Source: Hillenkoetter, R.H., interview file in the Historical Staff files.

Hillenkoetter to Darling (Second Interview), 2 December 1952.

p. 24:

As for the Eberstadt investigation of 1948 and report, Hillenkoetter had little to say. He did not recall that it had much influence on the changes in the Agency. Eberstadt did not make the same kind of investigation that the Dulles Group made. He took testimony and seemed to prefer to "pat them on the back" rather than to criticize. I gathered that Hillenkoetter had paid relatively little attention to the Eberstadt Report. This would have been natural in view of the furore which the Dulles Report caused.

Then we came to the delay in the summer of 1949 over consolidating OSO, OPC and Contact Branch. It was not Defense but the State Department which stopped their consolidation in an Operations Division. The "FBI" had nothing to do with it. I asked why it was that State should object. The answer was that State and Defense could not agree with regard to the man who should head the new organization. State would not accept Schow, the head of OSO, and Defense would not accept Wisner of OPC. Neither nominated anyone else. Hillenkoetter thought that the feud between Johnson and Acheson had something to do with the situation. He had already expressed his conviction that there should not be any such consolidation. To him OPC should have been put in the Pentagon as essentially a military operation. I did not ask him why he agreed to the move for consolidation. He was under much the same pressure by the Council as in the fall of 1947 when he was compelled to undertake psychological warfare against his own judgment.

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C/A: Hillenkoetter/ ...
Interview
cited in VIII/49(1)

24 October 1952

Cited Darling VII/72
VIII/104(2)
IX/38
X/6
X/7
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X/48

1. Q. First interest in intelligence?

A. My first interest in intelligence came in 1923 or 1924 when I was stationed in Panama. At that time I set up an intelligence net in the Republic of Panama, the Canal Zone, and in the adjacent areas, because we needed information and there was none. I must admit it was neither a very good net nor a very extensive one, but it did give us some information, and we had had none before. Afterwards, as I told you, I went with Mr. Bullitt when he opened up the Moscow Embassy under cover as a State Department Courier, and did work for him and for the Embassy in Paris. I left Paris in 1935 and returned again in January 1938 as Naval Attache again with Mr. Bullitt, the Ambassador, and stayed in that job until October 1941, working for both Mr. Bullitt and Admiral Leahy at Vichy. The work at Vichy was almost entirely intelligence, since the French Navy was completely tied up at that time, and it was intelligence both in the sense of S.I. and S.O., in that we acquired and used intelligence items and at the same time assisted the French Underground in operations and in getting Frenchmen out of France over to North Africa.

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In May 1942 I organized and established for Admiral Nimitz at Pearl Harbor, ICPOA (Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Area) and remained as its first Director until September 1943 when I went to the South Pacific. This Center comprised all branches of intelligence, and, without boasting, did a very excellent job as certified by Admiral Nimitz, Admiral Spruance, etc. This Center was started first as only a Navy center, but later on it was combined with the Army and Air Corps and operated as JICPOA (Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Area).

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3. Q. Decision to accept assignment to succeed Vandenberg?

Order - in line of duty?

Career as a civilian?

Conviction that Navy must have central intelligence?

A. In 1946 I again returned to Paris as Naval Attache and received despatch orders to come back as Director of Central Intelligence Group in February of 1947. I did not want the job and sent several telegrams back to the Navy Department asking that I be kept on in Paris and not be returned to the United States, as I preferred to stay as Naval Attache rather then come back with Central Intelligence. My protests were to no avail, and I was ordered back nevertheless.

The conviction that we must have some sort of central intelligence body has been of long standing as the first lack of any such central agency occurred during the period of the Anti-Michado Revolution in Cuba in 1933. I was on the staff that went to Cuba at that time, and the intelligence that we had about Cuba was purely nil. We found out afterwards that there was a tremendous amount of intelligence information in Washington, but it never succeeded in reaching the operating forces. The idea of making the Director of Central Intelligence

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a civilian or a member of the Armed Forces has been brought up very frequently, and I personally think that the advantages lie in having a military man as Director. After all, the prime purpose of the C.I.A. is for military and allied intelligence. If one could be sure that permanent peace was here, there would be no need for C.I.A. It would be simply a most expensive luxury. The only reason for its existence is for military purposes--i.e., military purposes perhaps in a broad sense to try to avoid a war if possible by having information, or if war does come to have more and better information in order that it may be won as quickly and as economically in both personnel and material as possible, but I repeat what I have said above, if one could be assured of permanent peace then there would be no need for C.I.A., and consequently, since C.I.A.'s purpose is primarily military, I believe that a military man would make a better director. In any case, whether it is a military or a civilian director, the choice should come down to the qualifications of the individual and not as to whether he wears a cap or a felt hat.

I also am firmly convinced that the individual coming in as Director should have a long time tenure. I think a great weakness of C.I.A. has been comparatively rapid turnover in Directors. Therefore, if a military man does come in, he should be

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prepared to give up any thoughts about the remainder of his military career, but in exchange there must be some assurances of an extended tenure in office, and that there can be no relieving on whims or minor changes either politically or militarily. As a corroboration of this tenure in office idea, I think one need only point to the success obtained by the F. B. I., which I believe in great measure has been caused by the very fact that Mr. Hoover has been Director for many, many years, and has been around to see that his ideas were carried out.

4. Q. ~~Status~~ Study of O. S. S.

Before becoming D. C. I.

A model in any respect function, office or procedure

Reaction against it in others

A. I had a fairly extensive knowledge of O. S. S., and indeed I was asked several times to join it during the war, and General Donovan a number of times asked the Navy Department to assign me to O. S. S. ~~during the War~~. In many respects C. I. A. had to be patterned along the lines of O. S. S. One hears now much criticism of O. S. S. on various points, but the fact remains that on the whole it did a most excellent job. There were individuals, of course, who fell down, but by and large the work of the O. S. S. was excellent and certainly was needed. Even

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if it were not nearly as good as it actually was, we should have had to have something like it, because outside of ~~that~~ OSS there was no centralized, nor indeed any agency, that could have done all that O. S. S. did. Its procedures and functions had to be changed to correspond with the conditions existing in 1945 and 1946 from what they were during the war, but certainly the idea and the general framework of C. I. A. had to come and did come in many respects from O. S. S. On coming to C. I. A., I read the history of O. S. S. which is down in the Archives now, and there is no question but that I profited immensely from reading of the trials and troubles of that parent body.

5. Q. View of the Group when I took over.

Collective enterprise of the departments?

Embryonic independent agency?

When I first came to C. I. A. I was not too sure of the exact form of the organization, and I found that in accordance with Admiral Sauer's concept, it was to be more or less a collective enterprise of the departments and as sort of a clearing house of the departments. My own personal opinions soon changed, however, and I came very rapidly to believe that such a concept, however ideal in theory, was absolutely unworkable in reality. The Agency had to become an embryonic independent agency to be of any value whatsoever. For a variety of reasons it was impossible to be

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merely a collective enterprise. In the form of a collective enterprise it was an organization with a body and no head. The jealousies and mistrust of the older departments simply prevented C.I.A. from working as a collective enterprise, and whether one wished to or not the only way it could be kept functioning was as an independent agency. I still believe that the concept of the independent agency is the correct one.

Further, it should be the President's personal information service, and should be primarily for the use of the President, although very definitely not limited to his use alone. I know that President Truman had this concept when I was in C.I.A. because he frequently referred to C.I.A. in my presence and before other members in the Security Council and before other groups of Government officials as, "This is my intelligence service. This supplies me with information." In addition to those remarks, Mr. Truman on a number of occasions called up the Director of C.I.A. sometimes himself and sometimes by way of Matt Conolly and asked for particular items that were desired, usually that were desired in a great hurry.

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6. Q. View of the Agency after National Security Act in effect.

What differences in his mind?

Power - greater or less under the Presidential directive?

A. When the National Security Act went into effect, it did a lot for C.I.A. First, it put the agency on a permanent basis and was of great assistance in our recruitment program. Before that time when the agency was operating under a Presidential Directive, there was quite a bit of natural hesitancy on the part of people to come in, feeling that since it was set up under a Presidential Directive, it could be disestablished just as quickly under another directive. After the Act went into effect, however, it assured a permanency which was reflected almost immediately by both the quantity and quality of people we could get to work for us. As regards the actual operations of the Agency, there was really very little difference after the Security Act than before the Security Act. The functions were spelled out in a clearer fashion, but there was very little real difference. If anything, I should say that the Director's power was more limited under the Security Act than it was under the Presidential Directive, since the Security Act spelled out more or less precisely the authority and the limitations of the Agency and of the Director. Under the Presidential Directive, this authority was a bit nebulous, and in a pinch, were it necessary, a second Presidential Directive increasing the authority of the Director could have been obtained.

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7. Q. View of the individual versus collective responsibility.

Policies of the agency, collection, production, dissemination.

National estimates, coordination - synthesis at working level.

A. There is no question in my mind, but that the view of individual responsibility is the only one that can be accepted, and I believe that that was definitely the intent of Congress when it passed the Security Act, that there would be an individual responsibility. Responsibility and authority must go hand in hand; collective responsibility is simply no responsibility at all. Of course, this view led to many discussions and disputes with the other agencies, because they were loath to give up any authority in their fields. However, I believe that this individual responsibility was the intent of Congress, because it was always the Director of Central Intelligence who was called up for any Congressional Committees on any discussions. It was never the collective chiefs of the other agencies, and I believe this is the most logical view. A collective responsibility means that the estimates and decisions will all be the results of compromises, which in the end only weaken the final product, and, further, from these appearances before Congressional Committees, it was clearly the intent of Congress that there was to be one source of responsibility and that was the Director of the C.I.A. It was easy enough to get the other agencies to agree on this concept of

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individual responsibility, but when it came to granting the adequate authority that should go with such responsibility there was a great reluctance to offer that concession.

In the preparation of national estimates I felt that the same responsibility and authority should go hand in hand, that C.I.A. should take from all the other agencies as its source the information they possess, and the first draft of the national estimate should be made by C.I.A. Then, this draft was to be passed around for comments and suggestions by the other agencies, and from the ensuing decisions, the final draft was to be prepared. Here too, the end responsibility must lie solely with the Director, and it must be his responsibility to determine what changes as might be suggested by the other agencies should be admitted into the final draft. It was his task to endeavor to secure as positive a national estimate as possible and to avoid watering it down by compromise and indefiniteness. Here too, as can readily be imagined, the policies of C.I.A. came into sharp conflict with the other agencies.

8. Q. Armstrong suggestion, October 29, 1947 re "Initial directive of National Security Council as opposed to Inglis's definition."

Definition of National Estimates

Research and Analysis

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8. (Cont.)

Use of Director's right of inspection departmental operations as well as materials.

A. It is not too clear in my mind regarding the details of Armstrong's suggestion, but from what I can remember I believe that he favored a broader view of the directives from the N.S.C. than did Inglis.. The Inglis concept in its entirety would have limited the Director into practically nothing more than a corresponding secretary for the I.A.C. The Armstrong suggestion, if I remember correctly, broadened the scope of the Director's authority considerably more than Inglis did. Also, if my recollection is clear, there were several caveats in Armstrong's suggestions, particularly as related to the defense of national estimates and principally in the field of political intelligence. I believe it was his idea that the combined agencies should each make up the original drafts of estimates in their own branches and then C.I.A. should gather these individual estimates and make them out into a single estimate, but with much allowance for editing or changes. Inglis concept was that these individual estimates should be made up, and practically limited the Director from doing any more than combining them together and sending them on to the Security Council. That, of course, was entirely opposed to my own opinions as stated in 7 above. Armstrong also suggested that the

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right of inspection of departmental operations be used as well as the inspection of materials. Such a suggestion was poison to the Service agencies, and I believe that it was offered with the knowledge that it would not be accepted, because from all I can recollect the State Department would have been just as adamant in receiving any inspections of its operations as were the Armed Service agencies. Here again in order to effect possible "living conditions," it was necessary to accept compromise rather than to start a fight at the very inception of C.I.A. These compromises while perhaps necessary at that time, and, in my opinion, they were necessary then, were to be a modus vivendi until the idea of a central intelligence agency got shaken down and was more or less accepted by the other agencies. Perhaps I was wrong in not insisting on the full execution of all the provisions at the time, but as conditions were then, I believed it was wiser to make haste slowly and to accept some undesirable conditions rather than starting out immediately with battles. This idea may nor may not have been the correct one, but at that time and looking forward to the fact that I was still in the Navy, it seemed to me the best thing we could do as conditions were then.

9. Q. Royall's position for the Army, November 26, 1947

Nature of the new I.A.C.

N.I.A. Directive No. 1 "All recommendations"

303 D.C.I.s Advisory Committee

9. A. Secretary Royall went along directly with the Inglis concept that all things should be done on a collective basis, and that the I.A.C. was to be a "Board of Directors" for the D.C.I. As this was issued by Mr. Royall it amounted practically to a directive as to how to operate. It caused considerable discussion which eventually led to my giving a briefing of the organization and duties of C.I.A. before Secretary Forrestal and the three Secretaries of the Armed Forces, a representative of the State Department and the Chiefs of the intelligence branches. At the end of the briefing, Mr. Forrestal pointedly turned to Admiral Inglis and General Chamberlain and told them they would cooperate with C.I.A. in accordance with the conception I had just given. This was a direct reversal of Mr. Royall's policy.

There was also considerable discussion over what recommendations were to be forwarded to the Security Council by the Director of C.I.A. My idea was that the Director of C.I.A. would forward a positive statement of C.I.A.'s views, plus the views of any of the other agencies which were in accord with the C.I.A. view, and accompanied by any dissents from any agency or agencies. The Inglis view particularly was that all recommendations made by the I.A.C. would be forwarded to the Security Council whether or not the Director C.I.A. was in favor of them. By the Security Act, only , the Director, C.I.A. had the authority to make recommendations to the Security Council; the Chiefs of the other agencies did

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not deal directly with that Council. When this proposal of all recommendations was brought up, after much discussion I flatly announced that I would not forward any recommendation of which I disapproved, that it would be most childlike and asinine for the Director of C.I.A. to make a recommendation to the Security Council and then say he was not in favor of such recommendation. It took this flat stand, however, to make the other agencies finally agree that recommendations and dissents as I advocated would be sent up in that manner.

I believed that the I.A.C. should be an Advisory Committee for the D.C.I. Going back to the position in 7 above, again, the D.C.I. had the responsibility before Congress and before the Security Council and he could not be relieved of that responsibility by a collective body. Therefore, he necessarily had to have the authority of making the final decision, and to use the I.A.C. as an advisory committee in that capacity. The other view, of course, was that the I.A.C. should be the governing body and that the Director should forward their views, if necessary dissenting from them, but nevertheless forwarding the views of the I.A.C. and carrying out their policies, more or less in the nature of a president of a company carrying out the directives of the Board of Directors.

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10. Q. ICAPS - Purpose, usefulness

Standing Committee for Intelligence Advisory Committee.

A. ICAPS was a hold-over that I found present when I came to the Agency. It was originally constituted to be a board, the members of which would represent the views of their own agencies. However, very shortly this usefulness was practically ended, because the members of ICAPS could not talk for their respective agencies. They degenerated first, into high-priced messenger boys from C.I.A. to the respective agencies, and then later evolved as sort of a standing committee to prepare papers for the I.A.C. During I.A.C. meetings I several times proposed informally doing away with ICAPS, but, even though it was serving no particular useful purpose, I could never get agreement with the other agencies that it should be abolished. Since informal soundings showed that the other agencies would not agree easily to the abolishment of ICAPS, it was considered better to let it stay on, Although it was not doing much good, neither was it doing any particular harm.

11. Q. Scientific Intelligence.

A. The need for scientific intelligence was very quickly realized, and the difficulty was in trying to fulfill this need. Some of the people proposed to head this branch could not get adequate security clearances, and others perfectly competent

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as scientists would not come to work for the Agency, because it meant they could publish no papers or findings, etc. As one scientist explained to me, his prestige as a scientist with his colleagues depended on publishing papers at the various congresses, and if he could not do that he would very rapidly be relegated into a second or third rate position. This he did not want and was the principal reason why he would not take the job as head of the scientific branch. As it was finally constituted, compromises had to be set up there also, and while the results were by no means complete or perfect they were better than we were getting before. While the Scientific Branch started out as a part of O.R.E., it was soon realized that it ought to be an independent branch, and was so constituted. The efforts were continuing to build it up and to try to make it a more valuable organization.

12. Q. Joint Chiefs in the Agency.

Elimination of civilians from J.I.C. and J.I.S.

Liaison--Representation by C.I.A. for the State Department

A. I believe in 1948 the Joint Chiefs had a reorganization which eliminated all civilian representation. It was at this time that C.I.A. was asked by the State Department to represent the State

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Department on the J.I.C., and the Atomic Energy Commission shortly afterwards requested the same thing. This may be another point in having a military man as Director, because the Joint Chiefs would accept me in a naval capacity as a member of the J.I.C. Whether they would have accepted a civilian director, I do not know as the point never came up. This procedure worked out very well as far as I know, at least neither the State Department nor A.E.C. ever made any complaints that they were not adquately represented.

13. Q. O.R.E. ?

Research and Evaluation

Reports and Estimates

Peculiarities of the problems of national estimates from his own point of view.

A. This whole question of reports by O.R.E. goes back again to what I said above in question No. 7. I believed that since C.I.A. was to be responsible for national estimates, the first draft should be made up in O.R.E. who were to have access to all source materials and information from the other departments. This first draft was then to be submitted to representatives of the other departments, and the views of the other departments obtained. Sometimes it was necessary to have

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three or four drafts before the final one could be submitted to the I. A. C. for either concurrence or dissent. Again it came down to the fact that in the ultimate instance the Director was responsible for the national estimate, and as such he must have the authority to reject or accept the views of the other departments. There were several instances of trying to placate the other departments and reconcile the views, which ended up in almost a completely innocuous national estimate. I still believe that if the Director is to be charged with the responsibility of a national estimate, it must be made up by his people, submitted for comments or dissent, but always in the last instance it must represent the views of the Director. The collective national estimate is almost certain to be a grouping together of compromises which at the end brings forth an innocuous document. It reads "on one hand" and then a paragraph later "on the other hand." This is a fine type of document in which one can never be wrong, but it is also one which by not taking any affirmative position is not much help as a national estimate.

14. Q. Establishment of O. P. C. June 1948.

Propaganda, psychological warfare.

A. When O. P. C. was established in 1948, it was set up that

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it was of, but not in the C.I.A. This division of responsibility and authority made for practically continuous conflict. I personally believed that the setup as existed under N.S.C. 4 could have been made more productive than what eventually emerged as the organization under N.S.C. 10. The extreme proponents for N.S.C. 10 were the State Department and its Policy Planning Board which took over almost the complete direction of O.P.C. Here again, the division of authority and responsibility came in. The State Department representatives were perfectly willing, and did, direct O.P.C. until mishaps occurred. Then they switched to the other side of the street and said that O.P.C. was a part of C.I.A. This question was still unresolved when I left C.I.A. in 1950, and I turned it over to General Smith as one of the first things he should do; either obtain complete control of O.P.C. or disassociate it completely from C.I.A. I have heard that this controversy still exists now in 1952, and the question is still unresolved. There is no doubt in my mind of the value of O.P.C. or an organization similar to it set up under the control and authority of C.I.A. I believe it should be disassociated from the intelligence side of the organization, because the purposes though similar are in many respects opposed. For example, in propaganda and in actual psychological warfare operations,

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when the operation is completed there must necessarily be some sort of publicity. The issuance of propaganda papers or a psychological operation to be of any value must come to the notice of the people they are directed against. For that reason I favored a complete separation of the functions of O.P.C. and O.S.O. As I said above, there is no question of the need for it. However, as conceived in 1948, I believed it was badly organized, and had I been able to make my choice I would not have had it set up in the fashion which it was. Its establishment was the result of a directive sparked by the State Department with most lukewarm support from the Defense Department and opposed by C.I.A. I shall admit there could not be a great deal of opposition when one's bosses, in this case the N.S.C., were insistent on setting it up.

15. Q. Views of Donovan "principles."

A. I do not understand quite what is meant by the Donovan principles, and consequently cannot comment on them now. Perhaps when you come up to see me you can explain what they are, and then I can give you an answer on them.

16. Q. Bogata.

A. As I told you when you were in New York, the decision on Bogata was completely my own and made finally really

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against my will. The background is as follows: We had just been set up for a year or so in Central and South America, and in most places we were trying to make our way and not getting very much support from the United States diplomatic representatives in most of the countries. The outstanding exception to this was Ambassador Bruce in the Argentines who supported the C.I.A. people completely. No one could have given greater support to us than he did. In most of the other countries, however, we got at the most a minimum support, and in many places what amounted to almost hostility. We were trying by all methods to make conditions better, and to please the Ambassadors and diplomatic representatives of the various countries. This is how things stood when our agent in Colombia sent positive word that there was to be an uprising during the time of the Pan-American Meeting. He reported this to the Ambassador in Colombia and to the State Department's advance representative who was making arrangements for the conference there. Both of these people requested that inasmuch as they knew of the thing they would take whatever steps were necessary to counteract it, and since they were aware of the situation they could handle it, and that the State Department should not be notified in order not to trouble the Department. I remember very well this despatch report came in about noontime, and in spite of our man's request at the

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insistence of the Ambassador and State Department representative that this not be communicated to the State Department, I started almost immediately to go over to see Mr. Lovett, the then Assistant Secretary of Defense, and give him the information. That was my first impulse and it later proved to be the correct impulse. However, when I spoke of doing this, the then Head of O.S.O., the Deputy Director, and the Head of ICAPS, all came in and we sat down to talk about it. The other three were opposed to notifying the State Department in view of the request contained in the despatch urging, that by acceding to the Ambassador's request it would help improve our relations with him and improve the relations between him and our agent in Colombia; that if this request was ignored the relationships between the Ambassador and our people, which even then were not particularly good, would be worsened. By following the Ambassador's request, we could build up some credit for ourselves. This question was discussed among the four of us for several hours, and I finally let myself be convinced. I should not have done it, but there were good arguments for doing so, particularly, as both the Ambassador and the State Department's advance man had said they could handle the situation in Colombia.

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17. Q. Korea.

A. I really don't have much to say about this, except that the capability of North Korea to commence an attack had been pointed out very frequently before the attack actually did come. Indeed, just about three to four days before the commencement of the Korean incident, O.R.E., in a formal report which was distributed, had pointed out that North Korea had the capabilities of attacking South Korea at any time, and also the fact that the South Koreans would probably be defeated. Of course, it was impossible to predict the exact hour and date of the commencement of hostilities, but, as I say, the capabilities had been pointed out frequently in the period before July 1950. Mr Pforzheimer can give you more information on this, and also he can tell you about the report of the meeting with the Senate Appropriations Committee. A copy of that record is held by the Committee and by Senator Bridges.

18. Q. The Dulles Investigation and Report.

A. I was primarily responsible for starting the Dulles Investigation and Report, as I mentioned to Mr. Forrestal and Admiral Souers that I thought it would be a good thing to have some disinterested people make an inspection and investigation as to how C.I.A. was getting along. I merely mentioned this to both Admiral Souers and Mr. Forrestal, and from there on Mr. Forrestal

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took it up and designated Mr. Dulles, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Correa to form the Committee. I had nothing to do with the selections of the individuals. I merely mentioned the idea to Mr. Forrestal. For a complete view on the Dulles Report you should see the comments that were made by C.I.A. on that report for submission to the National Security Council. I think I can add nothing to those.

However, there are a few side lines on this report that I think would be valuable. I think the over-all report was a very valuable thing. It brought out lots of things whereby a change for the better could be made, and, all in all, was worthwhile. I do believe it could have been much better had it actually been a Dulles Report. Instead, to be exact, it should be called a Robert Blum Report. I had had experience in inspecting and being inspected in the Navy, and there my experience was that if three ranking officers are designated to inspect an organization, they actually inspect it. In the case of the Dulles Board, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Correa spent very little time indeed in C.I.A., and they had scarcely more than a passing acquaintance with what actually was happening. Mr. Dulles himself spent much more time than his colleagues, but even he spent much less than fifty per cent of the total time the

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Board worked in C.I.A. The real inspector was Mr. Robert Blum, and he was personally incompatible and obnoxious to very many of the C.I.A. people, including myself. [redacted]

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