

12 June 1968

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr.
 Printing Requirements and Equipment Survey Team

SUBJECT : Recommendation concerning Microform Technology
 and Publications

1. As you requested I have drafted the following for your consideration:

Is the printing press the only method of publishing reports?

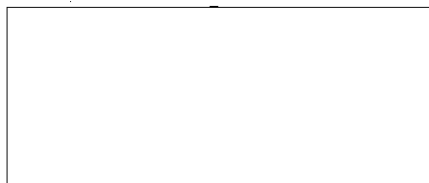
Modern technology offers many new techniques for modern communications. One specialized field encompasses the new microform systems which include the advantages of reducing the bulky size of reference material and office files. For example "Microfiche" puts a 65-page report on a plastic card of 4 x 6 inches. Even more promising as a publishing process is the new "PCMI" microform by National Cash Register Corporation which puts 3,200 pages on such a 4 x 6 transparency. We can better appreciate the potential when we realize that the complete NIS now fills 96 linear feet of shelf files. On Microfiche all of the NIS could be placed in part of one card cabinet; or on "PCMI" it could be put on less than 100 cards occupying 4 or 5 inches of space.

Unfortunately there are disadvantages and practical procedural requirements such as high costs, reading devices, and film technicians. Each master Microfiche with 65 pages costs \$1.15 and each extra copy is 9 cents. PCMI is much more, costing \$500 for the 3,200-page master and \$1.00 for each extra copy. These systems are economical only where many copies are distributed. Atomic Energy and NASA use Microfiche extensively. Ford Motor Company distributes its Parts Catalogue on PCMI. The Department of Commerce "Clearinghouse" offers any of its reports on Microfiche for fifty cents and on hard copy for \$3.50.

These two microform systems are typical of the hundreds of new communication systems being offered today. But they are systems that can be liabilities if poorly applied or part of the wrong procedure. Competent analysis is required to

develop an appropriate system. Such analysis requires the office concerned to initiate the study, participate in its research, cooperate with its development, and support its implementation. Service Organizations can offer the services they have available, provide advice and guidance on new technology they know; but, only the publisher can decide to explore a new system. It is recommended that all production units producing reports and documents for extensive distribution be required to re-examine their decision to use the printing media.

2. I hope this will help, but please alter it as you find necessary.



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CIA Records Administration Officer

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