

TAB

22 August 1973

BACKGROUND STATEMENT - JPRS

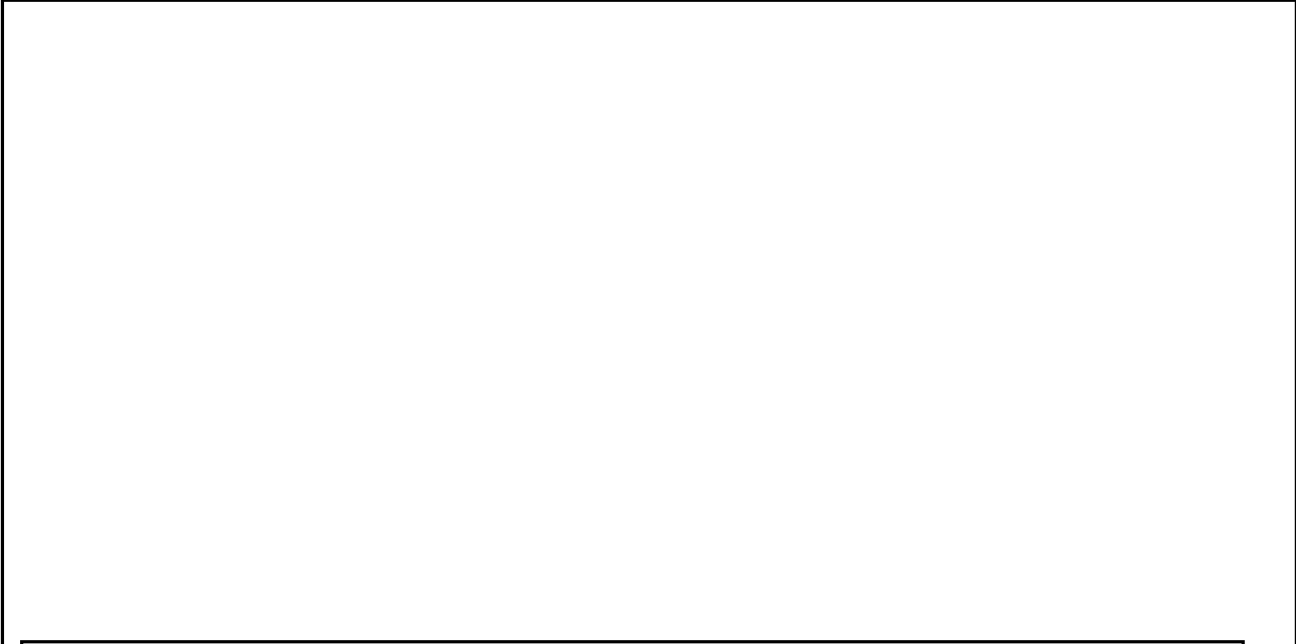
The end of World War II marked the beginning of an information explosion in open foreign-language sources (newspapers, periodicals, books) of interest to U.S. Government departments and agencies. The launching of Sputnik in 1957 heightened interest in foreign scientific and technological information, an interest shared by the Federal Government, the scientific and academic community, and the public at large. At the same time, foreign publications were multiplying so rapidly that it was beyond the capability of any single Federal agency to translate the volume and variety of material involved.

In keeping with its assigned task of performing services of common concern for the intelligence community which can be more efficiently accomplished centrally, the Central Intelligence Agency established an activity, under the name of the U.S. Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) and with a small staff engaging the services of hundreds of freelance contract translators, which was able to meet the ever increasing demand for translating open foreign-language sources.

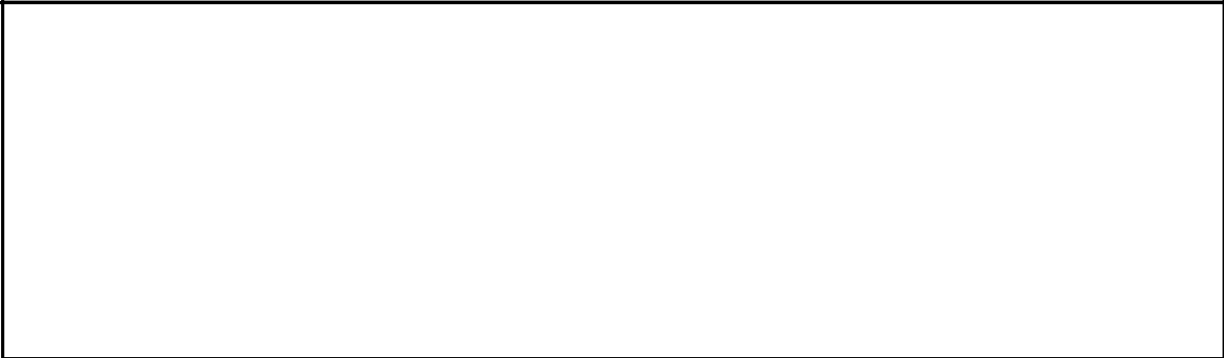
Consistent with law, it was neither published nor disclosed that JPRS was a component of CIA.

All JPRS translations came from open-source material. Further, JPRS functioned as a translation service for the entire U.S. Government, accepting translation requests from other Government departments and

agencies. Finally, the Department of Commerce, in keeping with its interest in disseminating scientific and technical data became the channel for providing public access to the translations produced by JPRS. What started out as informal ties gradually developed to the point where JPRS became publicly identified as a component of the Department of Commerce.



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