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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

15 December 1959

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 53-59

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Consultants at Princeton, 19 and 20 November

Consultants:

Hamilton Fish Armstrong  
Cyril E. Black  
Calvin B. Hoover  
Klaus Knorr  
George A. Lincoln  
Harold Linder  
Philip E. Mosely  
Joseph Strayer  
T. Cuyler Young

Government:

Allen W. Dulles  
Abbot Smith (Chair)  
Allen Evans  
William P. Bundy  
Robert Matteson  
  
R. V. Burks  
O. LeRoy Karlstrom  
Robert Miller

Papers presented for discussion:

Chapter VI of NIE 11-4-59; Soviet Foreign Policy  
Chapter II of NIE 11-4-59; Developments in the Soviet Economy  
NIE 100-8-59: "Estimate of the World Situation"

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In general, there was some feeling among the consultants that the Chapter on foreign policy might be too optimistic. Certain of the group tended to press home the probability of a

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missile gap in 1961, and to question whether, as a consequence of this gap, Soviet foreign policy might not, two years or so hence take a harder line than presently estimated in Chapter VI.

The Missile Gap. The burden of this argument was carried by MOSELY, who appeared to feel more strongly on the issue than the other consultants. STRAYER and KNORR indicated general agreement with MOSELY's position. EVANS announced his intention of "shooting down 11-4 with 11-8" (Soviet Capabilities For Strategic Attack Through 1964.).

In 1961, MOSELY asserted, the Soviet Union might acquire a clear qualitative superiority over the US in strategic weapons. American missile sites would still be soft and American missiles liquid-fueled. The location of these sites would be available to the Russians through a reading of the US press. The USSR, on the other hand, might have manufactured and deployed as many as 500 ICBMs. Since American observers would not have inspected more than five percent of Soviet territory, the location of these sites would be unknown to the American military.

Though a Soviet advantage of this sort would begin to diminish in 1962, as the Americans developed solid fuels and hardened sites,

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in the year 1961 the Soviet leaders might come to believe that they had a decisive superiority. They might believe that, with a single salvo, they could virtually destroy the American capability for strategic attack, without in turn receiving unacceptable damage from American counter blows. In this circumstance the Soviet leaders might very well consider launching general war. Or they could attempt to profit from this unique and transitory advantage through blackmail. Either action could have been prefaced or, more accurately, camouflaged, by a long period of relaxed tension and growing cultural exchange. Consequently, in MOSELY's view, the estimate of Chapter VI according to which Soviet foreign policy over the next five years will alternate between efforts at conciliation and limited aggressive actions should be revised to take these more doubtful possibilities into account.

From time to time some consultants attempted to pierce the MOSELY argument with doubts and reservations. LINCOLN, for example, was strongly of the view that it would be well-nigh impossible for the Russians to get off a properly aimed salvo of 500 missiles within the 15 minutes necessary to avoid the alerting of SAC. No military operation in history has been

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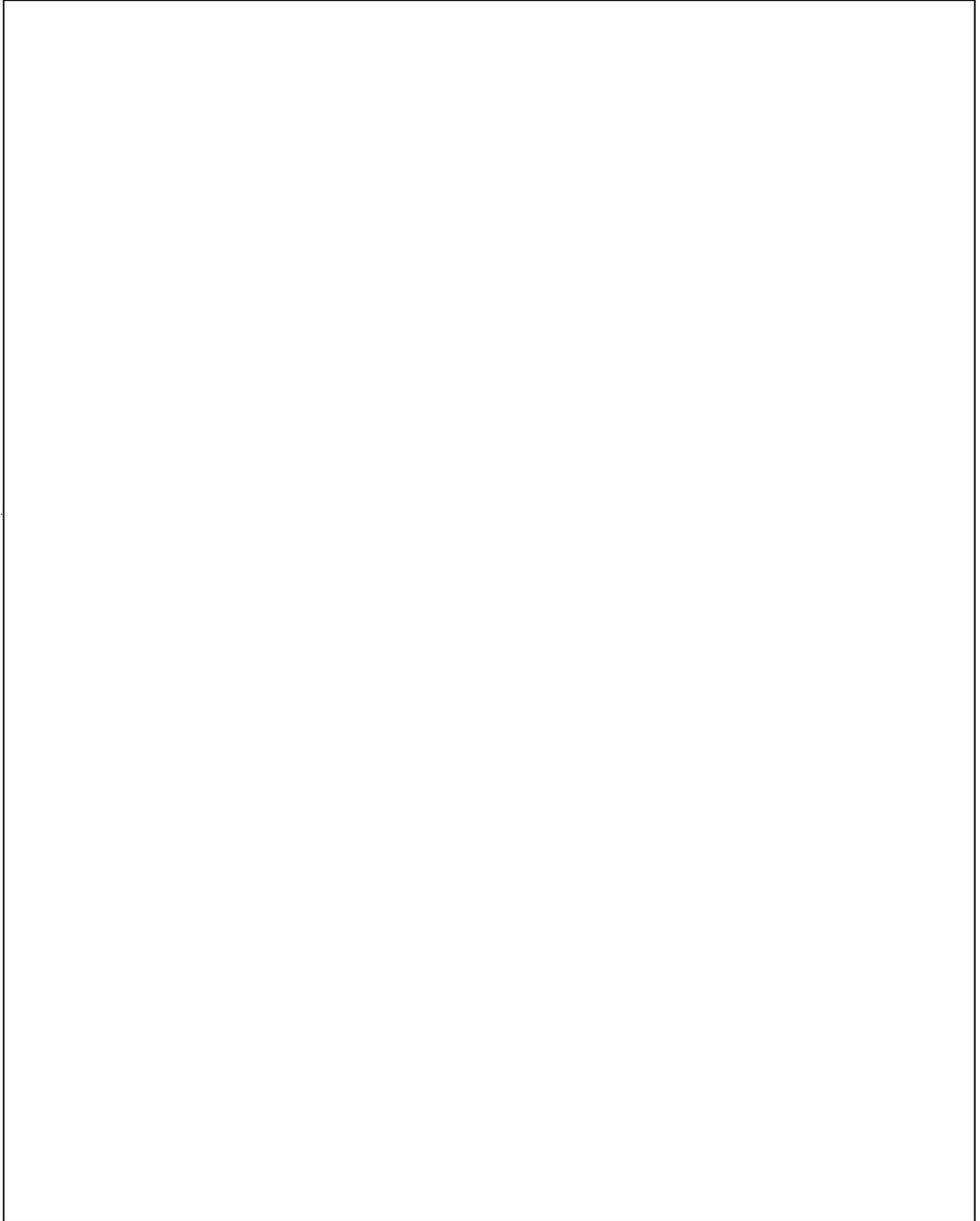
carried off on schedule with the precision such a salvo would require. Even at West Point 21 gun salutes rarely go off without a hitch. If S&J were on air alert, moreover, the impact of the first missiles would send those bombers already in the air scurrying for Soviet targets. The Russians could never be sure of destroying the American nuclear capability without receiving unacceptable damage in return.

To this MOSELY replied that the Russians could prepare the salvo at their leisure, that they could take into account such factors as in-flight failure by increasing the weight of the salvo, and that RAND Corporation studies had shown that the USSR would not necessarily receive unacceptable damage from an American counter-attack. What the Kremlin would be willing to regard as acceptable damage was probably far more extensive than anything our planners had in mind. The MOSELY argument appeared to impress many consultants, though support was more general for the probable use of blackmail than for a possible one-time salvo.

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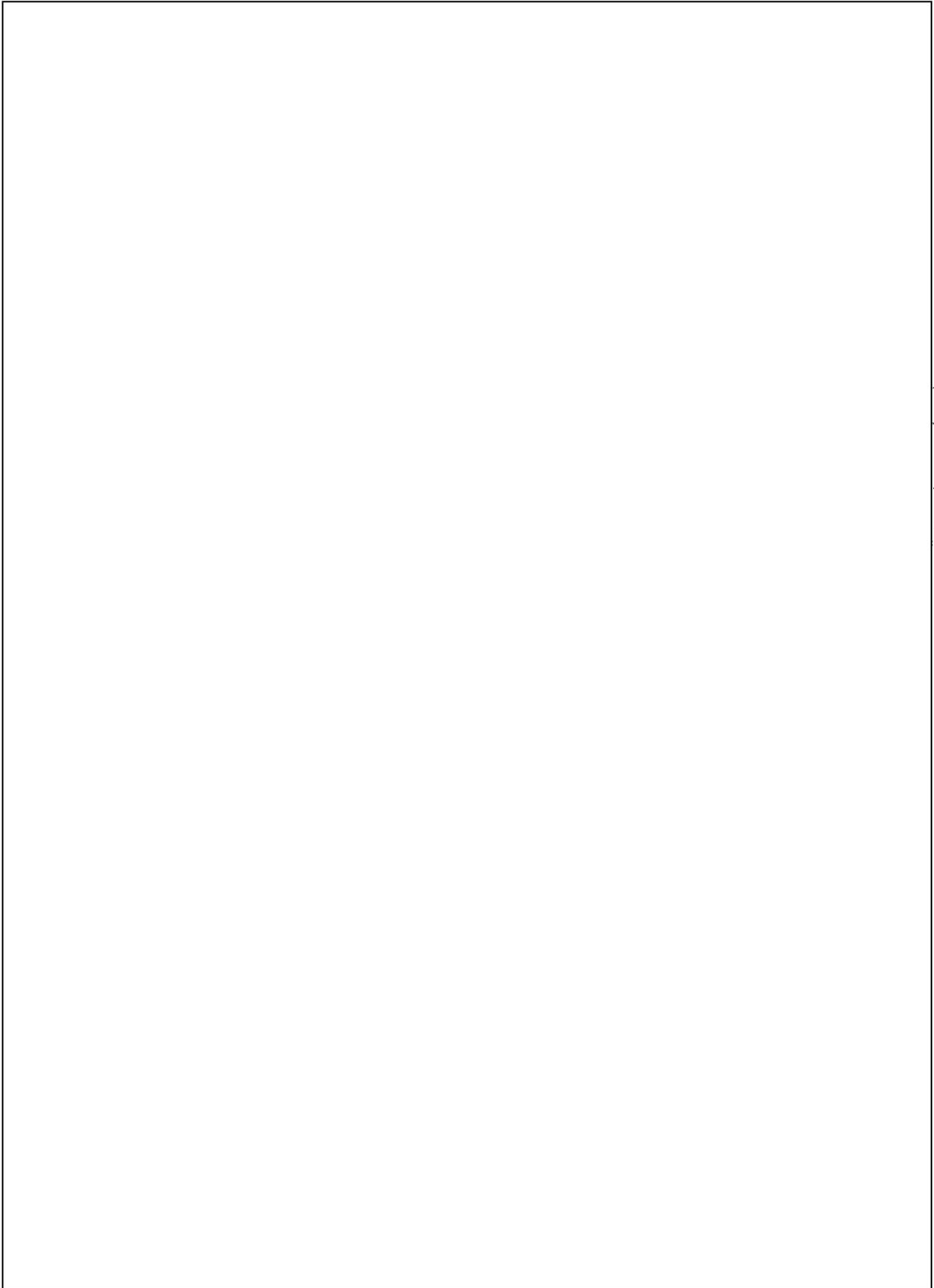
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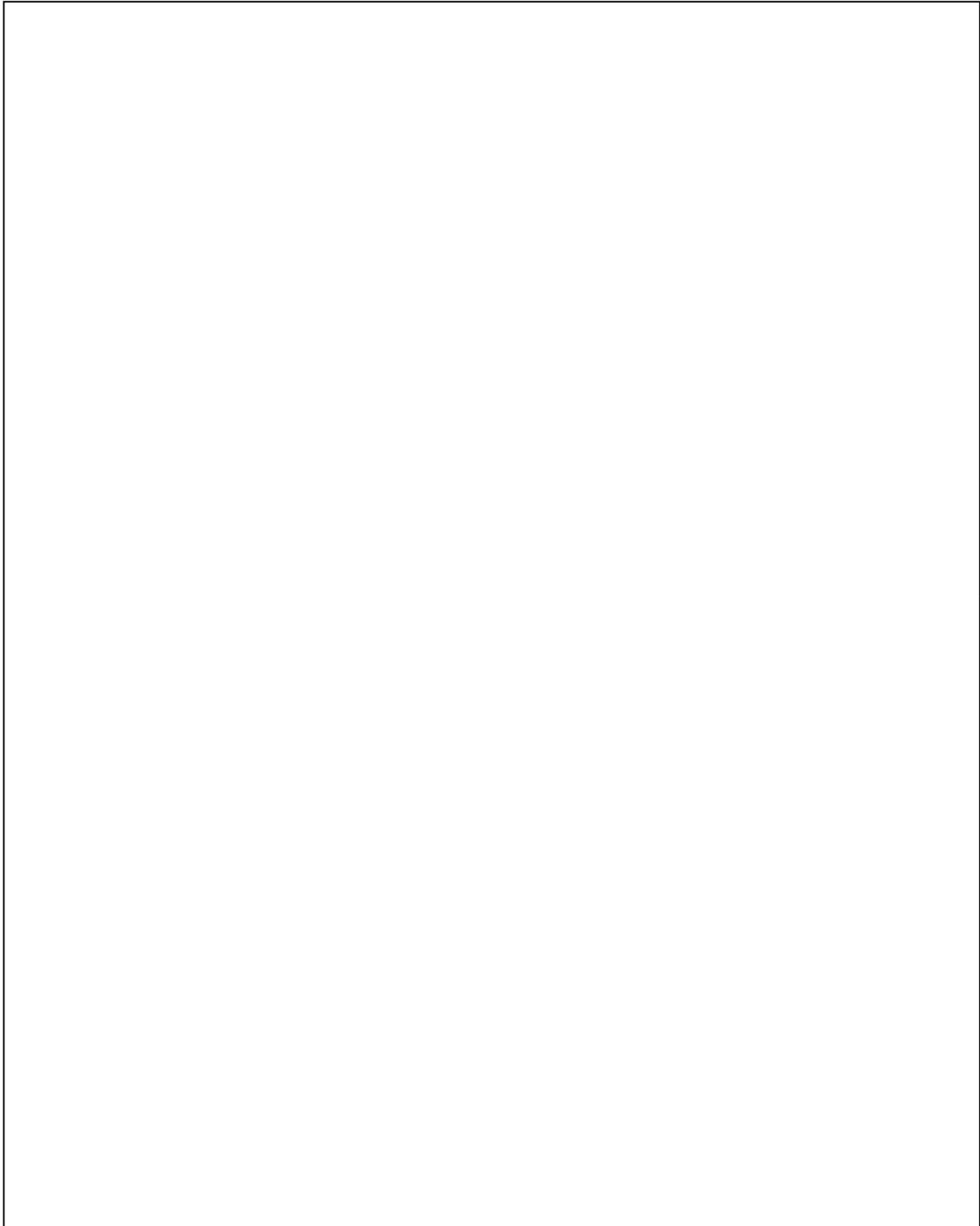
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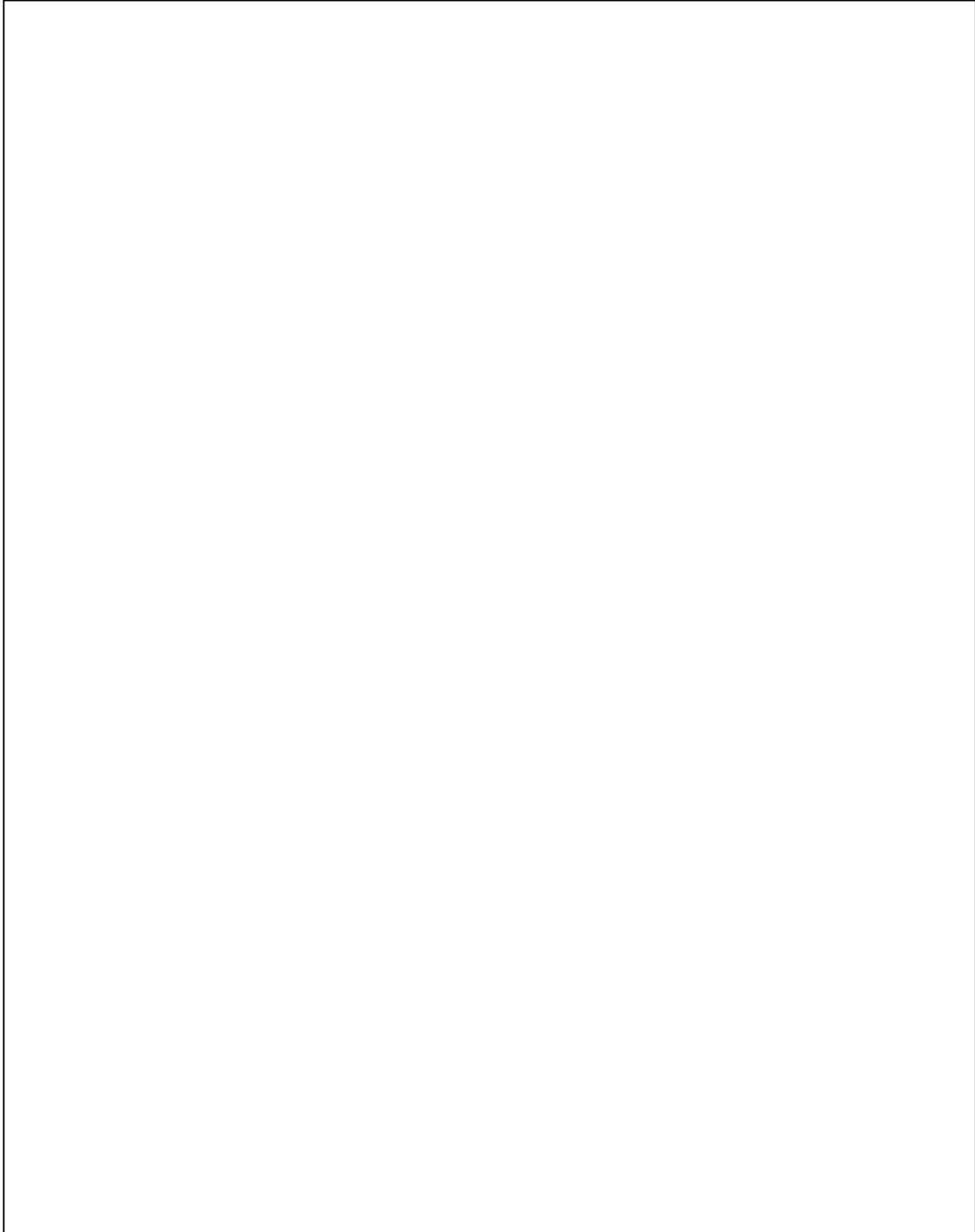
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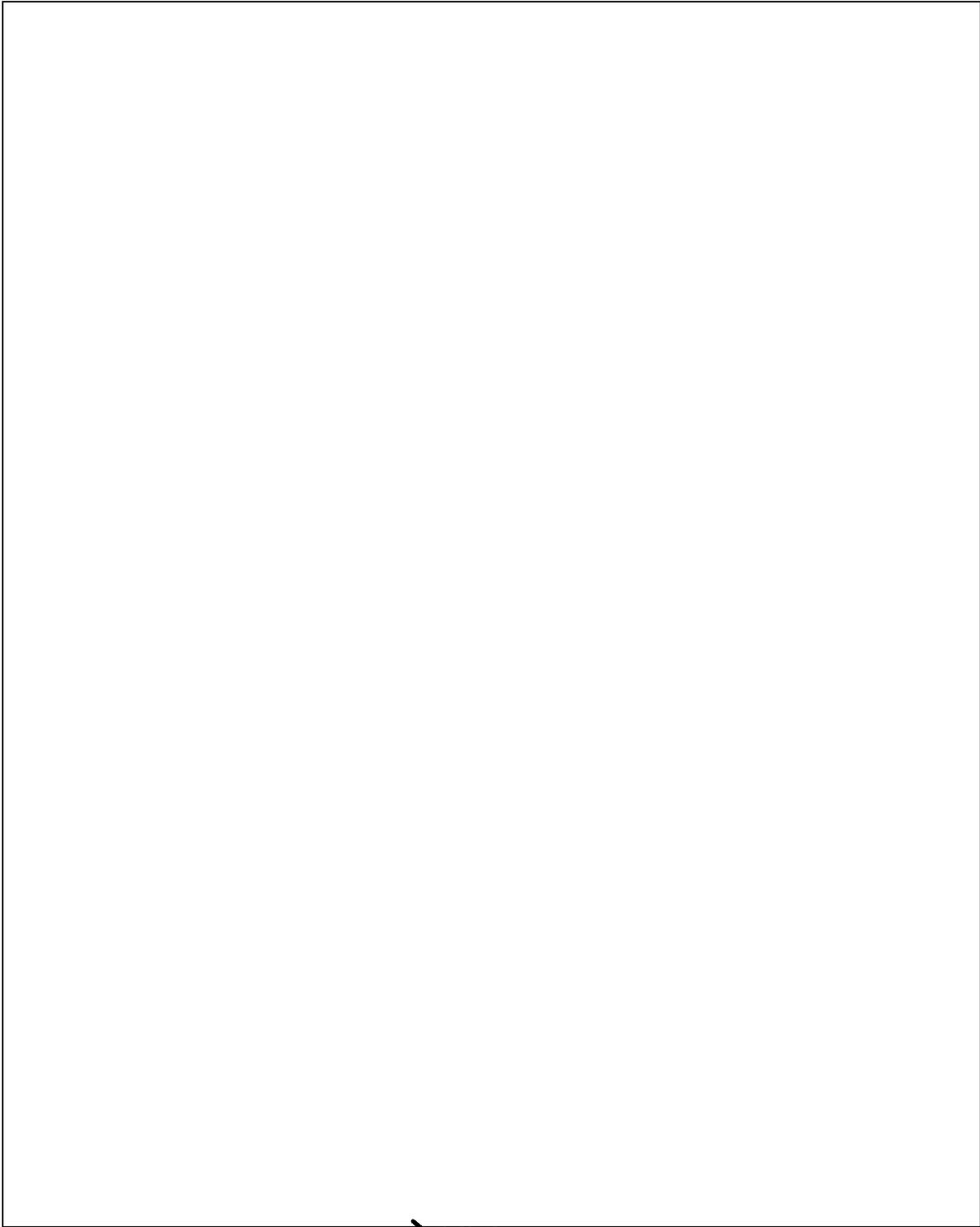
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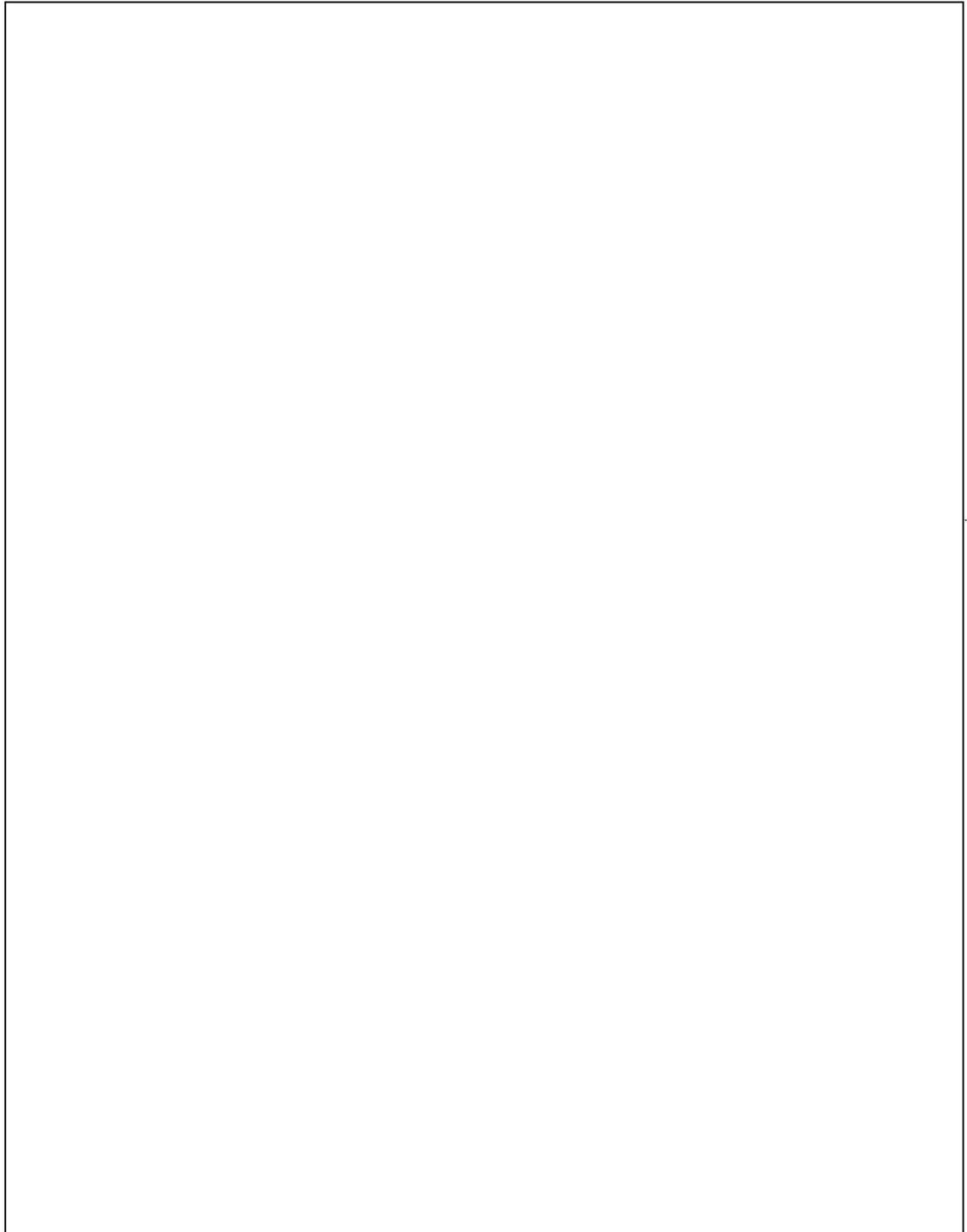
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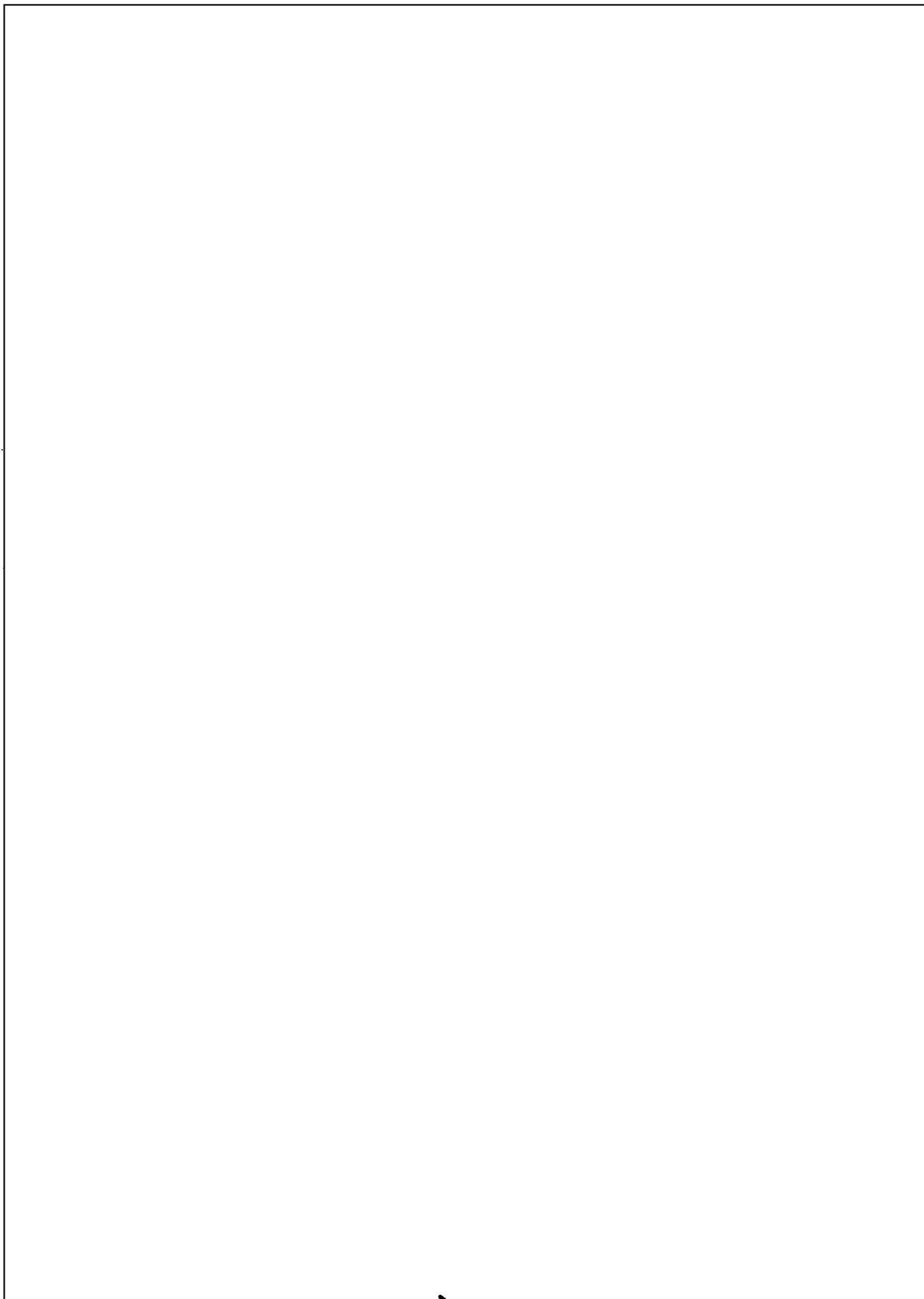
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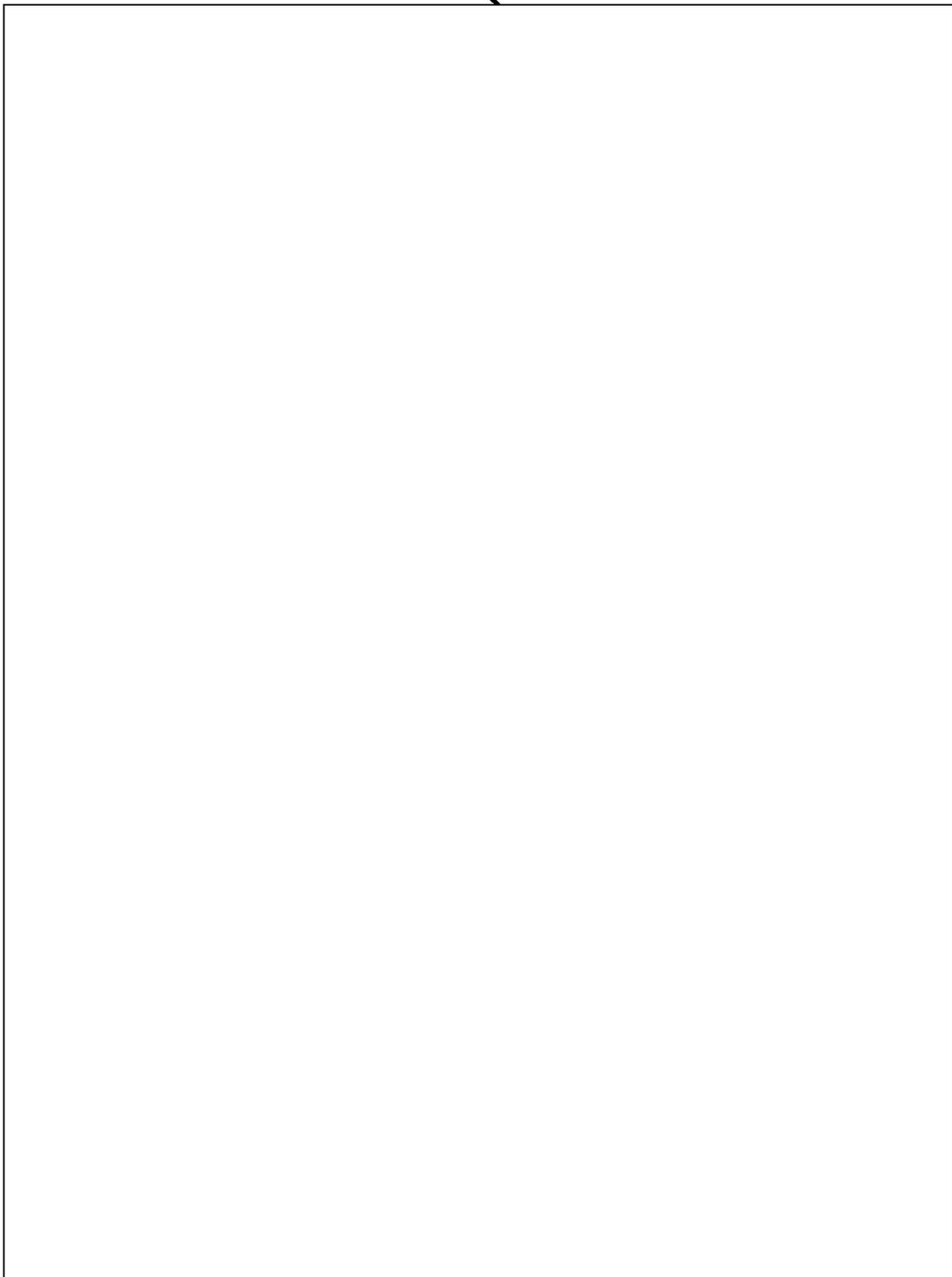
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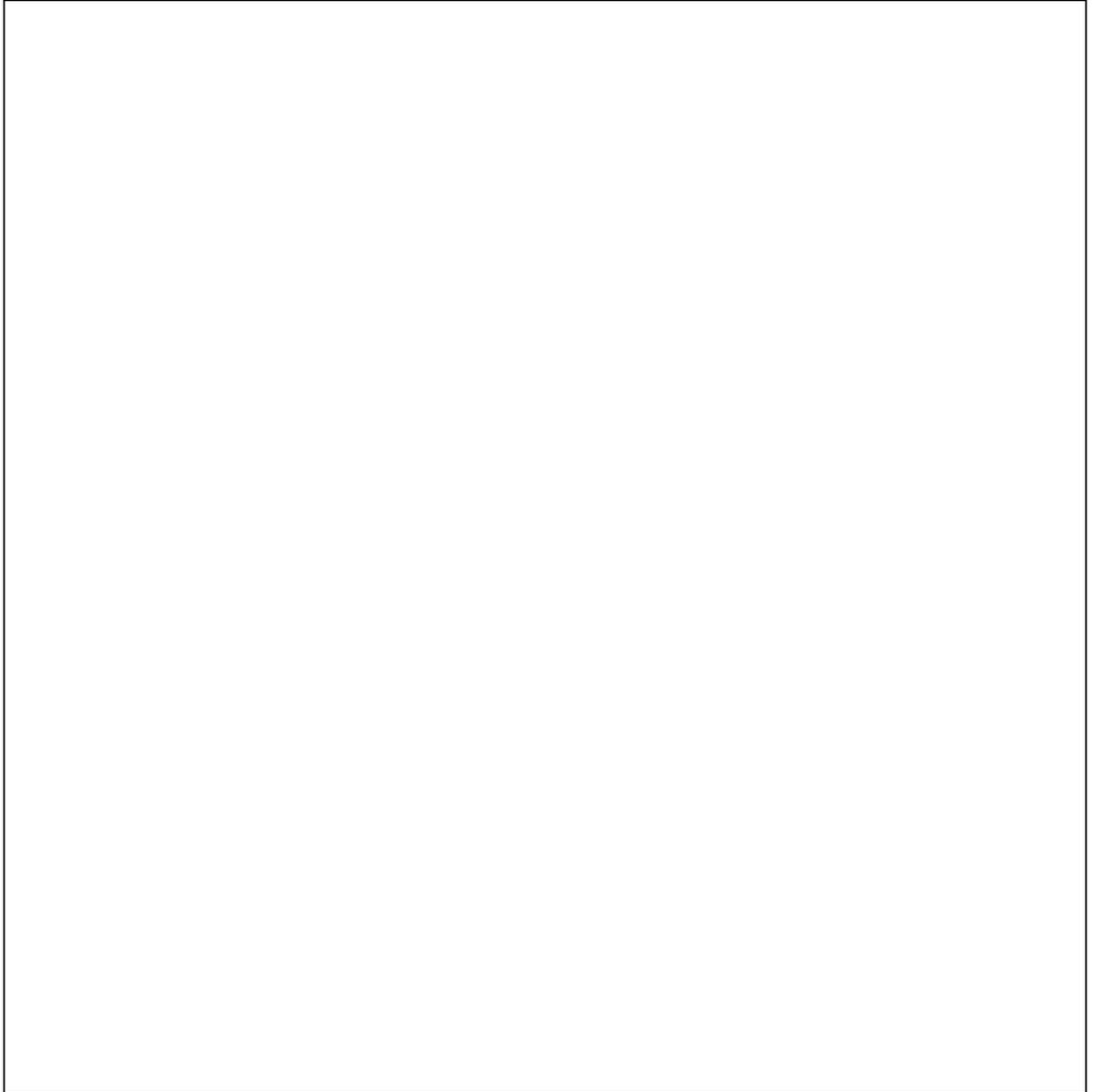
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Richard V. Burks  
O. LeRoy Karlstrom  
William Miller

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