 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, IV, Vietnam, August–December 1963*, 736; idem, memorandum to Rusk, "Subject: Covert Spot Check of Counterinsurgency Reporting in Vietnam," 9 January 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 4, folder 7; Michael Forrestal (NSC) memorandum to Bundy, "Reporting on the Situation in South Vietnam," 8 January 1964, *FRUS, 1964–68, I, Vietnam 1964*, 7–8; Colby, *Honorable Men*, 222; Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 44–45; George W. Allen, *None So Blind: A Personal Account of the Intelligence Failure in Vietnam*, 168–73; Colby memorandum, "Meeting on North Viet Nam—7 January 1964," EA Division Files, Job 78-00697R, box 1, folder 7. ~~(S)~~

[32] Colby, "Memorandum for the Record...Presidential Meeting on Vietnam, 21 December 1963," McCone Papers, box 3, folder 5; "Operational Reporting on General Khanh Coup...," early February 1964, and "Chronology of Events Leading up to Coup in Saigon...," 3 February 1964, ibid., folder 6. US officials reacted to Khanh in sharply varied ways. Under Secretary of State Ball called him "one of the best of the generals, both courageous and sophisticated"; Lodge and Harkins considered him "cool, clear-headed, [and] realistic," "a tough, able military leader"; and Colby thought he was perceptive and courageous. On the other hand, Maxwell Taylor depicted Khahn as "a skillful or unscrupulous croupier in the political roulette as played in Saigon," and the Agency's veteran Vietnam officer [redacted] said he was manipulative and chronically dishonest. A more balanced station assessment of March 1964 described Khanh as a moody loner with intelligence and energy. Blair, 108; Marshall Green (Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs) memorandum to Rusk, "The New Vietnamese Coup," *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 44; Forrestal untitled memorandum to the president, 30 January 1964, ibid., 43; Ahern, *CIA and the Generals*, 20; Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares*, 329. ~~(S)~~

[33] McCone untitled memorandum, 9 March 1964, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 8; transcript of McCone interview with Rowland Evans and Stewart Alsop, 3 February 1965, ibid., box 9, folder 2; [redacted] Bird, *The Color of Truth*, 273; Ahern, *CIA and the Generals*, 15–18; [redacted] CIA IG Report on Vietnam," 46–49. ~~(S)~~

To get objective assessments of the unsettled situation in South Vietnam, McCone had Agency officers conduct two reviews, and took a second trip to the country in March. Executive Director-Comptroller Kirkpatrick and COS de Silva did one of the assessments, and the abovementioned special survey team did the other. De Silva, writing in February, predicted that the "gradual abrading of the popular will to resistance" would destabilize the Saigon government unless countered by South Vietnamese military victories. Kirkpatrick was "shocked by the number of our (CIA) people and of the military, even those whose job is always to say we are winning, who feel that the tide is against us." He added that the Viet Cong's superior intelligence capabilities were a major factor in their success, and that unless communist infiltration into the South from Laos and Cambodia was curtailed, "this entire pacification effort is like trying to mop the floor before turning off the faucet." Around that time, the [redacted] survey team submitted the first of two reports to the DCI. The initial one depicted a scene of general deterioration, with the Viet Cong gaining headway, the South Vietnamese leadership ineffective, and counterinsurgency programs in disarray.[34]

Soon after receiving the above reports, McCone went to Saigon. Senior administration officials were not enthusiastic about his trip, but McNamara and Taylor already were traveling there, and no good reason could be given why the DCI should not go as well. Moreover, he was not about to let Agency equities go unprotected during a Pentagon VIP tour whose main purpose was to convey Washington's endorsement of Khanh. McCone could not be said to be going with an open mind. A few weeks before, he had commented that the last special estimate dealing with South Vietnam (dated 12 February) was not sufficiently negative, and just before he left he wrote that "the situation is worse now than it was in December...I am more pessimistic of the future of the American cause in South Vietnam than [before]...."[35]

Little that McCone saw or heard there during six days in early March would have changed his viewpoint. On the Vietnamese side, he met with Gen. Khanh and his military lieutenants; Gen. Minh, now the figurehead chief of state; and the vice prime ministers or ministers in charge of foreign affairs, economics, interior affairs, and cultural and social affairs. He did not receive what he thought were convincing answers to questions about increased enemy activity, or about the Saigon government's abilities to conduct successful "clear and hold" operations and to win the allegiance of the estimated 50 percent of the population that did not care who won the war. A report from the [redacted]eam about intelligence and operational problems was notably discouraging in that regard. Perhaps the bluntest conclusion the DCI heard came from the Australian colonel who headed his country's advisory team: "We are being asked the wrong question. When someone asks 'can the war be won,' the answer is 'certainly, yes'; but if someone asks 'will the war be won,' the answer is 'very probably, no.'"[36]

When the Pentagon party returned, McNamara submitted to the president a trip report that included a dozen policy recommendations founded on the premises that South Vietnam was too important to let fall to the communists and that current difficulties could be overcome. Besides increases in nonmilitary aid and military materiel, McNamara proposed that the US government underwrite an expansion of the South Vietnamese army and the creation of a counterguerrilla force, authorize Saigon's forces to engage in "hot pursuit" operations into Laos, and have the South Vietnamese air force prepared to launch retaliatory air strikes across the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on 72 hours notice and full-scale air raids (along with US aircraft) on

[34] Attachment to Elder memorandum to Rusk, "Appraisal of the Conduct of the War in Vietnam," 10 February 1964, and Helms memorandum to Rusk, 18 February 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 65–66, 84–86. Also around this time, BNE produced a special estimate containing the dire conclusion that "unless there is a marked improvement in the effectiveness of the South Vietnamese government and armed forces, South Vietnam has at best an even chance of withstanding the insurgency menace during the next few weeks or months." SNIE 50-64, "Short-Term Prospects in Southeast Asia," 12 February 1964, 1.

[35] Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...Special Group (5412) Meeting...13 February [1964]," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 8; Carter untitled memorandum, 15 February 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 16; McCone memorandum, USIB-M-311, 12 February 1964, ICS Files, Job 82S00096R, box 2, folder 4; McCone, "Memorandum on Vietnam," 3 March 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 122. President Johnson told the Joint Chiefs on 4 March that "we must make General Khanh 'our boy' and proclaim the fact to all and sundry. [The President] wants to see Khanh in the newspapers with McNamara and Taylor holding up his arms." Taylor, "Memorandum of a Conversation Between the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the President...March 4, 1964," ibid., 129. The DCI's abovecited memorandum on Vietnam included other negative judgments such as: "the prospects for a strong government are not bright.... The problem of reversing the [downward military] trend is formidable.... [T]here has been submersion of bad news and an overstatement of good news.... [O]ur military operations in South Vietnam have not been as successful as we assumed up to last December. I think the whole concept has to be reviewed." McCone, "Memorandum on Vietnam," 3 March 1964, ibid., 121–24.

[36] McCone untitled memorandum, 9 March 1964, "Notes on briefing at MACV Conference Room on 9 March [1964]," and "Notes on Meeting at US Embassy...9 March 1964...," McCone Papers, box 3, folder 8; [redacted] "Memorandum of Conversation...Meeting with Colonel Francis P. Serong, 11 March 1964...," ibid.

30 days notice. McNamara circulated a draft of the report among the trip participants. Hoping for consensus but anticipating disagreement, he allowed dissenters to take footnotes.[37] (U)

McCone took five. In the last—the longest and most important—he concurred with McNamara's proposals but called them "too little too late." He recommended instead a six-point program that would have significantly escalated the level of armed conflict and US involvement in Southeast Asia. For example, whereas McNamara's carefully hedged program of Cambodian border control emphasized that operations across the border should depend on the state of relations with Cambodia, McCone recommended that Gen. Khanh insist upon an immediate meeting with Prince Sihanouk to develop a joint border clearing program. If Sihanouk should refuse, McCone stated that Khanh, with US assistance, should "stop all traffic on the Mekong River to and from Cambodia, destroy Viet Cong installations in Cambodia, and authorize ARVN to engage in hot pursuit across the Cambodian border." In addition, McCone recommended that Nationalist Chinese troops be introduced into the delta—a proposal so unacceptable that Taylor warned that if it were put to the Joint Chiefs, they would unanimously oppose it.[38] ~~(S)~~

President Johnson did not want policy feuds among his advisers to be publicized, so at a meeting of the Vietnam principals to discuss McNamara's draft, he told the secretary of defense and the DCI that he hoped they could settle their differences. He deplored the fact that if such a split arose at an NSC meeting with a few dozen participants, it would immediately leak to the press. McNamara stated that his and McCone's judgments could not be reconciled. At that point, McCone decided to withdraw from the field as a policy adviser on Vietnam. "[A]s far as I was concerned," he told Johnson, "I would not advance my views at an NSC meeting unless specifically requested by the president for the simple reason that such matters as military and foreign policy were beyond my competence as Director of Central Intelligence." He had commented on McNamara's paper and expressed his thoughts to the president because he was asked to, but from now on, he said, he would confine himself to intelligence issues. At the next NSC meeting, McCone gave a terse summary of current developments and said nothing more.[39] ~~(S)~~

The Intelligence War: The Southern Theater (U)

The administration's war policy review in early 1964 ended with the issuance of NSAM No. 288 on 17 March—a document that was "minimal in the scale of its recommendations at the same time that it stated US objectives in the most sweeping terms used up to that time," according to the *Pentagon Papers*. The directive ordered the implementation of the specific proposals in McNamara's report. There were four possible courses of action at this point, President Johnson told the NSC: "'more war' against the DRV [North Vietnam] which is undesirable; pulling out, which is undesirable; neutralization, which is impractical and consequently undesirable; and the course outlined [in the report] which is the only real alternative." The comprehensive policy entailed, among other objectives, providing economic assistance to the South Vietnamese peasantry, training an offensive guerrilla force, augmenting the regular South Vietnamese army, increasing military aid, and revitalizing the Strategic Hamlet Program. The policy also called for clandestine activities conducted by CIA and US Special Forces. McNamara forecast that "if we carry out energetically the proposals he has made, Khanh can stem the tide in South

[37] McNamara memorandum, "McNamara-Taylor Mission to South Vietnam," 5 March 1964, and memorandum to the president, "South Vietnam," 16 March 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 133, 153–67. (U)

[38] McNamara memorandum, "McNamara-Taylor Mission to South Vietnam," 5 March 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 155, 157, 164, 166; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the President...To discuss South Vietnam report," 13 March 1964, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 8. Several times as DCI, McCone raised the idea of using Nationalist Chinese troops—in previous years referred to as "unleashing Chiang Kai-shek." William Bundy later noted that it was "a bug with McCone." Ray Clin[redacted] was the other Agency champion of deploying "ChiNat" forces. *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 126 n. 3; Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 55; Langguth, *Our Vietnam*, 286. Gen. Chiang thought he could best assist the United States and South Vietnam by airdropping (from US planes) up to 10,000 Nationalist guerrillas into the PRC's southwestern province to promote an anticommunist resistance movement and disrupt Chinese supply lines into Indochina. *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 247 n. 4. McCone thought that Nationalist troops might be useful on the Chinese mainland, but he did not support such grandiose ideas in Vietnam. Two hardliners on the JCS—the commandant of the Marine Corps, Lt. Gen. Wallace Greene, and the Air Force chief of staff, Gen. Curtis LeMay, agreed with McCone's criticism of McNamara's report. Greene wrote that its recommendations "offer little more than a continuation of present programs," and LeMay advocated attacking Viet Cong sanctuaries in Cambodia and North Vietnamese supply lines in Laos. *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 149–50 n. 3 and 243 n. 3. ~~(S)~~

[39] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the President...To discuss South Vietnam report," 13 March 1964, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 8; Colby, "Memorandum for the Record...National Security Council Meeting, 17 March 1964," ibid.; "Summary Record of the 524th Meeting of the National Security Council...March 17, 1964...," *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 170. ~~(S)~~

Vietnam, and within four to six months, improve the situation there."[40]

McCone's CIA was active in carrying out the administration's policy despite the loss of paramilitary responsibilities under Operation The Agency's clandestine enterprises during 1964 divided into two categories: pacification, political action, and espionage operations run in the South,

Some of these undertakings were already underway when the NSAM No. 288 policy was promulgated and were subsumed under it. US officials thought the change in government in Saigon would create a more hospitable environment for operations. The "Big Minh" regime had objected to sending Agency officers and US advisers into the countryside below the provincial or regimental levels,

The Agency's pacification program emphasized political action and propaganda and often experimented with variations on earlier projects.[42] As indicated by the gradual replacement of the term "counterinsurgency" with "pacification," the focus shifted from repressive action against the Viet Cong to mobilizing the Buddhist-Confucian lowland peasantry to side with the Saigon government against the insurgents. The *Census-Grievance and Aspiration Program* was designed to attract the political loyalty of villagers by providing an outlet for their complaints on which the government would try to act quickly. It had an intelligence payoff as well: during interviews, peasants often identified communist cadre. *Counter-Terror Teams* (later renamed *Provincial Reconnaissance Units*) provided a measure of physical security by taking the war into Viet Cong safe areas with raids, ambushes, and "psywar" ploys. *Advanced Political Action Teams* and *Armed Propaganda Teams* (later called *People's Action Teams* and *Revolutionary Development Teams*), like the communists, lived, ate, slept, and worked in the countryside to assert the government's presence and demonstrate its benevolent intentions. These units, eventually comprising up to 40 men, provided services to villagers and protected them from the insurgents until they were able to defend themselves. By mid-1964, more than 1,200 people in 17 of South Vietnam's 43 provinces were involved with CIA-directed political action teams.

The Agency's success with pacification depended largely on the commitment of the provincial government and the efficiency with which the indigenous bureaucracy delivered on its promises. CIA's pacification projects had to compete for attention from local officials—they ran alongside a much larger effort by the Saigon government to assert its control in rural areas through a reactivated Strategic Hamlet Program—

According to William Colby, the programs—particularly the People's Action Teams—were more effective at neutralizing and eliminating the Viet Cong infrastructure than at supplanting it with "positive local political institutions to prevent VC reinfiltration and subversion." As he later wrote, they "showed inconclusive results because they were *imposed* from above...rather than *built* from below by local efforts" (his emphasis). The projects accomplished enough, however, that Ambassador Maxwell Taylor and MACV commander William Westmoreland (who replaced Lodge and Harkins, respectively, during the summer) recommended in August 1964 that they be expanded. McCone did not involve himself much in discussions about the pacification program and left its development and implementation in the hands of the DDP—especially FE Division Chief Colby, who recalled that the DCI "was inclined to come directly to me" on Southeast Asian matters. CIA's pacification initiatives were marginally

[40] NSAM No. 288, "Implementation of South Vietnam Programs," 17 March 1964, and "Summary Record of the 524th Meeting of the National Security Council...March 17, 1964...," *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 171–73; *The Pentagon Papers* 3, 3; Colby, "Memorandum for the Record...National Security Council Meeting, 17 March 1964," McCone Papers, box 3, folder 8.

[41] Ahern, *CIA and Rural Pacification in South Vietnam*, 133; Kahin, 189–90; Lodge telegram to Rusk, 21 January 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 30–31.

[42] This overview draws on Ahern, *CIA and Rural Pacification in South Vietnam*, chaps. 7–9; *Annual Report for FY 1964*, 137; FE Division, "Chronology of CIA Involvement in Vietnam Paramilitary Programs," 2 June 1975, EA Division Files, Job 81-00336R, box 6, folder 21; de Silva, chaps. 20–21; Colby, *Honorable Men*, 231–34; and Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 209–12. CIA operations had to be coordinated with the rest of the Country Team, and other elements of the US Mission, especially the military, often participated in them. In addition, Agency officers worked in conjunction with a medley of civic action, safety, development, assistance, and "self-help" programs that overt US agencies administered. See Blaufarb, *Counterinsurgency Era*, 214–20.

effective, ably run, and uncontroversial, and so did not require McCone's attention.[43] (S)

The same was true with Saigon station's unilateral political action and intelligence collection activities. They included cultivating and maintaining assets [redacted] using local media to disseminate propaganda; running a number of well-placed sources [redacted]

[redacted]

The station's priority espionage target was the Viet Cong political apparatus: provincial committees and subcommittees, and leaders and members of local guerrilla and terror squads. Overall, Colby recalled,

> CIA's political contacts and unilateral penetrations did provide some useful insights into the major political developments on the Saigon scene, but as most of these took place in full public view anyway and at such a dizzying pace, they were almost as well reported in the press and by the embassy, leaving the Agency very little to add.... What's more, the Agency's efforts to work with Vietnamese intelligence services to improve coverage of the Communists in the countryside were almost totally frustrated by the rapid replacement of the leadership of such services with every change in government, and the preoccupation of the new appointees with the much more proximate danger of yet another coup.[44] (S)

As with other hard targets, technical means—overhead reconnaissance [redacted] proved relatively more effective than human sources at collecting intelligence on the Viet Cong. Since 1962, CIA had flown many U-2 missions over South Vietnam and parts of Laos and Cambodia to photograph Viet Cong activity. McCone reminded the principals, however, that imagery collection faced serious limitations in a guerrilla war. He pointed out that, even with daily coverage, much insurgent activity was undetectable from the air. Except for truck convoys, Agency photointerpreters had not been able to track enemy infiltration into the South regularly and accurately. By April 1964, in any event, imagery targets shifted from strategic reconnaissance to discern communist intentions, to tactical support of counterinsurgency operations as the Viet Cong stepped up attacks on villages and ARVN positions.[45] (S)

[redacted]

[43] Ahern, *CIA and Rural Pacification in South Vietnam*, 181; Colby memorandum to McCone, "Implications of Saigon Station Experiment in Counterinsurgency," 24 November 1964, EA Division Files, Job 78-00597R, box 1, folder 9; Colby, *Honorable Men*, 224, and *Lost Victory*, 121. (S)

[44] FE Division memorandum, "CIA Political Actions in South Viet Nam," 16 December 1964, EA Division Files, Job 78-00597R, box 1, folder 13; de Silva, 216; Dale Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes: The Phoenix Program and the Vietnam War*, 46; Colby, *Honorable Men*, 226, 229–34; Blaufarb, *Counterinsurgency Era*, 213. (S)

[45] Peter Jessup (NSC), "Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Special Group, 24 February 1964," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 7; Pedlow and Welzenbach, 230. (S)

The Intelligence War: Taking It to the North (U)

The Agency's worldwide collection program against North Vietnam, instituted in 1959, had deficiencies that came to McCone's attention at a USIB postmortem on a special estimate in April 1964. The estimate had stated that "[f]irm information about North Vietnam is extremely sparse. Accordingly, analysis...is extremely difficult."

produced "very unspectacular results," Colby wrote at the time. The DDP attributed the intelligence gap to North Vietnam's isolation and tight security. A former operations officer with long experience in East Asia recalled that "[o]f all of the denied area targets at the time [the early 1960s] to include the USSR, PRC, GDR [East Germany], North Korea...I believed North Vietnam was the most difficult target." Notwithstanding those formidable difficulties in the field, McCone ordered CIA officers to do what they could to improve reporting.[47] ~~(S)~~

MACV directed and controlled this ambitious agenda and created an unconventional warfare unit, euphemistically called the Studies and Observations Group (SOG), to carry out the US military's assignments.

President Johnson approved the program on 16 January 1964, and it went into effect on 1 February. In mid-March, it was assimilated into McNamara's policy recommendations that were promulgated as NSAM No. 288. OPLAN 34A became the weapon the administration used to take the war to the North without overcommitting the United States militarily during an election year. As Maxwell Taylor wrote at the time, "It is quite apparent that [the president] does not want to lose South Vietnam before next November nor does he want to get the country into war." Johnson, McNamara recalled, was "grasping for a way to hurt North Vietnam without direct military action."

[47] SNIE 14.3-64, "The Outlook for North Vietnam," 4 March 1964; Colby memorandum to Helms, "Comments to DCI on Memorandum Titled 'North Vietnam: Intelligence Deficiencies,'" 29 April 1964, and McCone letter to Hughes, 29 April 1964, CMS Files, Job 82R00370R, box 5, folder 27; Shultz, 15. ~~(S)~~

[48] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Bundy untitled memorandum to the president, 7 January 1964, Taylor, "Memorandum of a Conversation Between the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the President...March 4, 1964," and Taylor memorandum to McNamara, "North Vietnam Operations," 19 May 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 4, 129, 338–40; Shultz, 37–40, 281–90, 299–301, 319–22; Conboy and Andradé, 90–96; Tourison, chaps. 5–8; McNamara, 103. CINCPAC began concerted planning for unattributable hit-and-run raids against North Vietnam, to be carried out by South Vietnamese commandos trained by US military in May 1963. The Joint Chiefs approved a draft, OPLAN 34-63, in August–September; that plan was discussed in November in Honolulu. Department of Defense, *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945–1967*, vol. 3, appendix IV-C-2-a, 2. (U)

CIA had turned over its agent infiltrations to the US Army under

Within its own bailiwick, CIA airdropped 17,265,000 leaflets, 215,000 newspapers, 23,950 gift kits, and nine deception kits into the North between 1 February and 1 July 1964. A black radio operation, suspended during the November 1963 coup, was resumed in April 1964 and by July broadcast around six hours a week. In May 1964, the overt Voice of Freedom radio station went on the air seven to eight hours a day from Hue, just south of the DMZ,

To avoid a repeat of SAC's takeover of U-2 operations over Cuba during the missile crisis, he circulated—with Bundy's approval—a memorandum reaffirming CIA's authority for U-2 flights over most denied territory or covert flights over friendly territory.[52] (S)

In Special Group meetings, McCone argued for granting CIA blanket approval for photographic overflights of Laos Bundy and Vance objected, citing the need for at least the appearance of US compliance with the Geneva accords. The DCI contended that "we had a single war on our hands in the entire area and we should not

[49] Because of the problems CIA had experienced with Colby recommended that McCone not object if the Pentagon wanted them. The DCI took the advice. Colby memorandum to McCone, "Krulak Committee Paper on North Vietnam Operations," 4 January 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 342. (S)

[50] Tourison, 124, and chaps. 5–8 passim; *Annual Report for FY 1964*, 138; John L. Plaster, *SOG: The Secret Wars of America's Commandos in Vietnam*, 24–26, 184–85; Shultz, 68–69. (S)

[51] Shultz, 44, 132–33, 284, 304–5; Conboy and Andradé, 95–96; Ahern, "The Way We Do Things," 85. (S)

[52] Elder, "McCone as DCI (1973)," 1348–51; Pedlow and Welzenbach, 230–31; Vance memorandum, "U-2 Reconnaissance in SEASIA," 9 February 1964, and Carter memorandum to McCone, "U-2 Reconnaissance in the Far East," 23 February 1964, DCI Files, Job 98B01712R, box 1, folder 9; Carter, "Memorandum for the Record…Special Group (5412) Meeting…13 February [1964]," and McCone memorandum, "Meeting of Special Group…24 February 1964," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 8; Jessup, "Minutes of the Special Group Meeting, 13 February 1964," and memorandum to Rusk, McNamara, and McCone, "U-2 Reconnaissance in SEASIA," 3 March 1964, ibid., folder 7. By White House directive, the Air Force would fly overt U-2 missions over all of South Vietnam, Cambodia within 30 miles of South Vietnam, North Vietnam within 30 miles of South Vietnam or the coast, and the Laotian panhandle. CIA would fly covert U-2 missions over the remainder of North Vietnam and Laos. Bundy untitled memorandum to Rusk, McNamara, and McCone, 1 March 1964, DCI Files, Job 98B01712R, box 1, folder 3. (S)

be so sensitive that we tied our own hands in fighting this war," but the others' diplomatic sensitivities prevailed.[53]

From the inception of OPLAN 34A, McCone held little hope for its success.[54] He believed that the missions were too limited; that the Viet Cong were already too well established in the South for Hanoi's support to them to be influenced by "pinprick" operations; and that the record of previous missions since mid-1962 was poor.

The power of the Khanh government was the crucial variable, the DCI insisted. Unless it established a firm hold in the countryside, expanding clandestine operations in the North would be pointless because the Viet Cong "in all probability...would ultimately take over" the South.

> It seems obvious to me that unless the Khanh government is strengthened...carrying the action into North Vietnam would not guarantee victory.... [I]f the Khanh government remains fragile...and we are continually confronted with coup plotting and...if the resentment of [the] American presence increases, then it appears to me that carrying the war to North Vietnam would not win the war in South Vietnam and would cause the United States such serious problems in every corner of the world that we should not sanction such an effort.[55]

McCone did not accept the arguments of Rusk and McNamara that OPLAN 34A demonstrated American resolve. By this time, he had had enough of signals and symbols and did not want Agency resources squandered on gestures. What was needed, he contended, was a "more dynamic, aggressive plan" that would reinvigorate the strategic hamlet program, expand pacification efforts, launch cross-border attacks against Viet Cong havens in Laos and Cambodia, and undertake other political and diplomatic initiatives. Nonetheless, although he thought that "no great results are likely from this kind of effort," he joined McNamara, Rusk, and Bundy in recommending that the president approve OPLAN 34A. He had said his piece, and

More Dark Clouds (U)

McCone soon had more reason to disagree with the Johnson administration's emerging policy of gradually carrying the war to the North. During 7–9 April, he took part in a war game called SIGMA I-64 that was intended to project how the conflict would develop over the next decade.[57] (He had suggested the objective to the Joint War Games Agency in January when the idea of playing a Vietnam game had been discussed.) Designed by the RAND Corporation,

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[53] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Special Group Meeting on 23 April [1964]...," and "Memorandum for the Record...303 Committee Meeting...24 September [1964]...," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 8.

[54] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 46–47, 49–50, 52–53; Colby memorandum to McCone, "OPLAN 34A: Accomplishments During Phase I (1 February–31 May 1964)," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 8; McCone memorandum, "Discussion with Secretary McNamara and General Taylor...," 29 February 1964, ibid., box 9, folder 5; Colby, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting on North Vietnam—7 January 1964," and McCone, "Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to the President," 7 January 1964, and McCone, "Memorandum on Vietnam," 3 March 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 4–5, 125–27; Colby memorandum to McCone, "Krulak Committee Paper on North Vietnam Operations," 4 January 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 342.

[55] McCone later made his argument in more colorful terms to his friends Henry and Clare Boothe Luce: if South Vietnam were not strong enough to take retaliation from the North, it risked "being clawed to death by the northern monster in its dying gasps after the heart had been struck." McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Luncheon Meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Luce...12 June 1964," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 11.

[56] Though McCone did not say so, he also may have objected to the political calculations that were factored into White House decisions to limit US involvement in Vietnam during an election year. President Johnson expressed that thinking in a secretly recorded conversation with McGeorge Bundy in March. In response to the Joint Chiefs' urgings that the United States "get in or get out" of Vietnam—a position very much like the DCI's—Johnson told Bundy privately that he was only a "trustee" president, and that "I got to win an election...and then...you can make a decision. But in the meantime let's see if we can't find enough things to do to keep them off base and stop these shipments that are coming in from Laos, and take a few selective targets to upset them a bit without getting another Korea operation started." Transcript of Johnson conversation with Bundy, 4 March 1964, *Taking Charge*, 267. (U)

[57] SIGMA I-64 is described in most detail by another participant, William H. Sullivan of the Department of State, in his memoir, *Obbligato: 1939–1979: Notes on a Foreign Service Career*, 178–81; see also Bird, *The Color of Truth*, 276–77; John Prados, *Pentagon Games*, 62–63; Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 57–58; Krepinevich, 133–34; Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest*, 460–62; Helms memorandum to McCone, "War Game on South Vietnam," 24 March 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01480R, box 16, folder 342. Sullivan, who played the commander of North Vietnamese forces, Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap, misdates the game as taking place in the spring of 1963. McCone did not participate in the first Vietnam war game held during his directorship, SIGMA I-62 in February 1962, which pitted a US team against a Viet Cong enemy. (Cf. Henry L. Trewhitt, *McNamara*, 222, which confuses the I-62 and I-64 games.) He was scheduled to take part in a counterinsurgency war game at the Pentagon in late October 1963, but his records do not indicate that he did. Robert Buzzanco, *Masters of War: Military Dissent and Politics in the Vietnam Era*, 125–26; McCone calendars, entries for 24, 28, and 30 October 1963.

SIGMA I-64 was a command post exercise in which the players were divided into two teams—Blue (the United States and South Vietnam) and Red (North Vietnam and the Viet Cong)—each with a policy and an action element. McCone headed the Blue Team's policy group, and his Red Team counterpart was Maxwell Taylor; they played Lyndon Johnson and Ho Chi Minh, respectively. deputy chief of FE Division, and Chester Cooper of ONE were the other CIA players in McCone's group; four other FE and ONE officers played on the action and control elements. ~~(S)~~

The rules for SIGMA I-64 called for Taylor's team to use guerrilla strategy and tactics, exploit weaknesses in conventional military doctrine, accept heavy casualties, and undermine democratic processes by using propaganda and deception. As the game progressed, military and political conditions in South Vietnam worsened, and McCone's team found its options shrinking to two unpromising alternatives: major escalation of conventional warfare or de-escalation and eventual withdrawal. The former risked Chinese intervention and repetition of the Korean War, and the latter would seriously damage America's credibility and prestige. By the end of the exercise, steady escalation and the use of massive US air power north of the DMZ had not changed either the tactical or the strategic picture. The foundation of current administration policy was thus called into question: Attacking the North did *not* save the South. In the game, even though the United States eventually deployed 500,000 ground troops and a large contingent of air and naval forces over a period of several years, the communists overran most of Laos and controlled most of the South Vietnamese countryside. Their infrastructure remained intact despite severe losses in manpower, and they had overextended and demoralized the ARVN. US policy had severe domestic repercussions as well. Antiwar agitation arose on American campuses, and Congress prepared to oppose the administration's handling of the war. (U)

According to William Sullivan of the Department of State, who led the Red Team's action element, McCone "concluded that his organization [the Blue Team] ought to call it quits and cut its losses."

> The experience of that game made him a dove on Vietnam then and forever more. He felt that its projections were accurate and that the shadows they cast before them should be heeded as real. He did not like what he foresaw if the US engagement in Vietnam continued down that predictable path.

That observation is not entirely accurate, for McCone would soon advocate a much heavier conventional aerial and clandestine assault against North Vietnam and the Viet Cong. It is correct to say, however, that the game hardened his opinion that the United States must do what it needed to win the war, or it should pull out and leave the struggle to the South Vietnamese. (U)

One insight McCone did *not* take away from SIGMA I-64 was that heavy bombing of North Vietnam would not force it to stop supporting the communist insurgency in the South. In a review of the game, two CIA participants told the DCI that "[n]o data have as yet been brought to bear which convince us that bombing the DRV could be expected to have any greater effect on the capabilities and will of the enemy than was the case with the French against the Viet Minh, a decade ago, or the US against North Korea." McCone had very different views on the efficacy of air power and would soon become, after Air Force Chief of Staff Curtis LeMay, the strongest voice in the administration for bombing Hanoi into submission (see Chapter 17).[58] ~~(S)~~

Just after SIGMA I-64 was finished, the DCI's special intelligence survey team submitted its second report. Washington and Saigon, the officers concluded, had made progress in developing counterinsurgency programs, but both the US and South Vietnamese military remained fixed on conventional methods of warfare, and bureaucratic inertia and disarray at the middle and lower levels of the Saigon government were stifling initiative and innovation.

[58] and Harold P. Ford (ONE), "Memorandum for the Record...Comment on the Vietnam War Games, SIGMA I-64...," DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 1, folder 9. The record does not indicate whether McCone shared LeMay's criticism that SIGMA I-64's rules had artificially limited the Blue Team's ability to use air power. The outspoken general's objections caused enough controversy that the Pentagon decided to replay the game in September 1964. Even with greater weight and flexibility given to the Air Force, SIGMA II-64 produced similar results and reinforced doubts concerning heavy bombing of the North. McCone was invited to participate in the game and showed up for one session. Walter Elder has said that McCone "hated all war games" and grudgingly participated out of "innate snobbery when he learned that the other seniors would be there." Prados, *Keepers of the Keys*, 205–6; Krepinevich, 133–34; Bird, *The Color of Truth*, 277; Karnow, 399–400; Thomas B. Allen, *War Games*, chap. 10; McCone calendars, entry for 10 September 1964; Earle G. Wheeler (Chairman, JCS) letter to McCone, 1 August 1964, and Memorandum for the Record...Comments on SIGMA II...," 1 October 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 8; Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 67. McGeorge Bundy also criticized SIGMA I-64, saying it had been "quite crude" and "probably moved too fast" to simulate reality. Colby memorandum, "Meeting on North Vietnam—30 May 1964," EA Division Files, Job 78-00697R, box 1, folder 7. ~~(S)~~

The survey team recommended that the administration increase US advice and support for intelligence collection, political and civic action, and psychological warfare programs, and that disparate paramilitary forces be combined and more tightly administered. McCone urged his deputies to "button up" the team's work by moving its proposals ahead to the NSC's Vietnam Coordinating Committee, with the presumption that two of its key members, Sullivan and NSC official Michael Forrestal, would endorse them. That was done—and the ideas went no farther. The Country Team viewed CIA warily, and the Pentagon dismissed Agency suggestions for better utilizing regular forces.[59]

In early May 1964, Gen. Khanh's unexpected proposal that South Vietnam go on a war footing, evacuate Saigon, and break relations with France (because Charles de Gaulle had been advocating "neutralization") prompted an urgent meeting at the White House with the president, Rusk, McNamara, Taylor, McGeorge Bundy, and McCone. They decided that McNamara, Taylor, Forrestal, and William Bundy should go to Saigon to deal with this sudden development. No one suggested including McCone, and his offer of intelligence support (in the form of William Colby) was not accepted. The secretary of defense returned at midmonth to report the bleak news that chaos reigned in South Vietnam. Viet Cong attacks had intensified, and the Khanh government had lost control of more territory despite improvements in counterinsurgency operations. To stabilize the dramatically deteriorating situation, McNamara proposed a large increase in Saigon's regular and paramilitary forces, which in turn would require another sizable increment in American support.[60]

President Johnson did not want to widen the war significantly, but he was willing to take some risks. How would Hanoi and Peking react, he asked the principals, if he authorized retaliatory air strikes against North Vietnam, as Gen. Khanh wanted? Taylor did not think the communists' responses would amount to much, but McCone sharply disagreed. He warned that neither the North Vietnamese nor the Communist Chinese could be expected to sit passively while the war's tempo and scope increased drastically. In a brief private meeting on 16 May, the DCI told the president that, at his direction, CIA's most experienced analysts had prepared a comprehensive assessment and concluded that the state of affairs in the South was grave. More American economic and military aid to Saigon would not solve the fundamental problem—Khanh's failure to create a strong and stable government. At other meetings, McCone advised that there was now at least an even chance that, by the end of the year, both Vietnam and Laos "would be very difficult to save" unless strong action was taken directly against North Vietnam. Committing US ground troops would be a political blunder, however, because "[t]he American public are fed up with adventures such as the Korean War and would not stand for another one." Instead, air attacks "would be more decisive...and possibly conclusive," and the public would accept them. "If we go into North Vietnam," he told the NSC, "we should go in hard." In taking this belligerent position, the DCI differed with most of his Vietnam specialists in the DDP, DI, and ONE, who continued to insist that the war would be won or lost in the South, and that the best hope for victory lay in improving Saigon's political and military performance.[61]

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[59] [redacted] memorandum to McCone, "Special Report of the CIA Special Survey Team on its Mission to Vietnam," 13 April 1964, McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, 13 April 1964, and [redacted] memorandum to Helms, "The Two Reports on [redacted] Recommendations," 15 April 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 342. MACV commander Harkins thought the survey team's February report mixed old information and unevaluated observations, went beyond its area of responsibility, and would confuse policymakers. Harkins cable to Taylor, MAC 665, 21 February 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 100–102. Lodge was more ingratiating when he met with the team in early March. Intelligence Survey Team memorandum to COS, "1st Meeting with the Ambassador," 8 March 1964, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 8. COS Peer de Silva cabled Headquarters that the team's "presence on the Vietnamese scene was looked upon with some suspicion and considerable wariness by American elements here, principally MACV and to a certain extent the Embassy.... All were relieved and noticeably friendlier when the team departed." SAIG 5751, 13 April 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 342.

[60] Documents 136–38 and 140–42 in *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 284–96; Cooper memorandum to McCone, "Comments of Saigon LimDis Cable 2108," McCone memorandum, "Discussion at Luncheon Meeting[,] 5 May [1964]...," Colby memoranda, "Presidential Meeting on Vietnam—6 May 1964," and "Memorandum for the Record...Report by Secretary McNamara—14 May 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 8.

[61] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...NSC Meeting...15 May [1964]...," and "Memorandum for the Record...National Security Council Meeting—16 May 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 8; "Notes Prepared by the Secretary of Defense...May 14, 1964," "Memorandum Prepared by the Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency," 15 May 1964, "Summary Record of the National Security Council Executive Committee Meeting...May 24, 1964...," SNIE 50-2-64, "Probable Consequences of Certain US Actions with Respect to Vietnam and Laos," 25 May 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 322–27, 336, 370, 378–80; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion at Dinner at the White House...May 24th[, 1964]...," McCone Papers, box 3, folder 10; Cooper memorandum to McCone, "The Military Effectiveness of Aerial Strikes on PL/DRV Targets in Laos," 30 May 1964, ibid.; "CIA IG Report on Vietnam," 56–60; Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 62.

McCone joined almost all of the administration's senior Vietnam policymakers at a conference at CINCPAC headquarters in Honolulu during the first week of June for an extensive discussion of the whole situation in Southeast Asia.[62] Despite all the talk, no major policy decision was made. A proposed action plan involving graduated military pressures, culminating in limited air attacks against North Vietnam, went unapproved. McCone spoke infrequently during the three days he was there. When he did, he reiterated his grim view of events and prospects, in contrast to the more upbeat Lodge and Westmoreland. He disagreed with McNamara about the value of "surgical" bombing. The secretary of defense thought such attacks would convey the desired signal to Hanoi whether the targets were destroyed or not. McCone thought the passage of a congressional resolution supporting military action would deliver a much stronger message and be an "enormous deterrent" to the North Vietnamese.[63]

The conference ended inconclusively, with US departments and agencies essentially being told to do what they were doing, only a bit more and better. "At best," McNamara wrote to the president, during the next three to six months, "the situation will jog along about as it is...[and] it may continue to deteriorate slowly." A follow-on meeting of Vietnam advisers, which McCone attended, made little additional progress, and without a plan to escalate the war, the administration for now dropped the idea of getting Congress' formal approval for future military action. The president wanted to keep Vietnam out of the upcoming campaign. He had no intention of abandoning South Vietnam, but he would not expand US involvement, either. For now, the current policy would continue, as would planning for a wider war in the near future.[64]

McNamara's forecast proved accurate. During the next several weeks, the South Vietnamese army won a few minor battles but did not seize the initiative in repelling more frequent Viet Cong attacks. Buddhists, Catholics, and students resumed antigovernment activity. Rumors of coups swirled continuously in Saigon. Gen. Khanh, uneasy and insecure, publicly urged the United States to "march to the North" and complained about the new ambassador, Maxwell Taylor, appointed in late June. Taylor reported in August that "the best thing that can be said about the present Khanh government is that it has lasted six months and has about a 50-50 chance of lasting out the year...." In the meantime, North Vietnam mobilized its own forces for war, accelerated the transformation of the Ho Chi Minh Trail from a web of jungle pathways into an intricate logistical network, and prepared regular army units for infiltration into the South. As of late summer 1964, the administration's policy of graduated pressures against the North and increased support for the Saigon government was demonstrably inadequate.[65]

The Tonkin Gulf Incidents: A Sign of the Times (U)

McCone's forthright criticisms of US policy in Southeast Asia were even less welcome now than in previous months, and his assessment of the first Vietnam crisis of the Johnson

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[62] Sources used on the conference are: documents 187–89, 192–93, 201, 210, and 214 in *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 412–33, 440–46, 461–64, 487–92, 500; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Observations and Agreed Actions at Honolulu Meetings...," 3 June 1964, and William Bundy, "Memorandum for the Record...Tuesday Afternoon Session in Honolulu, June 2, 1964," McCone Papers, box 3, folder 11; McNamara, 121–22; Dallek, *Flawed Giant*, 143–46. The main participants at the Honolulu conference, besides the DCI, were McNamara, Taylor, Rusk, William Bundy, Forrestal, Westmoreland, Lodge, and Adm. Harry Felt, the CINCPAC.

[63] General Counsel Lawrence Houston had advised McCone that the 1954 and 1962 Geneva protocols on Vietnam and Laos, respectively, did not sanction most of the military moves the administration was considering, and even if the SEATO treaty permitted them, he believed that it was politically unwise for the United States to engage in direct combat in Southeast Asia without congressional authorization. McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the Executive Committee with the President...," 6 June 1964, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9; Colby, "Memorandum for the Record...White House Meeting on Southeast Asia, 6 June 1964," DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 12; Houston memorandum to McCone, "Legal Aspects of the Southeast Asia Situation," 8 June 1964, ibid., box 3, folder 11; Elder, "McCone as DCI (1973)," 851–54. At the White House's behest—one of the rare times it used him for that purpose—McCone met with several members of Congress after the Honolulu conference to determine whether a resolution would pass. He got an unenthusiastic reception. McCone, "Various Discussions Concerning a Joint Resolution by Congress in Connection with Southeast Asia," 24 June 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 11.

[64] McGeorge Bundy recalled the frustration he and other advisers felt about the president's reluctance to confront the Vietnam issue during the pre-election period. "He was extremely careful...you couldn't get a decision out of him." Quoted in Dallek, *Flawed Giant*, 148. (U)

[65] Taylor cable to Rusk, SAIG 377, 10 August 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 657 memorandum to McCone, "Station Relations with Ambassador Taylor," 28 July 1964, with attachments, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 12; Ahern, *CIA and the Generals*, 23–24; "CIA IG Report on Vietnam," 74; Colby, *Lost Victory*, chap. 10 passim; Kahin, chap. 8 passim. McCone judged that the change in ambassadors gave CIA an opportunity to improve its standing at the embassy, especially if the Agency counterattacked against other US officials who had made it look bad:

> I do not think we should pull any punches in laying out the failures of Lodge to utilize the Station properly, the damage done by "blowing" covert assets...and the fact that MACV plumbered up a lot of very good work on the part of the station as a result of ... I want to demonstrate to Taylor a willingness to do anything and everything to put the show on the road and give them support and I do not want to protect anyone, including General Taylor himself, from past errors.

McCone memorandum to Helms, 26 June 1964, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5.

presidency—the Gulf of Tonkin incidents of early August 1964—had no evident influence on administration policy.[66] On the afternoon of the 2nd, three North Vietnamese motor torpedo boats attacked the US Navy destroyer *Maddox* 30 miles off the coast. The *Maddox* was in international waters at the time, but earlier it had been several miles inside the 12-mile limit claimed by Hanoi, conducting an ELINT mission as part of a series of patrols, code-named DESOTO, that the US Navy had run in the Tonkin Gulf since February. The *Maddox* and US Navy aircraft from a nearby carrier sank or disabled two enemy vessels. The next day, accompanied by another DESOTO ship, the destroyer *C. Turner Joy*, the *Maddox* continued its clandestine collection mission and again sailed close to the North Vietnamese coast. ~~(S)~~

McCone at an NSC meeting about the first Tonkin Gulf incident (U) Photo: Bettmann/CORBIS

On the night of the 4th, the US ships reported that enemy PT boats were firing on them. Despite subsequent confusion on the scene and in Washington about what, if anything, had happened, President Johnson—who chose to respond to the first attack only with a diplomatic protest—decided on the 5th to retaliate by sending US planes to bomb several North Vietnamese offshore naval installations and an oil depot. These airstrikes were the United States' first overt punitive attacks on North Vietnam. The president went on national television late that evening to justify his action: "Aggression by terror against the peaceful villagers of South Vietnam has now been joined by open aggression on the high seas against the United States." He then called on Congress to approve the grandly labeled "Joint Resolution to Promote the Maintenance of International Peace and Security in Southeast Asia." Soon known as the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, it authorized the president to use whatever military force he judged necessary against the Vietnamese communists. Seized by a sense of crisis, Congress passed the resolution on the 7th with only two dissenting votes. Also that day, the JCS approved a new military operation plan, OPLAN 37-65, that incorporated OPLAN 34A as a continuing covert program. ~~(S)~~

McCone was on the West Coast when the first incident occurred and did not return to Washington until the 4th. In the meantime, President Johnson kept CIA out of the loop. He did not ask any Agency officer—not Acting DCI Carter, DDP Helms, FE Division Chief Colby, DDI Cline, or Vietnam Working Group chairman Cooper—to attend his first meeting with key Vietnam advisers just hours after the North Vietnamese attack on the 2nd. He did, however, summon several lower ranking military intelligence officers (he later called them "experts in technical intelligence") to help interpret intercepted North Vietnamese radio messages. At this stage, the president was treating the matter as purely military. Agency officers did not participate in any meetings on the Tonkin Gulf incidents until McCone gave his first direct advice to Johnson at a luncheon meeting on the 4th, attended also by Rusk, McNamara, Vance, and McGeorge Bundy. He told Johnson that he "favored a dynamic action because the NVN's [North Vietnamese] had committed an aggressive act of war against us. We were the victims." He urged a forceful response even though he and others in the administration knew that Hanoi may have been retaliating for OPLAN 34A raids by American-trained South Vietnamese maritime commandos on targets in North Vietnam on 30 July. McCone concurred with McNamara's proposal that US forces attack four North Vietnamese naval bases, but he added that the president should seek a congressional resolution authorizing the military action, as Eisenhower had during the Lebanon crisis in 1958.[67] ~~(S)~~

At an NSC meeting early that evening, however, McCone expressed strong reservations about the rationale on which Johnson was basing his decision to launch a retaliatory air strike. When the president asked him if the North

[66] On the Tonkin Gulf incidents, in addition to the previously cited sources on the Johnson administration and Vietnam, see also Hanyok, chap. 5; Edwin E. Moïse, *Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War*, passim; Johnson, *American Cryptology*, 515–23; Bamford, *Body of Secrets*, 293–301; Prados, *Hidden History of the Vietnam War*, chap. 6; Bird, *The Color of Truth*, 285–89; McNamara, chap. 5; Edward J. Marolda and Oscar P. Fitzgerald, *The United States Navy and the Vietnam Conflict. Volume II*, chaps. 14–15; Tourison, chap. 10; and "Memorandum to the Director...Review of the 2 and 4 August Incidents in the Tonkin Gulf," 8 August 1964, McCone Papers, box 8, folder 1. ~~(S)~~

Vietnamese wanted to provoke a war by attacking US Navy ships, McCone replied:

> No. The North Vietnamese are reacting defensively to our attacks on their offshore islands. They are responding out of pride and on the basis of defense considerations. The attack is a signal to us that the North Vietnamese have the will and determination to continue the war. They are raising the ante.

President Johnson and his advisers did not believe Hanoi would be so foolhardy as to challenge the formidable naval power of United States and would not have retaliated for OPLAN 34A missions because they had been so ineffective. McCone, however, judged more accurately that North Vietnam's leaders saw the US warships in the Tonkin Gulf as an opportune target for telling Washington that they would not stand for clandestine violations of their country's sovereignty and would not be deterred from pursuing their long-range goal of unifying Vietnam under their control. At a briefing of the congressional leadership at the White House immediately afterward, the DCI was disturbed at Rusk's "evasive" answers that "left the impression that there was no serious overt [US] attack north of the 17th parallel but merely some covert espionage and sabotage operations"—in short, that the North Vietnamese action was totally unjustified. "I concluded that the meeting would break up with a misunderstanding…[and] I concluded that the group must be fully informed." McCone—apparently without consulting the president—then proceeded to tell the legislators about the extensive US program of clandestine operations, including the raid on 30 July that he believed prompted the North Vietnamese attack on the *Maddox* on 2 August.[68]

Within a few days, McCone had cause to question the intelligence on which the administration was acting.

Presumably the DDI, whom PFIAB had summoned for an interview, first told McCone what he was going to say, especially given that the board's chairman, Clark Clifford, was a bureaucratic rival and personal antagonist of the DCI. McCone did not tell the White House about Cline's reservations, which were far from conclusive. On 8 August he read another internal assessment although fragmentary and ambiguous, it was "highly suggestive that action against the DESOTO patrol was contemplated." President Johnson knew that meaning was debatable and did not hear that CIA had any qualms about them until the 10th, when Clifford told him what Cline had said. It was a moot point. By then, Johnson had his congressional mandate and was not going to undercut his policy by publicly questioning whether the North Vietnamese really had launched a second attack. There was nothing for McCone to gain by raising the issue, either. As presidential aide Walt Rostow would later observe about the Tonkin Gulf episode, "We don't know what happened, but it had the desired result."[69]

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[67] Johnson, *Vantage Point,* 113–14; editorial notes in *FRUS, 1964–68, I, Vietnam 1964,* 590, 608–9; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record. Luncheon at the Mansion…Discussion re retaliation for the attack on the Maddox," 4 August 1964, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9.

[68] "Summary Notes of the 538th Meeting of the National Security Council…August 4, 1964…," *FRUS, 1964–68, I, Vietnam 1964,* 611; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…NSC Meeting—August 4th[, 1964]…" with attachment, "Probable North Vietnamese and Chinese Communist Reactions to Certain US Reprisals Against North Vietnam," and "Memorandum for the Record…Meeting of the Leadership…4 August 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9. On the 3rd, McNamara and Rusk had briefed members of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees on the OPLAN 34A missions and the DESOTO patrols. McNamara, 131–32; "Editorial Note," *FRUS, 1964–68, I, Vietnam 1964,* 600.

[69] Moïse, 197–99; Lloyd C. Gardner, *Pay Any Price: Lyndon Johnson and the Wars for Vietnam,* 137–38; Karnow, 373–74, 376; McNamara, 135; Ronnie E. Ford, "Secret Army, Secret War, Recent Disclosures and the Vietnam War: The Significance of American 34 Alpha and DESOTO Operations with Regard to the Tonkin Gulf Resolution," *IJ&NS* 11, no. 2 (April 1996): In October, McCone told PFIAB about the "dangerous situation" in which "top policy officials grabbed onto fragments of raw intelligence and made decisions before the information had been evaluated in the light of the total information available and relevant.… Policy officials should make use of the evaluating machinery which is at hand." PFIAB, "Minutes of Board Meeting of October 1 and 2, 1964," PFIAB record no. 206-10001-10000, PFIAB Records, NARA. NSA historian Robert Hanyok (in *Spartans in Darkness*) has established conclusively that SIGINT showed there was no attack on the 4th. A few days later, the president privately admitted his own doubts about what had happened that night. "Hell," he told an adviser a few days later, "those dumb stupid sailors were just shooting at flying fish." Karnow, 374.

Out of Favor (U)

President Johnson had secured congressional and public support for his Vietnam policy, and with the November election approaching, he resisted pleas for launching an air war over North Vietnam. He had his legislative resolution, his approval rating had jumped from 42 to 72 percent, and 85 percent of the American people supported the punitive airstrikes. Not surprisingly, he chose to continue the gradual escalation of the US role in the war. "Johnson got involved in his quagmire in Vietnam," McCone later observed, "because he couldn't make up his mind to win the war. It was my philosophy...[that you] don't get in a war if you can avoid it, but if you get in a war, then win it. And then settle the issues afterwards." Still, neither McCone nor other like-minded officials in the administration—at this time, McGeorge Bundy, Rusk, Westmoreland, the Joint Chiefs, and Walt Rostow—could persuade the president that all-out bombing of the North would save the South.[70] (U)

By then, McCone had already sounded out the president about how much he was wanted in the administration. At a meeting in mid-June, the DCI suggested that it was time for him to leave. According to Walter Elder, Johnson "waved this aside, stating that he wanted McCone to remain, certainly until after the election."[71] To maintain the façade of unity among his advisers and avoid giving his partisan opponents an issue, he would not let his Republican DCI resign so soon before the campaign. For his part, McCone did not want to give the GOP candidate, Sen. Barry Goldwater, any help. Despite the DCI's conservative views, partisan loyalties, and disagreements with the president, he showed little enthusiasm for Goldwater's candidacy for personal and professional reasons.[72] For the time being, McCone was in a bureaucratic limbo—on the outside of the White House looking in, relegated to the lesser function of purveyor of classified information, without a major place in Vietnam strategy debates. He had to wait for a more auspicious moment to disengage from his increasingly troubled relationship with Lyndon Johnson. ~~(S)~~

[70] McCone/McAuliffe OH, 32, 35, 51. (U)

[71] Elder, "McCone as DCI (1986)," chap. 10, 51. ~~(S)~~

[72] McCone agreed with a journalist's characterization of the GOP's nominee as "lazy" and noted that when Goldwater was in California during the convention, "[h]e didn't do anything.... He was up to the Bohemian Grove [an elite retreat in the redwood forests outside San Francisco], he was out boating, and every picture you would see he hadn't shaved." Transcript of conversation with Reston, 9 September 1964, 24, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 11. Also, after President Johnson directed that presidential candidates receive intelligence briefings, Goldwater snubbed CIA on the grounds that knowing classified information might "gag" him when he wanted to speak about national security issues. He received top-secret DIA briefings, however, in his capacity as a major general in the Air Force Reserve. "Goldwater—Secret Pentagon Briefings?," *New York Herald Tribune*, 19 July 1964, Intelligence—General clipping file, box 3, HIC.

CHAPTER

16

Working With a New Boss (II): Intelligence Affairs under Johnson (U)

Vietnam and the satellite reconnaissance programs took up more of John McCone's time than any other issue in the 17 months he served as President Johnson's DCI. He spent a fair share of his workday on a variety of other CIA and Intelligence Community concerns, however. Some of them have been discussed earlier; a few other prominent ones will be examined in detail in this chapter. In the operational area, McCone was most actively engaged with Cuba, the most important target of covert action outside Southeast Asia at that time. The most troublesome counterintelligence and security matter he dealt with was the search for a Soviet penetration agent inside CIA. In addition, he worked hard to improve the Agency's public image and reputation at the White House and to manage its business on a reduced budget. Lastly, McCone continued his efforts to administer community affairs efficiently and to avoid intelligence conflicts with the Pentagon at a time when the Vietnam war was straining CIA's relations with the military. ~~(S)~~

Easing Up on Castro (U)

President Johnson and his principal adviser on Latin American policy, Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Mann, followed the Kennedy administration's anticommunist, probusiness approach, which sought to prevent social upheaval by encouraging economic development. They modified it, however, under the so-called Mann Doctrine by deemphasizing political reform and overtly accepting military dictatorships as long as they maintained order and contained subversion. The Alliance for Progress, for example, became a conventional aid program and lost the "social justice" content of the Kennedy administration.[1] (U)

"What can I do about Cuba that won't get me in trouble?" Lyndon Johnson asked his national security advisers soon after succeeding to the presidency. "The answer is little," McGeorge Bundy admitted to a colleague afterward, "but he [Johnson] needs to be taken up and down the hills we've all been on so many times." At first, the new president took a Kennedyesque hard line toward Castro. He told McCone in late November 1963 that "the Cuban situation was one that we could not live with," that the administration "had to evolve more aggressive policies," and that he looked to CIA for "firm recommendations." Accordingly, the DCI and the other members of the NSC's Special Group authorized CIA to develop among Cuban exile groups the capability to stage air attacks against targets on the island. At the same time, the Agency continued to identify military dissidents, build espionage nets, disseminate propaganda, and prepare commando strikes on economic facilities.

Events soon after President Kennedy's death might have driven Johnson into an even more confrontational policy toward Cuba than his predecessors.

- In November 1963 the Venezuelan government discovered a large cache of Cuban-origin weapons and explosives on a farm in the northwestern part of the country (see Chapter 6). The discovery led CIA to conclude that there was now "solid evidence" for a "conclusive case" that Havana was trying to subvert neighboring pro-US governments.
- During 9–13 January 1964, anti-US riots involving more than 30,000 people in several cities in Panama left four US soldiers and 24 Panamanians dead, nearly 300 people wounded, and more than $2 million in property destroyed in several cities. Local communists and Castro supporters agitated openly during the period, pre-

[1] References to literature on the Johnson administration and Latin America are in the Appendix on Sources. (U)

[2] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting at his residence with President Johnson...," 29 November 1963, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6; *FRUS, 1961–1963, XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, 901–2; Joseph A. Califano (General Counsel, Department of the Army) memorandum to McNamara et al., "Meeting with the President on Cuba...December 19, 1963," Office of the Secretary of Defense Files, FRC 330-77-131, Misc. 63–65; CIA memoranda, "Suggestions for Additional Administration Statements on Cuba to Stimulate Anti-Castro Action on the Part of Dissident Elements in the Cuban Armed Forces," 9 December 1963, "Cuba—A Status Report," 12 December 1963, and Desmond FitzGerald (DDP/Special Affairs Staff), "Meeting at the White House[,] 19 December 1963," *FRUS, 1961–1963, XI/XII/XII, Cuba 1961–1962; Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath; American Republics: Microfiche Supplement*, docs. 723, 725, and 733; FitzGerald memorandum to McCone, "Considerations for US Policy Toward Cuba and Latin America," 9 December 1963, MORI doc. no. 209969. ~~(S)~~

sumably contributing to the president's belief that the riots were Castro-inspired.[3]

- In February, after the Coast Guard seized four Cuban fishing boats in US waters off the Florida Keys, Castro retaliated by cutting off the water supply to the US Naval Base at Guantánamo. Americans at the facility were in no danger because a contingency plan existed for having tankers shuttle water from Florida while base residents conserved supplies.

Notwithstanding these events, President Johnson chose a slow and cautious approach to Cuba that stressed multilateral diplomatic pressure and economic sanctions, and he played down secret warfare.[4] The new strategy was to isolate Cuba politically and commercially while quietly exploring signs that Castro wanted a rapprochement—under terms set in Washington.

At the new administration's first comprehensive discussion about anti-Castro operations, in mid-December 1963, the president postponed any sizable covert projects to destabilize the Cuban regime, although he continued to approve small-scale covert actions to keep US operatives busy and hopeful, even though Johnson thought they were "hypocritical and ineffectual." For the first few months of 1964, the Special Group approved a number of espionage and logistics missions into Cuba but rejected or tabled all sabotage proposals. "[T]he pressure [from the White House] for boom and bang stopped," recalled Samuel Halpern, the senior officer on the DDP's Special Affairs Staff, which was running the covert operations.[5] Johnson had several reasons for this shift. He wanted to distance himself from the Kennedy administration's more adventurous policies. He did not want to antagonize the Soviet Union, incite a military clash with Havana, or derail US efforts to have the OAS punish Cuba for supplying arms to Venezuelan insurgents. Johnson also may have feared provoking Cuban attempts on his life, having concluded soon after Kennedy was assassinated that pro-Castro Cubans were responsible.

Johnson's caution would frustrate McCone. In December, in NSC discussions about responses to the discovery of the arms cache in Venezuela, McCone opposed a diplomatic initiative and a plan to shadow and search suspect vessels. He thought contraband-bearing ships could too easily evade surveillance and believed diplomatic efforts would probably give Castro "reason to laugh in about three months' time over [their] ineffectuality." The DCI did not specify what he thought the administration should do about Cuban support to regional subversives.[6]

Discussion of the cutoff of water to the Guantánamo Naval Base, added to strain between McCone and the president. According to CIA, Castro wanted to highlight what he regarded as an American "policy of aggression" and show the Cuban people and other Latin Americans that he could insult the United States with impunity. *El jefe maximo* did not, however, want to spark a military conflict; according to CIA reporting, he cut off the water because it was the least provocative of three contemplated reactions to the fishing boats' detention—one of which was shooting down a U-2. As McNamara observed, "From a military point of view,

[3] The violence ensued after American students raised the US flag by itself at a high school in the American-controlled Canal Zone in defiance of a Zone administration order that both the US and the Panamanian flags fly at civilian institutions. SNIE 84-64, "The Short Run Outlook in Panama," 11 March 1964, 4–5; [redacted] CIA intelligence report IN 99812, "Background Information on the Border Clashes of 9 January...," 16 January 1964, MORI doc. no. 449649; Walter LaFeber, *The Panama Canal*, 106–11; Alan McPherson, "Courts of World Opinion: Trying the Panama Flag Riots of 1964," *DH* 28, no. 1 (January 2004): 83–112; *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXI, South and Central America; Mexico,* docs. 367–77 on 770–800.

[4] William O. Walker III, "The Johnson Administration and Cuba," in H.W. Brands, ed., *The Foreign Policies of Lyndon Johnson: Beyond Vietnam*, 61, 66–67; Dallek, *Flawed Giant*, 53; Gordon Chase (NSC), memorandum of meeting with the president on Cuba, 19 December 1963, and NSAM No. 274, "Cuba—Economic Denial Program," 20 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, 904–10; Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the President on Cuba...19 December 1963," and FitzGerald, "Meeting at the White House[,] 19 December 1963," *FRUS, 1961–1963, X/XI/XII, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath: Microfiche Supplement*, doc. 733; Helms, "Memorandum for the Record...NSC Standing Group Meeting...10 December 1963," DDO Files, Job 78-02958R, box 3, folder 12; "President Asks Review on Cuba," *New York Times*, 9 December 1963, Western Hemisphere—Cuba clipping file, box 2, HIC; Dean Rusk oral history interview by [redacted], Washington, DC, 2 January 1970, pt. 2, 8–10.

[5] Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...Disarmament Meeting on 18 January 1964 at the White House," ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 14, folder 1; "Excerpts from Memorandum for the Record of 31 January 1964...Meeting of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board...," CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 131; Breuer, 225–40; Thomas, *The Very Best Men,* 309 citing interview with Halpern; minutes of Special Group meetings on 9 January, 13 and 27 February, and 2 April 1964, McCone Papers, box 1, folder 7.

[6] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 107–8; "Editorial Note," *FRUS, 1961–1963, XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, 896; Rusk memorandum to the president, "Venezuelan Announcement of Cuban Origin of Discovered Arms Cache," 27 November 1963, "Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Posts in the American Republics," DEPTEL 1016, 4 December 1963, "Record of Actions by the National Security Council Standing Group," 10 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XII, American Republics*, 352–55; *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXI, South and Central America; Mexico,* docs. 3–23 on 8–64; CIA memorandum, "Arms Traffic in the Caribbean Area, 1963," 18 May 1964, MORI doc. no. 12097, 1, 5; Helms, "Memorandum for the Record...NSC Standing Group Meeting...10 December 1963," McCone Papers, box 13, folder 2; "OAS to Examine Caracas Charges Against Havana," *New York Times*, 4 December 1963, "OAS Group Finds Cuban Aggression Against Caracas," *New York Times*, 25 February 1964, Western Hemisphere—Cuba clipping file, box 2, HIC.

we're in no trouble...[but f]rom a political point of view...it's dynamite." The legal aspect of the dispute posed no problem—Florida courts would handle it—but the principals split over what other action to take. McNamara and JCS chief Taylor wanted to dismiss all Cuban employees at Guantánamo immediately; Robert Kennedy and McCone disagreed, arguing that a mass firing was an overreaction that would hurt the wrong people. The DCI added that it might prompt similar actions against Americans working overseas and that without the economic benefits derived from the base employees' salaries, the Cuban government might make an issue of the paltry rent the United States paid each year (only $3,000) for the facility. Instead, McCone proposed that "we go in now and cut the water pipes and say that we don't want Castro's water." President Johnson told McNamara that he "couldn't understand McCone. He's pretty hard-nosed, and I just couldn't find out where he was." The president wanted a firmer response and decided that the local workers should be fired. "We're going to make our base independent of Cuba," he told Sen. Richard Russell. The spat petered out in a few weeks. The Florida courts released the fishermen—36 went home and two stayed in Miami—and Castro offered to turn the water back on, but by then the US commander at Guantánamo had had the pipe into the base removed.[7] ~~(S)~~

Despite concern on the NSC in early 1964 that the immediate threat Castro posed was being overblown, the administration launched a massive diplomatic and propaganda campaign in the region, involving CIA assets, to ostracize Cuba. It succeeded; in July 1964, the OAS voted 15-4 to call on member states to break relations and impose economic sanctions on Cuba. (U)

McCone Takes a Stand (U)

McCone saw no point in persisting with tentative approaches. If the administration was too concerned about "noise" to let CIA carry out and take responsibility for a full range of covert actions, "it is not worth proceeding at all," he told his senior deputies in January 1964. Underlying McCone's irritation was his bleak view of Cuba's prospects unless the administration adopted a more belligerent policy. He was "convinced that Castro had turned the corner...would very probably grow stronger...[and] was conducting himself in a manner and carrying out provocative acts which had been declared...totally unacceptable to the United States." He told the Special Group that the administration's Cuban program was "in complete disarray," and that the current and proposed list of covert actions "gave Castro maximum grounds for righteous indignation without really accomplishing anything"—partly because "many times...we have had to stand down actions of this type [economic sabotage] in order to avoid raising the noise level." The DCI accordingly "felt that all prohibitions and self-imposed restraints, such as the use of US territory for training of personnel, launching of provocative acts, etc., could be declared void."

> I concluded we had one of two courses to follow: either we move in on Castro in the most aggressive possible way, accept attribution and destroy him by acts of violence short of war or including war if necessary, or, as an alternative, live with him in the hope that [P]rovidence might take care of the situation.... I felt the latter was a big gamble.

McCone advised that the United States should undertake this new "dynamic action" after warning Khrushchev and Castro and informing the American people. Speaking for the White House, however, Robert Kennedy said it was futile to discuss what CIA would do until the president and his advisers made the fundamental decision about whether to live with Castro or pursue his downfall.[8] ~~(S)~~

Before the White House decided on its policy, McCone had a flash of insight that foiled a Cuban disinformation operation and delivered a strong blow to the Cuban economy. In early April 1964, he noted reports that Castro was scheming to drive up the price of exported sugar—on which it depended for hard currency—by trying to create the

[7] CIA Watch Office cable to White House Situation Room, 6 February 1964, MORI doc. no. 98088; Helms memorandum to McCone, "Current Thinking of Cuban Government Leaders," CSDB-3/659,871, 5 March 1964, MORI doc. no. 361968; FitzGerald, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting at the White House[,] 7 February 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 7; OCI, "Cuba and the US Naval Base," *Current Intelligence Weekly Summary*, 14 February 1964, 15–16, MORI doc. no. 125099; Jack Valenti (White House aide), "Notes on Meeting in Cabinet Room...February 7, 1964," National Security File, Office of the President File, LBJ Library; CIA Intelligence Information Cable, "Cuban Government Policy Regarding the Guantánamo Naval Base," 18 February 1964, MORI doc. no. 98094; transcripts of Johnson conversations with McNamara on 6 February and Russell on 7 February 1964, *Taking Charge*, 227–28; transcript of Johnson conversation with McNamara on 7 February 1964, Recordings and Transcripts, Tape F64.12, Side A, PNO 3, LBJ Library; Bundy untitled memorandum to the president, 6 March 1964, National Security Files, Country File, Cuba, Overflights, Vol. 1, January 1964–January 1965, LBJ Library; Brands, *The Wages of Globalism*, 41–42; "Johnson and Aides Map Action on Cuba," Washington *Evening Star*, 7 February 1964, and "US Halts Flow of Funds to Cuba at Guantánamo," *New York Times*, 8 February 1964, in Western Hemisphere—Cuba clipping file, box 2, HIC. ~~(S)~~

impression that Cuba's next sugar crop would be small because of hurricane damage. McCone suggested that CIA put out an unattributable story exposing the scheme. When additional evidence of Cuban manipulation accumulated during the month [redacted] the Department of State organized briefings and releases of sanitized information that received wide media play. The disclosures caused sugar prices to plummet, and they stayed low for several months. Later in the year, McCone remarked that he was "particularly intrigued with the difficulties the Cubans are having." His idea had cost Cuba tens of millions of dollars, a substantial share of its foreign exchange.[9]

McCone could win no converts to his all-or-nothing position on the Cuban covert action program. By April 1964, the administration—increasingly preoccupied with Vietnam and reluctant to upset the Soviet Union—decided to stop Agency-controlled sabotage raids and have CIA concentrate on intelligence collection. At a White House review of Cuban operations, McCone described for the president the stark alternatives available to him: deciding whether the United States wanted "to bring about the eventual liquidation of the Castro/communist entourage and the elimination of the Soviet presence from Cuba," partly through large-scale clandestine operations, or to "rely on future events of an undisclosed nature which might accomplish that objective." The DCI contended that the sporadic achievements in sabotage did not test the covert program fairly. He quoted from an Agency operational plan, prepared almost a year before, which stated that "unless all the components of this program are executed in tandem, the individual courses of action are almost certain to be of marginal value.... This is clearly a case where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." McCone met resistance from the principals. Secretary of State Rusk spelled out the potential diplomatic problems that "noisy" sabotage operations would cause; McNamara said the covert program "has no present chance of success"; and Bundy noted that because developments inevitably would force the administration to turn the operations on and off again, a comprehensive and rigorous program such as McCone urged was not feasible.[10]

In effect, the president and his advisers abandoned the Kennedy objective of ousting Castro and instead sought to harass and contain him. This was a return to the approach used in phase one of Operation MONGOOSE two years before: espionage, economic warfare, and independent sabotage operations by exile groups. The Special Affairs Staff, under Desmond FitzGerald, drew up a comprehensive collection program using expatriate sources, infiltration agents, liaison contacts, legal travelers, refugees, and port watchers.

[redacted]

Training exiles for sabotage missions continued as well, although the likelihood that the administration would

[8] DCI morning meeting minutes, 15 January 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 346; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary Rusk...," 6 February 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 10; idem, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of 5412 Group," 27 February 1964, and Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...Special Group (5412) Meeting...on 13 February [1964]," ibid., box 1, folder 8; CIA memorandum, "Spectrum of Courses of Action With Respect to Cuba," 21 February 1964, MORI doc. no. 98089. FitzGerald outlined CIA's proposed program in "Review of Current Program of Covert Action Against Cuba," 27 January 1964, National Security Files, Country File, Cuba, Intelligence, Covert Program, January 1964–June 1965, LBJ Library.

[9] Karamessines memorandum to FitzGerald, "Cuban Sugar," 9 April 1964, follow-on memoranda from WH Division to Meyer and Helms, 14 and 27 April and 13 May 1964, and Karamessines untitled memorandum to FitzGerald, 10 September 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 1, folder 14; [redacted] vol. 2, 285–86. "The DCI may be interested in knowing of all actions" the US government took to carry out the ploy, Helms wrote about a report summarizing it, "since he sparked this move."

[10] FitzGerald, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting at the White House[,] 7 April 1964...Review of Covert Program directed against Cuba" and attached memorandum by McCone dated 8 April 1964, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 8.

approve any such raids steadily diminished.[12] Through the first half of 1964, the administration had grown more skeptical about backing militant exiles and warned them against staging unauthorized attacks. Policymakers concluded, however, that withdrawing support and severing connections just then was impractical and unwise. The assorted anti-Castro factions were having difficulty obtaining money from non-US sources, and intensive surveillance by US authorities was hampering their freelance operations. At least for now, the administration decided that cutting off backing to the largest recipients—Manuel Artime's Movement to Recover the Revolution (MRR) and Manolo Ray Rivero's Cuban Revolutionary Junta (JURE)—would eliminate a potentially useful weapon against Castro.

As the autonomous groups' utility diminished, however, the Special Group chose to phase out the official relationship. By June 1964, McCone told visiting journalists that "no exile activities are permitted which violate neutrality laws[,] such as taking off for a raid from United States soil."[13] The MRR, the Agency's favorite, mounted several raids from third countries—which "the United States Government neither encourages nor discourages," McCone said—but had its subsidy cut after it created an international controversy in mid-September by mistakenly attacking a Spanish ship. Meanwhile, the JURE built a dismal record that included "violations of the rules of 'autonomy'...major errors in judgment, and...lack of success," according to the Department of State. Manolo Ray "has carried out his projected operations ineptly and carelessly...he has failed in a humiliating and noisy way."[14] McCone thought the exiles' activities would still be useful if brought under greater US control, but the Special Group was too jaded toward them to agree, and the DCI conceded that Artime was "less and less responsive to persuasion [and] constituted a persistent menace." The last raid by either group, an unauthorized MRR attack on a fuel depot, occurred in February 1965, and Artime's organization began disbanding soon after. (Truly autonomous groups—notably Alpha 66 and its spin-off, Commandos L—continued to hit economic targets such as oil facilities, sugar mills, and factories, despite American interdiction efforts.)

[redacted]

[12] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: FitzGerald, "Chronology of Concept of Autonomous Operations...," late July 1964, and Jessup, "Memorandum for the Record...Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee, 30 July 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9; FitzGerald memorandum, "A Reappraisal of Autonomous Operations," 3 June 1964, *Bay of Pigs: 40 Years After*, tab 7, doc. 32; CIA memorandum to the 303 Committee, "Financial Support to the Autonomous Group Headed by Manuel Artime," 16 July 1964, ibid., doc. 33; Thomas, *The Very Best Men*, 309; Corn, 111–15; Rodriguez and Weisman, 139, 143; "Exiles Raid Cuban Port, Attack Mill," *Washington Post*, 14 May 1964, and "US Warns Exiles Not to Raid Cuba," *Baltimore Sun*, 15 May 1964, Western Hemisphere—Cuba clipping file, box 2, HIC; "Cuba: Playing for High Stakes," *Newsweek*, 1 June 1964, Tad Szulc, "'*Guerra!*'—Still the Word in Miami," *New York Times Magazine*, 5 July 1964, United Press International wire service reports A24 and A25, 17 September 1964, "Exiles Here Discontinue Cuba Raids," *Miami News*, 13 March 1965, ibid., box 3; *HSCA Hearings*, vol. 10, 67, 78–79, 140; [redacted] HS/CSG-2677, HS Files, Job 85-00664R, box 8, folder 2; Helms, "Memorandum for the Record...Luncheon with *Time* Officials," 24 June 1964, McCone Papers, box 13, folder 2; Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...303 Committee Meeting...24 September [1964]...," ibid., box 1, folder 8; Jessup, minutes of 303 Committee meetings on 18 June, 2, 9, and 30 July, 24 September, 12 November, and 3 December 1964, ibid., folder 7; "Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee, 7 January 1965," and CIA memorandum to the 303 Committee, "Status of Termination of Manuel Artime's Autonomous Paramilitary Group," 22 March 1965, Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records, January–June 1965; Paterson, "Fixation with Cuba" in *Kennedy's Quest for Power*, 153; Karamessines untitled memorandum to Lawrence K. White (Executive Director-Comptroller), 19 October 1967, ER Files, Job 80R01284A, box 10, folder 2; transcript of McCone testimony to Senate Armed Services Committee, 11 January 1965, 75–76, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 19; Chase memorandum to Bundy, "[redacted] Cuba," 8 February 1965, National Security Files, Country Files, [redacted] Vol. III, Memoranda December 1964–November 1965, LBJ Library.

[13] The administration also tried to scotch assassination planning by the exiles. President Johnson told McCone and Bundy to inform the attorney general that US law enforcement agencies were to prevent such plots from being carried out. Helms memorandum to McCone, "Plans of Cuban Exiles to Assassinate Selected Cuban Government Leaders," 10 June 1964, MORI doc. no. 455856; U. Alexis Johnson's notes of 303 Committee meeting on 18 June 1964, Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records. (U)

[14] John Crimmins (Department of State) memorandum to U. Alexis Johnson, "Continued Assistance to Manolo Ray's JURE...," 18 June 1964, Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, 5412 Special Group/303 Committee Records. Emblematic of the group's propensity to blunder was an embarrassing incident in early June 1964, when a British Navy destroyer intercepted Ray and several associates off the coast of the Bahamas while they were on an infiltration mission to Cuba. The party had stopped on a deserted island to make final preparations when the patrolling British vessel appeared nearby. Ray and some of his team tried to escape in a launch, but US military planes—unaware of whom they were shadowing—aided the British in capturing the Cubans. Ray and his compatriots were brought to Nassau and fined on charges of bringing firearms into British territory. They denied that the Agency had any part in their plan. "Ray Regrets 'Delay,'" *New York Times*, 7 June 1964, Drew Pearson radio report, "CIA, Air Force 'Tangle' Over Cuba," WTOP Radio, 13 June 1964, "The Visible CIA," *Nation*, 22 June 1964, and "Cuba War: Story of a Raid That Failed," *New York Herald Tribune*, 5 July 1964, Western Hemisphere—Cuba clipping file, box 3, HIC; Albert E. Carter memorandum to Thomas Hughes (both Department of State), "ARA-Agency Meeting of June 3, 1964," Department of State, INR/IL Historical Files, ARA-CIA Weekly Meetings, June 1964. (U)

Like its predecessor, the Johnson administration sought back-channel diplomatic opportunities to complement its not-so-silent war against Castro. The president hoped that quiet contacts would "keep Castro's temperature and the Caribbean noise level at a low pitch between now and [the] November [election]," a senior NSC staffer wrote in early 1964. At the same time, the administration held out few hopes that an accommodation with Havana was likely—largely for the same domestic political reasons. In the post-assassination climate, given Lee Harvey Oswald's Cuban connections and the new president's need to prove his mettle against Castro, Johnson could not risk appearing "soft" on Cuba. Still, the president did not use Kennedy's death, a Soviet-Cuban trade agreement, or Moscow's pledge to aid Cuba if the United States invaded it, as pretexts for ending the unofficial approaches.[16] (U)

Neither did Castro. A week after the Kennedy assassination, he put out feelers through the same back channel he had used before: his United Nations representative, Carlos Lechuga; his personal aide, René Vallejo; and an American journalist, Lisa Howard. CIA reported in February 1964 that, according to a high-ranking Cuban official, Castro "sincerely desires to enter into negotiation with the United States." Soon after, Howard brought back from Havana a startling offer from the Cuban leader:

> Please tell President Johnson that I earnestly desire his election to the Presidency in November.... [I]f there is anything I can do to add to his majority (aside from retiring from politics), I shall be happy to cooperate.... I know that my offer of assistance would be of immense value to the Republicans—so this would remain our secret....
>
> If the President feels it necessary during the campaign to make bellicose statements about Cuba or even to take some hostile action—if he will inform me, unofficially, that a specific action is required because of domestic political considerations, I shall understand and not take any serious retaliatory action.

The White House did not officially respond to this message, so the hands-off diplomacy continued for several months. In the early summer, Cuban representatives asked the Spanish government to act as a mediator but got no reaction from Washington. In an interview with the *New York Times* in July, Castro offered to stop supporting Latin revolutionaries if the United States halted exile attacks against Cuba. Lastly, Ernesto "Ché" Guevara's visit to the United Nations in December prompted other indirect contacts between the two governments. The Johnson administration did not reach a consensus on what steps to take next, however, and its intermittent pursuit of détente with the Cuban regime stalled.[17] (U)

As when the Kennedy administration dabbled in behind-the-scenes diplomacy, McCone adamantly opposed any agreement that would help Castro stay in power. He does not appear to have been aware of the Cuban leader's offer to "help" Johnson in the upcoming election, but he undoubtedly would have denounced the idea as fantastical and politically disastrous if publicized. In October 1964, McCone strongly disapproved when James Donovan, the lawyer who negotiated the ransoming of the Bay of Pigs prisoners, proposed secretly meeting with the Cuban leader. McCone already had told Rusk that "CIA would oppose approaching Castro for any purpose except to threaten him if he tampered with our U-2's." The DCI justified this refusal to talk by noting that the DDP was convinced that Castro could not remain in power for more than 12 to 18 months. "We would rather keep tightening the squeeze on him" than give Castro some indication that he could bargain with Washington.[18]

[15] The atrophying of the Agency-controlled exile program, and the effect that the administration's distraction with Vietnam had on Cuban field operations, are described in Ayers, chaps. 13–15. See also Carbonell, 250–51. (U)

[16] Walker, "The Johnson Administration and Cuba," 69–70, 75–76; Kornbluh, 12–15; Chase memoranda to Bundy, "Cuba—Item of Presidential Interest," 25 November 1963, "Bill Attwood Activities," 2 December 1963, and "Bill Attwood's Activities," 3 December 1963, and William Attwood (special adviser to the US United Nations delegation) memorandum to Adlai Stevenson (US Permanent Representative to the United Nations), "Latest Cuban developments for your talk with the President," 9 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, 890–91, 897–900, 904. In a speech to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on 13 December, Premier Nikita Khrushchev declared that "revolutionary Cuba will not remain defenseless if the aggressive militaristic circles of the USA attack it." The Moscow-Havana trade agreement was signed on 21 January 1964 but had been announced earlier. Ibid., note to doc. no. 387, 902. (U)

[17] Chase memoranda to Bundy, "Bill Attwood Activities," 2 December 1963, and "Bill Attwood's Activities," 3 December 1963, and William Attwood memorandum to Stevenson, "Latest Cuban developments for your talk with the President," 9 December 1963, *FRUS, 1961–1963, XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath*, 897–900, 904; Associated Press wire service report, "Cuban Leader Offered LBJ Help in '64 Campaign," 20 August 1999, story no. a748, Nexis 99-12549594; Helms memorandum to McCone, "Current Thinking of Cuban Government Leaders," CSDB-3/659,871, 5 March 1964, MORI doc. no. 361968; Castro message to Johnson, 12 February 1964, on the National Security Archive Web site at www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB18/09-01. (U)

McCone later advised Bundy that instead of entertaining the idea of rapprochement with Castro and Khrushchev, the administration should "signal" them that "dire consequences" would ensue if a U-2 were shot down over Cuba. For months, the DCI had been concerned that the Soviets' probable turnover of control of surface-to-air missile sites to the Cubans in 1964 raised the odds that a U-2 might be shot down (he presumed Castro's soldiers were more "trigger happy" than Moscow's men). The U-2 flights were essential for finding out what the Soviets were doing in Cuba [redacted] Some administration officials wanted to use satellites in place of U-2 flights, but McCone pointed out that unpredictable weather, fixed orbits, and resolution capabilities limited their effectiveness against the Cuban target. He had the use of other platforms examined—drones, balloons, and the A-12—as well as the idea of mounting a satellite camera on an aircraft flying oblique routes. None of those options was adopted.[19] (S)

In one of his last exegeses on Cuba, McCone suggested that even though Castro remained in power, US policy overall had succeeded in marginalizing his regime. "Cuba still belongs to Castro," he told a Senate oversight committee in January 1965, notwithstanding major American expenditures since 1960 to create a viable dissident movement. That was only one aspect of the US government's campaign to isolate Havana, however, and McCone believed that Washington had dealt Havana several hard blows by forcing the Soviet Union to withdraw offensive nuclear weapons from Cuba, publicizing Castro's attempts to subvert neighboring governments, and coordinating an international embargo on the island. In marked contrast to the fears that US policymakers expressed just a few years before, the DCI stated confidently that as of early 1965, Cuba "does not represent any real threat to the security of the United States."[20] (S)

McCone was not as sanguine about the rest of Latin America, however, and supported embarking on a more energetic clandestine and counterinsurgency program in the region. At the last SGC meeting he attended, on 8 April 1965, he told the members that the "dangers" south of the border required "positive, concerted and prompt action." "[T]here is evidence that a policy decision has been made [in Moscow] to conduct a more aggressive campaign not only in Latin America, but everywhere." At the DCI's behest, Desmond FitzGerald outlined for the SGC a general plan of intelligence collection, training of local security and police services, clandestine interdiction, and deployment of paramilitary strike forces and conventional military units. After hearing CIA's presentation, the SGC called for a full-scale review of communist subversion in Latin America and the effectiveness of current US counterinsurgency programs and for an examination of new ways to assist the security efforts of regional governments. [redacted]

In a final pronouncement on covert action that he gave a few weeks before leaving office, McCone told Rusk that neither the United States nor its allies were properly organized to combat Soviet- and Chinese-instigated insurgency. McCone said Moscow and Beijing were exploiting the nuclear stalemate to "pursue an aggressive program of politi-

[18] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Discussions with Secretary Rusk, 11 February 1964…," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 10. Presumably to better support his policy prescription, McCone relied on the DDP's assessment of Castro's durability instead of the consensus of DI analysts—enunciated in an August 1964 NIE—that Castro would likely retain control for several years. NIE 85-64, "Situation and Prospects in Cuba," 5 August 1964. See also CIA Memorandum, "Staying Power of the Castro Regime," No. 1601/64, 2 July 1964, 1: "The appeal of Castro's revolution is wearing thinner, but Castro himself retains firm control over the instruments of power…there will be further erosion of popular support for his regime over the next year or two…however, we think the chances of an overthrow of the regime or of a major uprising against it during this period will remain slim." HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 3, folder 8. (S)

[redacted] SNIE 85-4-63, "Soviet Transfer of the Surface to Air Missile System to Cuba," 18 December 1963, and SNIE 85-2-64, "Likelihood of an Attempted Shoot-Down of a U-2," 2 May 1964; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Discussion with Secretary Rusk—11 October 1964," and "Memorandum for the Record…Discussion with McGeorge Bundy—13 October 1964," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 12; idem, "Memorandum for the Record…Discussion at National Security Council meeting…2 May 1964," ibid., box 6, folder 8; idem, "Memorandum for the Record…Meeting at the White House…," 19 November 1964, ibid., folder 10; PFIAB, "Minutes of Board Meeting of June 4, 1964," 11, PFIAB record no. 206-10001-10013, and "Minutes of Board Meeting of October 1 and 2, 1964," 29, PFIAB record no. 206-10001-10000, PFIAB Records, NARA. McCone earlier had advised the president that aerial surveillance of Cuba was so essential that taking out the SAM sites had to be considered if they fired at the U-2s. "The President remarked that this would then mean war[,] and I responded that certainly the destruction of the SAM sites would mean war, that the degree of escalation could not be determined in advance. I stated that this was the most ominous situation that confronted us in Cuba in the immediate future. The President made no comment." McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Discussions with President Johnson at the Johnson Ranch…December 27th[, 1963,]" McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6. (S)

[20] Transcript of McCone testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 11 January 1965, 103, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 19. (S)

[21] C. G. Moody Jr., "Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Group (CI)…April 8, 1965," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 9. (S)

cal action, subversion, and insurgency" using proxies throughout the Third World—as the Soviet Union was doing in Latin America with Cuba. He urged that the SGC be revitalized so that it could formulate a coherent program that would involve all relevant US civilian and military agencies as well as US allies in Western Europe, South America, and the Far East. Rusk agreed with McCone's assessment, but nothing was done for the rest of the DCI's tenure. Within a few months of McCone's departure, community analysts judged that "Castro's hold on power is firm" and that "there is virtually no chance of his overthrow in the foreseeable future."[22] (S)

The Molehunt Widens (U)

The Kennedy assassination and the defection of KGB officer Yuri Nosenko three months later gave new urgency to the CI Staff's hunt for the Soviet mole that KGB defector Anatoliy Golitsyn alleged had burrowed into the Agency. McCone was put in the position of authorizing one of the most internally divisive security activities CIA ever undertook. The argument connecting the assassination and the defection hinged on the uncertain reliability of Nosenko's assertion that the KGB had had no interest in Lee Harvey Oswald when he defected to the Soviet Union during 1959–62. Nosenko's bona fides had not been established at that point and consequently, Soviet complicity in the killing of John Kennedy could not be ruled out. If the Kremlin had gone so far as to murder the president, it almost certainly would attempt to manipulate the investigation to conceal its involvement. To do so, the Soviets would use the same well-placed asset inside CIA that Golitsyn had described earlier as part of their "strategic deception" program. In addition to purveying disinformation and reporting on how the US government was reacting to the deception, the mole would support the credibility of a false defector sent to report that Oswald had no tie to the KGB. Nosenko suddenly appeared, with an unverifiable legend covering the years Oswald was in the Soviet Union, supposedly having no contact with the KGB. As Golitsyn had warned, some of Nosenko's information on Soviet intelligence activities contradicted his own reporting—including that about a mole. The all-too-convenient timing of this second defection reinforced James Angleton's suspicion that Moscow had penetrated the Agency, and gave the CI Staff chief more reason to pursue Golitsyn's leads about the elusive "Sasha."[23] (U)

For more than two years, McCone had known about Golitsyn's claim that a Soviet mole was inside Langley, and he stayed abreast, through Helms and Angleton, of the most important aspects of the investigations of individual officers during 1962 and 1963.[24] McCone did not accept Golitsyn's more extreme allegations— [redacted] but by mid-1964 he believed the threat of penetration was serious enough to warrant a systematic examination of the most plausible leads with the FBI. Feeding McCone's suspicions were continuing revelations of Soviet agents in Western intelligence services and investigations or arrests of several Americans suspected of or found to be spying for Moscow. After hearing Golitsyn allege that at least five Agency staffers and contractors, and possibly as many as 30, were KGB agents, McCone discussed the matter with J. Edgar Hoover in mid-October. That must have been a tough act of intelligence diplomacy, as Hoover was perturbed that the Agency had let Golitsyn discredit some of the Bureau's best Soviet sources—notably [redacted]—because they agreed with Nosenko. Nonetheless, the discussion resulted in a project codenamed HONETOL (a compound of "Hoover" and "Anatoliy").[25] (S)

From November 1964 until McCone left the Agency five months later, the HONETOL inquiry was run by a six-man committee that included three officers from each organization.[26] Angleton and [redacted] of the CI Staff and [redacted] of the Office of Security represented CIA; Assistant Director William Sullivan, liaison officer Sam Papich, and counterintelligence chief Donald Moore were the FBI's members. The CI Staff's Special Investigations Group under [redacted] did the Agency's share of the work. [redacted] senior CIA officers were investigated, and [redacted] of those were closely

[22] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary Rusk...," 18 March 1965, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 16; NIE 85-65, "Cuba," 19 August 1965, 1. (S)

[23] David Robarge, "Moles, Defectors, and Deceptions: James Angleton and CIA Counterintelligence," *Journal of Intelligence History* 3, no. 2 (Winter 2003): 40–41. (U)

[24] The most thorough classified treatment of the molehunt is [redacted] Open source treatments, which rely heavily on interviews with ex-Agency employees and declassified documents, are Mangold, chaps. 17, 18, 20; Wise, *Molehunt*, chaps. 12–15; Martin, *Wilderness of Mirrors*, chap. 9, and Riebling, chap. 11. (S)

scrutinized. McCone kept up with the general outlines of the molehunt but let Helms, Angleton [redacted] run CIA's part in it without supervising them closely. (S)

Interagency wrangles over resources soon impeded HONETOL. [redacted] has said that McCone would have been willing to "go to the mat" with Hoover to keep the joint activities going, but the DCI chose to expend his energies in his latter days on other issues such as Vietnam and NRO. After five meetings of the HONETOL committee between November 1964 and February 1965, the FBI concluded that Golitsyn was "a disruptive individual, seized with the overall theory of penetration and not above fabricating to support his theories," and the joint investigation ended. No mole was found at CIA during McCone's directorship.[27] (S)

Burnishing the Agency's Image (U)

During the first several months of the Johnson administration, McCone became noticeably more sensitive that CIA's popular image as a derring-do organization was losing its glamour and becoming a political liability to him and the Agency. He believed that Allen Dulles and some Kennedy administration officials had built up CIA's covert action capability at the expense of other functions, such as espionage and analysis—so much so, he told the president, with some overstatement, that "my contribution…was impaired, travel is difficult, [and] visiting foreign countries is practically an impossibility[,] all to the end [that] neither the DCI nor the Agency were serving the President as effectively as they could." Johnson agreed, telling McCone that he "wanted to do everything possible to get me out of the cloak and dagger business…[and] was tired that a situation had been built up that every time my name or CIA's name was mentioned, it was associated with a dirty trick." Instead, the president preferred to emphasize CIA's reporting and estimating functions and minimize public attention to its secret operations.[28] (S)

Although the alluring "spymaster" persona was ill-suited to a staid, blue-suit executive like McCone, he had difficulty shedding it at a time when James Bond books and movies captivated millions of people and US intelligence services spent billions of dollars on clandestine activities. Warning his senior deputies in December 1963 that "the year ahead will be a rough one for CIA," the DCI grew more worried about the Agency's image as his relationship with the president worsened. By avoiding embarrassing disclosures and fashioning a less controversial reputation for the Agency, McCone hoped to retain his and CIA's influence in the media-obsessed Johnson White House.[29] (S)

McCone launched this public relations offensive in January 1964 by informing his senior staff of his "desire to create an 'image' of CIA" that emphasized its "statutory responsibility" for analysis and support to policymakers rather than clandestine operations that critics portrayed as improper, ineffective, and unauthorized. "This is entirely wrong, both with respect to the activity and the coordination and con-

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[25] Transcript of McCone-Golitsyn meeting, 11 February 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 7; transcript of McCone meeting with Golitsyn, Helms, and Angleton, 16 July 1964, ibid., folder 11; "Golitsyn," 38; [redacted] index of DCI meeting memoranda, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 12; Riebling, 221–26. The most significant case of Soviet penetration of a Western service revealed around this point in McCone's directorship was Colonel Stig Wennerstrom, a senior official at the Swedish Ministry of Defense. Between mid-1963 and mid-1964, at least five cases of Soviet espionage by US military personnel and a defense contractor had resulted in arrests or were under investigation. CIA graphics, "Key Soviet Agents, Defectors, and Illegals, 1945 to the Present," product no. 562361 3–77, and "Key Soviet Agents and Illegals, 1945 to the Present," product no. 575590 4–78, copies in History Staff; Jepson, 41–42; Taylor and Snow, appendix. [redacted] Wright, 203; West, 107ff. (S)

[26] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: "Golitsyn," 38; [redacted] and the above-cited portions of the books by Wise, Mangold, and Riebling. (S)

[27] In July 1965, Hoover ordered the Bureau to break off contact with Golitsyn, but the molehunt continued at CIA, with the defector remaining the key source of information. Most of the investigations of wrongly accused officers occurred after McCone left. Golitsyn was correct that the Soviets had a mole in the Agency, but he turned out not to be as senior or as damaging as feared. [redacted]

[28] McCone memoranda about discussions with the president on 7 and 27 December 1963, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 6; idem, memorandum about meeting with the president on 20 February 1964, ibid., folder 7. (S)

[29] Carter memorandum to Kirkpatrick, Cline, and Helms, 30 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 19, folder 7; DCI morning meeting minutes for 16 December 1963, ibid., Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 345. (S)

trol, and I wish to attempt to change this image." McCone wanted this effort carefully managed to prevent a recurrence of the "CIA press conference" flap described in Chapter 10. After that incident, McCone established a public relations committee under the chairmanship of Lyman Kirkpatrick, with Ray Cline, Richard Helms, and Paul Chretien of OPA as members. He charged the committee with reviewing and approving all Agency activities with the media, including press notices and background briefings. He further directed CIA not to publicly circulate estimates, analyses, and reports in its own name and instead to coordinate information releases with the Department of State and the White House. Otherwise, he declared, "I wish absolutely no contact whatsoever, no comments, no discussions with the press except with my personal authorization."[30]

A contemporary depiction of the "cloak and dagger" image of intelligence that McCone sought to dispel (U)
A scene from the movie *The Adventuress*

In addition to instituting the image enhancement campaign, McCone fought back at the Agency's critics in Congress and the media. In a private moment of extreme pique, he told a long-time supporter, Sen. Stuart Symington, that "I am not going to stand for a lot of sons of bitches like your friend [Sen. Eugene] McCarthy...who want to destroy the thousands of people here and what this organization does...." "Either I am going to get this thing stopped[,] by God[,] or I am going to resign and go out and fight for this organization." After venting to Symington, McCone relaxed a bit and agreed with the senator that a better approach would be to pass intelligence information to CIA's allies on the Hill—such as Symington, Thomas Dodd, John Stennis, and Henry Jackson—and approach them about using the material in speeches defending the Agency.[31]

Two months later, McCone set up what in effect was a media "watch committee." He told Marshall Carter "to get a group together whose job it will be to devote constant effort and attention, on a daily basis, to the task of positioning ourselves better to refute, promptly and effectively, false accusations levied against the Agency in the press and in the Congress." McCone "attached great urgency" to this effort. Members of the task force were drawn from the DDP, the Offices of Legislative Counsel and General Counsel, BNE, OCI, and the CI Staff. The group initially compiled the eight or ten principal charges usually levied against CIA and then prepared rebuttals for dissemination to the media and Congress as the occasion arose.[32]

McCone vividly displayed his defensiveness about CIA's image by the outrage he felt over the book *The Invisible Gov-*

[30] McCone, "Memorandum for the File...Recent CIA Publicity," and "Memorandum: Handling of Publicity," 13 January 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 10; McCone memorandum to CIA Executive Committee, "Agency Relations with News Media," 16 January 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 1, folder 13. In a letter to the chairman of PFIAB, Clark Clifford, McCone partly blamed Chretien for the "press conference" foul-up, describing the recently appointed public affairs chief as being "not as sensitive to the tricky problem of press relationships as a more experienced press officer might have been." McCone letter to Clifford, 16 January 1964, CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 122.

[31] Transcript of McCone telephone conversations with Symington and Dodd, 5 and 18 February 1964, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 5. James Reston of the *New York Times* similarly suggested to Helms that the Agency try to alleviate reporters' instinctive suspicion of secret agencies by providing them with unattributable information. Doing so, Reston advised, would give journalists a sense that CIA was "attempting to be cooperative." Helms memorandum, "Talk with Mr. James Reston...," 27 January 1964, McCone Papers, box 13, folder 2.

ernment by journalists David Wise and Thomas B. Ross. After learning of plans for its publication in mid-1964, he and several senior lieutenants orchestrated an aggressive damage-preemption and damage-control campaign to suppress and discredit the book, which sharply criticized CIA and the DCI. This effort at nonlegal prior restraint would be the Agency's most forceful ever against anyone other than former employees.[33] McCone's reaction contrasted markedly with his tempered response to *CIA: The Inside Story* by American journalist Andrew Tully, which appeared two years before. At that time, the DCI opposed having an Agency officer publicly rebut Tully's book, which at its worst was only mildly disapproving and left some readers impressed with the scope and scale of CIA's enterprises. He judged that refuting the book only would draw attention to it, stimulate sales, and further damage CIA.[34] By 1964, however, McCone had become much more thin-skinned about criticism of CIA, wanted to prevent injury to the Agency's standing within the administration, and believed that *The Invisible Government* contained many more harmful allegations and revealed far more sensitive information than Tully's work. (S)

Wise, the Washington bureau chief of the *New York Herald Tribune*, and Ross, a correspondent for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, were among the first prominent practitioners of "investigative journalism" and already were notorious at Langley for their 1962 book *The U-2 Affair*, about the shootdown of Francis Gary Powers's spyplane. The Agency's in-house publication, *Studies in Intelligence*, described that "exposé" as "another of the recent spate of books which purport to reveal the inside story of secret operations and which gain some credence as authentic while intermingling fact and fiction without distinguishing between them."[35] Two years later, Wise and Ross followed up with *The Invisible Government*, which contained over 350 pages of extensive detail about CIA covert actions in Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Europe; the workings of NSA and DIA; and the Kennedy administration's national security apparat. The book was more than just reportage, however; it argued that a secret cadre of officials from the White House, the Departments of Defense and State, and the Intelligence Community ran American foreign policy without accountability to Congress and the public. "[T]his shadow government is shaping the lives of 190,000,000 Americans...out of public view...without the knowledge of our elected representatives," according to Wise and Ross.[36] (U)

The book was not flattering to McCone personally ("'When he smiles,' a CIA man cautioned, 'look out.'"), but what especially riled him was the premise of the title: that the NSC's entity for reviewing covert actions, known as the Special Group or the 303 Committee, was, in his words, "a sinister and powerful organization existing outside the channels of authority." McCone believed that to achieve their purpose of discrediting covert action, Wise and Ross had to attack the Special Group/303 Committee, and to do that, they had to target the DCI by depicting him as the behind-the-scenes leader of the US government's hidden foreign policy elite. As one of the Agency's internal reviews phrased the authors' contention, "the organization set up to control CIA's covert action mission has become a prisoner of John McCone and CIA, head and heart of the 'invisible government.'" Besides that ominous-sounding thesis, the information in the book, the DCI wrote, was "dramatized in a most slanted manner," and, whether it had been published previously or not, "the assembly of all of it under one cover" caused "great damage" to the United States by giving its adversaries fodder for their propaganda.[37] (S)

McCone further contended that tell-all books like *The Invisible Government* were ahistorical and conceptually

[32] DCI morning meeting minutes for 5 February 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 346; Karamessines memorandum to Angleton, 5 February 1964, "Refutation of False Accusations Against CIA in the Press and in the Congress," DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 1, folder 19. In December 1963, McCone had his deputies look into planting letters in American newspapers to rebut criticisms of CIA. DCI morning meeting minutes for 16 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folders 345. McCone's mounting antagonism toward the press had definite limits, however, and did not induce him to violate the Agency's charter. For example, he refused a Johnson White House request that CIA maintain files on nearly two dozen newspaper columnists. DCI morning meeting minutes for 5 February 1964 (cited above). (S)

[33] The Agency did not take such concerted action against an author again until in the early 1970s, when it twice went to court to prevent ex-officer Victor Marchetti from publishing a magazine article, and to force him to remove classified information from a book he was writing. The two cases upheld the legitimacy of the secrecy agreement CIA requires employees to sign. See John S. Warner, "The Marchetti Case: New Case Law," *Studies* 21, no. 1 (Spring 1977): 1–12. The Agency had no such leverage to use against Wise and Ross, and US espionage statutes had not been invoked against the media. (U)

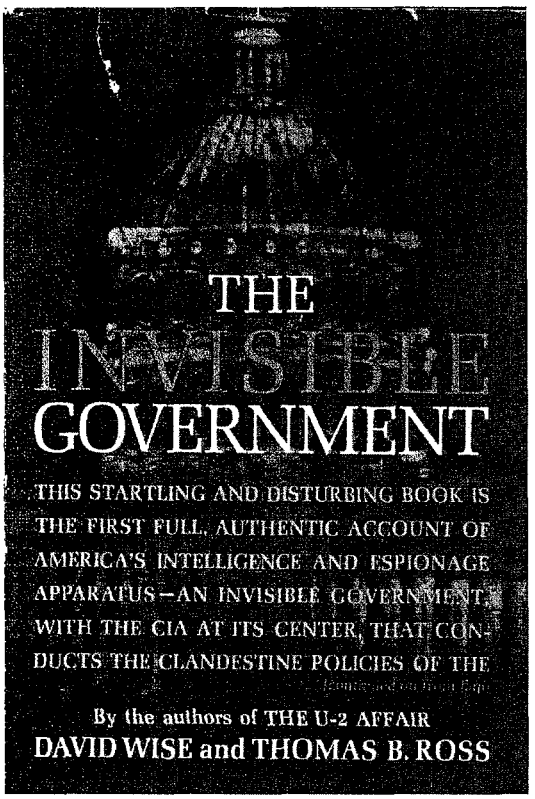
[34] McCone memorandum to Sherman Kent, 5 October 1962, McCone Papers, box 1, folder 14. (S)

[35] John S. Warner, review of *The U-2 Affair*, *Studies* 6, no. 3 (Fall 1962): A45. (U)

[36] Wise and Ross, *The Invisible Government*, quote from the dust jacket. (U)

[37] Wise and Ross, *The Invisible Government*, profile of McCone on 192–97, quote on 192; McCone untitled memorandum, 5 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 11; Paul Chretien, "Report on the Wise and Ross Book, *The Invisible Government*," 10 May 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 14. (S)

flawed. They portrayed the Agency's energetic use of covert action in the past as the current reality, whereas in relative terms CIA was now more heavily involved in collection and analysis than ever before—in good measure because of his own initiatives. Lastly, McCone believed that Wise and Ross had deceived him. After meeting with them about their book in August 1963, he invited them back to discuss their work with him as it progressed, and requested that they submit the manuscript for a fact-check and security review. They did neither, and as recently as late April 1964, Wise saw the DCI but did not mention the by-then-completed book.[38]



Cover of the first edition of *The Invisible Government* (U)

Consequently, an infuriated McCone tried to prevent the publication of *The Invisible Government*. First, he needed to show that the book seriously harmed the nation's security and was so riddled with errors that it should not be foisted on an unwitting public. Armed with a "bootleg" copy of the uncorrected galley proofs, he convened an Agency task force—with members drawn from the DDP, DI, and DS&T, the Office of Security, NIPE, the IG, the General Counsel and Legislative Counsel, BNE, and OPA—to scrutinize the book for mistakes, security compromises, and legal violations. The OPA staff conducted a separate, more detailed content analysis. McCone also directed that every Agency officer mentioned in the book comment on the accuracy of the references about him.[39]

The task force and OPA inquiries found that *The Invisible Government* contained over 200 "significant inaccuracies" and at least 120 "significant security disclosures" of cover organizations, clandestine personnel, operational details, or component functions—half of them revealed for the first time, and one-tenth of them previously known but still considered sensitive. Overall, the two studies concluded, the book represented more of a public relations problem than a breach of security. The OPA analysis stated that:

> The cumulative impact of the old material combined with the new, presented in a low-keyed setting that has the aura of authenticity, and under the guise of two crusading writers taking on an undemocratic organization, will do untold harm to the Agency, at home and abroad.... [T]he Communists will certainly use this book to discredit CIA throughout the world.... [T]he book is in a class by itself in being the most accurate of its kind ever in stripping bare the Government's most closely guarded secrets....[It] will further discredit us among the American people...[and] contribute to the decline of CIA.[40]

The task force suggested exerting quiet pressure on the book's publisher to halt publication or remove sensitive ref-

[38] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with *New York Times*...29 June 1964," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 11; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President, 20 May [1964]...," ibid., box 6, folder 8; transcripts of McCone telephone conversations with Gardner Cowles (*Look*), J.H. Whitney (*New York Herald Tribune*), Robert D. Loomis (Random House), Robert Manning (Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs), and David Wise, 5, 7, and 11 May 1964, ibid., box 10, folder 6; McCone letter to Cowles, 7 May 1964, and transcript of McCone meeting with Wise and Ross, 15 May 1964, ibid., box 7, folder 10; McCone letter to Loomis, 5 May 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 14; PFIAB, "Minutes of Board Meeting of June 4, 1964," 16, PFIAB record no. 206-10001-10013, PFIAB Records, NARA.

[39] McCone untitled memorandum, 5 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 11; Parrott, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the DCI," 4 May 1964, Chretien memoranda to McCone, "Task Force on *The Invisible Government*," 4 May 1964, and "Report on the Wise and Ross Book, *The Invisible Government*," 10 May 1964, and Knoche untitled memorandum to Carter, 6 May 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 14; DCI morning meeting minutes for 6 May 1964, ibid., Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 347; several task force memoranda in History Staff Miscellaneous Studies, No. MISC 13.14, "The Invisible Government."

[40] Chretien memoranda to McCone, "Task Force on *The Invisible Government*," 4 May 1964, and "Report on the Wise and Ross Book, *The Invisible Government*," 10 May 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 14.

erences and using covert assets and sympathetic journalists to secure unfavorable reviews. No one thought legal action against the authors was justified, although McCone suggested that the writer of another book with the same title "be advised very discreetly to bring suit" against Wise and Ross for copyright infringement. Some task force members thought that because so many facts in *The Invisible Government* had already appeared in open sources, the Agency's options were limited and that questioning only some points would be misinterpreted as confirming the rest. Richard Helms, however, wanted the Agency to take a tough approach, writing to McCone separately that publication of *The Invisible Government* should be stopped if possible. "This book is a classic case of the whole being a far more damaging security erosion than the individual parts which compose it." It was, Helms believed, based on a "philosophy [that] is equivalent to saying that our activities should not exist." The Office of Security tried to find out if Wise and Ross had contacted current or former Agency employees during their research, but, as had been determined in previous cases of this sort, the book's information was so widely held throughout the Intelligence Community that specific sources could not be identified.[41] ~~(S)~~

After the substantive review of *The Invisible Government* was done, McCone took several steps to get it spiked or revised. He forewarned the president of the book's potential for harm and suggested that Johnson refute the "shadow elite" notion at a press conference. According to McCone, "the President expressed regret that the book was published [and] discouragement over the license of government officials with the press, but didn't seem to know what to do about it." With the media starting to snipe at the administration over Vietnam, Johnson did not want to get into a First Amendment wrangle with journalists and publishers—least of all with CIA as the focus. The DCI tried to convince *Look* not to serialize the book because it contained "totally and maliciously distorted" interpretations and "philosophically…is just as screwy as it can be." "[It] gives to the Soviet propagandists and people like [Ghanaian president Kwame] Nkrumah and [Indonesian president] Sukarno and people like that just a speech for every night." *Look*'s publisher, Gardner Cowles, thought McCone was "unduly agitated" about material that had already appeared in print but allowed Helms to review the second installment (the first had already run) and suggest deletions.[42] ~~(S)~~

McCone and Carter also complained about *The Invisible Government* to its publisher, Random House, and to the publisher of the newspaper that employed Wise, the *New York Herald Tribune*. To the former, McCone passed on—no doubt agreeing with—the purported observation of Dean Rusk that "if the author wrote a memorandum putting everything that's in that book and delivered it to the Soviet Embassy, we could put him in jail for life…." McCone called and met with Wise and Ross to convince them to correct errors and remove statements "that would be damaging to the national interest," and he considered having the Agency buy all copies of the first edition if the publisher agreed to some deletions. The authors stood by their work, and the president of Random House, Bennett Cerf, replied that he would be glad to sell the first printing to the Agency, after which he would order another edition printed, and then another, and so on. CIA's pressure on the publishers had no effect. The book came out unchanged and soon rose to the top of the best seller lists—a "gold nugget" for Wise and Ross, as McCone had feared.[43] ~~(S)~~

After *The Invisible Government* was published, McCone acted to gauge and limit its effect. Acting on prior instructions, DDP stations and bases avoided giving the book further publicity or credence by attacking it; when feasible, discouraged its publication, sales, and distribution in their host countries; planted or stimulated critical reviews in local

[41] DCI morning meeting minutes for 27 May 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 347; Helms memorandum to McCone, "'The Invisible Government,'" ibid., Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 14; memorandum of meeting with Thomas Mann, 10 June 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 11. McCone believed, but could not prove, that Wise and Ross got much of their information from CIA's rivals in the Department of State and Department of Defense. Transcript of McCone telephone conversation with Sen. Leverett Saltonstall, 20 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 6. ~~(S)~~

[42] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record…Discussion with the President, 20 May [1964]…," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 8; transcripts of McCone telephone conversations with Cowles, 5 and 11 May 1964, ibid., box 10, folder 6. *Look* ran the serialization in its 16 and 30 June 1964 issues (vol. 28, no. 12, 37 et seq., and no. 13, 77 et seq.). ~~(S)~~

[43] Transcripts of McCone telephone conversations with Whitney, Loomis, Manning, and Wise, 5, 7, and 11 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 6; Knoche untitled memorandum to Kirkpatrick, 6 May 1964, Cowles telegram to McCone, 6 May 1964, and McCone letter to Cowles, 7 May 1964, ibid.; transcript of McCone meeting with Wise and Ross, 15 May 1964, ibid., box 7, folder 10; Helms memorandum to McCone, "Meeting with Mr. Gardner Cowles," 12 May 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 2, folder 12; Carter memorandum about conversation with Loomis, 8 May 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 16; David Wise, *The American Police State*, 198–99; McCone untitled memorandum, 5 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 11. The original edition of *The Invisible Government* appeared in June 1964; by September, it was in its fifth printing and had reached the number one or two spot on the most important best seller lists; and a paperback version was published in July 1965. Walter Pforzheimer memorandum to Chretien, "*The Invisible Government*," David Wise book review file, folder 1, History Staff. ~~(S)~~

media; and reported communist-sponsored attempts to exploit it. McCone had copies and a critique of the book given to all members of CIA's congressional oversight committees, and had OPA create a central repository of foreign and domestically published material in which Agency personnel and activities were identified or compromised. Several months later, McCone asked BNE for an account of how other countries had used *The Invisible Government* for political or intelligence advantage. Nkrumah reportedly was "much impressed" by it; Sukarno had ordered copies sent to his cabinet; and Pakistani president Ayub Khan was "shocked" and hoped nothing such as the book described was going on in his country. In the American press, according to OPA, two-thirds of the negative coverage stressed that CIA was out of control and a threat to democracy, while one-third played up Agency ineptitude. In addition, McCone declared that "I want to attack the book in the reviews" and had a statement drafted that would serve as the basis for critiques by CIA contacts in the media and the publishing industry. A few of those Agency-generated appraisals eventually appeared.[44] (S)

All these Seventh Floor fulminations only made the situation worse. They antagonized CIA contacts in journalism and publishing, and contributed to the increasingly adversarial relationship between the US government and the media over national security issues. In addition, McCone's misdirected determination to prevent CIA from getting bad press resulted in more negative coverage, not less. Not surprisingly, the "spiking" story leaked, resulting in First-Amendment-invoking headlines such as "McCone Tried to Stop New Book" and "Furious McCone Wages War on Book." McCone inadvertently had added a new twist to Wise and Ross's tale: CIA not only was sinister, but also undemocratic.[45] (U)

After several months, McCone's ire abated. Although he strongly believed that *The Invisible Government* had hurt the national interest, he concluded that its overdrawn premise about (in his words) a "monstrous, uncontrolled, secret action group" undercut the author's credibility. From the standpoint of the DCI and the Agency, it would have been better if he had reached that conclusion sooner and followed his previous policy of media disengagement, letting whatever hue and cry the book caused to subside on its own. In his judgment, however, at that time in that administration, a more combative stance was called for. Moreover, media savvy was not a forte of his. As it turned out, McCone and the Agency wasted their indignation: There was no sign that *The Invisible Government* affected the White House's regard for him and CIA one way or the other.[46] (S)

Despite that experience, McCone stayed in the media fray as exposés of CIA multiplied. One of the more discomfiting among them was *The Bay of Pigs: The Leaders' Story of Brigade 2506*, by Haynes Johnson of the Washington *Evening Star*, which appeared in mid-1964. Written with the collaboration of leaders of the anti-Castro resistance, it contained a startling allegation that seemed to substantiate the "invisible government" idea and caused McCone to order an internal investigation into the source of the leak. According to Johnson, a CIA field officer known as "Colonel Frank"—true name [redacted]—told members of the Agency's Cuban proxy brigade that his superiors at Langley had directed him to disobey administration orders to suspend the landing at the Bay of Pigs. With the Wise-Ross book selling so well, McCone could not allow the charge that CIA would contravene a White House command to go unrebutted.[47] (U)

The in-house inquiry that McCone convened found no evidence that then-DCI Allen Dulles, then-DDCI Charles

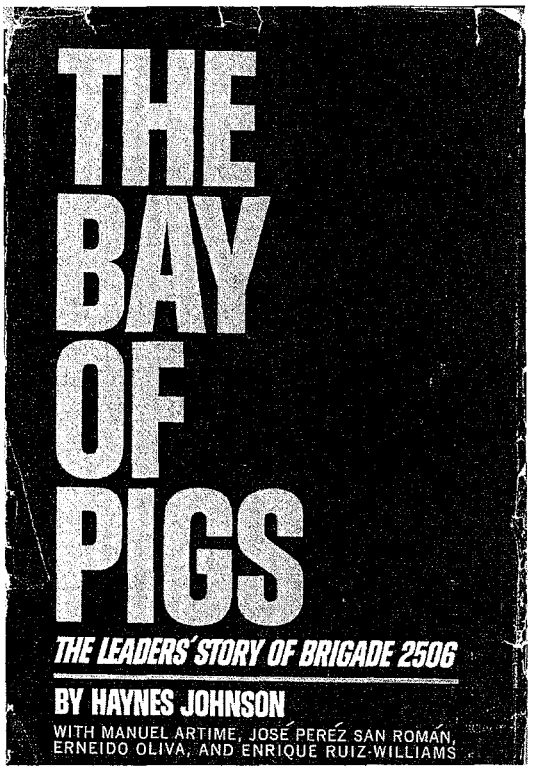
[44] DCI morning meeting minutes for 4 and 15 June and 9 September 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folders 347 and 348; [redacted] both titled "Adverse Publicity... *The Invisible Government*...," 28 May and 24 July 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 11; Kirkpatrick memorandum to Deputy Directors et al., Action Memorandum No. 392, "Centralization of Information on Published References to Agency Activities and Personnel," 19 June 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 2, folder 3; transcript of telephone conversation between Carter and McCone, 6 June 1964, and Chretien memorandum to McCone, "Press References to *The Invisible Government*," ibid., box 13, folder 14. (S)

[45] Associated Press wire service report, 9 June 1964, copy in DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 2, folder 14; "CIA Effort to Censor Book Told; Publisher Tells of Calls from McCone, Aide," *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, 9 June 1964, "Furious McCone Wages War on Book," *Miami Herald*, 14 June 1964, and "McCone Tried to Stop New Book on CIA; Attempt to Hold Up Magazine Articles Is Also Disclosed," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 18 June 1964, OPA Files, Job 81-00468R, box 9, folder 3; and numerous similar press reports in Wise book review file, folder 3. (U)

McCone's order about how securely BNE's analysis of *The Invisible Government* should be handled suggests that he believed the only thing worse than an exposé was a leak about an official investigation of an exposé. He wanted the BNE report treated as "a most confidential and privileged in-house document...[that] should not be disclosed to anyone outside of the immediate small group in the Agency....[T]he article is commendable, but could do irreparable damage to the Agency in connection with its relationship with the press and the public if improperly handled." McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, 23 June 1964, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5. (S)

[46] Carter untitled memorandum to Helms, 8 January 1965, and McCone letter to Tom Braden, 25 February 1965, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 16, folder 4; transcript of McCone meeting with Joseph Alsop, 13 March 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 3; Wise, *American Police State*, 199–200; Charles E. Valpey (pseud.), review of *The Invisible Government*, *Studies* 8, no. 4 (Fall 1964): 106–9. (S)

P. Cabell, or any other senior Agency official ordered participants in the Bay of Pigs operation to ignore specific directives or general policy guidance. [redacted] denied under oath that he said what the book claimed he had. However, according to the inquiry, some Agency field officers thought the incident Johnson recounted very likely had occurred because "Colonel Frank had shown himself to be a wild man quite capable of making the statements attributed to him." The investigation attributed discrepancies in participants' recollections to personal misim-pressions, overzealous attempts to inflate morale, and language difficulties. McCone told PFIAB in June that the inquiry "turned up only an instance or two where in the heat of the operations statements were made to the effect that the operation was ready and nothing could make it fail." Despite the Agency's fears—which the flap over *The Invisible Government* probably intensified—*The Bay of Pigs* did not create much of a stir.[48] ~~(S)~~



Dust jacket of the first edition of *The Bay of Pigs* (U)

McCone involved himself with another piece of journalism about the Bay of Pigs around this time—a proposed article by Mario Lazo, a prominent Cuban exile writer, in *Reader's Digest*. At the DCI's request, Helms showed Lazo's draft to McGeorge Bundy and said CIA was "anxious to see an end to these pieces which simply contrived to keep waving a 'bloody shirt' we would like to see buried." The DDP told Bundy that Kirkpatrick was going to try to get Lazo to withdraw the manuscript because its sympathetic tone toward CIA might suggest that the Agency was involved in its preparation. After reading the draft, Bundy said, "If you can knock off the article by a telephone call or by a meeting with the author, fine. If not, I do not propose that we take any further action. After all, this article is no worse than others which have appeared." Bundy's response suggests the White House did not believe that CIA's image was as easily tarnished as McCone thought, or that the costs of regularly intruding into the publishing process outweighed the benefits.[49] ~~(S)~~

Nevertheless, on two occasions in mid- to late-1964, McCone dealt with two potentially troublesome articles in *Time*. In early June, the periodical told of an alleged CIA operation against Cuba launched from Miami. Soon after, McCone met with *Time-Life* publisher Henry Luce, who had heard that the DCI was "very annoyed" with *Time*'s "totally false" story that the Agency had supported an infiltration attempt by the Cuban exile group JURE led by Manolo Ray Rivero. With the administration sharply reducing its support to the anti-Castro expatriates, claims that the Agency was still working with them

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[47] Johnson wrote that "[Colonel] Frank never said who [in the Kennedy administration] opposed the invasion.... He did say that if he received the order to stop the invasion, 'I have also orders from my bosses, my commanders, to continue anyway.'" *The Bay of Pigs*, 76. The back of the book's dust jacket promised that the brigade's commanders would "reveal the whole truth about...[the CIA's] secret plans to countermand White House decisions." One of the Agency's journalistic contacts, Charles Murphy, advised OPA that he thought *The Bay of Pigs* was "more destructive" to the Agency than *The Invisible Government*. Johnson presented credible detail about a well-known operational failure, whereas "a good deal" of what Wise and Ross wrote was "preposterous." Murphy letter to Stanley J. Grogan, 14 May 1964, MORI doc. no. 31068. (U)

[48] [redacted] memorandum to Helms, "Investigation of Certain Allegations Made in the Book, 'The Bay of Pigs,'" 28 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 4, folder 8; FitzGerald memorandum to Helms, "Haynes Johnson Book 'Bay of Pigs,'" 13 May 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 2, folder 12; Kirkpatrick review of *The Bay of Pigs*, *Studies* 8, no. 3 (Fall 1964): 105; PFIAB, "Minutes of Board Meeting of June 4, 1964," 16, PFIAB record no. 206-10001-10013, PFIAB Records, NARA. ~~(S)~~

[49] Helms, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with Mr. Bundy re Lazo Manuscript," 22 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 13, folder 2; Kirkpatrick memorandum to McCone, "Discussion with Dr. Mario Lazo Regarding His Potential Article for the *Reader's Digest*...," 21 May 1964, Lyman Kirkpatrick Collection, Section C, NARA. ~~(S)~~

"on the side" could be politically explosive. Drawing from a memorandum prepared by WH Division, McCone persuaded Luce to "investigate [the article] thoroughly." The story stood, but in spite of its "rogue agency" theme, it did not capture the interest of the White House, and the DCI's records do not indicate any follow-up on the matter.[50]

Another *Time* piece in October 1964 hit closer to home. CIA reportedly had conducted field investigations on several of the president's closest aides (Bill Moyers, Jack Valenti, George Reedy, and Walter Jenkins) before granting them a special clearance. Concerned that Johnson would think the Agency had insulted his trusted advisers or perhaps even thought they might be security risks, McCone wrote to the president directly about his "distress" over the *Time* story. He tried to assure Johnson that CIA had never considered investigating the aides, and that he had ordered the clearances issued to them. McCone added that he could only get the *Time* writer to admit that the source of information was not a CIA employee. No detectable sentiment issued from the White House—indicating again that McCone was far more anxious about the Agency's public relations than he needed to be.[51]

Besides trying to induce writers and publishers to modify or withdraw unfavorable books and articles, McCone also contemplated legal action against them if a strong enough case could be made. He took some encouragement from a New York State Supreme Court decision in 1964 that enjoined the movie production company Twentieth Century-Fox from showing the comedy film *John Goldfarb, Won't You Please Come Home?* because it misappropriated the name of the University of Notre Dame and thereby discredited the school. The court placed a similar injunction on the publishers of the book on which the movie was based. McCone told the Agency's general counsel to obtain a full record of the case and follow the appeals "as it might be that law is being made...which will be extremely useful to us in restraining authors, as well as TV and motion picture producers in the improper use of CIA for monetary benefits." Agency records do not indicate if any legal action resulted from McCone's idea while he was DCI.[52] (U)

Along with trying to curtail journalists' discussion of CIA, McCone ordered Agency executives "to reduce press contacts to an absolute minimum" and named "controversial figures [in the media] who should be avoided altogether." The strategy that McCone, Helms, Chretien, and John Bross of NIPE developed in early 1965 for dealing with NBC's proposed documentary on CIA put that attitude into practice. In February 1964, NBC had broadcast a *White Paper* program on the Bay of Pigs affair that criticized the Agency, so the DCI and his deputies were on their guard when they heard that the network was preparing another documentary about CIA.[53] They decided that the Agency would not collaborate officially on the program (including not allowing filming on the Headquarters compound) but would afford "unofficial, unattributable" assistance to NBC in making contacts and organizing information. Current CIA managers would encourage former officers such as Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell to appear on the program or provide background interviews. Helms wrote that "[t]his is the only device open to us for keeping the show from being overloaded with commentary from such critics as David Wise...[or] Andrew Tully...." (McCone declined to be interviewed; he cited his policy against speaking in public, and disingenuously claimed that because he "was not so sure that the hostile attitudes toward the Agency were serious or were hurting [it]," there was no point in him appearing on television.) Lastly, CIA permitted two Chinese defectors to be interviewed, and arranged for the release of U-2 photographs during the Cuban missile crisis and of the Soviet Union before 1960. "Since such material [aerial photography] has been used on TV before," Helms wrote, "it can hardly be regarded as a violation of security and would do much to get into the program an aspect of intelligence collection which is dramatic and effective."[54]

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[50] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Luncheon Meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Luce...12 June 1964," and FitzGerald, "Memorandum...Manuel Ray [and] *Time* Magazine Article of 12 June 1964," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 11.

[51] McCone letter to President Johnson, 20 October 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 4, folder 16.

[52] McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, 18 December 1964, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5. The movie finally opened in March 1965. Reviews in the *Washington Daily News* and the *Washington Post*, 31 March 1965, OPA Files, Job 88-01365R, box 2, folder 5. (U)

[53] Like Haynes Johnson's book, the *White Paper* program caused scant controversy outside Langley. JMWAVE reported, for example, that it had no problems dealing with its Cuban expatriate assets after the telecast, even though the program concluded that trying to oust Castro was futile. The station thought, however, that it might temporarily have trouble recruiting new exile operatives. WAVE 1813, 11 February 1964, OPA Files, Job 88-01365R, box 2, folder 6.

[54] Numerous memoranda by Chretien and [redacted] during December 1964–February 1965, OPA Files, Job 88-01365R, box 2, folders 5 and 6; DCI morning meeting minutes for 27 January 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 349; Helms memorandum to McCone, "Proposed NBC TV Program," 27 January 1965, ibid., Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 6.

NBC broadcast the program, *The Science of Spying*, on 4 May 1965, less than a week after McCone stepped down. The mistitled documentary had a narrower scope than Agency executives had thought, dealing only with CIA covert actions in Iran, Guatemala, Indonesia, Tibet, the Congo, Cuba, and Laos. It carried interviews with Dulles, Bissell, and Sen. Eugene McCarthy. Dulles defended the Agency as a vital weapon in the Cold War, and Bissell noted that it only carried out missions that the White House assigned it. McCarthy complained that CIA had usurped Congress' warmaking power by toppling governments at the president's behest. The program showed much "local color" footage but apparently no material that the Agency provided. CIA observers concluded that the damage the show inflicted "lies not in security breaches but in the editorial slant and misrepresentations" made through "clever [film] splicing" and "artful editorializing."[55] ~~(S)~~

McCone did not make any recorded comments about *The Science of Spying* or the effectiveness of CIA's approach toward it. [redacted] of the CA Staff—one of the officers most involved in developing the Agency's media strategy—concluded, however, that "we probably devoted too much time and thought to the program." In the future, "[w]e need a subtle, patient, and carefully planned effort to see that we do get occasional positive treatment by TV and other media."[56] McCone's methods—reactive, defensive, and frequently hostile—were proving to be ill-suited for the emerging era of greater public accountability and journalistic scrutiny. ~~(S)~~

In addition to this carefully controlled media contact, McCone—partly at the White House's suggestion, partly on his own initiative—lifted his self-imposed embargo on outside appearances and met with selected individuals and sympathetic groups in controlled settings. In September 1964, the president asked McCone to travel to major US cities and meet with business leaders, publishers, and other prominent private citizens to discuss CIA's views on world events and "disclose in a discreet manner [its] methods of operation, its competence, etc." Johnson believed "showing the flag" would offset unfavorable public comments about the Agency, particularly those emanating from Capitol Hill. The DCI "agreed to undertake this mission" and during the next several months met with journalists and corporate executives somewhat more often than before—to what effect is unclear.[57] ~~(S)~~

Additionally, in late 1964, McCone attended two outside awards ceremonies and delivered remarks at each about international affairs and intelligence issues. He gave his first public speech as DCI on 14 November at the Catholic University of America, when he accepted the Cardinal Gibbons Medal for lifetime service to the Catholic Church. He used the occasion to defend CIA against some of the most common charges leveled against it, to recount some of its forecasting successes, and to describe the state of the communist world and the Soviet threat. After accepting the Herbert Hoover Medal from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers on 2 December, he made some general comments about world events. These appearances generated no unfavorable publicity and, in a small way, appear to have helped put a more benign face on the Agency, at least in some quarters.[58] ~~(S)~~

Tightening the Pursestrings (U)

After President Johnson decreed an economy drive throughout the federal government in November 1963, McCone directed CIA managers to review their programs and budgets thoroughly and propose cutbacks within 90 days. He also wanted fitness reports for executives at the rank of chief of station (or the stateside equivalent) and above to include attention to economy as a job element. He

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[55] Script for *The Science of Spying*, NBC News, 4 May 1965, and CIA memoranda, "Content Analysis of NBC Presentation *The Science of Spying*," 11 May 1965, and "Fact Sheet on NBC-TV's 'Science of Spying,'" 19 July 1965, OPA Files, Job 88-01365R, box 2, folder 24. The program's sole sponsor, B.F. Goodrich, cancelled its commercials shortly before airtime. The company claimed that the broadcast might "do harm to the government of the United States." The precipitous move evoked unfounded suspicion that CIA or the Johnson administration had pressured Goodrich into withdrawing its sponsorship. "A Hassle Over 'Spying' Documentary," *New York Herald Tribune*, 6 May 1965, ibid. ~~(S)~~

[56] [redacted] memorandum, "NBC TV Show, 'The Science of Spying'...," OPA Files, Job 88-01365R, box 2, folder 5 ~~(S)~~

[57] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with the President—30 September [1964]," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9; McCone calendars, entries for November 1964–April 1965. ~~(S)~~

[58] McCone speech at the Catholic University of America, 14 November 1964, McCone Papers, box 5, folder 17; "McCone Awarded Hoover Medal," *New York Times*, 4 December 1964, McCone clipping file, HIC. In May 1964, McCone gave a brief talk about the Agency at a dinner of the Papal Knights of Malta, but the function was private, and his remarks went unreported. McCone speech files, McCone Papers, box 5, folder 17. For undisclosed reasons, McCone declined Helms's and Karamessines's recommendation that he meet with prominent American publishers at an off-the-record off-site to discuss the Agency's mission and activities and the intelligence and political threats it faced. Karamessines untitled memorandum to Helms, with attached routing sheet, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 1, folder 18. ~~(S)~~

gave his top administrative lieutenants, Carter and Kirkpatrick, the primary responsibility for developing and carrying out the frugality measures, which were encouraged by hallway posters admonishing Agency employees to keep in mind that "The dollar you save may be your own!" The cutbacks included a hiring freeze; a curtailment in expansion of some programs in communications, photo interpretation, paramilitary operations, SIGINT collection, and research and development; and a reevaluation of personnel ceilings, overseas activities, and service and support functions. High-overhead areas such as aircraft and communications operations were to be managed more carefully. By DCI decree, the Agency had to use competitive fixed-price contracts wherever practical instead of sole-source or cost-plus-fee contracts. If the latter were necessary, incentives were written in for contractors to keep down costs.[59]

McCone watched the economizing process carefully with his businessman's eye. Although he was pleased with the early results, he told Carter to "examine 'old Spanish customs' and eliminate [them] where possible," and urged his deputies that "no effort [should] be spared to expedite [the] attainment" of new budget and personnel ceilings. "[I]f any Directorate wanted to do something more than they were doing," he wrote, "they would have to absorb it within their own hide, and if they wanted to take on new responsibilities, they would have to give up something at the bottom priority level." He specifically expressed his dissatisfaction with the cost-effectiveness of the DDP, telling Kirkpatrick that, judging from what it produced, it was too big.[60]

McCone and his deputies at CIA met the president's economy goals without impairing the Agency's ability to fulfill its core missions of intelligence collection, analysis, and warning. After six months, Kirkpatrick reported that a projected would be saved through numerous administrative belt-tightenings, especially reducing and relocating personnel, closing facilities, and streamlining production.

When McCone left Langley, CIA was putting into action what would be known later by the catch-phrase "doing more with less."[61]

Improving Community Management (U)

To the end of his tenure as DCI, McCone strived to be a true director of the Intelligence Community, looking for better ways to carry out his responsibilities as its overseer and to improve coordination among its constituent departments. As of mid-1964, he was still dissatisfied with his ability to manage it. In his view, parochialism and shortsightedness persisted. He valued CIA's role as a counterweight to policy-driven diplomats and worst-case warfighters, and although he lauded individual community officials (such as the director of DIA, Gen. Joseph Carroll), he had little good to say about how the armed services ran their intelligence operations.

> [B]ecause the military insist on a policy of rotation of personnel[,] you don't and you can't get the professionalism in the military intelligence organizations that you get here [at CIA]. And an added factor...is that traditionally within the military the intelligence is rather low in priority...the fellows out of the bottom third of the class go over there....

Military attachés, he claimed, were chosen "for being personalities rather than brains...and they usually like to get one that's got both a pretty and a rich wife.... As a result we've got a lot of attachés scattered around the world who

[59] President Johnson, "Memorandum for the Heads of Departments and Agencies," 30 November 1963, McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, 4 December 1963, Carter memorandum to senior CIA managers, "President's Memorandum on Government Economy," Action Memorandum A-319, 6 December 1963, McCone letter to Kermit Gordon (Director, Bureau of the Budget), 13 December 1963, Kirkpatrick memorandum on "Economy Poster," Action Memorandum A-337, 23 December 1963, and Carter untitled memorandum to Kirkpatrick, 24 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 7, folder 7; DCI morning meeting minutes for 3 December 1963, ibid., Job 80R01580R, box 17, folder 345; McCone memorandum to Carter, "Agency Procurement Activities in Fiscal Year 1964," 15 October 1964, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5. Johnson's government cost-cutting was part of his deficit reduction plan, which in turn was a tactic to help get a tax cut bill through Congress.

[60] McCone memorandum to senior Agency managers, "Economy Measures," Action Memorandum A-411, 18 August 1964, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 7, folder 7; McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, 4 December 1963, ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 7, folder 7; Kirkpatrick Diary, vol. 6, entry for 4 August 1964.

[61] Kirkpatrick memorandum to McCone, "Report on Economy Measures Within CIA for the Period Ending 31 March 1964," 6 May 1964 (with McCone's handwritten comments), ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 7, folder 7; Bross memorandum to McCone, "Funding of Intelligence Community Programs," 4 February 1965, CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 129; "Total CIA Obligations, 1947–1977," ER Files, Job 79M01476A, box 1, folder 12; "Full-Time Permanent Personnel, 1950–1977," ibid., Job 79M00467A, box 2, folder 24.

are the best damn dancers in the military, but...."[62]

The US Intelligence Board in April 1965 (U)

McCone considered two answers to the problem of community disunity. One was to create an assistant secretary of defense for intelligence who would superintend the collection and analysis activities of all military intelligence entities. McCone believed that establishing this office would alleviate many of the bureaucratic conflicts between the DCI and the Pentagon and permit better management of tactical intelligence. The other idea was to give the secretary of defense operational responsibility for the military elements in the community—

while making the DCI the "executive agent" of all national intelligence resources—CIA, NSA, NRO, NPIC, and FMSAC. McCone saw some virtue in severing the DCI's "intimate relationship" with CIA so that he could more effectively guide the entire community, but he recognized that the director's dependence on the Agency for staff support and nondepartmental analysis made that arrangement unworkable. He compared the British and West German intelligence bureaucracies and concluded that the latter offered a much better model for the United States. In Britain, the chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee was separated from operations, which severely limited his value to the prime minister

The chief was more of a DCI than McCone.[63]

CIA and DIA worked well together by 1965, so McCone did not give their relations much attention during his last months at Langley. He had received evaluations of DIA's performance from Agency officers who chaired the principal USIB committees and from the heads of the directorates.

[62] Transcript of McCone meeting with Sir Kenneth Strong, 4 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 9.

[63] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Mr. Clark Clifford...14 July 1964," *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXIII, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy...*, 463–64; McCone memorandum concerning meeting with CIA and Bureau of the Budget, 9 October 1964, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 12; transcript of McCone meeting with Fubini, 16 November 1964, ibid., box 9, folder 1.

McCone continued meeting weekly with USIB, which was as busy during Johnson's administration as it was during Kennedy's. Vietnam, Laos, the Soviet Union, and the Middle East were the main topics of national estimates and special assessments. As discussed in earlier chapters, the board's committee structure and responsibilities were changed and new procedures for handling compartmented information and defectors were instituted under McCone's chairmanship. The Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance submitted the most reports of any committee—representing one half of the board's output—a reflection of the surging growth of technical means in the national intelligence effort. Among his final significant actions as head of the community, McCone issued several new DCI Directives: a charter for the Critical Collection Problems Committee, an important vehicle for integrating all-source collection on "hard target" countries and problems; terms of reference for the USIB Watch Committee and National Indications Center, charged with warning of imminent Sino-Soviet Bloc hostilities; and procedures for rationalizing production of nuclear, guided missile, space, and economic intelligence.[65]

In the area of technical security, McCone found an arrangement ripe for the sort of consolidation he had effected elsewhere, but serious information compromises had to be uncovered before the situation was improved. In 1956, the NSC had set up a Special Committee on Technical Surveillance Countermeasures—a delayed reaction to the discovery in 1952 of a sophisticated listening device concealed in the Great Seal of the United States hanging in the American ambassador's office in the embassy in Moscow. The committee had achieved some measure of interdepartmental coordination, but as an NSC entity, it was too awkwardly positioned between USIB and community components to set policy effectively. The NSC abolished the committee in late 1964—ironically, after discoveries of Soviet audio penetrations of the US embassies in Moscow and Warsaw indicated that the current system needed fixing urgently.[66] In its stead, McCone, with the assistance of USIB, was charged with responsibility for coordinating technical surveillance countermeasures, and a new committee was set up for that purpose. Placed inside the now-efficiently running machinery of USIB that McCone helped develop, the Technical Surveillance Countermeasures Committee was able to translate national requirements into action—precisely what had been missing in the previous countermeasures program. Within CIA, McCone told DDS&T Wheelon to mount a major counter-audio research and development program.[67]

McCone took an especially keen interest in the preparation of the last annual reports on the community and CIA that were written for PFIAB during his tenure. After closely reviewing early versions, McCone had the community report revised and the "sterile, uninspiring" Agency summary redone from scratch. He wanted the reports to

> reflect the activities of the community and of CIA accurately and comprehensively and to bring out to the fullest extent the positive accomplishments of the

[65] Lay, vol. 5, 14–15, 20–23, 25; Bross memorandum to McCone, "Actions Taken to Improve Effectiveness of Intelligence Effort of the Government as a Whole," 15 April 1964, CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 122; DCID No. 2/2 (New Series), "Charter for Critical Collection Problems Committee (CCPC)," DCID No. 1/5 (New Series), "Terms of Reference, Watch Committee of the USIB," DCID No. 3/3 (New Series), "Production of Atomic Energy Intelligence," DCID No. 3/4 (New Series), "Production of Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence," DCID No. 3/1 (New Series), "Production and Coordination of Foreign Economic Intelligence," all effective 23 April 1965, DCI Files, Job 86T00268, box 2, folder 12.

[66] The Department of State had difficulty connecting specific Soviet foreign policy decisions to the compromised intelligence and concluded that Moscow had not used most of it. Because embassy security was the responsibility of the Department of State, McCone and CIA avoided criticism. Moscow Embassy EMBTEL 3311, 29 April 1964, Department of State DEPTELs 3499 and 3577, 19 and 24 May 1964, Robert Bannerman (Director, CIA Office of Security) memorandum to USIB Security Committee, "Preliminary Damage Assessment of the Technical Surveillance Penetration of the US Embassy, Moscow," 1 June 1964, and Department of State, "Estimate of Damage to US Foreign Policy Interests (From Net of Listening Devices in US Embassy Moscow)," 2 October 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XIV, The Soviet Union*, docs. 30–32, 35, 47; Bannerman memorandum to Kirkpatrick, "Meeting of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board on 4 June 1964," DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 12; Max Frankel, "In Moscow, Walls Have Ears (40)," *New York Times*, 20 May 1964, Nosenko clipping file, HIC; Bannerman memorandum to Kirkpatrick, "Briefing of Baker Panel, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board," 11 May 1964, and CIA memorandum, "Replies to Inquiries of Special Panel on Audio Countermeasures, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board," 14 May 1964, CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 124; PFIAB, "Minutes of Board Meeting of June 4, 1964," 3–7, 13, PFIAB record no. 206-10001-10013, PFIAB Records, NARA.

[67] "Security Program of the Central Intelligence Agency, 1941–68. Volume I," 205; idem, "Security Program of the Central Intelligence Agency, 1941–68. Volume II," pt. 2, 261–65; idem, "Security Program of the Central Intelligence Agency, 1941–68. Volume VI: Technical Security," Support Services Historical Series No. OS-6 (May 1972), 78–80, 118–20, 123–24; NSAM No. 317, "Audiosurveillance and Countermeasures Problems Within the Intelligence Community," 15 November 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 10; DCID No. 1/12 (New Series), "Technical Surveillance Countermeasures Committee," 23 December 1964, DCI Files, Job 86T00268, box 2, folder 12; Lay, vol. 5, 72–75; Wheelon memorandum to McCone, "First Progress Report on Counter Audio Research and Development," 24 June 1964, CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 124.

> community and the agency. Also[,] I wish the [A]gency report to reflect the competence, the experience, the intellectual background of the organization, the care with which security matters are handled, particularly personnel security, and the skill and professionalism involved in operational undertakings. Also[,] I wish the report to deal in depth with the importance, the value, and the contribution to US policy which emanates from our current intelligence reports and our BNE estimates.... Finally, I want to "call the glass of water half full instead of half empty" at all times.

The CIA report, McCone said, in particular should detail the Agency's achievements in science and technology issues, stressing its responsiveness to PFIAB recommendations and its successes in connecting technical collection to analysis. It should discuss successful recruitments of agents in place as well as productive handling of defectors—by way of underscoring the DDP's "active" espionage efforts and downplaying slightly the prominence of "passive" collection through walk-ins. Finally, the report should indicate the influence of estimates on policy and the rationalized procedures by which they were requested and produced.[68] (S)

McCone's attitude toward these reviews suggests that he regarded them almost as valedictory statements on his directorship, and his final opportunity to educate US officials on the Agency's accomplishments and indispensability. Within the confines of their format—responses to specific questions from PFIAB—they favorably evaluated the community's accomplishments during his tenure.[69] They do more than recite achievements and state challenges. They are testaments—albeit in bland bureaucratese—to McCone's sense of leadership, implicitly giving his prescription for what a DCI should be and do. Reading them leaves little sense that at the time they were being prepared, the Vietnam conflict was causing McCone to despair of his relations with the White House and that his time at Langley was nearing its end. (S)

[68] McCone undated memorandum to Carter, "Annual Reports on DCI Community Activities and the Central Intelligence Agency for the PFIAB due October 1," McCone Papers, box 9, folder 5; Kirkpatrick Diary, vol. 6, entry for 14 September 1964. (S)

[69] *Annual Report for FY 1965*. For a précis in a similar vein by McCone, in response to a presidential request to heads of all departments and agencies, see McCone letter to the president, 3 December 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXIII, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy...*, 475–78. (S)

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CHAPTER

17

The Saga in Southeast Asia Continues (U)

During his final nine months as DCI, John McCone tried, with no more success than anyone else in the Johnson administration, to solve the United States' Vietnam conundrum: how to fulfill security commitments to an anticommunist ally that seemed unable or unwilling to bear its share of the burden, without undertaking a costly, open-ended military involvement that risked either confrontation with the major communist powers or a humiliating stalemate, defeat, or withdrawal. As DCI and a member of the NSC, McCone contributed to the formulation of US policy in Vietnam and to CIA's role in carrying it out. Though regarded as a "hawk" on military issues, his views actually fell well within the mainstream of administration thinking until he was near the end of his tenure, when he advocated a full-bore aerial assault on North Vietnam. By then he was outside the White House inner circle, and his influence on Vietnam matters was insignificant throughout the closing period of his directorship. (U)

Meanwhile, the clandestine war against North Vietnamese encroachments into Laotian territory, which had expanded so substantially during McCone's time as DCI, was fully subordinated to the larger struggle between Hanoi and Saigon. President Johnson stepped up US paramilitary activities in Laos to interdict North Vietnamese infiltration into and operations against South Vietnam. The purpose of supporting the Hmong and other tribal forces in Laos changed. It was no longer an effort to uphold the Geneva agreements and secure Laotian neutrality but had become an operation to harass the North Vietnamese. Developments in Vietnam would determine the success or failure of the covert actions CIA and US Army Special Forces conducted with America's Laotian tribal proxies. (U)

The Laotian Sideshow (U)

The transformation of the CIA-originated clandestine counterinsurgency in Laos into a conventional military operation moved ahead during 1964.[1] The United States kept resupplying the royalist and neutralist armies, and the Hmong force grew steadily in size to 17,000 (with expansion to 23,000 authorized). The Pathet Lao launched successful campaigns in central Laos and on the Plain of Jars in early and mid-1964. The Hmong again saw action in a tactical role during the summer offensive and for the first time received support from US combat aircraft. (CIA-recruited American civilians, directed by Agency case officers, flew some of the missions; American use of other tribal fighters in the central and southern regions of the country increased. The NSC's Special Group, on which McCone sat, in June 1964 approved a plan, submitted by the JCS, In addition, other CIA and Special Forces operations continued, including cross-border reconnaissance missions launched from South Vietnam into Laos along the "Ho Chi Minh" Trail (codenamed), and development of safe areas and staybehind nets. The Agency resisted the Army's attempts to increase the size of the roadwatcher units and to use them in tactical operations. CIA insisted on, and retained, full control of the activities of Laotian irregulars.

Around the same time, the governing tripartite coalition, led by the neutralist Souvanna Phouma, fell apart in spite of US support after a military putsch in April 1964 failed and the communists withdrew from the government.[3] In August, CIA judged that the situation in Laos "is so fragile that it could crumble in any of many ways," such as a Pathet Lao counteroffensive or a rightist coup. Souvanna Phouma—regarded as almost everyone's second choice to

[1] Overview information for this section comes from Ahern, *Undercover Armies*, chaps. 9–10; *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXVIII, Laos*, 1–363.

[2] "Covert Action Briefing Data: Laos—Summary of Counterinsurgency Program: Authorizations," June 1965; CIA memorandum, "Status of Lao Paramilitary Programs," 7 August 1964, and Colby memorandum, "National Security Council Meeting—29 April 1964," EA Division Files, Job 78-01412R, box 2, folder 3; 7 May 1964, ibid., folder 2 memorandum, "Briefing of Lieutenant General Joseph F. Carroll on Operation in Central Laos," 16 April 1964, ibid., folder 1; CIA memorandum, "CAS Paramilitary Assets in Laos," 14 August 1964, ibid., Job 78-01389R, box 1, folder 9.

[3] For an Agency assessment of the coup attempt, see OCI Memorandum, "Background of the 19 April Rightist Coup in Laos," OCI No. 1124/64, 22 April 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXVIII, Laos*, 59–61. McCone was displeased that CIA had not forecast the putsch more precisely. Minutes of DCI morning meeting on 20 April 1964, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 127, folder 347.

run the country—eventually reestablished some measure of control, and in early 1965 Gen. Phoumi Nousavan—at one time the Agency's favored leader—fled to Thailand. The battlefield situation became much more active in early 1964 and then stabilized, falling into a seasonal rhythm of engagement and withdrawal—the "seesaw war," one writer has called it—that persisted for most of the decade. The struggle pitted 50,000 Laotian regulars and over 23,000 CIA-backed guerrillas (Hmong, Yao, and Kha) against perhaps 20,000 Pathet Lao fighters and about 11,000 North Vietnamese soldiers.[4] In December 1964, the US Air Force began bombing communist strongholds in Laos (Operation BARREL ROLL)—which was in addition to missions already being flown by the Lao air force and the US Air Force and Navy—and a few weeks later the Ho Chi Minh Trail also was targeted. The bombing raised the spirits of the Laotian tribal fighters but had little tactical or strategic effect. In early 1965, North Vietnam reinforced its troops in northern Laos and along the Trail in preparation for its next dry-season offensive.[5] (S)

As the US military presence in Vietnam slowly expanded during 1964, McCone worried that the Johnson administration might be drifting into a commitment to send ground troops into Laos to disrupt Hanoi's campaign against South Vietnam. Speaking as a policy adviser with insights into Republican Party thinking, he told McGeorge Bundy in June 1964 that deployment of US forces in Laos "would cause consternation throughout the country...not one person in 50 favored such [a] commitment." Even "hardboiled spokesmen" of strong action against the North Vietnamese, such as Sen. Barry Goldwater and former Vice President Richard Nixon, wanted the American presence in Laos limited to airstrike personnel and materiel. In the DCI's judgment, congressional reaction to sending ground troops to Laos would be "infinitely more violent" than the debate over a congressional joint resolution supporting the current Vietnam policy.[6] (S)

At the same time, McCone urged the administration not to make any concessions to the Pathet Lao, battlefield conditions notwithstanding, and to insist that the Laotian communists abide by all the terms of the 1962 Geneva accords. The United States had to resist North Vietnam's "salami" tactics against both Laos and South Vietnam, tactics that were part of its "'plausibly deniable' scheme" to "weaken the will to resist among the anti-Communists in Southeast Asia so that the whole fabric will collapse, leaving the United States nothing to fight with or for." The Johnson administration must adhere to a consistent, forward-looking policy, especially because international pressure probably would force it to attend another conference in Geneva, where it would be placed at a diplomatic disadvantage. (Informally to Robert McNamara, McCone said the United States should "move to Geneva from a real position of strength with the US fleet pointing at Haiphong. The Secretary of Defense agreed.") Otherwise, the DCI told the president, "there was a grave danger of us 'sliding down the slippery slope' on day-to-day decisions and that we did not have a full scenario of actions in view of the military effort that was now being made."[7] (S)

The reflex to retaliate when the Pathet Lao shot down a US reconnaissance aircraft early in June 1964 exemplified McCone's point. McNamara thought that the administration must stop "talking tough and acting weak," but Marshall

[4] In a cable from Vientiane in mid-May 1964, Ambassador Leonard Unger expressed the sense of frustrated resignation that most US officials in Laos felt at the time:

> [O]ur sorry position remains what it always has been.... PL [Pathet Lao] backed by Viet Minh can launch successful push at time and place of their choosing[,] with friendly forces' capability of successfully resisting limited. If we have to live with the situation, and we do unless we want to risk Souvanna's quitting or his and our being caught in violations of the Geneva accords, best we can do is to work thru Meo, Yao, etc., to take advantage of PL extending their lines of communication and harass their rear, hopefully causing them to pull back or at least to halt any drive that they may have in mind with the objective of reaching to or almost to Mekong...

Embassy Vientiane to Department of State, [redacted] 13 May 1964, DDO Files, Job 78-01389R, box 1, folder 8. (S)

[5] Joseph Scott (Department of State) memorandum to the Special Group, "Report of the Subcommittee on United States Support of Foreign Paramilitary Forces," 17 January 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXVIII, Laos*, 3; CIA analysis prepared for Chester Cooper (NSC), August 1964, "Editorial Note," ibid., 251; JCS memorandum to McNamara, "Operations in Laos," JCSM-1050-64, 17 December 1964, ibid., 307–9; Colby memorandum, "Meeting of Principals on Vietnam—19 December [1964,]" ibid., 309; Embassy Saigon cable to Department of State, EMBTEL 2073, 7 January 1965, ibid., 313–15; Cooper memorandum to President Johnson, "Developments with Respect to Laos," 22 January 1965, ibid., 318; INR memorandum to Rusk, "Communist Buildup in Southern Laos May Be Precautionary," 27 January 1965, ibid., 323–24; SNIE 10-65, "Communist Military Capabilities and Near-Term Intentions in Laos and South Vietnam," 4 February 1965, ibid., 332; NSAM No. 328, 6 April 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 539; CIA memorandum, "Status of Lao Paramilitary Programs," 7 August 1964, EA Division Files, Job 78-01412R, box 2, folder 3. (S)

[6] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the Executive Committee with the President...," 6 June 1964, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 9. (S)

[7] Colby, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting on Laos—18 May 1964," DDO Files, Job 78-03041R, box 3, folder 11; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...National Security Council Meeting—19 April 1964," *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXVIII, Laos*, 46; "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting on...June 7th, [1964,] with the President...," ibid., 149–50; "Summary Record of [NSC] Meeting," 10 June 1964, ibid., 174. (S)

Carter (speaking for the DCI) objected that a reprisal would be "out of sequence" and serve no longer range plan to improve the American position in Laos. Instead, McCone agreed only that the aerial reconnaissance missions should have fighter escorts authorized to return fire if attacked. The president, however, approved an airstrike against a Pathet Lao artillery site.[8] (U)

After late November 1964, CIA's covert war came under tighter control with the arrival of a new ambassador to Laos, William H. Sullivan. Sullivan had been W. Averell Harriman's principal deputy during the negotiations in Geneva. "[C]onsidered brilliant by most and tyrannical by many," according to a recent history of the Laotian conflict, Sullivan had instructions to scrutinize all clandestine activities in country. The confrontation soon became known as "Mr. Sullivan's War." The popular image of the omniscient, omnipotent ambassador—as conveyed in Assistant Secretary of State William Bundy's remark that "[t]here wasn't a bag of rice dropped in Laos that he didn't know about"—is overdrawn, as Sullivan had no command authority over US military resources needed to support the Laotian irregulars. However, the ambassador carefully managed the American role in the covert war to maintain the appearance that the United States was adhering to the 1962 agreements. He resisted MACV's attempts to launch operations from South Vietnam using the local fighters it had taken over from CIA under [redacted] he did not want MACV's Studies and Observations Group using Laos as a staging point for infiltrations into North Vietnam; and he did not permit the Agency to recruit guerrillas from the Hmong living in the North. His expectations for operations against the Ho Chi Minh Trail were modest: "[a] little intelligence scouting, with luck a little sabotage, [redacted] Sullivan believed that CIA operations in the Panhandle had the best chance to succeed of any US-supported ground activity in Laos. In other regards, the Agency often found itself in a secondary role, brokering relations between Washington, the embassy, MACV, and the Agency's tribal proxies to ensure that the latter got what they needed to fight the communists.[9] (U)

With Sullivan now overseeing covert operations, and with Laotian affairs subsumed under the Vietnam conflict, McCone largely withdrew from the issue for the rest of his directorship. Any complaints he had about the conventionalizing and bureaucratizing of the clandestine war in Laos, and CIA's loss of operational independence there, do not appear in the record. The DCI probably realized that after [redacted] a similar Pentagon takeover of paramilitary operations in Laos was inevitable, and by this late date he was tired of fighting the military bureaucracy. Speaking privately to Secretary of State Rusk, however, McCone questioned whether the US government was properly organized to conduct counterinsurgency. Too many departments were involved, some were not discharging their responsibilities properly, and the diminution of the Special Group Counterinsurgency's role was hampering White House management of the disparate programs whose objective was to combat communist-supported insurgencies.[10] ~~(S)~~

[redacted] Soon after McCone resigned, BNE assessed that the communists were unlikely to stir up the military situation in Laos. Since the Geneva agreements, they had achieved their main objective there: gaining control of the border regions for use in infiltrating men and material into South Vietnam.[11] ~~(S)~~

"That Bitch of a War" (U)

Political and military conditions in South Vietnam worsened during the late summer and early fall of 1964, but the administration put off hard choices about the war until after the November election.[12] McCone and CIA analysts grew more worried that instability and Viet Cong successes in the

[8] "Summary Record of the 533rd Meeting of the National Security Council," 6 June 1964, McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the Executive Committee with the President...," 6 June 1964, and Bromley Smith (NSC), "Memorandum of Conference with President Johnson," 8 June 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXVIII, Laos*, 141–44, 152–60. (U)

[9] [redacted] *Undercover Armies*, 280–82; Conboy and Andradé, 140–41; Embassy Vientiane cable to Department of State, EMBTEL 1726, 23 April 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXVIII, Laos*, 361. Sullivan reflected on his ambassadorial service in his memoir, *Obbligato: 1939–1979*, 208–27. The Johnson administration regarded Sullivan's abilities highly. McGeorge Bundy credited the "resourceful" ambassador with blocking "an unusually foolish coup" in late January 1965 "by getting a tipsy Australian technician to cut some [radio] wires" and preventing the plotters from communicating with their comrades. Bundy memorandum to the president, "News of the Day," with attachments, 31 January 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXVIII, Laos*, 325–28. (U)

[10] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary Rusk...18 Mar 65," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 16. ~~(S)~~

[11] SNIE 58-65, "Short-Term Prospects for Laos," 5 August 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXVIII, Laos*, 380–84; Colby memorandum to DCI William Raborn, "Request for Release from Reserve for Contingencies to Fund CIA Operations in Laos in Fiscal Year 1965," 1 June 1965, DDO Files, Job 78-02805R, box 1, folder 22. ~~(S)~~

South might prompt the Saigon government to negotiate with Hanoi. In September, he told the NSC and congressional leaders of the rising influence of southern "neutralist" factions that favored talks, and of signs of increasing anti-American sentiment in South Vietnam. Taking issue with Rusk's conjecture that the communists' restraint after the Tonkin Gulf raid suggested their wariness and flexibility, McCone contended that Hanoi and the Viet Cong believed the war was going well and that their guarded reaction was tactical; intelligence reports indicated that they were temporarily shifting to political efforts to exploit divisions between southern Catholics and Buddhists. Further concessions by the regime to the Buddhists would further alienate the Catholics. "The schism between the rival interests is deepening and could easily precipitate a civil war unless the United States is able to exercise a moderating influence and persuade the differing parties...to patch up their differences for the duration." McCone held out little hope for that, however. Like McNamara, he believed that "we can squeeze through between now [late September] and the next several weeks...[but] after the election, we've got a real problem on our hands." The situation was worse than under Diem, McCone believed, and if Gen. Nguyen Khanh used force to suppress opposition, as the DCI thought some officials in Washington would encourage him to, then the South Vietnamese leader would be through. Sen. Richard Russell, the Agency's staunchest ally in Congress, informed the president in early November that "I told John McCone he ought to get somebody to run that country [who] didn't want us in there.... Then...we could get out with good grace. But he didn't take me very seriously."[13]

As the United States' chief intelligence officer, McCone was especially distressed at inadequacies in collection on Viet Cong operations—especially the failures of the South Vietnamese civilian and military services to detect preparations for terrorist attacks.

> What concerns me is [the] lack of detailed current intelligence on VC locations, activities, and operations which make possible recurrent and discouraging ambushes. I am at a loss to understand how VC forces can assemble in battalion size or greater in geographic areas or in the vicinity of communities which are presumably held by government elements without some advance knowledge of the presence of VC being communicated to the authorities. I am at a loss to understand how a battalion size attack could occur four miles from the Saigon airport without a civilian informant communicating a warning. In sum, where are the Vietnamese Paul Reveres? Obtaining info of this type seems to me to be the responsibility of the Vietnamese civilian and military [services] and I raised the question as to whether they are properly organized, trained, and motivated, and whether the friendly population is in support. I do not believe that [redacted] or MACV can do this, but we must see that it is done and done efficiently by the Vietnamese.

McCone attributed the collection gap to "fear, apathy and discontent among the population," and noted that intelligence operations in South Vietnam in general suffered from the same disarray that beset military and political activities. [redacted] The United States soon paid the price of this collection failure. On 1 November, two days before the election, the Viet Cong attacked the American airbase at Bien Hoa, killing five Americans, wounding 76, and destroying 27 of 30 aircraft. This was the first time the guerrillas had targeted a US installation. No warning had been received, even though Viet Cong fighters had infiltrated the surrounding area in recent weeks. The administration decided not to retaliate immediately; "we are inevitably affected by [the] election timing," Dean Rusk wrote.[14]

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[12] The section heading is taken from Johnson's comments to historian Doris Kearns about the political dilemma he found himself in over Vietnam:

> I knew from the start that I was bound to be crucified either way I moved. If I left the woman I really loved—the Great Society—in order to get involved with that bitch of a war on the other side of the world, then I would lose everything at home. All my programs...[a]ll my dreams.... But if I left that war and let the Communists take over South Vietnam...there would follow in this country an endless national debate—a mean and destructive debate—that would shatter my presidency, kill my administration, and damage our democracy.

Quoted in Doris Kearns, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*, 251. For secondary materials regarding Vietnam during the latter months of McCone's directorship, see the Appendix on Sources. (U)

[13] McCone memoranda of meetings with the NSC and the congressional leadership on 9 September 1964 and with the president and his national security advisers on 14 September 1964, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 9; *Reaching for Glory*, 41, 137.

[14] "Notes for DDCI, 14 September 1964," ER Files, Job 80B01676R, box 13, folder 10; "Excerpts from Memorandum for the Record of 5 October 1964...Discussions by DCI with the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board...2 October 1964," CMS Files, Job 92B01039R, box 7, folder 131; documents on the Bien Hoa attack in *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 873–82.

Another collection lapse, this time involving North Vietnamese infiltration into the South, became evident soon after the Tonkin Gulf incidents. President Johnson asked McCone why North Vietnam had not reacted strongly to US retaliatory airstrikes. McCone said Hanoi was waiting and watching and probably calculated that the political unrest in the South benefited it for the time being. Actually, unbeknownst to CIA, the US military, or the South Vietnamese, North Vietnam had been preparing to deploy troops to the South for several months. In September, the first full combat units of the North Vietnamese army began to move down the Ho Chi Minh Trail. CIA did not report the movements until December.[15] (U)

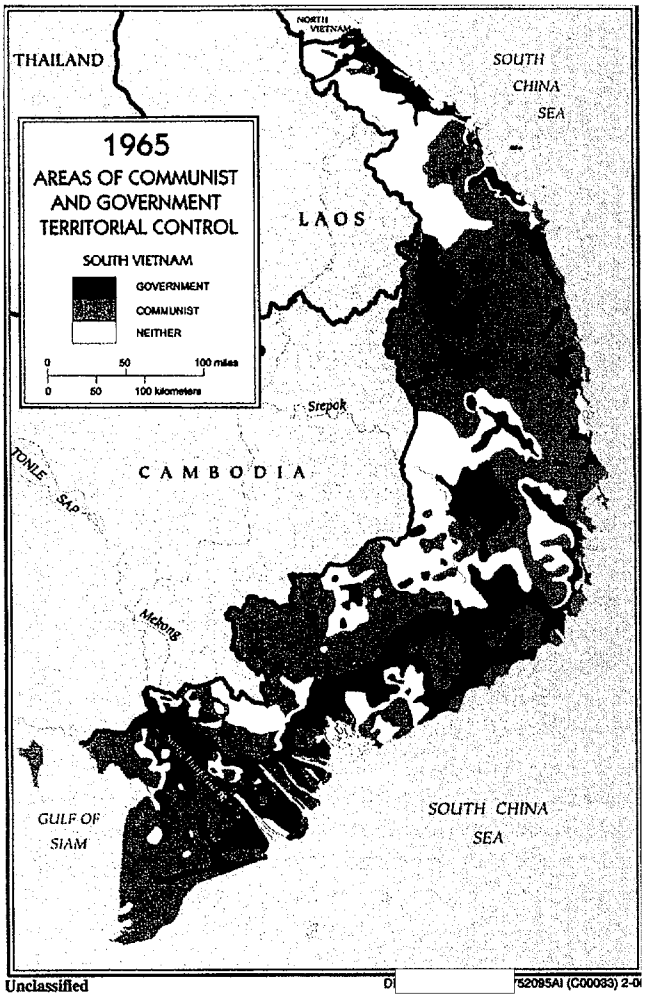
During late 1964 and early 1965, McCone was involved in a dispute over collection of statistics on enemy infiltration that foreshadowed the controversy analyst Samuel Adams was to have a few years later with DCI Richard Helms. MACV recently had submitted new figures showing that Viet Cong and North Vietnamese infiltration into the South was up 250 percent. USIB sent a team to Saigon in mid-November to evaluate the numbers, which information then available in Washington could not corroborate. The team confirmed the much higher figures. McNamara and Rusk "expressed great dissatisfaction" with the revision. They thought critics of the administration's policy in Vietnam would charge that the new numbers were contrived to justify military action. McCone ordered the USIB contingent to stay in Saigon until further notice and directed Agency officers to thoroughly review all CIA reporting and estimates about infiltration, with special attention to how [redacted] affected collection and what influence the Pentagon and the secretary of defense had had on estimates. McCone wrote that "I am sure [this subject] will assume very major proportions over the next few weeks, and therefore I want a thorough and careful research job done." New assessments of Viet Cong strength by CIA, DIA, and the Department of State in early 1965 substantiated the upward trend; the revised figure of 50,000 to 100,000 was 50 percent higher than previous MACV estimates. McCone attributed the increase to MACV's customary underestimation of the enemy and to bureaucratic delays in reporting information on new communist units. A surprised McNamara replied that if the higher figures were true, "we were 'simply outmanned.'" At that point, the discrepancy was subordinated to assessment of the impact of the ROLLING THUNDER bombing program on enemy manpower movements, and McCone did not deal with the matter again.[16] ~~(S)~~

Throughout the latter part of 1964, CIA analysts produced a succession of downcast assessments that McCone approved and used in briefings and discussions with policymakers. He did not try, as he had in 1963, to modify their tone or prognoses. Not only did he agree with their judgments, but he apparently believed that, now more than ever, the administration needed to hear the dismal truth. In September, CIA estimators concluded that "the signs of deterioration are so many and so clear...that the odds now favor a continuing decay of South Vietnam will and effectiveness in coming weeks, sufficient to imperil the political base for present US policy and objectives in South Vietnam." In October, ONE described continued political and military deterioration and saw few prospects for improvement. Agency officers William Colby and George Carver independently weighed in with similar conclusions. A Saigon station assessment in December 1964, drafted by George Allen, detailed intensifying enemy activity, declining ARVN effectiveness, eroding government influence in the countryside, and persistent disunity and instability in the leadership in Saigon. Allen's report was not coordinated with other members of the US mission, so in early 1965 the administration asked for a composite view. In February, Ambassador Maxwell Taylor approved a joint CIA-MACV estimate only after deleting discouraging forecasts from the outgoing cable. The station sent the original, bleaker analysis to Headquarters, where analysts used it when working on later assessments. After intelligence reporting in early 1965 indicated that Hanoi had dispatched entire combat units (up to division size) to South Vietnam, the above scenario repeated itself. In the spring, the mission drafted a gloomy assessment; the ambassador deleted the worst news from the outgoing cable; and the station sent the full text to Langley for analysts' use.[17] ~~(S)~~

CIA's in-house assessments of Vietnam between mid-1964 and mid-1965 mostly were on economic subjects and came from the DI's Office of Research and Reports. ORR

[15] Bundy, "Memorandum of a Meeting, White House...September 9, 1964...," *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 754; Moïse, 251. (U)

[16] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary McNamara on 16 November 1964," and "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting on 11/24/64—Secretaries Rusk, McNamara, Ball, McGeorge Bundy, General Wheeler, McCone, and William Bundy," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 14; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary McNamara—18 March 1965," ibid., folder 16; [redacted] 231. ~~(S)~~



analyzed scenarios of economic interdiction against the North (concluding, for example, that a naval blockade probably would not work); examined the logistical infrastructure of North Vietnam and the mechanics of its infiltration of men and materiel into the South; and studied the economy of Viet Cong-controlled areas of the South (judging that the enemy obtained most of its supplies locally). In more direct support of military operations, ORR worked with targeting intelligence and conducted damage assessments after ROLLING THUNDER began in March 1965. As the analyses accumulated, McCone and CIA were unalterably cast in the role of bearers of bad news—news that further estranged him and the Agency from the administration, while reinforcing its disposition to pursue victory in Vietnam.[18]

What To Do Next (U)

Administration officials agreed with CIA that conditions in South Vietnam had gotten much worse but decided that the United States must find a way to prevent a large scale political and military collapse there. With a landslide election win behind him, and with his frustration over the war mounting, President Johnson was willing to entertain more venturesome options to buttress the Saigon government. Policy discussions during late 1964, to which McCone and other senior Agency officers contributed, focused on tactics—what to do—rather than strategic issues—was Vietnam vital to US interests; could the United States achieve its objectives there; would the region fall to the communists without American intervention? The most important venue for deliberation in this period was an NSC working group headed by Assistant Secretary of State William Bundy and including members from the Departments of State and Defense, the JCS, the NSC, and CIA (Harold Ford from ONE). The president convened the group in early November to prepare a comprehensive new assessment for the principals to discuss. During the next few weeks, it established the policy framework that the administration followed for most of the balance of McCone's tenure.[19] (U)

The Bundy Working Group reached a consensus that the United States must undertake a gradually escalating program of military actions, including airstrikes against the North, as a way to coerce Hanoi into negotiating. That approach, referred to as Option C in the group's report to the president, was deemed preferable either to continuing current military efforts (including reprisals against "terrorist" attacks) while seeking a diplomatic settlement on any acceptable terms ("Option A"), or quickly starting a "sys-

[17] SNIE 53-64, "Chances for a Stable Government in South Vietnam," 8 September 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 742–46; CIA memorandum, "Deterioration in South Vietnam," 28 September 1964, attachment to Carter letter to Bundy, same date, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 342, recast as SNIE 53-2-64, "The Situation in South Vietnam," 1 October 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 806–11 (the quoted language was not in the published estimate); Bruce Palmer Jr., "US Intelligence and Vietnam," *Studies* 28, no. 5 (1984): 34–35; Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 65–66, 73–74; Allen, *None so Blind*, 185–88, 193–94.

[18] McGeorge Bundy told President Johnson that he thought some of the Agency's analysis "was a shade blue, not quite a balanced account." He attributed that quality to "a little bit [of] covering their flanks...making sure that they are the ones that are giving the gloomy news first." *Reaching for Glory*, 42. (U)

[19] The Bundy Working Group is discussed in David Kaiser, *American Tragedy*, 355–59, 362–70; Van de Mark, 26–29, 31–35; Bird, *The Color of Truth*, 293–95; and "Editorial Note," *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 886–88. (U)

tematic program of military pressures" against a full range of North Vietnamese targets ("Option B," also called "a hard/fast squeeze"). The latter was considered too risky, raising the likelihood of Chinese intervention. US officials offered several reasons for stepping up American military activity: to boost South Vietnamese morale, to give the Saigon government a "breathing spell" from communist attacks, to interdict infiltration of Northern supplies and manpower, to compel Hanoi to stop supporting the Viet Cong and begin talking (McCone's rationale), or just to "do something" so the United States would not "lose" Vietnam—especially after China exploded its first nuclear device in October and raised its power profile in the Asian region. Option C, according to Bundy's group, had the advantage of flexibility:

> The whole sequence of military actions would be designed to give the impression of a steady, deliberate approach, and to give the US the option at any time (subject to enemy reaction) to proceed or not, to escalate or not, and to quicken the pace or not. Concurrently, the US would be alert to any sign of yielding by Hanoi, and would be prepared to explore negotiated solutions that attain US solutions in an acceptable manner.[20] (U)

The Bundy Working Group circulated drafts of its prescription among senior administration officials. After McCone received his copy, he asked several high-level subordinates review it. DDI Cline, FE Division chief Colby, Abbot Smith of ONE, and R. Jack Smith, head of OCI, judged that the North Vietnamese most likely would not relent under gradual escalation and that the administration should not count on the Saigon government becoming strong enough to resist the communist insurgency.[21] ~~(S)~~

In its final form, as approved by the president on 7 December, Option C would be implemented in two phases. Starting in early December, covert operations and aerial reconnaissance flights north of the DMZ would be intensified, and communist infiltration routes inside Laos would be bombed (BARREL ROLL). After 1 January, an escalating series of aerial attacks against North Vietnam would commence. (U)

McCone questioned the efficacy of this incremental approach, but he had not yet decided what he thought the administration should do. His thinking was in transition, driven by growing concern over the shakiness of the Saigon government. In September, he had agreed with the low-key, reactive policy then under consideration—reprisals against Viet Cong terror attacks [redacted] and the Navy's DESOTO patrols, and limited South Vietnamese air and ground operations against the Ho Chi Minh Trail. He believed that a sustained air campaign north of the DMZ would be too dangerous to undertake then because the government of South Vietnam was too weak to respond to the increased insurgent activity that might result. In addition, Communist China would likely augment its assistance to North Vietnam.[22] (U)

At the same time, McCone was realizing that the Khanh regime probably was unsalvageable. Three leadership changes had occurred between mid-August and early September, and several more would follow by early 1965—prompting Chester Cooper, an ONE officer on detail to the NSC, to remark later that "Khanh and [Gen. Duong Van] Minh checked in and out of their offices in the Presidential Palace like traveling salesmen at a commercial hotel." A distinct note of despair sounded in McCone's private comments about the fate of the South. In early October, he told Ambassador Sullivan, "I often wonder if what is really involved here is an erroneous concept that we in this country, by pouring in thousands of people and a hell of a lot of money, could train them [the South Vietnamese] and encourage them and inspire them to fight." "You almost have to say that the outlook is hopeless," he lamented to some journalists several weeks later. "[Y]ou just hang onto a little thread of hope that this government put together by this Council of Elders will take form and will get off the ground, and with civilian leadership and with Khanh devot-

[20] NSC Working Group, "Courses of Action in Southeast Asia," 21 November 1964, William Bundy memorandum to Rusk, "Issues Raised by Papers on Southeast Asia," 24 November 1964, Bundy memoranda of NSC Executive Committee meetings on 24 and 27 November 1964, NSC Executive Committee, "Position Paper on Southeast Asia," 2 December 1964, and Johnson untitled memorandum to Rusk, McNamara, and McCone, 7 December 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 916–29, 938–45, 958–60, 969–74, 984; *The Pentagon Papers* 3, 678. (U)

[21] Cline et al. memorandum to McCone, "Critique of the (Bundy) Vietnam Working Group Papers," 21 November 1964, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 15. ~~(S)~~

[22] McGeorge Bundy memorandum to the president, "Courses of Action for South Vietnam," 8 September 1964, and memorandum of meeting at the White House, 9 September 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 746–50. On Communist China's growing political and material support for North Vietnam during this period, see Zhai, chaps. 5–6. (U)

ing himself to the military there might be some improvement. But that's an awful thin hope, I believe."[23] (S)

Those reservations notwithstanding, McCone joined the consensus on Option C, at least temporarily. By late November, he thought that if the administration started heavily bombing the North, the American public and the United States' allies would react with "anger, sorrow, and disgust." Any aerial attacks in retaliation for Viet Cong terrorism must target their infiltration and supply infrastructure (lines of communication and depots, for example) and keep collateral damage to an absolute minimum. The DCI also thought that "going big" risked reuniting the communist world, then in some disarray because of the Sino-Soviet split. He doubted, however, whether the Viet Cong insurgency could be brought under control quickly even if North Vietnam stopped supporting and directing it. He told the principals that the residual communist threat in the South was "much greater and much more difficult" than the uprising the British faced in Malaya in the early 1950s and "infinitely more serious" than the Hukbalahap rebellion that the United States helped the Philippine government quash a few years later. It would take the United States 10 years and major military and economic assistance to South Vietnam to stamp out the Viet Cong, he contended.[24] (S)

A Fork in the Road (U)

"By the end of January [1965]," historian George Herring has written, "the major argument against escalation [the Saigon government's failure to govern] had become the most compelling argument for it." The administration abandoned the concept of securing stability in the South before expanding US military involvement in the North and instead saw escalation as the preferred way of achieving some measure of political order in Saigon. Heavy bombing above the DMZ and deployment of American combat forces in the South, in William Bundy's words, "would have some faint hope of really improving the Vietnamese situation." In late January, McGeorge Bundy and McNamara informed the president that "[b]oth of us are now pretty well convinced that our current policy can lead only to a disastrous defeat.... The time has come for harder choices": either negotiate a way out, or use whatever military force is needed to prevail. Just over a week later, Bundy returned from South Vietnam to report that "[t]he prospect in Vietnam is grim. The energy and persistence of the Viet Cong are astonishing." "[W]ithout new US action defeat appears inevitable.... There is still time to turn it around, but not much." The United States needed to adopt a policy of "sustained reprisal...against *any* VC act of violence to persons or property." Air and naval attacks on North Vietnam must be gradual and related to the military struggle in South. "The object would *not* be to 'win' an air war against Hanoi," but the operations nonetheless would be continuous to exact the maximum political value. "Even if it fails, the policy will be worth it." There was little alternative, recalled Chester Cooper, who accompanied Bundy. "There was a general disposition after we were there for a few days to feel that...either we had to get out or do something more than we were doing."[25] (U)

McCone came to that conclusion a bit sooner, having advised the president and the secretary of defense some weeks before that the United States had no chance of accomplishing its objectives unless it substantially increased airstrikes against the North and began low-level ground actions to check enemy infiltration into the South. Well into 1964, the DCI had doubts about how effectively massive air attacks on the North would hamper the communist insurgency in the South. Eventually, however, like other key administration policymakers, he stopped worrying as much

[23] Cooper, 246–47; transcripts of McCone meetings with Sullivan, 1 October 1964, and John Steele and Hedley Donovan, 17 November 1964, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 1. (S)

[24] McCone memorandum, "Problems of Courses of Action—South Vietnam," 26 November 1964, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 15; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting on 11/24/64—Secretaries Rusk, McNamara, Ball, McGeorge Bundy, General Wheeler, McCone, and William Bundy," ibid., box 2, folder 14. The immense difficulty that the United States and South Vietnam faced in suppressing the communist insurgency was violently underscored yet again on Christmas Eve 1964, when a car bomb exploded in Saigon outside the Brinks Hotel where US military officers lived. The attack killed two Americans and wounded 58 other persons. McCone advised the president against retaliating because Viet Cong culpability was too hard to prove. "Memorandum of Briefing of President Johnson...December 28, 1964," McCone Papers, box 5, folder 5. (S)

[25] George C. Herring, *America's Longest War*, 127–28; William Bundy memorandum to Rusk, 6 January 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 32; McGeorge Bundy memoranda to Johnson, "Basic Policy in Vietnam," 27 January 1965, and "The Situation in Vietnam," 7 February 1965, ibid., 95–97, 174–85; Cooper oral history interview at LBJ Library, quoted in Mann, 393. Ambassador Taylor's field reports typified the mood of administration officials at this time. On 6 January, for example, he wrote that "[w]e are faced here with a seriously deteriorating situation characterized by continued political turmoil, irresponsibility and division within the armed forces, lethargy in the pacification program, some anti-US feeling which could grow, signs of mounting terrorism by VC directly at US personnel and deepening discouragement and loss of morale throughout SVN." *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 13. CIA analysts agreed; a special estimate in February judged that "US political leverage [in South Vietnam] appears to be at a low point." SNIE 53-65, "Short-Term Prospects in South Vietnam," 4 February 1965, ibid., 143. (U)

about the strength of the Saigon government and decided that the best approach was to go all out with Option B. The South would not, and probably could not, save itself, so the United States had no choice but to "go big" against the North. Even if a viable government were established in Saigon, the DCI said, the United States "could not win the way we were going" and must take "more dynamic action...a systematic series of attacks...starting in the south sector of North Vietnam and...work[ing] toward the north...[a] strike every day or at least every second day...regardless of what the Soviets say or what the Chinese Communists say or what anybody else says."[26] (U)

In taking that position, McCone differed with several senior Agency officers who advanced unsolicited opinions about the effect bombing would have on the North. William Colby thought expanding the war might cause a confrontation with Beijing. The head of FE Division's Vietnam-Cambodia branch bluntly called bombing a "bankrupt" move. Peer de Silva, the COS in Saigon, believed an air campaign would only provoke Hanoi into sending more troops down the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Ray Cline thought US bombing would at best only buy time for South Vietnam. Lastly, Harold Ford told McCone directly that US policy in Vietnam was "becoming progressively divorced from reality" and that the "brave, resourceful, skilled, and patient" communist enemy would not be beaten into negotiations. "[T]he chances are considerably better than even," Ford wrote, "that the US will in the end have to disengage in Vietnam, and do so considerably short of our present objectives." McCone did not respond to this litany.[27] (U)

Instead, the DCI justified his view strategically with the domino theory, to which he steadfastly held despite ONE's judgment that it was untenable. McCone told the Senate Armed Services Committee in January 1965 that "if we pulled out of Vietnam...there would be a serious deterioration in Southeast Asia, and I think it would extend to Cambodia, to Laos, to Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.... [I]t would mean the acceleration of the communist movement throughout Southeast Asia." The reason was that the conflict in Vietnam "is no civil war. This is a straight Communist-directed guerrilla effort designed to remove the free thinking people of South Vietnam from any position of authority and take it over for Communism." That was why establishing a stable, popularly based government in the South was so hard. The communists were gaining control of more rural areas "not because [the peasants] are embracing the purposes of Communism, but because they are just war weary and tired and they just don't want to be shot at when they are out in the rice fields and will compromise almost everything to avoid that."[28] (S)

McCone's belief in the utility of heavy bombing probably drew on two experiences. As a member of the President's Air Policy Commission during 1947–48, he heard testimony, read reports, and participated in discussions on the decisive importance of air power in World War II. While he was under secretary of the Air Force during 1950–51, SAC's doctrine of strategic air power, so forcefully expounded by its commander, Gen. Curtis LeMay, dominated US policymakers' thinking on the subject. In addition, the Korean war had provided to some observers a real world lesson in the effect an aerial onslaught could have on an adversary's will to resist. With the ground war at an impasse and covert operations accomplishing nothing, heavy bombing of military and civilian targets was the only way to take the war to the enemy. Many Americans believed that large-scale bombing of dams in North Korea in the summer of 1953 had forced the Communist Chinese and North Koreans to stop their diplomatic obstructionism and last-minute terrain grabbing and agree to a truce. The Air Force chief of staff in 1953, Gen. Hoyt Vandenberg, summed up the attitude when he warned senior officers at the Air War College to "keep our eye on the goal of air power, which is to knock out the ability of a nation to fight." By the early 1960s, the Air Force's doctrine writers had outlined a role for strategic aircraft in low-intensity conflicts—a theory with which McCone agreed. To him, a stra-

[26] McCone, "Addendum to MR on Meeting w/President on 22 Oct 64," dated 26 October 1964, National Security Council File, Meetings with the President 4 January 1964–28 April 1965, LBJ Library; transcript of McCone interview with Rowland Evans and Stewart Alsop, 3 February 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 2; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the National Security Council...," 8 February 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 193, 195–96. (U)

[27] Ford, *CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers*, 73–76. (U)

[28] McGeorge Bundy, "Memorandum of a Meeting, White House...September 9, 1964...," *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 752–53; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President re South Vietnam," 3 February 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 130; Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...Telephone Conversation with Mr. McCone on 6 November 1964," and McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary McNamara on 16 November 1964," McCone Papers, box 2, folder 14; McCone testimony to Senate Armed Services Committee, 11 January 1965, 69, 73, 83, 104–105, ibid., box 3, folder 19. In early February, McCone similarly told PFIAB that "both the North Vietnamese and the ChiComs think that the war is in hand from their point of view," and that "there was abundant intelligence which says that Thailand would be next." Kirkpatrick memorandum, "Meeting of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board," 4 February 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 19, folder 382. (S)

McCone's military recommendation for Vietnam: strategic bombing (U)
Photo: US Air Force

tegic air campaign, run without regard for immediate tactical considerations, was essential for countering an externally supported insurgency of the scope that the Viet Cong were waging in South Vietnam.[29] (U)

Some policy realism also contributed to McCone's advocacy of using strategic air power against the North. President Johnson would not pull the United States out of Vietnam, so the DCI argued for what he judged to be the most effective use of America's military capabilities—one that would exploit its technological superiority and economic resources while avoiding the commitment of a large ground force to a land war in Asia. South Vietnam as a proxy force was too weak to resist the Viet Cong, and covert operations across the DMZ could not help except very marginally. Massive air attacks against the North, however, would shift the arena of military combat from the South, where the position of Washington and Saigon was weakest, to the North, where the leadership in Hanoi would risk having its economy destroyed unless it capitulated. Capping the argument, Agency analysts had told McCone that such bombing would not elicit a major military response from North Vietnam's communist allies, and the Intelligence Community had judged that Hanoi probably would respond to intense American airstrikes by ordering the Viet Cong to temporarily suspend attacks in the South. Accordingly, "I'd go win this one," the DCI told the president. "I'd do whatever was necessary to win it."[30] (U)

McCone's advocacy of heavy bombing moved him outside the administration consensus and made him seem like a hawkish counterpart to the solitary "dove" in the Vietnam policymaking circle, Under Secretary of State George Ball—whose persistent argument for withdrawal and negotiation has led one biographer to label him the president's "in-house hair shirt." This McCone-Ball analogy is largely accurate.

[29] Mark Clodfelter, *The Limits of Air Power*, 17–19, 23, 35–36; Conrad C. Crane, *American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950–1953*, 159–63; Robert F. Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950–1953*, 666–79; idem, *Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine: A History of Basic Thinking in the United States Air Force, 1907–1984*, vol. 1, 291–304, 335–51, 419–67 passim, vol. 2, chaps. 1–2 passim; Thomas C. Hone, "Strategic Bombing Constrained: Korea and Vietnam," in R. Cargill Hall, ed., *Case Studies in Strategic Bombardment*, 488–90; Moody, 158–66; Donald J. Mrozek, *Air Power and the Ground War in Vietnam*, 17–24; ORR, "Historical Notes on the Use of Air Power as a Weapon of Interdiction," CIA/RR ER 66-8, May 1966, 29, 32, HS Files, Job 03-01724R, box 4, folder 6. What McCone had in mind was the use of "strategic air warfare," defined by Air Force doctrine writers as

> Air combat and support operations, designed to effect, through the systematic application of force to a selected series of vital targets, the progressive destruction and disintegration of the enemy's war-making capacity to a point where he no longer retains the ability or will to wage war. Vital targets may include key manufacturing systems, sources of raw material, critical material, stockpiles, power systems, transportation systems, communication facilities, concentrations of uncommitted elements of enemy armed forces, key agricultural areas, and other such target systems.

Moody, xi, n. 5. (U)

[30] McCone memorandum to the president, "Probable Communist Reactions to Certain US or US-Sponsored Courses of Action in Vietnam and Laos," 28 July 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 586; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with The President re South Vietnam," 3 February 1965, ibid., *II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 130; SNIE 10-3-65, "Communist Reactions to Possible US Actions," 11 February 1965, ibid., 244–50; transcript of McCone interview with Edward Weintal (*Newsweek*), 19 March 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 3. The Department of State dissented from the community's October 1964 assessment, holding that Hanoi more likely would send its own troops into Laos and South Vietnam. The dissent proved correct. Palmer, 33–34. (U)

The only prominent decisionmakers to agree with the DCI were the JCS, but even they were divided on the issue in private. Despite the popular stereotype that they were anxious to blast North Vietnam to rubble, the service chiefs disagreed on the utility of an all-out bombing offensive against the North. None of them doubted that the United States would enjoy air superiority north of the DMZ or that bombing would inflict serious damage on enemy military and economic targets. Only the Air Force and the Marine Corps, however, believed that a sustained campaign of heavy bombing would force Hanoi to suspend support for the Viet Cong. The Army and Navy were unconvinced. Despite these disagreements, however, and to present a united front to the White House and the public, the service chiefs kept their doubts about strategic bombing off the record and recommended using the US bomber arsenal in an escalatory way (Option C). In that context, the hawk McCone was almost as alone on his own limb as the dove Ball was on his.[31] (U)

President Johnson, who had no historical experience with heavy bombing, resisted using it all-out against North Vietnam. In September 1964, he declined to authorize an intense aerial attack on the North; McGeorge Bundy wrote at the time that "in [the president's] judgment the proper answer to those advocating immediate and extensive action against the North was that we should not do this until our side could defend itself in the streets of Saigon." As late as December 1964, he complained to Ambassador Taylor that "[e]very time I get a military recommendation[,] it seems to me it calls for large-scale bombing. I have never felt that this war will be won from the air."[32] (U)

By mid-February 1965, however, the president moved toward a more aggressive posture. Lethal Viet Cong attacks against American facilities at Pleiku and Qui Nhon and another change in government in Saigon in mid-February forced him to concede that there probably never would be enough order in the South to justify waiting to intensify military action. "Johnson's highest priority for Vietnam" then, according to historian Robert Dallek, "was to settle on a well-defined, consistent policy that held out prospects of ending the conflict and convincing people that he knew what he was doing." He told his advisers that he "had kept the shotgun over the mantel and the bullets in the basement for a long time now," but "cowardice has gotten us into more wars than response has." In the president's judgment, limited, sustained bombing, escalated according to how Hanoi reacted to it, stood some chance of forestalling both a communist victory and a divisive domestic debate—the latter almost assured if he ordered a ground offensive. But Johnson was still planning to practice "flexible response" and not deliver the full force of American air power. "We face a choice of going forward or running," he declared. "We have chosen the first alternative. All of us agree on this, but there remains some difference as to how fast we should go forward."[33] (U)

The president's decision on 13 February to begin ROLLING THUNDER marked a turning point in US policy, despite his claim that "we seek no wider war." A campaign of regular bombing attacks went well beyond the "tit-for-tat" reprisal strikes that had been the practice since the Tonkin Gulf affair. The scope and intensity of the bombing would increase gradually, use of napalm was authorized, and pilots could strike alternative targets without prior approval if they could not reach their original destinations. Over 100 US and South Vietnamese aircraft—the largest number used on one day up to then—flew the first missions on 2 March against an ammunition depot and a naval base. In April alone, 3,600 sorties hit fuel dumps, bridges, munitions factories, and power plants across the DMZ. "The air war," writes George Herring, "quickly grew from a sporadic, halting effort into a regular, determined program."[34] (U)

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[31] David L. Di Leo, *George Ball, Vietnam, and the Rethinking of Containment*, 125; Palmer, 32–33; Buzzanco, 171–72, 193–94; JCS memorandum to McNamara, "Courses of Action in South East Asia," 23 November 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 934–35. (U)

[32] McGeorge Bundy, "Memorandum of a Meeting, White House...September 9, 1964...," *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 751; Johnson telegram to Taylor, CAP 64375, 30 December 1964, ibid., 1058. (U)

[33] Colby memorandum for the record, "White House Meeting on Vietnam, 6 February 1965," *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 159–60; Dallek, *Flawed Giant*, 248, 254–55; Clodfelter, 51–52, 58–64. The Viet Cong attack on the US Army barracks at Pleiku on 7 February, which killed eight Americans and wounded 126, "pulled the rug out from any sitting and waiting," according to Chester Cooper. Cooper oral history at LBJ Library, quoted in Mann, 393. In retaliation, the president ordered 154 US and South Vietnamese aircraft to bomb four North Vietnamese army barracks in the southern panhandle. Documents 76–81 in *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 155–72. On 10 February, Viet Cong guerrillas bombed a hotel housing US soldiers in Qui Nhon; 23 were killed and more than 20 were wounded—the most American casualties in any such incident in Vietnam so far. Documents 95, 97–99, 106 in ibid., 212, 214–25, 236–37. A succession of leadership changes in Saigon in mid-February, culminating in Khanh's resignation on the 21st, did nothing to end the political malaise in the capital. The holdover civilian cabinet had little authority and no ambition, and popular enthusiasm for the war effort continued to wane. (U)

[34] Department of State telegram to Embassy Saigon, DEPTEL 1718, 13 February 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 263; Herring, *America's Longest War*, 129–30. (U)

A Final, Futile Push (U)

To McCone, ROLLING THUNDER was no solution. Instead, he regarded it as just the kind of graduated, reactive, politically calculated approach that he never thought would work in Vietnam. "We must not lose sight of our purpose," he told the NSC, "[which is] to help [the] South Vietnamese win freedom from Communist aggression.... [This goal] should not be compromised for collateral reasons." Tentativeness had been the problem with US policy in Vietnam since 1961, McCone contended. By moving in American military forces gradually without a defined purpose, "[i]n some ways we lifted the responsibility for the situation off the shoulders of the South Vietnamese, but we didn't provide the muscle to put it on our own shoulders." This incremental approach left the United States vulnerable to the charge that it was practicing "just another form of colonialism" and was not truly interested in preserving South Vietnam's right of self-determination. McCone conceded that strategic bombing might cause North Vietnam to launch a "burst operation" against the South to quickly defeat its army, topple its government, and force out US troops. He thought, however, that if Hanoi judged that the bombing was threatening its economy, it would curtail guerrilla operations in the South "and wait for a sunny day, making some pretense at negotiations." He told the president that most USIB members agreed with that conclusion, especially if airstrikes were flown more often than planned under ROLLING THUNDER and hit targets above the 19th parallel in the heart of North Vietnam.[35] (S)

McCone opposed deploying US ground troops to South Vietnam and did not want the administration to use Viet Cong attacks on American facilities there to justify doing so. Disagreeing with the Pentagon's conclusion that US installations in the South could not be protected from guerrilla raids without sending a large contingent of combat troops, he directed the DDP to develop a plan for establishing informant networks around American bases to serve as "Paul Reveres" if the Viet Cong tried to launch attacks like the one on Pleiku. He feared that if the joint US-South Vietnamese intelligence apparatus could not discover such activity nearby, a bigger surprise—North Vietnamese or Chinese intervention, or a massive Viet Cong uprising, for example—might occur. The shock undoubtedly would produce calls from inside and outside the administration for a big buildup of ground forces. McCone consequently charged all departments represented on USIB to step up collection efforts against North Vietnamese targets and to give "the closest attention...to every available indicator, no matter how tenuous." As DDCI Carter passed on McCone's directive to the Agency, "We all need to remain cool and objective but...[y]ou can't afford to ignore any report, no matter how wild it may seem...It is absolutely essential that the analysts state their requirements...[and] be in the closest touch with collectors...."[36] (S)

The Intelligence Community's mixed record of working the North Vietnam target indicated how formidable a task the DCI was asking it to perform. [redacted] twice as many communist prisoners of war were under interrogation at any given time than in the previous year, more aerial reconnaissance missions were being flown, and COMINT and HUMINT reporting had increased somewhat in volume if not in quality. The Agency had little success, however, at inducing defections by Viet Cong or North Vietnamese army personnel or in debriefing travelers to the North, and much reporting through US military channels was either redundant or unreliable.[37] (S)

CIA's other clandestine activities in Vietnam offered little to hearten McCone during this time, either. [redacted] so the Agency's pacification programs—the Political Action, Counter Terror, and Census Grievance Teams—languished. The CIA-run propaganda program was still "penny-ante," according to a senior

[35] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the National Security Council...," 8 February 1965, McCone Papers, box 6, folder 11; transcript of McCone interview with Evans and Alsop, 3 February 1965, ibid., box 9, folder 2; McCone memorandum to the president, "Communist Reactions to US Air Attacks on North Vietnam," 13 March 1965, and "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary McNamara—18 March 1965," *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 437, 459. (S)

[36] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the National Security Council...," 8 February 1965, and "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting at the White House, 10 February 1965...," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 11; McCone memorandum to chairman of USIB Critical Collection Problems Committee, "Review of Resources for Intelligence Coverage of Indications of Possible Intervention in South Vietnam by Communist Forces," with attachment, 25 February 1965, CMS Files, Job 82R00370R, box 5, folder 28; Knoche, "Memorandum for the Record," 26 February, with attachments, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 341. (S)

FE Division officer at the time; "there are insufficient consideration, insufficient personnel and insufficient funds devoted to psychological endeavors." Moreover, McNamara's interest in OPLAN 34A faded in 1965 once US bombing began and US ground forces landed. In his judgment, the struggle had become a conventional conflict, and what he later called the "trifling efforts" of MACV-SOG could contribute little to its success.[36] Historians Kenneth Conboy and Dale Andradé have summarized this line of reasoning: "Rather than spending months preparing for the insertion of a sabotage team armed with a few rockets, American planes could now rain down thousands of times more explosives during a single afternoon."[39] (U)

The NSC still wanted to use the "quiet option," however, so in response to its request, McCone submitted a much expanded covert action plan to complement the strategic bombing of the North that he was pressing the administration to undertake. Drafted by the DDP, the 12-point proposal included extending support to political, labor, farmer, and student groups; expanding political action teams in disputed areas; organizing *Montagnard* self-defense units and assisting local partisan groups; expanding harassment teams in Viet Cong-held territory; and developing irregular elements to locate, infiltrate, and seize enemy communications sites. The plan, McCone advised the president, would "improve the viability of the [Saigon] government...promote cohesion within the South Vietnamese military structure...encourage [the] South Vietnamese people to support their government and...participate more actively in the defense of their country." McGeorge Bundy thought CIA's proposal "should be explored urgently." The administration adopted some aspects of the Agency plan, but, assigned implementation of most of them to Army Special Forces. When Bundy raised the idea of recreating CIA's defunct Civilian Irregular Defense Groups, McCone demurred. "[I]t was probably too late...the effort had gone past the point of no return...[and] more or less eroded away." The embassy and MACV opposed the program then and would do so now; could not be reversed. When Bundy asked McCone if he had told the president about the problems with the turnover, the DCI said he had not because "it would be construed as 'bureaucracy and parochialism.'" Bundy chided him for that reasoning, saying "it would be too bad to lose the game out there and then have us say 'If you'd only done it our way we wouldn't have lost.'" Asked if that was fair to the president, McCone simply replied that "the decision had been made and could not be reversed."[40] (U)

In his last month as DCI, McCone made several attempts to persuade Johnson and his Vietnam policy coterie not to let the United States get drawn into a slowly escalating conflict, especially on the ground. His basic point in this final effort was the same as before: Hit the enemy fast and hard with devastating aerial firepower to make them immediately feel the cost of a protracted struggle and scare them to the negotiating table. ROLLING THUNDER as currently implemented, he told the NSC, was having little or no effect on the North Vietnamese. "Hanoi remains unconvinced that they [sic] cannot win out militarily. They are not yet ready to negotiate." He did not oppose committing ground troops, only a piecemeal engagement unsupported by a major escalation of the air war—particularly massive airstrikes north of the DMZ.[41] (U)

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[38] Clandestine missions under OPLAN 34A and the US Navy's DESOTO patrols, briefly suspended after the Tonkin Gulf incidents in August 1964, had resumed in September under NSAM No. 314. After another supposed North Vietnamese attack on US destroyers in the Gulf on 18 September, President Johnson halted the DESOTO patrols. Later that month, the 303 Committee decided to review monthly mission plans under OPLAN 34A to avoid conflicts such as had occurred in late July and early August when sabotage attacks and ELINT patrols had overlapped. NSAM No. 314 (untitled), 10 September 1964, and Bundy memorandum to the president, "The Gulf of Tonkin Incident, September 18," in *FRUS, 1964–1968, I, Vietnam 1964*, 759, 778–81; Jessup, "Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee, 24 September 1964," and Carter, "Memorandum for the Record...303 Committee Meeting...24 September [1964,]...," McCone Papers, box 1, folder 7. (S)

[39] Ahern, *CIA and the Generals*, 31–33; memorandum to Elder, "Mr. Rowan's Memorandum for the President...," 18 March 1965, McCone Papers, box 3, folder 17; Shultz, 501, 523; Conboy and Andradé, 141. (S)

[40] McCone letter to the president, 31 March 1965, with attached Helms memorandum to McCone, "CIA Proposals for Limited Covert Civilian Political Action in Vietnam," same date, Bundy memorandum, "Key Elements for Discussion...," 1 April 1965, McCone untitled memorandum to Carter, 1 April 1965, and NSAM No. 328 (untitled), 6 April 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 494–97, 508, 512–14, 538; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Mr. McGeorge Bundy...," 19 March 1965, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 16. (S)

The Agency's proposal was one of several multifaceted plans that US military and civilian officials developed around then. When Ambassador Taylor was faced with implementing a 21-point military program, a 41-point nonmilitary program, a 16-point US Information Service program, and CIA's 12-point program, he cabled McGeorge Bundy that US policy seemed to be fashioned "as if we can win here somehow on a point score." Quoted in Leslie H. Gelb with Richard K. Betts, *The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked*, 117. (U)

The day before McCone presented the covert action plan, a Viet Cong car bomb exploded outside the US embassy, killing two Americans and 20 Vietnamese and wounding 200 persons. A CIA secretary was among the dead, and COS Peer de Silva was partially blinded. McCone arranged for a special medical evacuation flight for injured Agency personnel that took them nonstop from the Philippines to California. De Silva, 265–70; Johnson, *The Right Hand of Power*, 432–35. (U)

By then, policymakers knew McCone's refrain by heart, and the president was losing confidence and trust in him. Recently in private, Johnson had described him as someone "that might get offboard later" and should be "view[ed]...very carefully." The president, despite his own doubts about the war ("I don't see any way of winning"; "there ain't no daylight in Vietnam"), was set on his course. Convinced that overwhelming air power could not prevail ("[a]irplanes ain't worth a damn") and that American ground forces must be sent in, he tuned out McCone, who believed just the opposite. With criticism of the administration's limited airstrikes already emanating from some quarters of Congress, the media, and the public, and with the president needing to keep political support for his far-reaching domestic program, McCone's more belligerent position was untenable anyway. The DCI seemed to know this. As political dissent and social discontent grew inside the United States, he realized that the United States would get caught in a contradiction if it went all out to defend South Vietnam from falling to communism. America was trying to be "a shining beacon to the world...[but] unless we look inwardly and straighten up some of the problems here, as long as we have a situation so deteriorating...[a]s long as we've got these race problems, as long as we've got crime, as long as we've got the youth problems...we can't serve as that beacon."[42] (U)

McCone persisted, judging that the harm Vietnam's fall would cause to US national interests outweighed other considerations. After a meeting of the NSC on 1 April 1965, at which Johnson approved a gradual escalation of airstrikes against the North and an active combat role for US troops in the South, McCone circulated a memorandum to Rusk, McNamara, Bundy, and Taylor in which he argued vigorously that the measures were too little, too late. The "slowly ascending tempo" of bombing had not improved the situation on the ground but had made the communists more intractable and increased the likelihood of Soviet or Chinese aid to North Vietnam. If the airstrikes did not achieve measurable results soon, the administration would face growing domestic and international pressure to call them off. "[T]ime will run against us...and I think the North Vietnamese are counting on this." A large but ultimately fruitless commitment of US ground forces appeared almost inevitable to the DCI unless the administration changed tactics.

> I think what we are doing is starting on a track which involves ground force operations which, in all probability, will have limited effectiveness against guerrillas.... [F]orcing submission of the VC can only be brought about by a decision in Hanoi. Since the contemplated actions against the North are modest in scale, they will not impose unacceptable damage on it.... [O]ur proposed track offers great danger of simply encouraging Chinese Communist and Soviet support of the DRV and VC cause if for no other reason than the risk for both will be minimum.... We will find ourselves mired down in combat in the jungle in a military effort that we cannot win, and from which we will have extreme difficulty in extracting ourselves.... [I]f we are to change the mission of the [US] ground forces, we must also change the ground rules of the [air]strikes against North Vietnam. We must hit them harder, more frequently, and inflict greater damage. Instead of avoiding the MiGs, we must go in and take them out. A bridge here and there will not do the job. We must strike their air fields, their petroleum resources, power stations and the military compounds. This...must be done promptly and with minimum restraint.[43] (U)

McCone strongly disputed McNamara's proposal in mid-April 1965 that US bombing stay at its current level

[41] "Summary Notes of the 550th Meeting of the National Security Council," 26 March 1965, McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...NSC Meeting," 21 April 1965, and BNE memorandum, same date, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 482–83, 580, 593, 595. On 6 April, the JCS concurred with CIA that the bombing campaign had not curtailed North Vietnamese military activities significantly. Gen. Earle Wheeler (chairman, JCS) memorandum to McNamara, "Over-all Appraisal of Air Strikes Against North Vietnam 7 February 1965 to 4 April 1965," ibid., 535–37. McCone never indicated—probably because it was beyond his area of responsibility—how many ground troops he thought the United States needed to deploy in Vietnam, but evidently he thought the 82,000 called for in the Pentagon's schedule in late April was not enough. Department of State telegram to Embassy Saigon, DEPTEL 2397, 22 April 1965, ibid., 602. (U)

[42] *Reaching for Glory*, 186, 194, 213; transcript of McCone interview with Evans and Alsop, 3 February 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 2. Johnson's suspicion of McCone's connections to the Kennedys showed in January 1965 when he complained that the late president's loyalists were accusing him of using the DCI to blame John Kennedy for the Vietnam stalemate. "[T]hey have these little parties out at Georgetown...they had a party last night...and the Kennedy crowd decided that I had framed up [sic] to get [the] Armed Services [Committee] in the Senate to call McCone to put the Vietnam War on Kennedy's tomb. And that I had a conspiracy going on to show that it was Kennedy's immaturity and poor judgment that originally led us into this thing." McCone did not make such a statement to the committee during his January 1965 appearance. *Reaching for Glory*, 157. (U)

[43] McCone untitled memorandum to Rusk, McNamara, Bundy, and Taylor, 2 April 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 522–24. In his memoir, President Johnson selectively quoted the parts of this memorandum in which McCone endorsed heavy bombing—implying that the DCI approved of ROLLING THUNDER—while omitting those that expressed his opposition to an American role in the ground war. Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, 140. (U)

and more US ground troops be sent to the South. (The first 3,500 Marines had landed near Da Nang on 8 March, and more Marines, authorized to conduct offensive operations, deployed to Hue in April.) The secretary of defense said increased deployments were necessary to protect US forces already there and to release South Vietnamese troops to fight elsewhere. According to the DCI, McNamara's plan changed the purpose of the airstrikes on the North. Instead of being the principal means of forcing Hanoi to negotiate, they would become just another tactic of harassment and interdiction. McCone argued that the communists could absorb present damage, that economic targets in the North must also be hit, and that US ground force deployments must be part of a coordinated strategy to intensify pressure against the North on all fronts. Lacking such a strategy, the United States would face a "slow...deliberate...progressive" communist buildup that "would always confront us with an increasing demand for men, increasingly serious problems, and increasing casualties." The Johnson administration had several strategic options in Southeast Asia to choose among in early 1965, some more politically feasible than others. McCone's preferred course may have been no more likely to succeed than the few that were considered, and there was no compelling historical case in favor of unlimited bombing. The most that can be said with certainty about the approach he promoted is that the Johnson administration never tried it.[44] (U)

Marines land near Da Nang in March 1965. McCone advised against waging a conventional ground war in Vietnam. (U)

On his final day as DCI, 28 April 1965, McCone gave President Johnson a letter summarizing his views on the drawbacks of limited airstrikes, the tenacity of the communists in achieving their long-term goals, and the likely political and diplomatic consequences of failing to achieve progress soon. "I am not talking about bombing centers of population or killing innocent people," he assured the president. "I am proposing to 'tighten the tourniquet' on North Vietnam so as to make the communists pause to weigh the losses they are taking against their prospects for gains. We should make it hard for the Viet Cong to win in the south and simultaneously hard for Hanoi to endure our attacks in the north." After hearing McCone make his case one more time, Johnson "accepted the letter and placed it on his desk without comment." McCone concluded his dealings with the administration on Vietnam by observing afterward: "I personally feel this is as far as I can go or, for that matter, as far as the Agency should go in this matter."[45] (U)

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[44] McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...NSC Meeting—20 Apr 65," and "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting of the NSC Executive Committee—22 Apr 65," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 11. (U)

President Johnson authorized the deployment of two more Marine battalions and a Marine air squadron on 6 April in NSAM No. 328. The NSAM also directed an increase in logistics forces in preparation for larger ground deployments, and expanded the mission of US forces from base security to include active combat. NSAM No. 328 was highly secret, distributed only to Rusk, McNamara, and McCone—the minimum needed to carry it out. The president warned them to avoid "premature publicity" about the new deployments and mission. Implementation "should be taken in ways that should minimize any appearance of sudden changes in policy, and official statements on these troop movements will be made only with the direct approval of the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of State." "[T]hese movements and changes should be understood as being gradual and wholly consistent with existing policy." NSAM No. 328 (untitled), 6 April 1965, *FRUS 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 537–39. (U)

[45] McCone letter to the president and "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President alone...," both dated 28 April 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, II, Vietnam, January–June 1965*, 613–15. McCone—with his successor, Adm. William Raborn present—made the same points to Rusk, who deflected the suggestion by saying that McNamara, Bundy, and he had considered the DCI's views but decided to hold to the present course. McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary Rusk...," 27 April 1965, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 16. The day McCone stepped down, Sherman Kent prepared a memorandum for the president, with which OCI and FE Division concurred, supporting the basic points of McCone's 28 April letter. Kent, "Comment on Mr. McCone's Views of 28 April 1965," DCI Files, Job 80R01580R, box 16, folder 341. (U)

McCone's continual pressure for heavier bombing of the North had one unintended effect within the Johnson administration: convincing Clark Clifford to oppose continued escalation. In May 1965, President Johnson asked Clifford to read a private letter in which McCone argued that putting more troops on the ground required a big increase in airstrikes. According to Clifford, "the powerful internal logic of McCone's arguments helped me clarify my thinking," and he advised the president against sending more ground forces to Vietnam. Clifford, 409–10. (U)

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CHAPTER

18

Transition (U)

John McCone's frustrations as Director of Central Intelligence mounted so substantially during the first several months of 1964 that by mid-year he had decided to resign—perhaps imminently. Throughout his professional career he had been used to controlling the organizations he was responsible for, and he was not accustomed to answering to overseers or to competing for influence with equally assertive rivals while wrestling with seemingly insoluble problems. He had captained his engineering and shipbuilding enterprises largely as he had seen fit, and at the Department of the Air Force and the AEC he had wielded command over focused organizations dealing with a relatively narrow range of issues and activities and a limited constituency of patrons and interests. As DCI, in contrast, McCone lacked formal authority over most of the massive and diffuse intelligence bureaucracies that he nominally directed, and he did not secure the political resources in the White House and Congress that would have enabled him to exercise the power he sought. He reportedly told an aide: "I've been trying to get [President] Johnson to sit down and read these papers [the Agency's annual estimates of Soviet strategic intentions]. When I can't even get the President to read the summaries, it's time for me to leave."[1] (U)

In addition to these institutional and political limitations, McCone gave several specific reasons for resigning. His influence in policymaking circles was declining at the same time public criticism of CIA was reaching new levels of intensity. The "frightful" and "sickening" *Invisible Government* episode, as he described it, particularly disheartened him. He confided to a congressional friend in May 1964 that "I took this job over to try and build it [CIA] up and if the attitude around town is to try and knock it down...I have got a wonderful home in Pasadena and I am not going to stay here for 30 minutes [more]." A few weeks later, he told President Johnson for the first time that he wanted to step down soon, saying that he believed he was getting too old to run a large government agency. Speaking in confidence to a trusted journalistic contact several months later, McCone outlined the bureaucratic and political aspects of the job that dissatisfied him.

> [T]here's a great many facets [sic] of this job that are quite out of character with me.... I like to be able to discuss what I'm doing more freely than I can...and I'm very, very sensitive to a responsibility for an agency and for the work of a lot of dedicated men and then have them beaten up unmercifully, and unfairly, and incorrectly, and be unable to answer back.... This is the kind of thing that wakes me up at 3:00 [in the morning]...some of the things that are said are just absolutely incredible.

Lastly, McCone wanted to devote more attention to his business interests, which since the late 1950s he had run in his spare time, and to his and his wife's personal lives.[2] ~~(S)~~

The Search for a Successor (U)

McCone recalled that his initial offer to resign in mid-1964 "changed the intimacy of the relationship [with President Johnson].... I could feel it in a hundred ways." Despite their personal and policy differences, however, the president tried to dissuade the DCI. To avoid creating any political problems for the administration, McCone agreed to stay on, but only until after the November election. In October, he apparently thought he was being rehabilitated. The president asked McCone to accompany him to Herbert Hoover's funeral in New York on the 26th. According to a CIA official who worked with the DCI, he "was as excited as a kid with a new toy." Johnson's gesture was a partisan calculation, however; he figured that as the administration's most prominent conservative Republican, McCone should appear at the funeral of the doyen of the GOP's Old Guard. Despite the lengthy discussion the DCI and the president had while

[1] Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets,* 167. Helms recalled McCone saying several times that one of the reasons he left the government was that he did not get to see the president enough and did not feel that he had enough influence in the White House. Helms [redacted] OH, 8. (U)

[2] Transcripts of McCone telephone conversations with Robert Lovett and Sen. Leverett Saltonstall, 19 and 20 May 1964, McCone Papers, box 10, folder 6; transcript of McCone meeting with Joseph Alsop, 13 March 1965, and interview with Edward Weintal (*Newsweek*), 19 March 1965, ibid., box 9, folder 3. ~~(S)~~

traveling, the trip did not lead to a warming in their relations.[3] (S)

Afterward, Johnson did not try very hard to find a successor to McCone. In mid-December, the DCI reminded the president that he had offered his resignation six months before and had agreed to stay only past the election. It was time to think about a new DCI, he told Johnson. Rumors of McCone's departure were circulated in the press, along with names of possible successors (including Roswell Gilpatric, Cyrus Vance, Nicholas Katzenbach, Maxwell Taylor, Paul Nitze, and Henry Cabot Lodge). McCone complained that the president "hasn't done a damn thing about it [replacing him]—except he talks to Clark Clifford during lunch some days."[4] (S)

At a meeting with Johnson in late February 1965, the DCI took the initiative by submitting a list of 15 candidates and telling the president when he would be leaving. Johnson replied that he had four names under consideration (he did not say which) and would decide soon. In the meantime, he wanted McCone to remain until 1 May. The DCI replied that 1 April or earlier would suit him better. As a compromise, the president proposed that McCone stay until the end of April but feel free to be away from Langley as much as his personal business required. CIA was efficiently organized and well-managed, and Marshall Carter had run it well in McCone's absence before, Johnson remarked.[5] (S)

Who did McCone think should succeed him? He believed an intelligence professional probably would be best suited for the job. He did not want the White House to demean the position of DCI by filling it with a patronage appointment like "some hotshot businessman or chairman of the Democratic National Committee in the State of Colorado." Nor did he think a military commander, unless possessed of unusual abilities, experience, and independence would be appropriate because CIA might become "a tool of the Pentagon." He doubted that an experienced civilian public servant with aspirations to become secretary of defense, secretary of state, or ambassador to a major Western European country would want to risk tarnishing his reputation by serving in the controversy-ridden post. Accordingly, although he personally preferred an outsider—intitially Gilpatric, then Acting Attorney General Katzenbach—McCone recommended Richard Helms ("superb") and Ray Cline ("a man of very great intellectual capacity"), with, according to Walter Elder, a nod toward Helms. McCone thought Lyman Kirkpatrick, the executive director and comptroller, would be "a hell of a good manager" but that his disability would diminish his influence and convey an image of reduced vitality. ("[E]very time an emergency is called...when the cameras are around at the White House doors, if the Director of Central Intelligence has to pull himself into a wheelchair...I think that would be bad.") Regardless of his successor's résumé, McCone believed the new DCI must have a very close relationship with the president—"that if the President was home at eleven o'clock at night and got to worrying over some development in South Vietnam, or what[ever], would call him up and say, 'Jump in your car and come down here and sit beside me on this bed, because I want to talk about this before I go to sleep'"—in short, just the opposite of what McCone had with Johnson.[6] (S)

Much of the search for McCone's successor was conducted by PFIAB Chairman Clifford and John Macy, former head of the Civil Service Commission, who joined the White House in late 1964 as a presidential "talent scout." Besides the intelligence careerists, Clifford and Macy considered defense establishment pillars such as Taylor and Gilpatric. McCone told McGeorge Bundy and Dean Rusk that picking Taylor "would be very damaging" because of the general's long history of conflict with the Agency [redacted] While I knew Taylor well and favorably," McCone said, "no appointment...would be more harmful to the Agency...." Other names floated in the press included Joseph Carroll, the director of DIA, and William Bundy, the assistant secretary

[3] Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*, 167; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with the President—22 October 1964," McCone Papers, box 6, folder 10; transcript of McCone interview with Arthur Schlesinger Jr., 26 February 1965, ibid., box 9, folder 3. (S)

[4] Transcript of McCone interview with Schlesinger, 26 February 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 3; Elder, "McCone as DCI (1987)," 366–67; Robert J. Donovan, "John McCone Resigns as CIA Director," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 December 1964, McCone clipping file, HIC. (S)

[5] Transcript of McCone meeting with Alsop, 13 March 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 3; Elder, "McCone as DCI (1987)," 373. (S)

[6] Bromley Smith (NSC) memorandum to the president, "Your meeting with John McCone today...," 17 November 1964, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXIII, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy...*, 475; transcripts of McCone interviews with Schlesinger, 26 February 1965, and Weintal, 19 March 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 3; transcript of McCone interview with Rowland Evans and Stewart Alsop, 3 February 1965, ibid., folder 2; Helms/McAuliffe OH, 9; Elder/[redacted]OH, 12; Elder/McAuliffe OH1, 35; Elder, "McCone as DCI (1987)," 373–74. (S)

of state for Far Eastern affairs. As of mid-March, McCone said he still did not have the slightest idea whom the president had in mind. At the end of the month, he recalled some years later, Johnson called him and talked about a retired US Navy admiral named William Raborn. In early April, however, Johnson was still privately vetting new names, such as Burke Marshall, an assistant attorney general concerned with civil rights, and David Bell, the director of AID.[7]

Like almost everyone else at CIA, McCone was stunned to hear on 11 April that Johnson had selected Raborn. The admiral was a party loyalist from Texas, had managed the Polaris submarine program, and enjoyed good rapport with Congress. At his staff meeting the following morning, McCone's voice and countenance evidenced his displeasure, although he did not comment on the appointment. Several years later, he termed Raborn—with whom he had worked when the AEC was involved in nuclear-powered submarines—"an unfortunate choice...thrown into a job he wasn't really equipped for.... [A]t no time would I have considered him for that post." McCone observed that the DCI "[had] to be kind of an operational manager and play somewhat the role of a college president"—responsibilities requiring "a different kind of mentality" from that of "a hard-driving, technical man" like Raborn. Beyond the White House's lack of consultation and Raborn's apparent unsuitability, McCone had reason to take the admiral's nomination as a personal slight. As intelligence historian Christopher Andrew has noted, "[b]y appointing Raborn, Johnson showed that he rejected McCone's style of leadership and was more interested in curbing the CIA's independence than in improving the quality of its intelligence. He saw in Raborn a reliably compliant DCI whose administrative efficiency would ensure that the [A]gency did not rock the presidential boat."[8]

McCone and Adm. William Raborn (U)

During the brief transition, McCone took Raborn on courtesy calls around Langley and Washington to introduce the admiral to CIA officers, administration officials, and congressional overseers. The DCI also brought Raborn to some morning staff meetings to acclimate him to the daily flow of business at the Agency. Meanwhile, McCone's work pace slowed as he prepared to step down. He sat for his official portrait, attended an Agency farewell dinner for him and Carter at the City Tavern Club, received the National Security Medal from the president, and said goodbye to Robert Kennedy.[9]

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[7] Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*, 167; Emmette S. Redford and Richard T. McCulley, *White House Operations*, 138; transcript of McCone meeting with [redacted] and William Colby, 14 May 1963, McCone Papers, box 7, folder 3; McCone, "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Mr. McGeorge Bundy...," 19 March 1965, and "Memorandum for the Record...Discussion with Secretary Rusk...," 18 March 1965, ibid., box 2, folder 16; transcript of McCone interview with Weintal, 19 March 1965, ibid., box 9, folder 3; Kirkpatrick Diary, vol. 5, entry for 5 December 1963; Carter-Knoche OH, 15–17; Richard Reston, "Katzenbach Considered for Next CIA Director," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 January 1965, and "The Search for Someone to Fill the Cloak," *Time*, 9 April 1965, McCone clipping file, HIC; McCone [redacted] OH, 22; *Reaching for Glory*, 266. [redacted]

[8] Elder, "McCone as DCI (1987)," 377; Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*, 167; Smith, *The Unknown CIA*, 164; transcript of McCone meeting with Charles Tillinghast (TWA), 13 April 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 4; McCone [redacted] OH, 22–23; Andrew, 324. President Johnson offered the DCI job to Raborn in a telephone call on 6 April 1965. He told the admiral that he wanted someone whom the secretary of defense respected, who had "seasoned judgment," and who could work well with Congress. The president made it clear to Raborn, however, that the appointment was temporary, while Richard Helms—who would be promoted to DDCI—was groomed for the directorship. Helms, Johnson told Raborn, was "a young, attractive fella" who needed "some training and some seasoning" before rising to the top spot. Transcript of Johnson telephone conversation with Raborn, 6 April 1965, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXIII, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy...*, 496–97. Two days later, Raborn telephoned the president and accepted the appointment.

[9] John Warner, "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with Members of CIA Subcommittee of House Appropriations," and "Memorandum for the Record...Meeting with Representatives Rivers and Hebert of the CIA Subcommittee of House Armed Services," 13 April 1965, McCone Papers, box 2, folder 16; McCone calendars, entries for 12–28 April 1965; McCone untitled memorandum to Raborn, 23 April 1965, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 3, folder 67.

Richard Helms speaks at the farewell dinner for McCone and Carter on 26 April 1965. (U)

McCone met with President Johnson alone for the final time as DCI on the day of Raborn's swearing-in, 28 April 1965. McCone reiterated his belief that the president needed to receive personal intelligence briefings and not rely only on written reports, and he recommended that Raborn brief attendees of the Tuesday Lunches. Johnson agreed and indicated that he would work out some arrangement. McCone then urged the president to give to Raborn a letter like the one John Kennedy issued in January 1962 affirming the DCI's leadership of the Intelligence Community and role as the president's chief intelligence adviser. Johnson "felt this would be in order," and subsequently discussed the subject with McGeorge Bundy.[10] ~~(S)~~

Leaving the Oval Office, McCone joined a large CIA delegation at Raborn's installation ceremony at the White House. As President Johnson lauded his new DCI, "tears were coursing down [the admiral's] crimson cheeks and forming tiny drops at the point of his chin," R. Jack Smith recalled. McCone's reaction to his successor's public display is unrecorded. That afternoon, the now-former DCI hosted a luncheon for USIB and the following day left for California. After President Johnson received the first briefing from Raborn, he made it clear that their relationship would not be like the one he had had with McCone. The president ended their meeting by saying in exasperation, "And, I'm sick and tired of John McCone's tugging at my shirt tails. If I want to see you, Raborn, I'll telephone you!"[11] ~~(S)~~

A Public Retirement (U)

The limitations of Raborn's leadership soon became the stuff of corridor legend at Langley. An anonymous Washington wit summed up the Agency's recent history by observing that "Dulles ran a happy ship, McCone ran a tight ship, and Raborn runs a sinking ship." Perhaps out of fear that the admiral's substantive and managerial shortcomings would undo much of what he thought he had accomplished, McCone continually offered the DCI unsolicited advice on intelligence policy and administrative matters large and small. His business interests (as chairman of the Hendy International Company and as a member of several corporate boards) brought him to the East Coast regularly, and two or three times during his first year of retirement he came by Headquarters to counsel the reluctant Raborn. On those occasions, the Agency provided McCone with services customarily given to former directors, including a limousine and an intelligence briefing.[12] (U)

R. Jack Smith, then the DDI, was the hapless victim of McCone's hard-charging habits during one visit. Suffering from a bad cold, Raborn told Smith that he did not want to see McCone or anyone else and left the DDI to "handle the

[10] McCone letter to Johnson, 26 April 1965, and McCone memorandum, "Discussion with the President alone on 28 April 1965...," *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXIII, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy...*, 500–502. McCone and Johnson did not discuss the crisis in the Dominican Republic that was about to erupt. ~~(S)~~

[11] White House press release, 28 April 1965, McCone clipping file, HIC; Smith, *The Unknown CIA*, 166; McCone calendars, entries for 28 and 29 April 1965; Helms, 294. ~~(S)~~

[12] Andrew, 324; Smith, *The Unknown CIA*, 176–77. McCone sold his interest in Hendy International in 1969. (U)

problem." Meeting McCone at Dulles Airport, Smith said neither Raborn nor Helms was at Langley and that the car would take the former DCI downtown. Without responding, McCone directed the driver to go to Headquarters. After they arrived and had taken the elevator from the executive garage to the seventh floor, Smith tried to steer his guest to his offices, but McCone turned toward the DCI suite, and, writes Smith:

> sailed into the Director's outer office at flank speed and without breaking stride opened Admiral Raborn's closed door and walked through. The Admiral sat at his desk...clutching a piece of Kleenex. Before he even sat down, McCone had already said, "Admiral, there are a couple of things I want to take up with you." I stood behind him silently indicating my helplessness. As I retreated in chagrin I met Dick Helms coming in the doorway, and my defeat was complete. As I explained to both men later, I could not have stopped John McCone from confronting Admiral Raborn that day except by a hard tackle below the knees.[13] (U)

At other times, McCone conveyed to Raborn his thoughts on "the very serious erosion of public confidence in CIA because of unwarranted attacks which unfortunately go unanswered"; suggested opportunities for the admiral to request intelligence studies and streamline the reporting process; proposed that the DCI portraits and autographed photographs of the presidents be moved to more visible locations; and offered to help Raborn deal with a proposed investigation of CIA by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In 1966, he urged Raborn to travel to Vietnam, as he himself had twice, to get a firsthand look at the political, military, and intelligence situation there.[14] (U)

The Agency retained McCone as a consultant until 1973. In 1966, he worked with CIA in responding to a request from the *New York Times* that he review a draft article critical of the Agency. He recommended that the *Times* not run the report and then proposed many editorial changes, some of which were made. According to Harrison Salisbury of the *Times*, "McCone's intervention had not weakened the series; it had reinforced it because his views had been tested and the stories rechecked and strengthened in the light of his observations." McCone also periodically offered advice to then-DCI Richard Helms. In 1967, for example, he briefed Helms on Mideast oil matters and asked him to pass on to the administration an idea for establishing a buffer zone between Egypt and Israel. Helms disagreed with the concept and presumably did not convey McCone's notion to the White House.[15] (S)

In 1973, McCone asked CIA to terminate his consultancy after his involvement in the Agency's covert action in Chile in 1970 came under congressional scrutiny.[16] In mid-1970, the US government again mobilized clandestine resources to keep the perennial socialist candidate, Salvadore Allende, from winning the Chilean presidential election. Also again, American business leaders offered corporate money to CIA for use in supporting Allende's opponents. This time the group of concerned executives and industrialists included McCone. Since 1965, he had been a member of the board of directors of International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT)—a sure target for nationalization under an Allende government because of its extensive economic and political influence in Chile. Through his contacts with Helms, McCone set in motion a series of discussions between ITT and CIA about the Chilean election. On his own initiative, McCone met with Helms several times during May and June 1970 to discuss the situation. According to Helms, McCone seemed to think the Agency could repeat its successful intervention in 1964 when he was DCI and was dissatisfied that CIA was not mounting a massive covert operation this time. McCone pressed Helms to send an Agency representative to talk with ITT's chief executive officer, Harold Geneen. In a meeting in mid-July with Will-

[13] Smith, *The Unknown CIA*, 176–77. (U)

[14] McCone letters to Raborn, 25 October 1965 and 20 January and 7 May 1966, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 3, folders 67 and 68. (U)

[15] McCone personnel file no. 35335, Office of Personnel Files; White untitled memorandum to Raborn, 9 May 1966, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 4, folder 82; Helms briefing notes and letter to McCone, 21 July 1967, McCone Papers, box 11, folder 3; McCone letter to Raborn, 13 May 1966, ER Files, Job 80R01580R, box 3, folder 67; Harrison E. Salisbury, *Without Fear or Favor*, 522–26; McGeorge Bundy memorandum, "Briefing by Mr. John McCone on the Importance of Middle East Oil to the United States," 29 June 1967, *FRUS, 1964–1968, XXXIV, Energy Diplomacy and Global Issues*, 452–56. (S)

[16] Sources for this paragraph and the next are: McCone-Colby correspondence, 19 June and 2 July 1973, ER Files, Job 80M01066A, box 14, folder 23; Hathaway and Smith, 84–85, 91; Richard Helms oral history interview by Robert M. Hathaway, Washington, DC, 15 June 1983, 4–5; *Church Committee Hearings, Volume 7: Covert Action*, Appendix A, "Covert Action in Chile, 1963–1973," 166–72, 205; US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, *The International Telephone and Telegraph Company and Chile, 1970–71*, 2–6, 9–10, 16; Robert Sobel, *ITT: The Management of Opportunity*, 307, 312–13; Anthony Sampson, *The Sovereign State of ITT*, 269, 276; Eileen Shanahan, "McCone Defends I.T.T. Chile Fund Idea," *New York Times*, 22 March 1973, and "McCone Says Memos on Chile Authentic," *Washington Post*, 31 March 1972, McCone clipping file, HIC. (S)

iam Broe, then head of WH Division, Geneen offered to give CIA a "substantial" fund (later calculated at $1 million) to pass along to Allende's principal opponent. Broe declined, citing the US government's prohibition against backing a specific candidate, but he encouraged ITT to provide the money directly to the campaign. Company representatives, guided by CIA advice, eventually passed approximately $350,000 to the National Party. McCone presumably was witting of these activities. ~~(S)~~

At the ITT board of directors' monthly meeting in early September 1970, just after Allende won a plurality of the popular vote, Geneen told McCone privately that he would put up $1 million of ITT's funds to support any US policy to build opposition to Allende before the Chilean legislature voted on the president in November. (Under the Chilean constitution, when no candidate won an absolute majority in the plebiscite, the Congress would select a president from the two candidates with the most votes.) McCone concurred with the idea and a few days later met with Helms and the national security adviser, Henry Kissinger—both members of the NSC's 40 Committee, successor to the Special Group and the 303 Committee—to convey ITT's offer. Kissinger said he would get back to McCone if the administration had a plan, but McCone said Kissinger never did. Later in September, as the second phase of the election drew nearer, CIA proposed a large-scale program to disrupt the Chilean economy as a way of encouraging Christian Democrats to vote against Allende or, failing that, to undermine the new government. The DDP, Thomas Karamessines, telephoned McCone to request his approval of the scheme, but McCone did not think the plan would work and so informed Geneen, who decided not to take part in it. CIA eventually spent between $800,000 and $1 million to influence the vote, which Allende won. ~~(S)~~

McCone does not appear to have had any part in subsequent US efforts to destabilize Allende's government, which fell in a military coup in 1973. When questioned at the time by Sen. Frank Church about CIA-ITT activities toward Chile, McCone said he "would personally be very distressed" if a foreign government or corporation tried to influence a presidential election in the United States. He testified that ITT intended the money it placed in Chile during the election as economic aid, prompting incredulous senators to note how inconsequential the amount was when compared to official US assistance of $1 billion. McCone did not persuade the legislators that ITT's intentions in Chile or its dealings with CIA were as innocuous as he claimed, but he did not incur any sanction for either his actions or his testimony.[17] (U)

McCone took part in other public affairs not related to intelligence during the late 1960s and early 1970s. President Johnson had placed him on a committee studying the feasibility of a supersonic transport aircraft, and he stayed on the panel following his resignation. His business experience and contacts and his knowledge of the OXCART's development was useful to the committee's work. (The US government decided in the early 1970s, however, not to develop an SST.) After race riots broke out in Los Angeles's Watts District in the summer of 1965, McCone—a lifelong resident of California—headed a committee appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown to investigate urban violence and racial relations in the United States. The committee tried to allocate blame for the riots evenhandedly and proposed an agenda of economic and educational programs targeting urban minorities. Two years later, President Johnson appointed McCone to an 18-member committee to determine how business and labor resources could be mobilized to attack poverty in the inner cities. McCone made overtures to the new Nixon administration in 1969, and in one instance discussed PFIAB with the president. During Nixon's second term, McCone served on the general advisory committee of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.[18] (U)

[17] In November 1976, McCone was called to testify before a federal grand jury hearing evidence about Richard Helms's perjury before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1973. McCone wrote to then-DCI George Bush that he "had little recollection of discussions that took place…several years ago…. I was something less than the most informative witness and, at times, was concerned that the jury might think I was 'stonewalling' which was not the case." McCone letter to Bush, 18 January 1976, ER Files, Job 79M00467A, box 2, folder 21. (U)

[18] McCone [redacted] OH, 20; transcripts of McCone meetings with [redacted] 1 and 13 April 1965, McCone Papers, box 9, folder 4; Robert M. Fogelson, comp., *The Los Angeles Riots*; Wallace Turner, "McCone Heads Panel of 8 to Study Riots on Coast," *New York Times*, 20 August 1965, Robert B. Semple, "U.S. Panel Named to Attack Slums," ibid., 4 June 1967, Peter Hart, "Watts Commission Will Publish Findings," ibid., 31 October 1965, "Nixon Taps 4 Advisers," *Oakland Tribune*, 1 October 1973, McCone clipping file, HIC; Elder memorandum to Helms, "Meeting with Mr. McCone," 26 May 1969, McCone Papers, box 11, folder 7. During the 1966 gubernatorial campaign in California, Republican candidate Ronald Reagan said that, if elected, he would put McCone in charge of a committee to investigate campus unrest at the University of California. McCone had been on the university's Board of Regents and, as mentioned in Chapter 1, was concerned about student and faculty radicalism there. After he took office, Governor Reagan did not establish the committee. Lou Cannon, *Reagan*, 148; Bill Boyarsky, *Ronald Reagan: His Life and Rise to the Presidency*, 96. (U)

As the Agency's relations with Congress and reputation with the public deteriorated in the early and mid-1970s, McCone decided that CIA must retreat from some of its traditional positions on openness and oversight. The scandals surrounding the Agency had so damaged its image, he concluded, that major changes were needed to end the criticism and restore confidence in it. In 1972, he endorsed a bill to require the Agency to distribute estimates to Congress and regularly report to the House and Senate committees on foreign affairs as well as the usual oversight committees. In 1975, McCone suggested to the Rockefeller Commission that PFIAB be strengthened, that a joint congressional oversight committee be established, and that CIA's name be changed (because it "is so tainted.") Later that year, he volunteered to apprise the Pike Committee—the House of Representatives' investigative committee, chaired by Rep. Otis Pike (D-NY)—of some of the Intelligence Community's accomplishments. He told Vice President Nelson Rockefeller that "I think I'd better go talk to this man Pike. He's off the reservation." Pike replied that he was not interested in hearing about the Cuban missile crisis again and never met with McCone. In addition, McCone proposed the creation of an interagency subcommittee of the NSC that would monitor all CIA activities, not just covert action. In public testimony to a Senate committee in 1976, he repeated his call for the creation of a join congressional oversight committee.[19] (S)

McCone at the groundbreaking ceremony for the New Headquarters Building in May 1984. Also pictured are his former executive assistant, Walter Elder (l); William Raborn (c); James Schlesinger and William Colby (r). (U)

At the same time he was espousing these ideas, which contradicted positions he had taken as DCI, McCone defended the Agency in two widely circulated publications. His essay on "Foreign Intelligence in a Free Society" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* yearbook for 1976 explained in objective terms why intelligence collection and analysis "is an indispensable service for any government having even the most elementary international associations." He made the same case, with a slightly sharper pen, in a *TV Guide* article in early 1976, "Why We Need the CIA." In both pieces, he recognized that "changes must be made to extinguish...criticism [and] to restore confidence...[in] an on-going, dynamic foreign intelligence service."[20] (U)

McCone's participation in CIA and intelligence affairs lasted into the 1980s. He was one of the few ex-Agency officials who supported President Jimmy Carter's controversial nomination of Theodore Sorensen, John Kennedy's speechwriter, to be DCI. While a member of the NSC Executive Committee during the Cuban missile crisis, he had been particularly impressed with Sorensen's abilities. McCone served on the Citizens Advisory Committee on Cuba, which President Carter had convened after the so-called "discovery" of a Soviet army brigade in Cuba in 1979. He joined

[19] Thomas B. Ross, "McCone Backs Bill to Give Congress CIA Reports," *Chicago Sun-Times*, 28 March 1972, and Reuters wire service report no. 1436, 10 October 1975, McCone clipping file, HIC; Elder untitled memorandum of McCone meeting with Rockefeller Commission staffers on 17 April 1975, OIG Files, Job 80B00910A, box 25, folder 11; Elder/[redacted]OH, 45; McCone testimony to Senate Committee on Government Operations, 26 January 1976, *Oversight of U.S. Government Intelligence Functions: Hearings Before the Committee...*, 189 (S)

[20] McCone, "Foreign Intelligence in a Free Society," *Britannica Book of the Year: 1976*, 241–42; idem, "Why We Need the CIA," *TV Guide*, 10 January 1976, 6–10. McCone donated his $500 honorarium for the *Britannica* article to the Agency's education fund. McCone letter to William Colby, 24 September 1975, ER Files, Job 80M01066A, box 1, folder 6. (U)

that impressive coterie of "senior statesmen"—the other members were McGeorge Bundy, Brent Scowcroft, John McCloy, Sol Linowitz, David Packard, Dean Rusk, William Rogers, Henry Kissinger, Roswell Gilpatric, George Ball, W. Averell Harriman, Nicholas Katzenbach, and James Schlesinger—in spending a day at CIA Headquarters questioning Agency officers about the nature of the supposed deployment and examining old intelligence reports. The panel concluded that the unit had been in Cuba since the missile crisis and that the Intelligence Community had lost track of it sometime during the preceding 16 years. McCone, presumably more defensive than the others about CIA's lapse, appears to have tried to implicate the Soviet Union in some sort of indiscretion and said the United States should "take steps to rectify the situation"—though he did not specify what.[21] (U)

During the Reagan administration, McCone served on the President's Commission on Strategic Forces (also known as the Scowcroft Commission), which recommended ways to reduce American vulnerability to a first strike. In interviews for books and newspapers, he tried to set the record straight about CIA during the contentious directorship of William Casey. (On his trips to Washington, McCone often stopped by Headquarters to see the DCI.) In 1982, the Agency gave McCone the William J. Donovan Award in recognition of his contributions to the intelligence profession and, Casey said in his speech, of McCone's service as a "citizen statesman and...citizen soldier." In 1987, President Reagan presented him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor the US government can bestow on private citizens. The following year, McCone was named honorary chairman of the advisory board of the National Intelligence Study Center, a private information clearinghouse for intelligence scholars. He also was a trustee of the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California during this period.[22] (U)

By the end of the decade, McCone's health was failing. On 14 February 1991 at the age of 89, he died of a heart attack at "Blue Stars," his home in Pebble Beach, California, overlooking Carmel Bay. He was buried nearby at the Carmel Mission.[23] (U)

[21] Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*, 348, n. 9; Clifford, 637–38; Prados, *Keepers of the Keys*, 405; Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977–1981*, 350–52. (U)

[22] Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War*, 115; Kevin Howe, "Ex-CIA Boss McCone, Now Retired, Keeps His Eye on the Spy Business," *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 27 May 1982, "Former Chief of C.I.A. Honored by O.S.S. Members," *New York Times*, 22 May 1982, and "10 to Receive Freedom Medal," *USA Today*, 23 June 1987, McCone clipping file, HIC; Herbert E. Meyer, comp., *Scouting the Future: The Public Speeches of William J. Casey*, 270–71; *CIRA Newsletter* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 34–35; *Foreign Intelligence Literary Scene* 8, no. 2 (1989): 1. (U)

[23] Glenn Fowler, "John A. McCone, Head of C.I.A. in Cuban Missile Crisis, Dies at 89," *New York Times*, 16 February 1991: sec. I, 15; Myrna Oliver, "John A. McCone, 89; Helped Establish CIA," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 February 1991: A34. (U)

A DCI for His Times (U)

Arthur Schlesinger Jr., historian and adviser to President John F. Kennedy, wrote the first assessment of John McCone as DCI in early 1965, before McCone resigned. The evaluation holds up well, almost 40 years later. McCone, Schlesinger concluded, was a "cautious, realistic, and self-effacing" director who

> repaired morale within the Agency, instituted measures to keep the CIA and himself out of the newspapers...restored its relations with the State Department and the Congress, if not altogether with the Department of Defense...declin[ed] to allow his own views to prejudice the intelligence estimates...[and] showed a fair-mindedness which shamed some of us who had objected to his appointment.

Just after McCone died in 1991, then-DCI William Webster described the sixth director as "sharp, tough, and demanding...a highly effective and widely respected leader." In 2004, then-acting DCI John McLaughlin—noting similarities between the straits CIA found itself in after the Bay of Pigs debacle and the intelligence controversies of Operation Iraqi Freedom—described the way McCone handled himself inside what President Kennedy called the "bull's eye:"

> He would lead an Agency that was, for the first time in its history, under intense scrutiny and criticism.... If McCone was at all uneasy about the challenges before him, he did not let it show. With the confidence and decisiveness of an experienced manager, he learned what he needed to know—and he learned it fast.... He was a leader suited for a tough business in a tough time.[1] (U)

McCone was the right DCI for the times—the manager *and* leader CIA needed desperately in the early 1960s, when the Agency faced an uncertain future in the wake of the Bay of Pigs humiliation. A president other than Kennedy may well have decided to put a submissive bureaucrat in charge with orders to downsize or dismantle it; even Kennedy, the dynamic cold warrior, briefly thought of doing so. He could not envision winning the Cold War without CIA, however, and needed a DCI like McCone to make sure the administration's clandestine arsenal was used as effectively as possible. (U)

McCone fulfilled the Kennedy administration's expectations and more than ably completed the missions he was assigned. He brought his lengthy experience in business and government, his keen intellect, his political sophistication, and his forceful personality to bear on CIA's manifold administrative and political problems. He restored balance to the Agency's activities by reemphasizing its preeminent missions—collecting secret foreign intelligence and providing strategic warning and analysis to US policymakers—and keeping close watch over CA operations. Except for minor imbroglios over covert actions and information disclosures with Congress and the media, he kept CIA out of public controversy. When McCone left Langley 42 months after his appointment, the Agency and the Intelligence Community were in far better shape to conduct their business than when he arrived. (U)

Like Walter Bedell Smith, McCone was an archetype of the "manager-reformer/outsider" DCI, and he showed that a career as a Washington insider is not essential to running the community effectively. There are, of course, limits to how far a DCI can live apart from the capital scene and still be successful. James Schlesinger and Stansfield Turner demonstrated that point, and they did not help themselves with their arrogance and hostility toward clandestine operations. A DCI who, like McCone, comes from beyond Washington determined to make changes, has political skills and connections, appreciates the community's bureaucratic culture, and enjoys the support of the president, can accomplish much in making the intelligence services major contributors to American foreign policy. (U)

The watchwords of McCone's directorship were productivity, efficiency, and accountability. These he tried to achieve through centralization and the appointment of trusted and experienced subordinates. He eschewed management systems and models, and he did not proliferate sub-bureaucracies. He convened working groups and special

[1] Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 429; "Statement from Judge William H. Webster on John McCone," 15 February 1991, HS Files, Job 03-01742R, box 6, folder 9; "A/DCI McLaughlin Congratulates New SIS Officers," *What's News*, no. 1325, 3 August 2004. (U)

panels to address specific issues but disbanded them after they finished their assignments. McCone thought that intramural competition—which he distinguished from offices' efforts to complement each other's activities—was corrosive, especially at lower levels. He wanted lines of authority, responsibility, and function clearly defined from the top down. Striving to be a true D/CIA, McCone brought more authority into the Office of the DCI and put trustworthy and knowledgeable insiders in charge of the key operations and directorates. They kept him fully informed through morning staff meetings and the reenergized DCI Executive Committee. (U)

McCone accomplished most of the internal managerial goals he set for himself. Despite his reputation as a hardheaded executive, he played the bureaucratic game adeptly, knowing that as an outsider he could not run CIA by seventh floor edict. After 30 years in the private sector and the US government, he knew the difference between acting decisively and acting precipitously. Cognizant of the cultural differences within the Agency, he did not—as did Stansfield Turner and John Deutch—bring in a cadre of former associates to populate the upper echelon, nor did he try to run a unique government organization by business school paradigms. He realized that CIA had some singular specialties and let the career experts practice them. (U)

Externally, McCone had more difficulty. Probably his biggest misstep in community affairs was his initial handling of the dispute with the Department of Defense over running NRO. The controversy was clear evidence that the DCI—then wielding command authority over only one-sixth of the community's resources—did not direct something called "central intelligence." When adjustments of the traditional CIA-Pentagon joint management of NRO became necessary, McCone negotiated away too much administrative and budgetary authority to the Pentagon, wrongly counting on personal relationships to offset the bureaucratic disadvantage in which he left CIA. He soon entered an interagency slugfest to regain the ground he had surrendered, in an effort that took up more of his time than any issue except Vietnam. (U)

Two of McCone's signal accomplishments as DCI came in the areas of science and technology and analysis. With his engineering background and previous work at the Pentagon and the AEC, he was almost ideally equipped to lead the community early in a revolution in technical intelligence. McCone's centralization of CIA's scientific and technological activities into a new directorate enabled him to mobilize Agency resources more efficiently and added to CIA's influence in this increasingly important aspect of the community's work. He not only understood many of the design intricacies of the new overhead systems, but he knew enough about the politics of the military-industrial complex to be able to preserve for CIA a major role in the National Reconnaissance Program. A less combative or less knowledgeable DCI almost certainly would have been far less effective at protecting the Agency's interests in the new era of technical collection—arguably the community's most vital contribution to Cold War intelligence. (U)

McCone also raised the prominence of intelligence analysis in the national security decisionmaking process. For intelligence analyses to be influential—let alone be read at all—they had to answer the questions the policymakers were asking. It was not enough to tell them what CIA thought was important. McCone regarded relevance, accuracy, objectivity, and timeliness as the keys to making intelligence analysis worthwhile. Except for the Vietnam special estimate in 1963, he kept his policy role from influencing his supervision of the community's analytic efforts. He was an empiricist who could be, and many times was, argued out of a judgment by facts or compelling logic. To him, the estimative process existed to inform policymakers, not to press a case or plead a cause. (U)

McCone did not win all his bureaucratic fights, but he established the authority of the DCI as the US government's national intelligence officer. He came to Langley with a "vision" of how the community should be run and worked assiduously to bring it to fruition. When he prevailed, he did so largely by building respect for himself and his ideas across organizational lines, even if he was often hard to work with. His reputation for integrity and candor served him well in interdepartmental and congressional settings; few officials or legislators ever accused him of being devious or playing political games. From McCone's time on, the DCI would be regarded (even if at times only formalistically) as director of central intelligence, not just director of CIA. Later DCIs—for reasons of personality or politics—were more passive in carrying out their duties or served under presidents who were indifferent or hostile to CIA. Nonetheless, McCone ensured that when a president who cared about intelligence took office and appointed an activist DCI, the Agency and the community would be well prepared to serve both. (U)

In the early 21st century debate over intelligence reform, many of McCone's views would resonate. A "McCone perspective" would involve giving *more* power to the DCI—making the position a true director of the Intelligence Community, with authority over the programs, budgets, and personnel of *all* intelligence agencies, and answerable to the president. McCone attempted to make himself a "chairman of the board" of "Intelligence, Inc." in a way that resembles current proposals to establish a national intelligence director with the statutory authority to coordinate all activities of community "operating companies" such as CIA, NSA, and NRO. McCone most likely would have regarded that reform as far more preferable to creation of large interagency centers combining operations and analysis on specific issues or decentralization of authority over intelligence affairs to purely civilian and military departments under their own directors reporting to cabinet secretaries. McCone would also have endorsed giving the DCI command authority over "national" or "strategic" intelligence agencies, leaving "departmental" and "tactical" components—INR, DIA, and the other military and civilian intelligence offices—under their respective cabinet secretaries. (U)

At the same time that McCone demonstrated the importance of being close to the White House, he revealed the risks of trying *too* hard to be close. As Richard Helms—a very different type of DCI—observed,

> Each President has to be dealt with by a Director according to his personality and according to his way of doing business.... Every President is going to do his business the way he wants to do it. You say, well, he should discipline himself, but they never do. They do it exactly the way they want to do it. Even if you convince them that they ought to do it differently, they'll never do it for more than twice differently, and then they go back to the way they wanted to do it before.... The notion that a Director should constantly see[,] and be in the presence of[,] the President is *not* necessarily true. As a matter of fact, he can become an irritant.... You either adjust your production to the man you have in the office or you're going to miss the train.[2]

McCone came on too strong with Lyndon Johnson in the early weeks of their relationship. With uncharacteristic obtuseness, he failed to adapt his approach to suit the new president's preferences. Then he compounded his error by constantly caviling about the administration's policy in Vietnam. In short, McCone almost argued himself out of a job. His disputatiousness and unconcealed dissatisfaction helped bring on the appointment of William Raborn, who knew little about foreign affairs and was chosen mostly because he would not bother the president. (U)

Almost as important for an institution's history are the features of a leader's style that his successors choose *not* to emulate. Richard Helms, for one, learned by McCone's negative example. During his seven-year directorship, he consciously fashioned his management approach to reduce the DCI's policy profile and to avoid bureaucratic battles. Unlike McCone, Helms did not believe the DCI could or should "wear two hats" and that if any director was bold enough, as McCone was, to take on the secretary of defense—by many measures the second most powerful official in Washington after the president—he was sure to lose. Instead, the DCI's role in this more quiescent conception is mainly to "keep the game honest"—to "be at the table" at the pleasure of the president with the facts and objective analysis—while avoiding pointless and self-defeating skirmishes over turf and prestige and staying out of policy discussions as much as possible.[3] (U)

Most of McCone's followers adopted Helms's approach, but neither style alone has guaranteed success. The DCI's standing and accomplishments have depended substantially on whether the president—because of ideology, politics, or something else—is suspicious of or uninterested in intelligence and whether the national security adviser functions as the president's chief intelligence officer (as did Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski). Most DCIs have been unable to influence those variables. On occasion, however, with the right conjunction of world events, personalities, and political needs, a DCI has reached the top of the national security apparatus. John McCone occupied such a place. (U)

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[2] Helms [redacted] OH, 34–36. ~~(U)~~

[3] See David Robarge, "Richard Helms: The Intelligence Professional Personified," *Studies* 46, no. 4 (2002): 35–43. (U)

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Appendix on Sources

This appendix contains annotated citations for key sources on major topics discussed in the book. (U)

Intelligence Studies and Intelligence History (U)

Essential bibliographies for the historian of intelligence and DCIs are:

- Paul W. Blackstock and Frank L. Schaf Jr., *Intelligence, Espionage, Counterespionage and Covert Operations: A Guide to Information Sources* (Detroit: Gale, 1978);
- James D. Calder, comp., *Intelligence, Espionage, and Related Topics: An Annotated Bibliography of Serial Journal and Magazine Scholarship, 1844–1998* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999);
- Marjorie W. Cline, Carla E. Christiansen, and Judith M. Fontaine, eds., *Scholar's Guide to Intelligence Literature: Bibliography of the Russell J. Bowen Collection* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1983);
- George C. Constantinides, *Intelligence and Espionage: An Annotated Bibliography* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983);
- John J. Dziak, *Bibliography of Intelligence Literature*, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: Defense Intelligence School, 1976);
- Robert Goehlert and Elizabeth R. Hoffmeister, eds., *The CIA: A Bibliography* (Monticello, IL: Vance Bibliographies, 1980);
- William R. Harris, *Intelligence and National Security: A Bibliography with Selected Annotations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968);
- Hayden B. Peake, *The Reader's Guide to Intelligence Periodicals* (Washington, DC: NIBC Press, 1992);
- Neal H. Petersen, *American Intelligence, 1775–1990: A Bibliographical Guide* (Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 1992);
- Walter Pforzheimer, ed., *Bibliography of Intelligence Literature: A Critical and Annotated Bibliography of Open Source Intelligence Literature*, 8th ed. (Washington, DC: Defense Intelligence College, 1985);
- Myron J. Smith, *The Secret Wars: A Guide to Sources in English. Volume I: Intelligence, Propaganda and Psychological Warfare, Resistance Movements, and Secret Operations; Volume II: Intelligence, Propaganda and Psychological Warfare, Covert Operations, 1945–1980; Volume III: International Terrorism, 1968–80* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 1980–81).

The most comprehensive Web site on intelligence is Loyola University's homepage on "Strategic Intelligence"; its address is www.loyola.edu/dept/politics/intel.html. (U)

Helpful surveys of the literature of intelligence are:

- Gary W. Allen and Anthony J. Ramienski, "A Survey of Intelligence Literature," *Military Intelligence* 12, no. 2 (1986): 54–56;
- Russell J. Bowen, "The Quality of Intelligence Literature," *Studies in Intelligence* 34, no. 4 (Winter 1990): 33–35;
- John Ferris, "Coming in from the Cold War: The Historiography of American Intelligence, 1945–1990," *Diplomatic History* 19, no. 1 (Winter 1995): 87–115;
- John Lewis Gaddis, "Intelligence, Espionage, and Cold War Origins," *Diplomatic History* 13, no. 2 (Spring 1989): 191–212;
- Raymond L. Garthoff, "Foreign Intelligence and the Historiography of the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 21–56;
- "A Guide to Further Study," in Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones and Andrew Lownie, eds., *North American Spies: New Revisionist Essays* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 241–53;
- Roger Hilsman, "On Intelligence," *Armed Forces and Society* 8, no. 1 (Fall 1981): 129–43;
- David H. Hunter, "The Evolution of Literature on United States Intelligence," *Armed Forces and Society* 5, no. 1 (November 1978): 31–52;
- Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, "The Historiography of the CIA," *Historical Journal* 23, no. 2 (June 1980): 489–96;
- Mark M. Lowenthal, "The Intelligence Library: Quantity vs. Quality," *Intelligence and National Security* 2, no. 2 (April 1987): 368–73;
- Neal H. Petersen, "Intelligence Literature of the Cold War," *Studies in Intelligence* 32, no. 4 (Winter 1988): 63–72;
- Marc B. Powe, "The History of American Military Intelligence: A Review of Selected Literature," *Military Affairs* 39, no. 3 (October 1975): 142–45;
- Bradley F. Smith, "An Idiosyncratic View of Where We Stand on the History of American Intelligence in the Early Post-1945 Era," *Intelligence and National Security* 3, no. 4 (October 1988): 111–23. (U)

For those who prefer visual media, espionage, covert action, and counterintelligence receive regular treatment on American and British television. US cable networks such as the History Channel, the Learning Channel, and the Discovery Channel have broadcast numerous documentaries on intelligence that include discussions of some DCIs. Some of the programs are fairly breathless in tone, but others are solid in substance. In 1999, the British Broadcasting Company produced an excellent series called *The Spying Game* that handled several complicated intelligence operations with sophistication and insight. An earlier BBC effort, a 1992 serialization of John Ranelagh's sweeping history of CIA, *The Agency: The Rise and Decline of the CIA* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), was equally good. (U)

Directors of Central Intelligence (U)

As indicated in the introduction, the literature on the DCIs is extensive. Allen Dulles (DCI during 1953–61) has received more attention in print—including two full-length biographies and an extensive, once-classified, study of his directorship—than any other DCI. See especially:

- H.W. Brands Jr., "Allen Dulles and the Overthrow of Clausewitz," in Brands, *Cold Warriors: Eisenhower's Generation and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 48–68;
- Kenneth J. Campbell, "Allen Dulles: An Appraisal," *Studies in Intelligence* 34, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 35–41;
- Peter Grose, *Gentleman Spy: The Life of Allen Dulles* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1994);
- Burton Hersh, *The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1992);
- Wayne G. Jackson, "Allen Dulles as DCI," 5 vols., unpublished manuscript HRP 91–2/1, CIA History Staff, 1973, in Record Group 263, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD;
- Leonard Mosley, *Dulles: A Biography of Eleanor, Allen and John Foster Dulles and Their Family Network* (New York: Dial Press, 1978);
- Neal Petersen, ed., *From Hitler's Doorstep: The Wartime Intelligence Reports of Allen Dulles, 1942–1945* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996);
- James Srodes, *Allen Dulles: Master of Spies* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 1999).

Dulles provided his own reflections on Cold War operations and analysis in *The Craft of Intelligence* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963). (U)

After Dulles, William Casey (1981–87) and Richard Helms (1966–73) have been written about more comprehensively than the other DCIs. Casey has been the subject of two books—Joseph E. Persico, *Casey: From the OSS to the CIA* (New York: Viking Press, 1990), and Bob Woodward, *VEIL: The Secret Wars of the CIA, 1981–1987* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987)—and numerous articles, most relating to the Iran-Contra affair and covert actions of the Reagan administration. A perceptive analysis of Casey's leadership is Joseph Lelyveld, "The Director: Running the CIA," *New York Times Magazine*, 20 January 1985: 16–28, 50–51. Casey's denouement is recounted in James McCullough, "Personal Reflections on Bill Casey's Last Month at CIA," *Studies in Intelligence* 39, no. 5 (1996): 75–91; and David Halevy and Neil C. Livingstone, "The Last Days of Bill Casey," *Washingtonian* 23, no. 3 (December 1987): 174–77, 238–45. (U)

One of the most insightful books about CIA, Thomas Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), is more a history of the Agency than a biography of Helms. His directorship is covered a bit episodically in a classified study by Robert M. Hathaway and Russell Jack Smith, *Richard Helms As Director of Central Intelligence, 1966–1973* (Washington, DC: CIA History Staff, 1993). See also David Robarge, "Richard Helms: The Intelligence Professional Personified," *Studies in Intelligence* 46, no. 4 (2002): 35–43; and Thomas N. Bethell, "The Spy Who Went Out in the Cold: The Problem of Choosing Wars Wisely," *Washington Monthly* 12, no. 3 (March 1980): 28–41. Helms wrote a discreet memoir (with William Hood), *A Look Over My Shoulder: A Life in the Central Intelligence Agency* (New York: Random House, 2003).

Scholarship specifically on the remaining DCIs is not substantial. (Titles about John McCone are discussed in the Introduction, and accounts of the DCIs in more general works about CIA are not included here.) The early directors—Sidney Souers (1946), Hoyt Vandenberg (1946–47),

Roscoe Hillenkoetter (1947–50), and Walter Bedell Smith (1950–53)—are discussed in:

- Arthur Darling, *The Central Agency: An Instrument of Government to 1950* (State College: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990);
- Danny D. Jansen and Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, ed., "The Missouri Gang and the CIA," in Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones and Andrew Lownie, eds., *North American Spies: New Revisionist Essays* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 122–42;
- Sara L. Sale, "Admiral Sidney W. Souers and President Truman," *Missouri Historical Review* 86, no. 1 (October 1991): 55–71;
- Phillip S. Meilinger, *Hoyt S. Vandenberg: The Life of a General* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989);
- Charles R. Christensen, "An Assessment of General Hoyt S. Vandenberg's Accomplishments as Director of Central Intelligence," *Intelligence and National Security* 11, no. 4 (October 1996): 754–64;
- Arthur B. Darling, "DCI Hillenkoetter: Soft Sell and Stick," *Studies in Intelligence* 13, no. 1 (Winter 1969): 33–56;
- Ludwell Lee Montague, *General Walter Bedell Smith As Director of Central Intelligence, October 1950–February 1953* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992);
- Kenneth J. Campbell, "Bedell Smith's Imprint on the CIA," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 1, no. 2 (1986): 45–62;
- [redacted] and James Hanrahan, "Notes on the Early DCIs," *Studies in Intelligence* 33, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 27–33. (U)

William Colby's life is chronicled in John Prados, *Lost Crusader: The Secret Wars of CIA Director William Colby* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), and his eventful tenure receives thorough treatment in a classified work by Harold P. Ford, *William Colby As Director of Central Intelligence, 1973–1976* (Washington, DC: CIA History Staff, 1993). Colby's dismissal of the Agency's controversial counterintelligence chief James Angleton is provocatively interpreted by one of Angleton's journalistic acolytes, Edward Jay Epstein, in "The War Within the CIA," *Commentary* 66, no. 2 (August 1978): 35–39. Colby wrote a fair-minded memoir, *Honorable Men: My Life in the CIA* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978) and a somewhat tendentious account of the Vietnam War, *Lost Victory: A Firsthand Account of America's Sixteen-Year Involvement in Vietnam* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989). ~~(S)~~

Besides the above-mentioned sources on Casey, there are relatively few works on the DCIs after Colby. George Bush's single year at Langley (1976–77) is noted in Herbert S. Parmet, *George Bush: The Life of a Lone Star Yankee* (New York: Scribner, 1997), chap. 12, and Nicholas King, *George Bush: A Biography* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1980), chap. 12. Two articles look at Bush's short-lived experiment in competitive analysis on the Soviet threat: Robert C. Reich, "Re-examining the Team A-Team B Exercise," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 3, no. 3 (Fall 1989): 387–403; and Richard Pipes, "Team B: The Reality Behind the Myth," *Commentary* 82, no. 4 (October 1986): 25–40. Bush included some documents from his directorship in his memoir-anthology, *All the Best, George Bush: My Life in Letters and Other Writings* (New York: Scribner, 1999). (U)

After James Schlesinger (1973), Stansfield Turner (1977–81) probably generated more contention per capita than any DCI, but his directorship has not been studied in detail. Some of his management ideas are critiqued in Benjamin F. Schimmer et al., "The Slow Murder of the American Intelligence Community," *Armed Forces Journal International* 116, no. 3 (March 1979), 50–54; and Edward Jay Epstein, "Who Killed the CIA: The Confessions of Stansfield Turner," *Commentary* 80, no. 4 (October 1985), 53–57. Turner provided an account of his tenure and his prescriptions for intelligence in *Secrecy and Democracy: The CIA in Transition* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985). (U)

Preliminary attempts at evaluating William Webster (1987–91) are Mark Perry, "The Case Against William Webster," *Regardie's*, January 1990: 90–95; and Loch K. Johnson, "DCI Webster's Legacy: The Judge's Self-Assessment," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1991): 287–90. The "politicization" issue that beset the directorship of Robert Gates (1991–93) is analyzed in H. Bradford Westerfield, "Inside Ivory Bunkers: CIA Analysts Resist Managers' 'Pandering,'" *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 9, no. 4 (Winter 1996–97): 407–24 (part 1), vol. 10, no. 1 (July 1997), 19–55 (part 2). Gates's pre-DCI career is the subject of David Callahan, "Robert Gates: Bush's Man at Langley," *Foreign Service Journal* 68, no. 12 (December 1991): 14–21. Gates describes his years in the national security establishment in *From the Shadows: The Ultimate*

Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). (U)

An institutional overview of CIA during the Clinton administration, with brief reference to the three DCIs who served in it (R. James Woolsey, John Deutch, and George Tenet), is Christopher M. Jones, "The CIA Under Clinton: Continuity and Change," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 14, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 503–25. On Woolsey (1993–95), see John Prados, "Woolsey and the CIA," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 49, no. 6 (July–August 1993): 33–38; James W. Danan, "Mr. Woolsey's Neighborhood," *Air Force Magazine*, April 1994: 44–47; J. Douglas Orton and Jamie L. Callahan, "Important 'Folk Theories' in Intelligence Reorganization," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 411–29; and David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals* (New York: Scribner, 2001), 191–93, 243–44. (U)

The directorships of Deutch (1995–97) and Tenet (1997–2004) are too recent to have received other than journalistic treatment. For an interesting examination of how Deutch handled a major controversy, see Abraham H. Miller, "How the CIA Fell Victim to Myth Posing as Journalism," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 10, no. 3 (Fall 1997): 257–68. Deutch's post-CIA security problems are discussed, in the context of his fractious directorship, in David Wise, "What the Spymaster Knew," *Talk Magazine*, November 2000: 25–31, and Thomas Powers, "The Whiz Kid vs. the Old Boys," *New York Times Magazine*, 3 December 2000: 98–110. (U)

Tenet's and CIA's relations with Congress are the focus of Chuck McCutcheon, "CIA's Role in Afghan War Restores Tenet's Image on Hill," *Congressional Quarterly*, 2 February 2002, on-line edition. Tenet's role in formulating counterterrorism policy after the 11 September 2001 attacks by Al-Qaeda is detailed in Bob Woodward, *Bush At War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002). Woodward also recounts Tenet's involvement with Operation Iraqi Freedom in *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004). Antithetical analyses of Tenet's leadership before his resignation are provided by Spencer Ackerman and John Judis, "The Operator," *New Republic* 229, 22 September 2003: 18–22, 27–29; and Bill Powell, "How George Tenet Brought the CIA Back from the Dead," *Fortune* 148, no. 8 (13 October 2003): 129–38. (U)

Covert Actions against Cuba (U)

The policy context for the Kennedy administration's campaign against Castro is detailed in Bruce Miroff, *Pragmatic Illusions: The Presidential Politics of John F. Kennedy* (New York: David McKay, 1976), 110–42; and Stephen G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), previewed as "Controlling Revolutions: Latin America, the Alliance for Progress, and Cold War Anti-Communism," in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961–1963* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 106–22. (U)

Operation MONGOOSE has been extensively examined in the following published sources:

- Taylor Branch and George Crile III, "The Kennedy Vendetta," *Harper's Magazine* 251, August 1975: 49–63;
- David Corn, *Blond Ghost: Ted Shackley and the CIA's Crusades* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), chap. 4;
- Lawrence Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), chap. 17;
- Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble": Khrushchev, Castro and Kennedy, 1958–1964* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 142–48, 156–58;
- Warren Hinckle and William W. Turner, *The Fish Is Red: The Story of the Secret War Against Castro* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 110–23, 131–33;
- Herbert S. Parmet, *JFK: The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Dial Press, 1983), 218–21;
- Thomas Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), 170–81;
- Gus Russo, *Live By the Sword: The Secret War Against Castro and the Death of JFK* (Baltimore: Bancroft Press, 1998), chap. 2;
- Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *Robert Kennedy and His Times* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978), 474–80;
- Evan Thomas, *The Very Best Men: Four Who Dared: The Early Years of the CIA* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), chap. 20.

Most of these works also cover the Kennedy administration's post-MONGOOSE covert actions against Cuba. (U)

The Cuban Missile Crisis (U)

More has been written about the Cuban missile crisis than any other episode of the Cold War. Most works about it published before 1990 are listed in Lester H. Brune, *The Missile Crisis of October 1962: A Review of Issues and References* (Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 1985), 83–143; Arthur Gillingham and Barry Roseman, comps., *The Cuban Missile Crisis* (Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Armament and Disarmament, California State University, 1976); and Neal H. Petersen, *American Intelligence, 1775–1990: A Bibliographical Guide* (Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 1992), 252–55. (U)

Useful synopses of the episode are:

- Barton J. Bernstein, "Cuban Missile Crisis," in Bruce W. Jentleson and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Encyclopedia of US Foreign Relations*, 4 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), vol. 1, 387–96;
- G.J.A. O'Toole, *The Encyclopedia of American Intelligence and Espionage* (New York: Facts On File, 1988), 144–49;
- Thomas Parrish, *The Cold War Encyclopedia* (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), 74–76;
- Norman Polmar and Thomas B. Allen, *Spy Book: The Encyclopedia of Espionage* (New York: Random House, 1997), 148–51;
- Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 310–19. (U)

Works since 1990 draw on newly declassified materials in the United States and abroad and on the recollections of an international cast of participants and their associates. The principal titles include:

- Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1999);
- Barton Bernstein, "Understanding Decisionmaking, U.S. Foreign Policy, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *International Security* 25, no. 1 (Summer 2000): 134–64;
- Michael R. Beschloss, *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960–1963* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), chaps. 15–19;
- James G. Blight, *Cuba On the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993);
- James G. Blight, *The Shattered Crystal Ball: Fear and Learning in the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Savage, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1990);
- James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggle with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002);
- Dino Brugioni, *Eyeball to Eyeball: The Inside Story of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Random House, 1991);
- Dino Brugioni, "The Invasion of Cuba," *Military History Quarterly* 4, no. 2:92–101; ed. James A. Nathan, *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992);
- Robert Divine, "Alive and Well: The Continuing Cuban Missile Crisis Controversy," *Diplomatic History* 18, no. 4 (Fall 1994): 551–60;
- Max Frankel, *High Noon in the Cold War: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Random House, 2004);
- Lawrence Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), chaps. 18–24;
- Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble": Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958–1964* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), chaps. 9–15;
- John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), chap. 9;
- James N. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), chap. 8;
- Bernd Greiner, "The Soviet View: An Interview with Sergo Mikoyan," and replies by Raymond L. Garthoff, Barton J. Bernstein, Marc Trachtenberg, and Thomas G. Paterson, *Diplomatic History* 14, no. 2 (Spring 1990): 205–56;
- Anatoli I. Gribkov and William Y. Smith, *Operation ANADYR: US and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Chicago: edition q, 1994);
- James H. Hansen, "Soviet Deception in the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Studies in Intelligence* 46, no. 1 (2002): 49–58;
- James G. Hershberg, "The United States, Brazil, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," in two parts, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 3-20, and no. 3 (Summer 2004): 5-67;

- Roger Hilsman, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Struggle Over Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996);
- *Intelligence and National Security*, special issue on "Intelligence and the Cuban Missile Crisis," 13, no. 3 (Autumn 1998);
- Tony Judt, "On the Brink," *New York Review of Books*, 15 January 1998: 52–59;
- Sergei N. Khrushchev, *Nikita Khrushchev and the Creation of a Superpower* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), chap. 6;
- Richard Ned Lebow, "Domestic Politics and the Cuban Missile Crisis: The Traditional and Revisionist Interpretations Reevaluated," *Diplomatic History* 14, no. 4 (Fall 1990): 471–92;
- Carlos Lechuga, *In the Eye of the Storm: Castro, Khrushchev, Kennedy and the Missile Crisis*, trans. Mary Todd (Melbourne, FL: Ocean Press, 1995);
- David T. Lindgren, *Trust but Verify: Imagery Analysis in the Cold War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000), chap. 3;
- Mary S. McAuliffe, "Return to the Brink: Intelligence Perspectives on the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Newsletter* 24, no. 2 (June 1993): 4–18, and response by Samuel Halpern, "Revisiting the Cuban Missile Crisis," ibid., March 1994: 1–8;
- Gil Merom, "The 1962 Cuban Intelligence Estimate: A Methodological Perspective," *Intelligence and National Security* 14, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 48–80;
- Philip Nash, *The Other Missiles of October: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the Jupiters, 1957–1963* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997);
- James A. Nathan, ed., *Anatomy of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001);
- Thomas G. Paterson, "When Fear Ruled: Rethinking the Cuban Missile Crisis," *New England Journal of History* 52, no.1 (Fall 1995): 12–37;
- "Roundtable Review: *FRUS* on the Cuban Missile Crisis" (containing articles by Raymond L. Garthoff ["Documenting the Cuban Missile Crisis"], Jorge I. Domínguez, ["The @#$%& Missile Crisis"], and Philip Zelikow ["American Policy and Cuba, 1961–1963"], *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 295–334;
- Len Scott and Steve Smith, "Lessons of October: Historians, Political Scientists, Policy-Makers, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *International Affairs* 70, no. 4 (1994): 659–84;
- Sheldon M. Stern, *Averting "The Final Failure": John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003);
- Robert S. Thompson, *The Missiles of October: The Declassified Story of John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992);
- Robert Weisbrot, *Maximum Danger: Kennedy, the Missiles, and the Crisis of American Confidence* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001);
- David A. Welch, "Intelligence Assessment in the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Queen's Quarterly* 100, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 421–37;
- Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999);
- Mark J. White, *The Cuban Missile Crisis* (London: Basingstoke, 1996);
- Mark J. White, "New Scholarship on the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Diplomatic History* 26, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 147–53. (U)

Classified accounts of the crisis focusing on CIA and NSA are:

- [redacted]
- Gregory W. Pedlow and Donald E. Welzenbach, *The Central Intelligence Agency and Overhead Reconnaissance: The U-2 and OXCART Programs, 1954–1974* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1992), 199–211;
- Thomas R. Johnson, *American Cryptology during the Cold War, 1945–1989. Book II: Centralization Wins, 1960–1972* (Ft. Meade, MD: National Security Agency, Center for Cryptologic History, 1995), 317–32. ~~(U)~~

Essential compendia of official documentary sources are:

- Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh, eds., *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002) (this collection is posted, along with several interpretive articles and a thorough chronology, on the Web site of the National Security Archive at www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri.);

- David L. Larson, ed., *The "Cuban Crisis" of 1962: Selected Documents, Chronology, and Bibliography*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986);
- Mary S. McAuliffe, ed., *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1992);
- The National Security Archives' microfiche collection, *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: The Making of US Policy*;
- Two volumes in the Department of State's *Foreign Relations of the United States* series for 1961–63: *Volume X, Cuba 1961–1962* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1997) and *Volume XI, Cuban Missile Crisis and Aftermath* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1996). (U)

NSA has posted several dozen declassified SIGINT documents, along with a useful synopsis of its crisis-related activities, on its Web site at www.nsa.gov/docs/cuba/archive. Those materials are discussed in David Alvarez, "American Signals Intelligence and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 169–76. (U)

Other Web sites with good documentary collections and links are the Cold War International History Project, www.cwihp.si.edu; Mount Holyoke College, "Documents Relating to American Foreign Policy: The Cuban Missile Crisis," www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/cuba; ThinkQuest, "14 Days in October: The Cuban Missile Crisis," www.library.advanced.org/11046/briefing; and Yale University School of Law, www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/diplomacy/forrel/cuba. (U)

John Kennedy's secret recordings of many of the meetings of the NSC ExComm during the missile crisis have become both an indispensable resource for scholars and a matter of disputation. Two edited collections of transcripts of those recordings have been published:

- Ernest R. May and Philip D. Zelikow, eds., *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House during the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997);
- Ernest R. May, Philip D. Zelikow, and Timothy Naftali, eds., *The Presidential Recordings: John F. Kennedy: The Great Crises*, 3 vols. (New Jork: W. W. Norton, 2001); vol. 3 covers the missile crisis and includes an audiovisual CD-ROM. (U)

The significance of omissions and inaccuracies in both of these editions, as well as the utility of recordings vis-à-vis other primary sources, are thoroughly examined in several articles:

- Robert Dallek, "Tales of the Tapes," *Reviews in American History* 26, no. 2 (June 1998): 333–38;
- James N. Giglio, "Kennedy on Tape," *Diplomatic History* 27, no. 5 (November 2003): 747–50;
- David Greenberg, "The Cuban Missile Tape Crisis: Just How Helpful Are the White House Recordings?," *Slate*, 22 July 2003, on-line version at Slate.msn.com/id/2085761/#sb2085838;
- Mark Atwood Lawrence, "The Kennedy Tapes," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (December 2002): 810–14;
- Robert J. McNamara, "A Near Miss," *Reviews in American History* 32, no. 2 (June 2004), 262–66;
- Sheldon Stern, "The 1997 Published Transcripts of the JFK Cuban Missile Crisis Tapes," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (September 2000): 586–93; "Response to Zelikow and May," ibid., no. 4 (December 2000), 797–99; "What JFK Really Said," *Atlantic Monthly* 285, no. 5 (May 2000): 122–28; and the appendix to *Averting the "Final Failure"*;
- Terry Sullivan, "Confronting the Kennedy Tapes: The May-Zelikow Transcripts and the Stern Assessments," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (September 2000): 594–97; "Reacting to Zelikow and May," ibid., no. 4 (December 2000): 800–801;
- Philip D. Zelikow and Ernest R. May, "The Kennedy Tapes: Past and Future," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (December 2000): 791–96. (U)

Southeast Asia (U)

CIA's "covert" war in Laos is starting to receive the scholarly attention it deserves, but the existing bibliography remains much shorter than that for the Vietnam conflict. General information on the political and military situation in Laos and CIA operations there, relevant to McCone's directorship, is available in:

- Nina S. Adams and Alfred W. McCoy, eds., *Laos: War and Revolution* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 139–212;
- Thomas L. Ahern Jr., *Undercover Armies: CIA and Surrogate Warfare in Laos, 1961–1973* (Washington, DC:

Center for the Study of Intelligence, a forthcoming classified study), chaps. 1–9;

- Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present* (New York: Free Press, 1977), 128–47, 158–62;
- Douglas S. Blaufarb, "Organizing and Managing Unconventional War in Laos, 1962–1970," Report R-919-ARPA, prepared for Department of Defense, Advanced Research Projects Agency (n.p.: RAND Corporation, January 1972) (declassified December 1980);
- Timothy N. Castle, *At War in the Shadow of Vietnam: U.S. Military Aid to the Royal Lao Government, 1955–1975* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 1–80;
- CIA, "Chronology of Significant Events in Laos, January 1960–October 1963," History Staff Files, HS/CSG-277, Job 83-00036R, box 2, folder 2;
- William Colby (with James McCargar), *Lost Victory: A Firsthand Account of America's Sixteen-Year Involvement in Vietnam* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989), chap. 12;
- Kenneth Conboy with James Morrison, *Shadow War: The CIA's Secret War in Laos* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1995), 3–161;
- Chester L. Cooper, *The Lost Crusade: America in Vietnam* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1970), 170–72, 182–91;
- [redacted] "Air America, 1946–1972," CIA Miscellaneous Historical Studies No. MISC-9, vol. 5, 339–419, copy in History Staff files;
- Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963, Volume XXIV, Laos Crisis* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1994), 1–530;
- Arthur J. Dommen, *Conflict in Laos: The Politics of Neutralization* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 58–199;
- Arthur J. Dommen, *Laos: Keystone of Indochina* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), 40–89;
- Jane Hamilton-Merritt, *Tragic Mountains: The Hmong, the Americans, and the Secret Wars for Laos, 1942–1992* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 69–112;
- Kenneth L. Hill, "President Kennedy and the Neutralization of Laos," *Review of Politics* 31, no. 3 (July 1969): 353–69;
- Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 91–155;
- Noam Kochavi, "Limited Accommodation, Perpetuated Conflict: Kennedy, China, and the Laos Crisis, 1961–1963," *Diplomatic History* 26, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 95–135;
- [redacted]
- Usha Mahajani, "President Kennedy and United States Policy in Laos, 1961–1963," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 2 (September 1971): 87–99;
- [redacted]
- Herbert S. Parmet, *JFK: The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Dial Press, 1983), 132–55;
- John Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations from World War II through Iranscam*, rev. ed. (New York: William Morrow, 1986), 261–71;
- Keith Quincy, *Harvesting Pa Chay's Wheat: The Hmong and America's Secret War in Laos* (Spokane: Eastern Washington University Press, 2000);
- Christopher Robbins, *Air America* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Son's, 1979), 103–48;
- Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 323–34;
- Richard H. Shultz Jr., *The Secret War Against Hanoi: Kennedy's and Johnson's Use of Spies, Saboteurs, and Covert Warriors in North Vietnam* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999), chap. 6;
- R.B. Smith, *An International History of the Vietnam War: The Kennedy Strategy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 259–75;
- Charles A. Stevenson, *The End of Nowhere: American Policy Toward Laos Since 1954* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 1–154, 194–221, 332–47;
- Hugh Toye, *Laos: Buffer State or Battleground* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 103–97;
- Peter S. Usowski, "Intelligence Estimates and U.S. Policy Toward Laos, 1960–63," *Intelligence and National Security* 6, no. 2 (April 1991): 367–94;
- Roger Warner, *Shooting at the Moon: The Story of America's Clandestine War in Laos* (South Royalton, VT: Steerforth Press, 1996), 1–51, 124–66;
- Edmund F. Wehrle, "'A Good, Bad Deal': John F. Kennedy, W. Averell Harriman, and the Neutralization of Laos, 1961–1962," *Pacific Historical Review* 67, no. 3 (August 1998): 349–77. (U)

Useful overviews of the Vietnam conflict during the time McCone served in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations are:

- Larry Berman, *Planning a Tragedy: The Americanization of the War in Vietnam* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), chap. 3;
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US Policy toward the "Two Chinas" (U)

Good overviews of US policy toward the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China, as it affected McCone's tenure, are:

- Warren I. Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 3rd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 187–91;
- James Fetzer, "Clinging to Containment: China Policy," in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961–1963* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), chap. 7;
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- Noam Kochavi, *A Conflict Perpetuated: China Policy During the Kennedy Years* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002);
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Key policy documents are in the Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963, Volume XXII, Northeast Asia* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1996); idem, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXX, China* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1998); and idem, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963, Volumes XXII/XXIV, Northeast Asia, Laos: Microfiche Supplement* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 1997). Dean Rusk records Kennedy's domestic political calculus of China policy in his memoir *As I Saw It* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 282–84. (U)

The Kennedy Assassination (U)

It is a historiographical oddity that an event of such *Zeitgeist*-altering proportions as the Kennedy assassination has received so little rigorous attention from academics. Instead, in an intellectual corollary to Gresham's Law, bad scholarship has driven out the good and even the mediocre. Journalists of assorted reputations, legal advocates, sensationalizers, political extremists, and so-called "independent researchers" (i.e., buffs and freelancers) preempted the field from historians as the assassination became, in historian Christopher Lasch's apt phrase, "a rich field for the unchecked play of fantasy." (Lasch, "The Life of Kennedy's Death," *Harper's Magazine*, October 1983: 32.) One of the few scholarly treatments of the killing itself is Michael L. Kurtz, *Crime of the Century: The Kennedy Assassination from*

a Historian's Perspective (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982). The conspiracist literature, in contrast, is voluminous, numbering over 2,000 books and thousands of articles and tracts that range enormously in reliability. Useful reference works about this corpus are:

- Anthony Frewin, comp., *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: An Annotated Film, TV, and Videography, 1963–1992* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993);
- James N. Giglio, comp., *John F. Kennedy: A Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), 335–53;
- DeLloyd J. Guth and David R. Wrone, comps., *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: A Comprehensive Historical and Legal Bibliography, 1963–1979* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980). (U)

For an early assessment of the assassination literature that still holds up, see Calvin Trillin, "The Buffs," *New Yorker* 43, 10 June 1967: 41–71. A more recent analysis is Robert Alan Goldberg, *Enemies Within: The Culture of Conspiracy in Modern America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 105–48. Barbie Zelizer, *Covering the Body: The Kennedy Assassination, the Media, and the Shaping of Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) is an interesting examination of how journalists' "first draft of history," and their subsequent reworkings of it, have shaped what we "know" about the assassination. (U)

Recent exemplars of the principal plot theories, with the alleged perpetrators discernible from the titles, are:

- G. Robert Blakey and Richard Billings, *Fatal Hour: The Assassination of President Kennedy by Organized Crime* (New York: Berkeley Books, 1992);
- L. Fletcher Prouty, *JFK: The CIA, Vietnam, and the Plot to Assassinate John F. Kennedy* (New York: Birch Lane Press, 1992);
- William W. Turner and Warren Hinckle, *Deadly Secrets: The CIA-Mafia War Against Castro and the Assassination of J.F.K.* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1992). (U)

John Newman, *Oswald and the CIA* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1993); Gaeton Fonzi, *The Last Investigation* (New York: Thunder Mouth's Press, 1993); and Philip H. Melanson, *Spy Saga: Lee Harvey Oswald and US Intelligence* (New York: Praeger, 1990), try to demonstrate that Oswald was an operative for CIA and/or the KGB. Many other books with mild to ardent conspiracist perspectives have been published during the past 10 years. (U)

The most thorough open source accounts of Yuri Nosenko's defection and treatment are:

- Gordon Brook-Shepherd, *The Storm Birds: Soviet Post-War Defectors* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), chap. 12;
- Edward Jay Epstein, *Legend: The Secret World of Lee Harvey Oswald* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1978), 3–50, 257–74;
- John Limond Hart, *The CIA's Russians* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003), chap. 3;
- Tom Mangold, *Cold Warrior: James Jesus Angleton: The CIA's Master Spy Hunter* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1991), chaps. 12–13;
- David Martin, *Wilderness of Mirrors* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), 153–78. (U)

In *Legend*, Epstein posited the intriguing but unsubstantiated theory that the Soviets recruited Oswald when he was a Marine Corps radar operator at Atsugi Airbase in Japan to steal secrets about the U-2, which flew missions from that installation. After Oswald returned from the Soviet Union to the United States, the Soviets constructed a legend of him as a disillusioned defector to explain why he was in Russia and to conceal his intelligence activities. The Soviets never intended for him to kill John Kennedy, but when he did, they dispatched Nosenko as a false defector to corroborate the legend and, by inference, exonerate the KGB. Nosenko's bona fides, in turn, would be reinforced by another Soviet disinformation agent, [redacted] who had volunteered himself to the FBI two years earlier in New York City but remained under Soviet control. The objective of these tactics was to have Nosenko testify before the Warren Commission that the KGB files he had seen showed that Oswald never had any connection with Soviet intelligence. Epstein elaborates on elements of his interpretation in "The War of the Moles: An Interview with Edward Jay Epstein," *New York*, 27 February 1978: 28–38. *Legend* and Martin's *Wilderness of Mirrors* represented the two sides of the public debate over Nosenko that started in the late 1970s when Agency and Bureau officers began telling their anonymous versions of the still-officially-secret story. Martin's reading of the Nosenko affair deals much less with the assassination and, based heavily on unattributed interviews with James Angleton's opponents in CIA and the FBI, is far more critical of the Agency's long-time CI chief and its handling of Nosenko, Golitsyn, and counterintelligence in general. (U)

Several books on the Nosenko-Golitsyn controversy are reviewed in Cleveland C. Cram, *Of Moles and Molehunters: A Review of Counterintelligence Literature, 1977–92*, CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence Monograph CSI 93-002 (October 1993). Nosenko's knowledge of Oswald is well summarized in Gerald Posner, *Case Closed: Lee Harvey Oswald and the Assassination of JFK* (New York: Random House, 1993), 46–56. CIA officer Richards J. Heuer Jr. incisively examines the flaws in the analysis of Nosenko's case in "Nosenko: Five Paths to Judgment," *Studies in Intelligence* 31, no. 3 (Fall 1987): 71–101, declassified and printed in H. Bradford Westerfield, ed., *Inside CIA's Private World: Declassified Articles from the Agency's Internal Journal, 1955–1992* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 379–414. The allegation that Angleton ordered Nosenko's incarceration has been disproved in Samuel Halpern and Hayden Peake, "Did Angleton Jail Nosenko?," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 3, no. 4 (Winter 1989): 451–64. A recent analysis of the Nosenko case, and Angleton's approach to CI generally, is David Robarge, "Moles, Defectors, and Deceptions: James Angleton and CIA Counterintelligence," *Journal of Intelligence History* 3, no. 2 (Winter 2003): 21–49. (U)

Latin America and the Johnson Administration (U)

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- H.W. Brands, *The Wages of Globalism: Lyndon Johnson and the Limits of American Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 30–61;
- Robert Dallek, *Flawed Giant: Lyndon Johnson and His Times, 1961–1973* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 91–92;
- Philip Geyelin, *Lyndon B. Johnson and the World* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 64–70;
- Walter LaFeber, "Thomas C. Mann and the Devolution of Latin American Policy: From the Good Neighbor to Military Intervention," in Thomas J. McCormick and Walter LaFeber, eds., *Behind the Throne: Servants of Power to Imperial Presidents* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 166–203;
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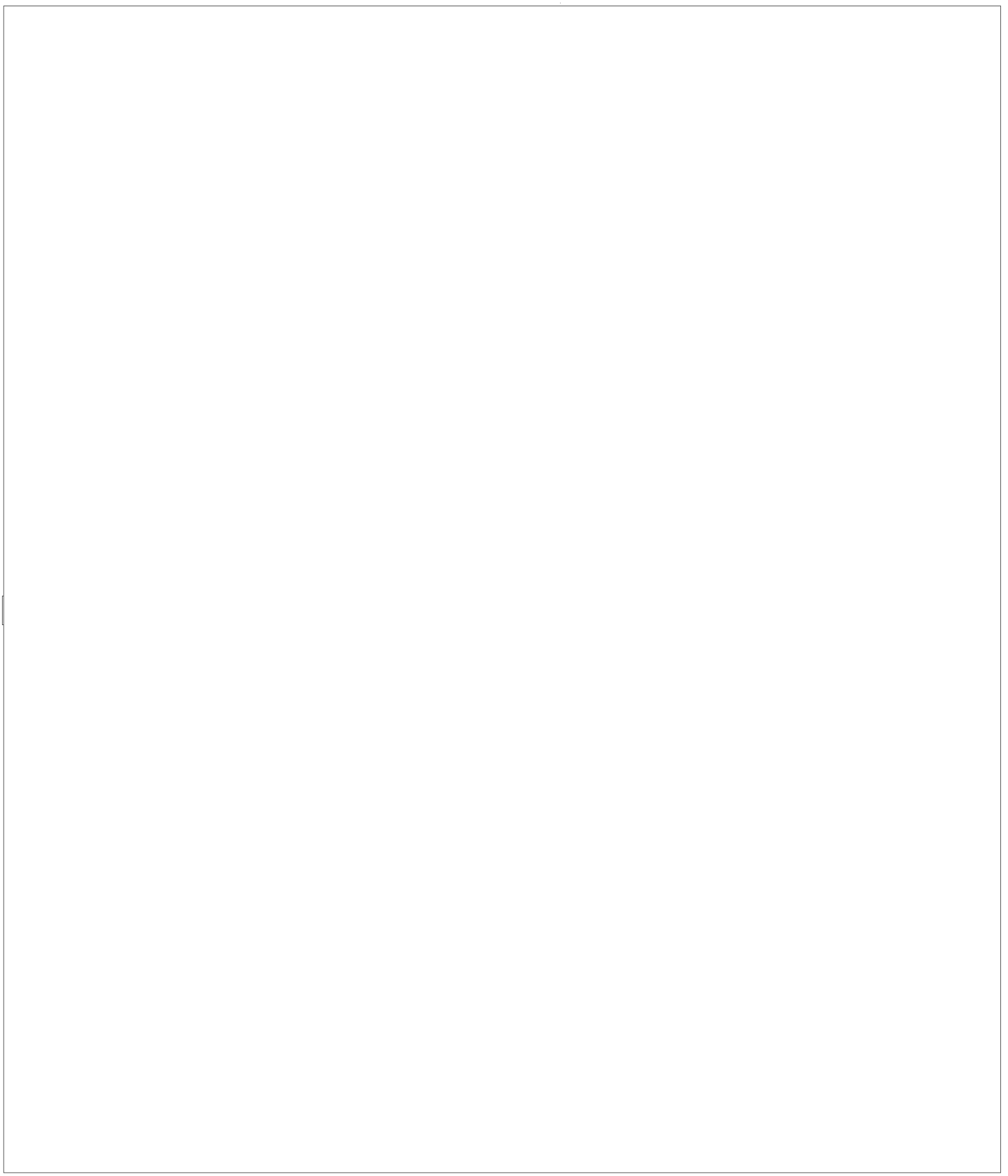

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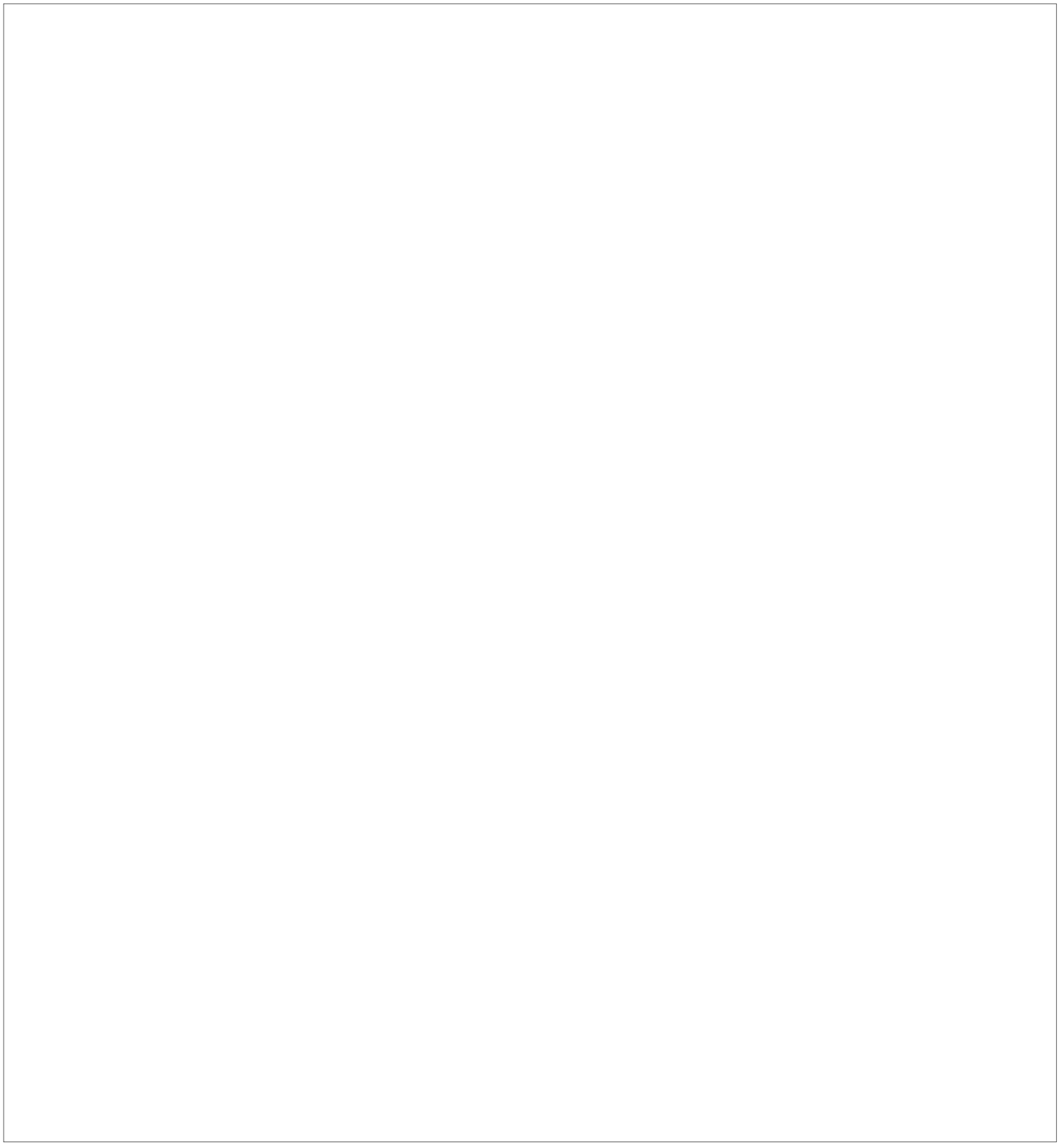

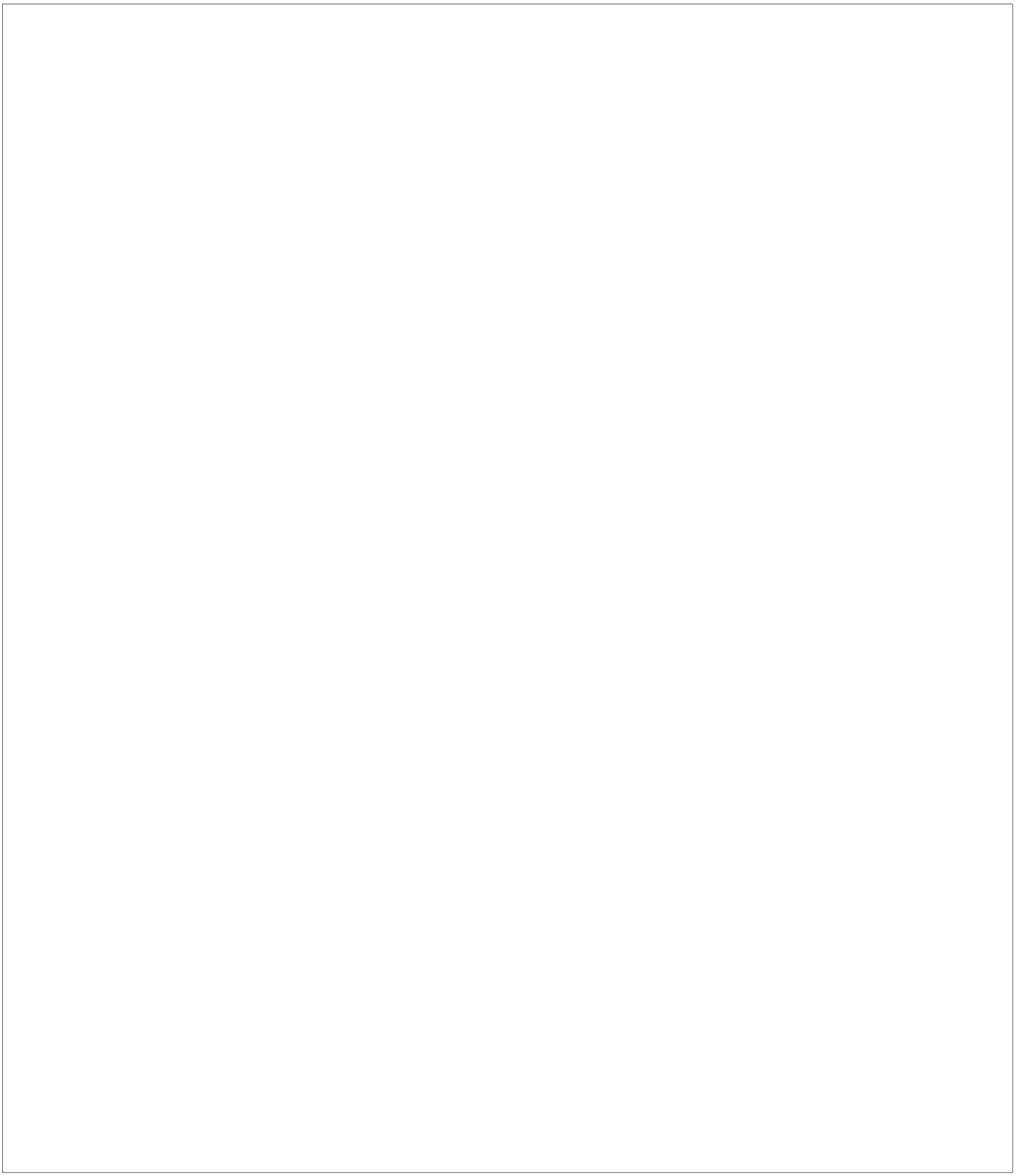

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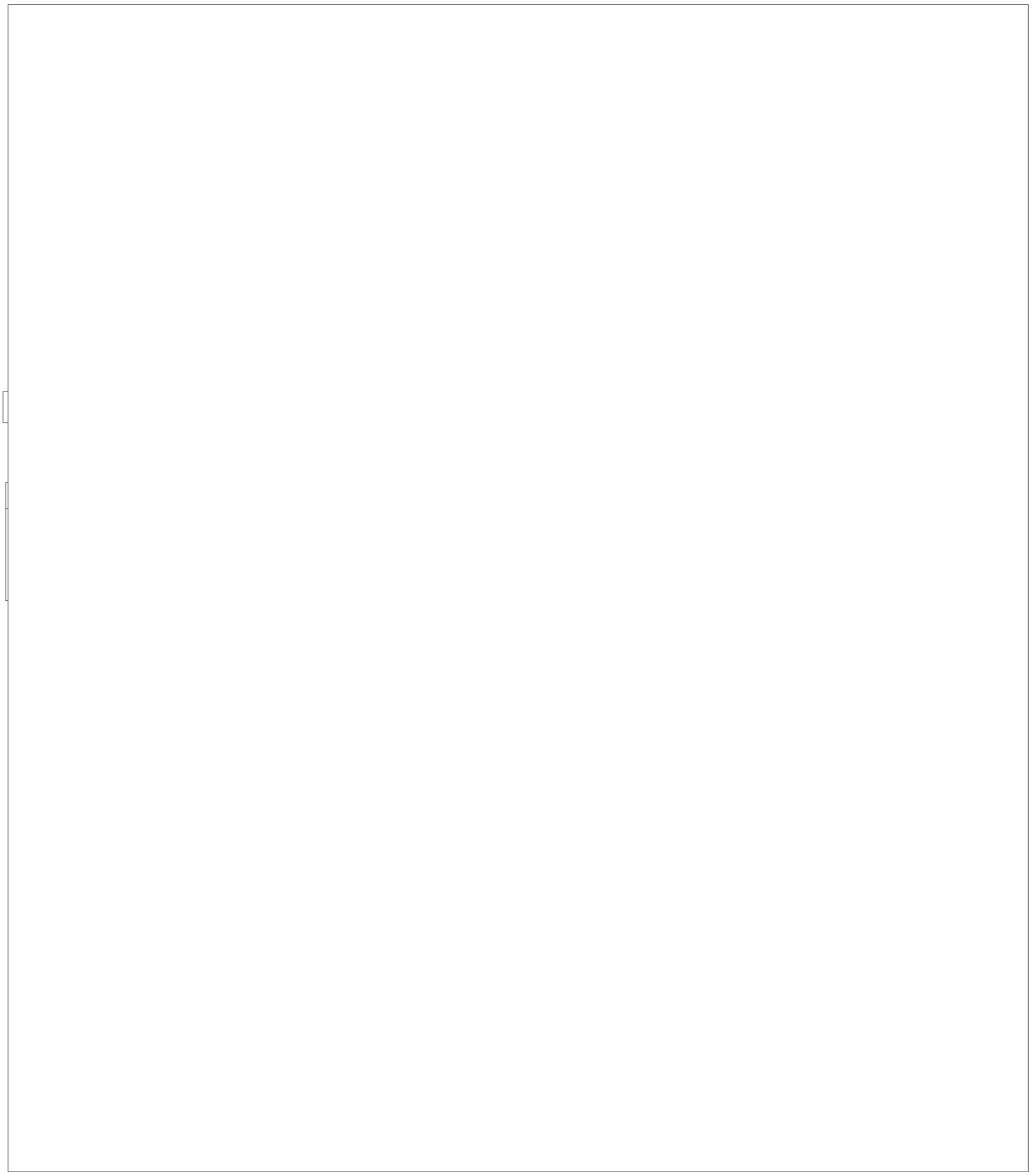

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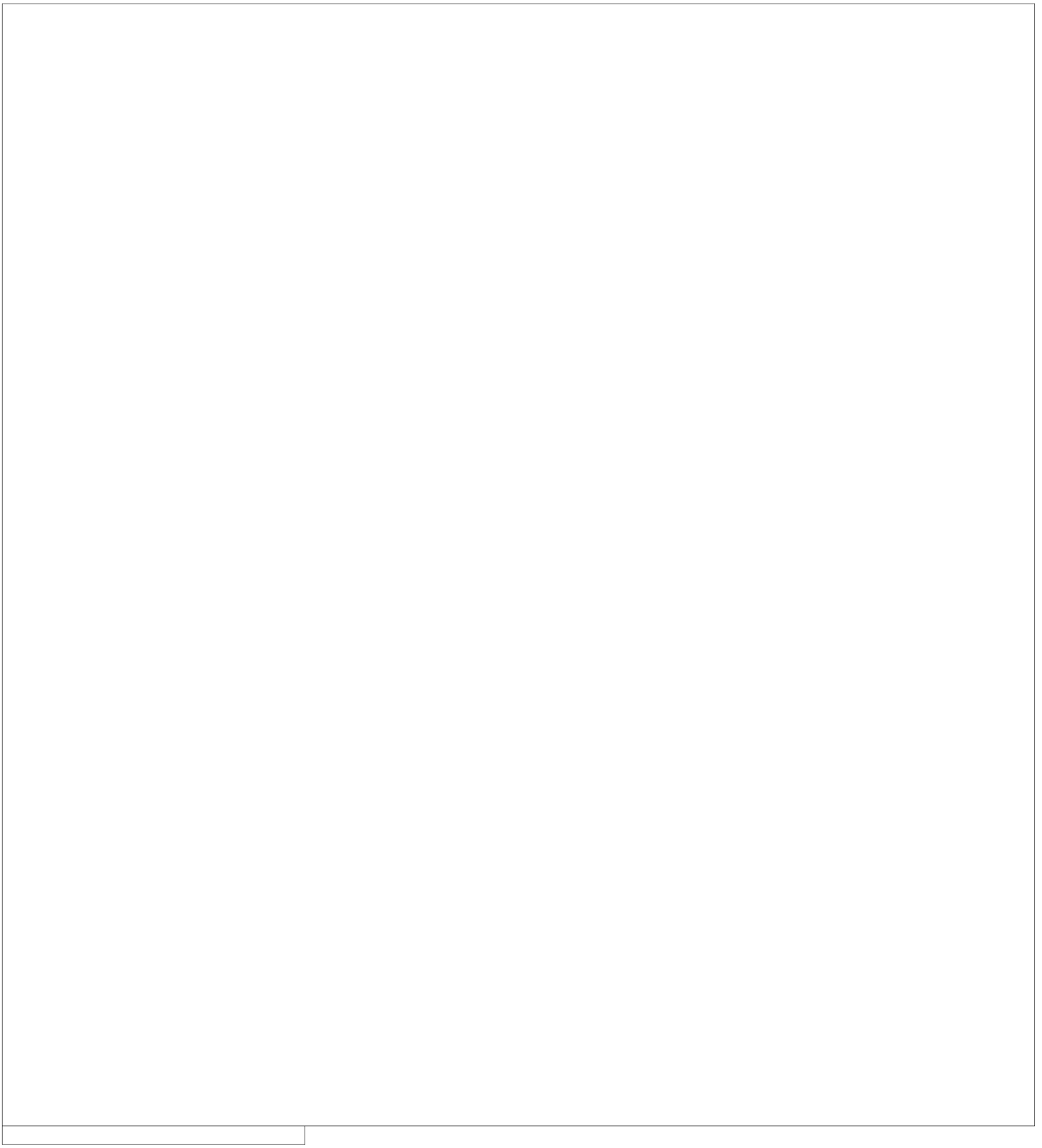

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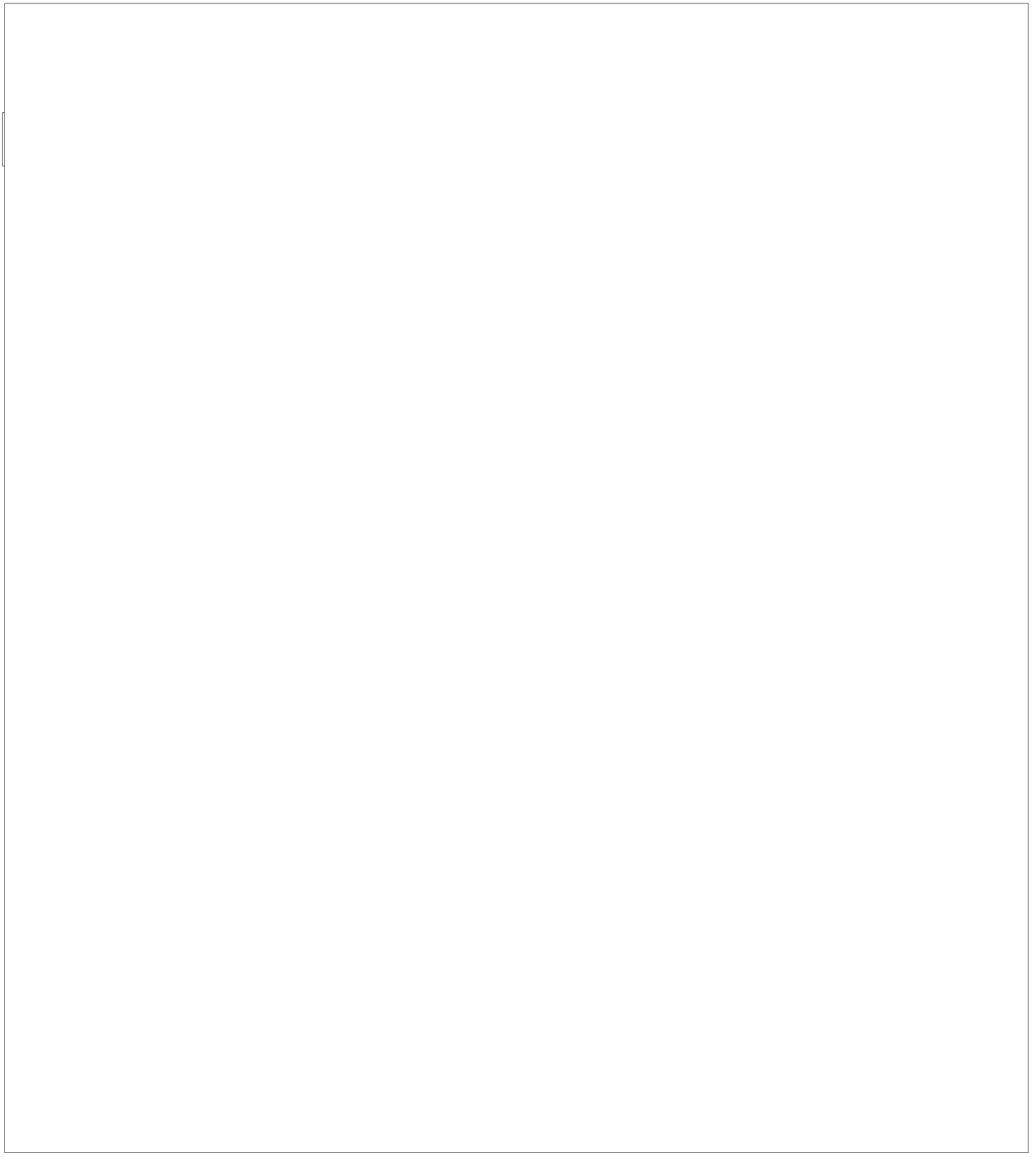

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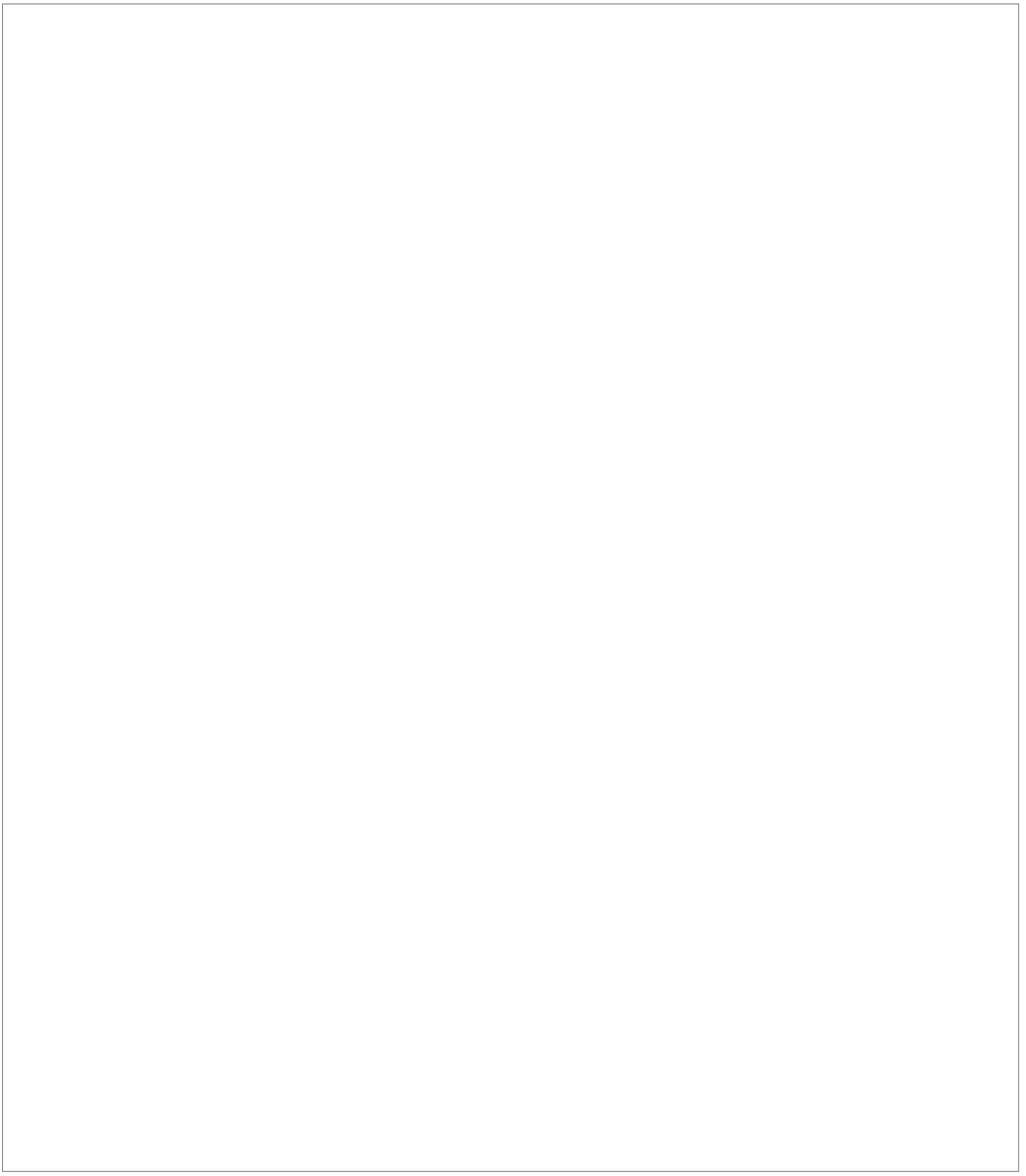

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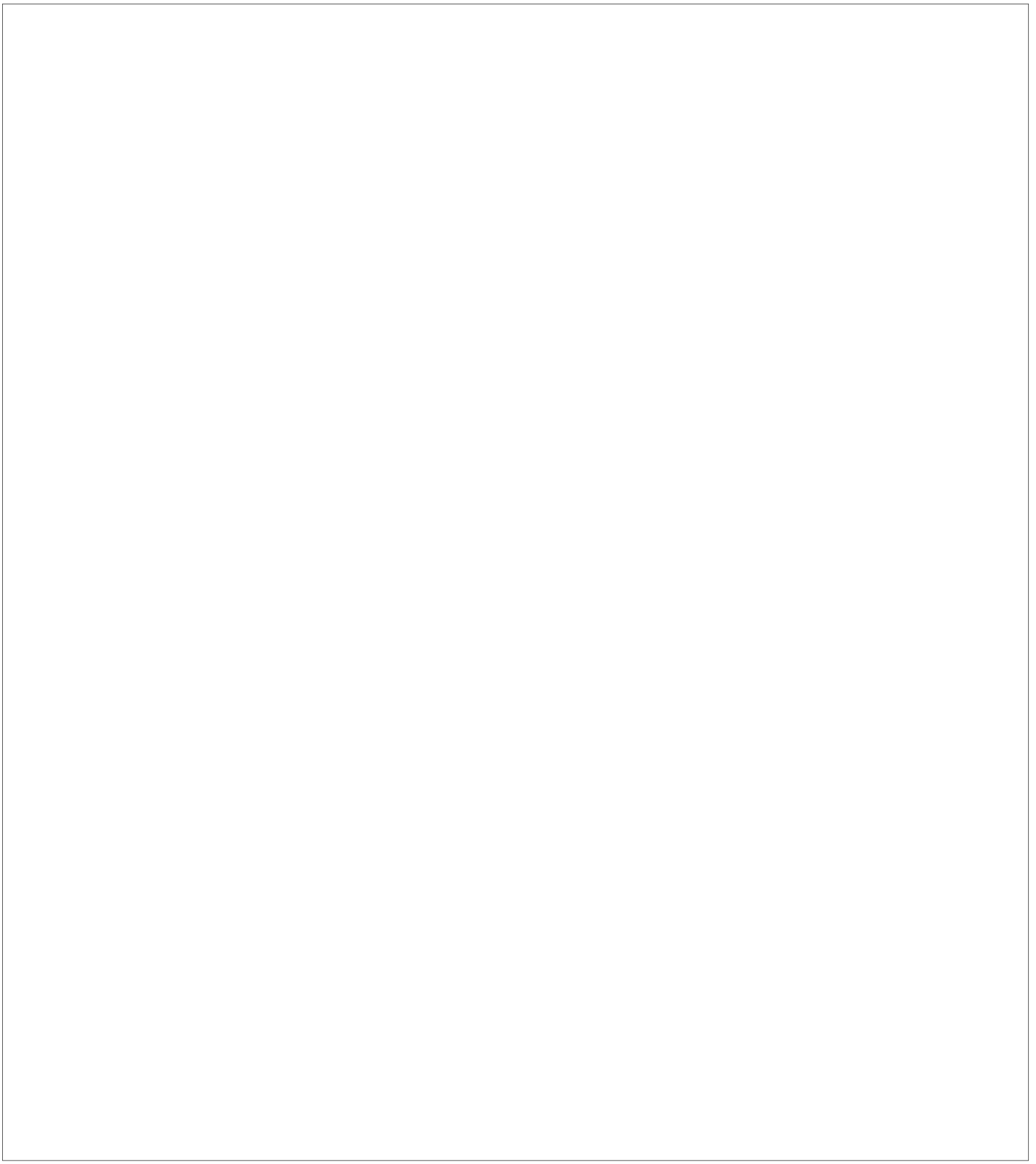

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