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UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
OIL AND GAS DIVISION  
Washington 25, D.C.

Office of the Director

August 10, 1948

CONFIDENTIAL

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Dear [REDACTED]

Confirming recent discussions, the National Military Establishment and the Departments of State and Interior, all of whom are represented on the Interdepartmental Petroleum Committee, are of the opinion that Central Intelligence Agency could render a most valuable service in producing and keeping current comprehensive studies covering all aspects of petroleum production and utilization abroad.

What is needed is a series of books, encyclopedical in scope, treating (technically to the extent necessary) all features of the petroleum and synthetic liquid and substitute fuels industries of the important oil producing and consuming countries. Coverage should include, in addition to oil finding, production, refining, transportation, and utilization, data on facilities, foreign trade, government oil policy, legal aspects, estimates of the country's future position, strategic considerations, etc. Text and statistics should be supplemented with blue prints, flow charts, drawings and photographs.

These petroleum "basic data books" would be of the greatest usefulness to the three military Departments, the Department of State, and the Department of the Interior, and to such other Government agencies as the National Security Resources Board, the Department of Commerce, the Tariff Commission and the Economic Cooperation Administration. I assume, too, that such information would be very useful to the Central Intelligence Agency, and the other intelligence agencies. There should be in one place, easily accessible, all necessary authoritative information concerning petroleum in foreign countries, in sufficient detail to meet all needs for estimating situations, planning, policy making, and operational purposes.

This project was discussed at a recent conference with Mr. William R. Boyd, Jr., President of the American Petroleum Institute, Mr. Walter S. Hallanan, Chairman of the National Petroleum Council, and Mr. Bruce Brown, Chairman of the Military Petroleum Advisory Committee. They assured us the utmost industry cooperation in getting the desired basic material for the proposed studies. Subject to confirmation of detailed arrangements and to the provision of necessary funds, the Oil and Gas Division is willing to undertake to arrange for the required information to be compiled by properly cleared industry experts who know the petroleum industry in each of the foreign countries treated. Material so gathered would be transmitted to the Central Intelligence Agency where it could be

checked for adequacy, integrated with other data, and processed into a form assuring maximum usefulness to all eligible agencies of Government concerned with the international oil situation.

Sincerely,

/s/

Max W. Ball,  
Director, Oil and Gas Division  
Chairman, Interdepartmental Petroleum  
Committee.

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Central Intelligence Agency,  
Washington, D. C.

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