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THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
Washington 25, D. C.

12 May 1948

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Robert Blum  
Office of the Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT: Biographical Data on Foreign Scientific and Technological Personalities.

1. This is in response to your memorandum of 10 May which forwarded a copy of NSCID No. 8 on the above subject.

2. We are in complete agreement with the general policy of assigning to CIA primary responsibility for the maintenance of biographical data on foreign scientific and technological personalities.

3. It is apparent that the proposed Directive represents a number of compromises which relieves the Departmental intelligence agencies of any positive commitments. While on the one hand the Directive assigns primary responsibility for this type of activity to CIA, on the other hand it fails to assign to the Departmental intelligence agencies any active functions which would insure the efficient discharge of CIA's responsibility with a minimum of duplication of effort.

Under the terms of the Directive, the Departmental intelligence agencies are not obligated to collect, analyze, and abstract biographical data. Presumably if they do not engage in such operations now (e.g., Air Intelligence) they needn't in the future. Accordingly, CIA must re-examine every report received through the Departmental intelligence agencies whether or not it has been previously abstracted. (Suggestion: Assign definite responsibility for abstracting Naval Attache reports to Navy, Military Attache reports to Army, Air Attache reports to Air Force, diplomatic reports to the State Department, and others to CIA -- pooling the abstracts in CIA.)

The forwarding of biographical data to CIA by the Departmental intelligence agencies "in the manner most satisfactory to the Department concerned" will result in a hodge-podge central index with incomplete data. The processing of non-standardized Departmental abstracts for conversion to machine records will add greatly to CIA's burden.

4. Similarly, the Directive fails to require CIA to coordinate its activities with the Departmental intelligence agencies (e.g., coding and indexing) so that the central register will be of maximum use to those agencies.

5. The Directive covers only biographical "data". The Departmental

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intelligence agencies evaluate much of this data to produce biographical intelligence. It is highly important that both the data and the intelligence be incorporated in CIA's central register.

6. Paragraph "1.d." of the Directive provides that all biographical data on foreign scientific and technological personalities maintained by CIA shall be readily available to the participating Departments and Agencies. Provision should be made to make the data available to selected non-participating agencies such as RDB.

7. In our opinion this Directive is another example of least common denominator compromises between CIA and the Departmental intelligence agencies. The results of such compromises are a hodge-podge of Directives giving CIA very little authority to coordinate intelligence aggressively as contemplated by the National Security Act of 1947. A situation has developed whereby the several intelligence agencies are substantially free of integrating influence and have little responsibility to CIA.

/s/ L. R. HAFSTAD  
Executive Secretary

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