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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

VIA : Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT: Ray Cline's Efforts with Certain of the Press to Improve Public Confidence in Agency

1. This memorandum is for information only.

2. With rising clamor impairing public confidence in the Agency as an institution and in the competence of some of its personnel it may be that there is a need to explore new approaches to methods of restoring diminishing faith in the Agency's competence. In this connection the press relations activities since 1957 to date of Mr. Ray S. Cline, Deputy Director (Intelligence) may be of some interest. Without self-interest and purely in the interest of the Agency, Mr. Cline has become a source of information to certain members of the Press. Mr. Cline's methods of operation as gleaned from his reports to the Assistant to the Director causes him to express the belief that his discussions benefit the general rapport of the Agency with these newsmen. Among newsmen who have had the benefit of Mr. Cline's viewpoints are:

- Joseph C. Harsch, ex-CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, now NBC
- Walter Lippmann, LOS ANGELES TIMES Syndicate
- John Scott, TIME
- Joseph Alsop, Publishers' Newspaper Syndicate
- Wallace Carroll, then NEW YORK TIMES Washington Bureau
- Cy Sulzberger, NEW YORK TIMES
- Henry Gemill, Phil Geyelin, and Louis Kraar, WALL STREET JOURNAL
- Charles Bartlett, Publishers' Newspaper Syndicate
- Max S. Johnson, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT
- Harry Schwartz, NEW YORK TIMES
- Bill Shannon, NEW YORK TIMES
- Jess Cook, TIME
- Stewart Alsop, SATURDAY EVENING POST
- William S. White, United Features Syndicate
- Chalmers Roberts, WASHINGTON POST
- Murray Marder, WASHINGTON POST
- Charles J.V. Murphy, FORTUNE
- Russell Wiggins and Alfred Friendly, WASHINGTON POST
- Ted Szulc, NEW YORK TIMES
- Kay Graham, Publisher, WASHINGTON POST and NEWSWEEK

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3. Pertinent to Mr. Cline's press activities of this date is a report of 10 September 1963 when he gave Jess Cook of TIME a "brief personal evaluation of [redacted] Mr. Cline reported he told Cook he could give him no official information and Cline gave Cook a general analysis [redacted]

[redacted] Mr. Cline "repeatedly stressed that not everybody would necessarily agree with my personal evaluation." Mr. Cline expressed the thought that this briefing "will be in the interests of a reasonable treatment of [redacted]

4. Another coincidence of history repeating after two years is this "slow-down" of the Russian economy briefing to Stewart Alsop of the SATURDAY EVENING POST, a lively subject of activity today. Mr. Cline reported on 13 December 1963 that on the previous day, with Messrs. [redacted], at the Director's instruction, he gave a two-hour briefing to Alsop on the slow-down rate of the Soviet economy, which was the substance of a briefing the DCI gave to the NSC, excluding military weapons data. He stressed the pressure of military expenditures on the allocation of resources, the gold reserve problem, long term credits in relation to importing chemical fertilizer plants and other equipment, etc.

5. Another coincidence is the report that when Mr. Cline shortly goes to New York City accompanying his daughter who is to attend school in that area he plans to see Harry Schwartz at the NEW YORK TIMES and discuss Soviet economic matters with Mr. Schwartz. In a report of 19 January 1965 Mr. Cline said that while in New York City on other business he stopped at the TIMES at the invitation of Harry Schwartz and Bill Shannon to meet Editor John Oakes "to establish a little rapport with the Editorial Board." Mr. Oakes, due to the death of his brother, was not available. Mr. Cline reports he told Mr. Schwartz that the manner of the NEW YORK TIMES handling a briefing with some of the Press by CIA on the Soviet economy in 1964 (editorially and in the news columns) "made it impossible for CIA to release data on the Soviet economy to the newspapers as we had last year." Mr. Cline promised Schwartz and Mr. Shannon to return to the TIMES "on a suitable occasion" in an effort to establish a better understanding and cooperation between the Agency and the TIMES, at least as far as the editorial department was concerned.

6. On 28 May 1965 Mr. Cline conferred at luncheon at the Cosmos Club with William S. White, United Features columnist, whom he had met several times at quasi-official functions. Mr. Cline reported he undertook to call Mr. White in a few weeks time after learning in answer to Cline's question that he, White, would like to come to CIA for a general

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briefing on how we go about our business. Mr. Cline reported a little quiet cultivation with White would do the Agency no harm and he proposed, unless the DCI and DDCI had objection, to have a general chat with him from time to time. On 8 September 1965, Mr. Cline telephoned to Mr. White and told him he had returned from a Far Eastern trip and he accepted White's invitation to lunch. He phoned me for approval and received it.

7. On 21 January 1965 Mr. Cline had his first conference with Chalmers Roberts of the WASHINGTON POST. Roberts told Cline he would like to have discussions from time to time "on a completely discreet basis without any attribution to me (Mr. Cline) or to the Agency" and Cline agreed to see him "as time permitted and the subject matter was not delicate from either a security or a policy point of view." Later meetings have been held with Roberts and Murrey Marder, together, and on 31 March 1965, Mr. Cline reported having luncheon at the WASHINGTON POST, at Roberts' request, with Russell Wiggins, Alfred Friendly, Marder and Roberts. He reported, "The meeting - my first with all these men except Roberts - was extremely cordial, and I think benefited the general rapport of the Agency with these journalists."

8. Mr. Cline has had many luncheon conferences with Jess Cook of TIME. These meetings at times were "the customary tour of the horizon of world crises." When Mr. Cline avoided meeting Cook, he reports on 2 March 1965, "in view of the stringent limitations being put on Agency contacts with the press" Cline said, "I think Cook feels the Agency has not been very helpful or forthcoming lately." He found Cook friendly and thought Cook understood this "is due to the general climate in Washington and is not something justifying resentment against us."

9. "The only regular official contact which I personally maintain with a newspaperman," Mr. Cline reported on 25 January 1965, "is my contact with Joseph Alsop." Cline wrote: "For most of the last three years I have been seeing Alsop whenever he requested it to discuss international events of interest to him for the purpose of writing his columns, giving him guidance as to my thinking on these subjects whenever it was possible to do so without disclosing classified information, or sensitive policy planning data. The DCI, in fact, requested me to maintain this contact on the grounds it was better for Alsop to write reasonable columns than to have misinformation published." Others had the same reasoning as the DCI for in a report of 23 March 1965 Mr. Cline reports: "At one point, however, Joe did summarize for me his column on Viet Cong strength (which, in fact, ran the following day in the WASHINGTON POST) without asking my view on it, but speaking confidently of the situation along the lines which in fact seemed to be based on quite recent intelligence as reflected in the joint CIA/DIA/State memo of 17 March 1965. My guess is that the data therein had been summarized for Alsop the preceding day or on that very day." Alsop in January expressed to Mr. Cline, the latter reported on 25 January 1965, "the President had issued some kind of instructions which amounted to black listing him and that he was so grim about this that I (Cline) feared he might write a column on it if

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he could get any concrete evidence. In view of the many invitations which he gives me, I told the DCI that I felt that I could only make a complete break with Alsop with some indication of official constraint on me, which might be just the thing that would occasion a hostile story about the White House, CIA, or me." Cline recommended severely limited meetings with Alsop on social occasions, but not a complete break-off and the DCI concurred in that view. On 18 June 1965 Mr. Cline reported he found Alsop "in a state of despondence." Cline wrote: "Part of his despondency is due to the feeling that the President is not doing all he can do to solve the Vietnamese problem, but it seems to center around his own view of the freedom of the press and the right of journalists to have access to candid views of senior officials of the U.S. Government. He was rather acid about CIA but he said he realized that restrictive attitudes and procedures were a reflection of the President's line rather than of the lesser bureaucracy." Cline said he made clear that CIA had no role in public relations policy on the Presidential level and Cline thought he "cheered Joe up a little bit and slightly softened his view of the Government." On 13 July 1965, after lunch with Mr. Alsop, Mr. Cline reported: "Alsop's implicit threats at his last talk with me concerning public protests on the Administration's policy of restricting his (Alsop's) access to knowledgeable Government officials seemed to have dissipated in the light of his hopes for a better climate in Washington for newspapermen under the Moyers regime. I think this is lucky for us because I sensed that Alsop was on the verge of a public attack which might well have included some nasty references to CIA. This no longer seems likely as long as we continue to maintain a discreet but generally cordial relationship with him."

10. It will be noted that Chalmers Roberts, Murrey Marder, Jess Cook (now stationed in Saigon), and William S. White either are or appear to be regular conferees with Mr. Cline, in addition to the "official" contact with Joe Alsop.

11. Mr. Cline's reports show he gives no classified information, follows the line of the President's press conferences or other official public statements, and believes there is better feeling toward the Agency because of his efforts. He states in a memorandum of 25 January 1965:

"I expect to maintain these contacts at about the present level, unless circumstances change. The only unusual period of my official contacts with the press was about a year ago, when I was instructed to do a substantial briefing on the Soviet economy and when the NEW YORK TIMES played the story in a way which caused the Agency some embarrassment. This episode is well documented, and I assume will not be repeated."

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11. Whether the press activity of the DDI should be extended to include the other Deputy Directors, whether the centralized control in the Director's office should be delegated so that each Deputy will be responsible for the public relations activities of his Directorate without reference to the DCI's office, but operate under general policy directives, are some of the questions that come to mind in view of Mr. Cline's press work on behalf of the Agency. His unique "official" relationship with Joe Alsop I fully approve of and think it has been valuable. Whether other writers like Chalmers Roberts, Murrey Marder, Jess Cook, et al should make appointments directly with Mr. Cline rather than come having them make their requests to this office so this office could take the matter up with Mr. Cline, and where approved, have briefings in this office with a member of this office present, is worthy of discussion.

12. Mr. Cline's efforts on behalf of better understanding on the part of the Press of CIA and its duties and responsibilities are worthy of praise. I doubt there has been any measurable impact on the WASHINGTON POST but overall there surely has been no loss.

SIGNED

[Redacted Signature Box]

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CC: RnDir-Compt

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