

12 April 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Security

SUBJECT : Role of Polygraph in the  
Reinvestigation Program

1. This memorandum responds to your request for a review of the role of the polygraph interview in the reinvestigation program initiated in 1961 and curtailed, for all practical application, in 1967. The memorandum also offers alternative plans for use of the polygraph should a reinvestigation program be reactivated.

2. Background

- a. On 30 November 1960, the Director of Security forwarded to the Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency a proposal to reinvestigate staff employees. A polygraph interview was proposed as part of the reinvestigation program. The DDCI approved the proposal on 2 February 1961. By June 1961 the reinvestigation program had been formally implemented in accordance with the following proposed procedures:

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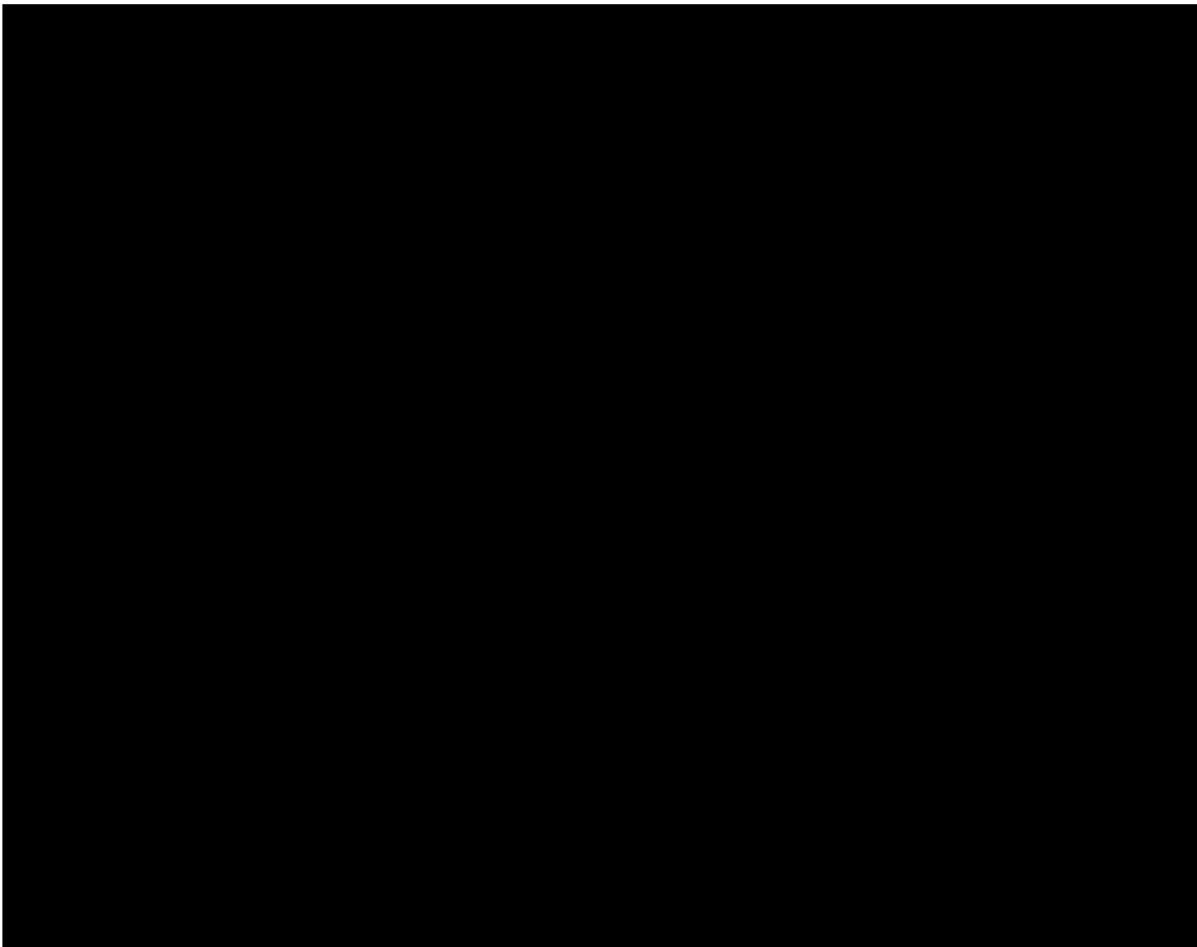
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- d. The inclusion of the polygraph interview in the reinvestigation program was a comparatively simple procedure because there was an on-going repolygraph program under DCI policy. This policy was set forth in a memorandum for the Director of Security, from C. P. Cabell, Acting Director, subject Polygraph Operations, dated 8 August 1957. Paragraph 2, Persons to be Tested, states in part:

"The following categories of personnel will be requested to participate in a voluntary polygraph program for the benefit of the over-all security of the Agency. STATINTL



employees of any grade with five years of favorable service who were clear with SRS and who had been polygraphed in the past five years. The exception to this authority were employees of sensitive projects (not otherwise identified) and Communications employees, including code clerks.

- f. There is evidence in the records that by July 1959 there was concern among the Agency population over the fact that some individuals had to take the test and some did not. A memorandum to the Director of Security from C/IB, dated 20 May 1960, suggested that all overseas returnees be repolygraphed. This was turned down.
- g. Objections to repolygraphing of certain categories of personnel was raised by the Inspector General during the early discussions of the proposal to institute a formal reinvestigation program. In a 26 January 1961 memorandum for the DDCI from Mr. Lyman Kirkpatrick, he states in part:

"...I would not make it mandatory that a polygraph be given in each case. In fact, I would suggest that the polygraph be used only if there is evidence which needs to be clarified by such examination. Furthermore, I believe that it should be policy in most, if not all instances, senior employees, female employees and others on whom there is no new information developed by name checks, etc., be excluded from the polygraph."

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h.



be reinvestigated and repolygraphed to make one full circuit of the population. To keep the program current after 1966 would require approximately [REDACTED] investigations and repolygraphs a year. Unfortunately, these figures were calculated on a projected stable population of approximately [REDACTED] employees with a fudge factor added for attrition and an equal number of new employments.

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- i. As the records show, the repolygraph program never approached the projected figure of [REDACTED] per year. It was never higher than [REDACTED] in the period from 1961 to 1966. The records reflect that the re-investigation program was suspended for a time in the spring of 1963 and again in 1964 because of the high demands for new employee processing and a high volume of covert cases from the special project areas of the DDS&T.

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- j. In June 1964 the Director of Security, Mr. Bannerman, informed the Executive Director-Comptroller that the Office of Security had "completed the routine re-investigation program in approximately [REDACTED] cases as of 30 May 1964." Since by the end of 1964, we had repolygraphed only [REDACTED] there is a clear indication that procedures had been modified and that not all individuals had been repolygraphed as part of the reinvestigation program. There are no clear cut policy papers in available records to show the reason for this change in procedure. But by May 1965 the records contain pretty clear indication that the Director of Security did not want automatic repolygraph of personnel. He maintained in his discussion with other Agency officials that repolygraph is proposed on a selective basis. He further indicated that reinvestigation polygraphs should not be conducted unless a specific reason appears.

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- k. This shift in policy and procedures had a noticeable effect on the polygraph interview portion of the re-investigation program. From a high of [REDACTED] repolygraphs in 1964, the number dropped to [REDACTED] in 1965, to 11 in 1966, to 8 in 1967 and in the six years since, there have been a total of only 18 reinvestigation polygraphs. The program is now considered to be non existent.

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1. The files contain indication that there were personnel objections to the selective use of polygraph. People were adversely responsive to request to be polygraphed. They complained to their chiefs and supervisors and frequently questioned the polygraph officer as to the reason they had been singled out for repolygraph. It was recognized that the largest number of repolygraph interviews took place with DDO personnel and the personnel of other directorates did not find themselves called for repolygraph on any comparative percentage basis.

3. The concept that polygraph interviews play a significant role in any reinvestigation program must be evaluated in terms of results. As mentioned above, analysis fails to justify use of the polygraph in terms of uncovering penetration attempts or developing serious security information. Not one of the [REDACTED] repolygraph cases surfaced a counterintelligence case or case with CI overtones. Based on such a criteria it would be difficult to justify re-initiation of an across the board, all employee repolygraph program.

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4. There are intangible advantages to a potential repolygraph interview. Among these are the effect that fear or apprehension of polygraph disclosure might have had over the years on personnel who abstained from undesirable conduct or actions, the weight fear of exposure might have had on opposition elements tempted to recruit our personnel and the advantage of peace of mind available to employees who recognize that their peers have also gone through and face again the possibility of polygraph.

5. Should these intangibles outweigh the lack of hard evidence and a repolygraph program again be initiated, there are factors of today's environment that require consideration in structuring such a program and in electing the coverage to be included. Among these are:

- a. the more widely held conviction that an element of privacy exists as a right of the individual;
- b. the changed morals and ethics of the day;
- c. the acceptance of civil disobedience as a human right if not duty in some circumstances;
- d. the more open posture of the Agency as a whole as declared by the Director.

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8. The coverage in such a program could include the following which seem to take into consideration the current environment:

- a. Release of classified information to unauthorized persons;
- b. Recruitment or employment by a foreign intelligence service;
- c. Use of narcotics;
- d. Participation in terrorists activities.

9. In summary, the original reinvestigation and repolygraph of the sixties did not develop significant volumes of security related information. It faltered because of priority work. The selective repolygraphing created some morale problems. The policy and procedures changed in the mid-sixties and the program was essentially terminated by the end of the sixties. Reinstitution of a polygraph program should be considered in light of today's environment and be launched only with strong support of top management. Coverage should be limited and applicable to issues of direct relevance to security matters of high intensity.

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Chief, Interrogation Branch

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