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7/15-21

16 January 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Mr. Robert Lovett's Report on Mikoyan Visit
to New York City

1. Mr. Lovett called at 11:30 a.m. on 16 January to advise you of the results of Mikoyan's visit to New York. He said that he thought they had succeeded in accomplishing your request to present a united front on Berlin. Mr. Lovett said there were two occasions when they could be blunt about this issue and that he had passed on six questions to be used at both events. The first event was a luncheon given by Howard Shephard of the National City Bank, at which event unfortunately Mr. Lovett could not be present himself because of a prior commitment to a board meeting. The second was the reception given by Averell Harriman. Mr. Lovett reported that at both of these there was some pretty frank talk. He said that at the Shephard luncheon Mikoyan said that "about all that was needed was for us to trust them." He was asked the question, "Why should we?" He replied, "Your hands aren't clean either." Mr. Lovett said that Mr. Harriman did a particularly good job because while some of the others present phrased the questions too generally or too politely, Harriman made them direct and pointed. He said, "Why do you fellows act this way? In this room there are democrats and republicans all of whom are squarely behind President Eisenhower. Whether we were for Roosevelt and Truman, or were republicans, we all squarely support the President on Berlin. While we are peace loving we will go to any extreme to keep Berlin free." One of the guests was sitting next to Mikoyan's assistant and noted that he took down the exchange on Berlin verbatim.

2. Mr. Lovett said there was another aspect of Mikoyan's visit that he thought should be noted. He said there seemed to be some feeling that the reception given Mikoyan by the business circles had been overly generous and that some areas seem to feel that American businessmen were ready to do business with Russia. He said that this was not true. Mr. Lovett said that he also felt the American press had given an expanded stature to this Armenian trader. He noted that the press gives a full account of everything that Mikoyan says but does not necessarily report fully on the questions or other comments.

3. Mr. Lovett said that it should be recognized that Mikoyan makes an extremely favorable impression. He shows a boldness in answering questions. The content of his answers is always very good. He has extreme competence and knowledge of pertinent facts and figures about the United States as well as Russia.

Approved for Release
Date OCT 1999

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