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17 September 1968

Meeting with [redacted]

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[redacted] has not talked to the DCI on the subject of an archives for CIA. He has talked to Colonel White about a reference center for historical papers but nothing has come of it. It was agreed that this is a good time to press for an archives program since there is interest in collecting material for the Library. Since this problem for the Library will come up each time an Administration changes, it would seem necessary to set up the procedure now and this would involve the problems of space and cost.

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[redacted] stated that during his work in the British archives, there was a 50 year rule on disclosing records to the public. This later was changed to 30 years, with certain exceptions. It would appear that the 50 year rule is somewhat stringent, 25 years is too soon, and that 30 years is about right.

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[redacted] in the history project is trying to bring together material that should be available for use in the writing of an overall history of CIA. At present he is concentrating on the DDI side and specifically the Office of the Director. One must familiarize himself with the filing system being used and then trace down the documents. He is in the initial stages of this process. He is temporarily filling the function of overall Historical Officer. He feels there should be a permanent chief, a deputy, and historical officer in each one of the Directorates, assisted by the Historical Board. With this set up there should also be an archive and archivist. At present there is no such organization and it is something which should be encouraged at this time. The DCI must be persuaded that there is a need for physically keeping documents of historical value in an archives where they would not be subject to periodic purges.

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[redacted] has made a cursory survey of several offices - FBIS, Domestic Contacts, etc. - and looked at their files and at their retention rules. There seems to be agreement between the system by which documents are filed and the retention rules so that they can be easily retrieved [redacted]

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It was agreed that reports of CIA operations should be kept for internal use only as long as necessary but not made permanent part of the records either for retention or eventual release to the public.

It was agreed that there should be included in the Library some paper describing CIA's historical program to let the academic world know that we are making a conscientious effort to keep this record even if it may not be made available to the public for many years.

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[redacted] stated that he had reviewed several of the histories being prepared. Examples were [redacted] history of Communications, [redacted] OCI's history of CIB, a 50-page history of the Defector Program. Most of the histories are satisfactory but none are outstanding. It was agreed that several of these histories which were being written for internal CIA use, might at a later time become appropriate to reveal to the public, without danger to CIA operations.

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[redacted] said that he would eventually be writing a final report on his efforts on the Historical Board and it was agreed that this might be appropriate for the Library. The Clandestine Services may have some guidance papers for the historical program. [redacted] said he thought the [redacted] report was highly appropriate for inclusion.

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The NIE and NIS papers appear to lend themselves to release to the public in a relatively short time.

The use of bland general essays for inclusion in the Library was discussed and it was agreed that these will always be viewed with suspicion by scholars of the future as self-serving and incomplete. They might serve as bibliographical sign-posts which would lead to the original documents in CIA custody.

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