

AIRGRAM

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CA-5700, **SECRET**
NO. _____ HANDLING INDICATOR _____

TO : ALL AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

FROM : Department of State

DATE: FEB 1 9 34 AM '67

SUBJECT: Collection of Biographic Information on Potential Leaders

REF : Transmittal Letter: FOI-14, October 3, 1966 (11 FAM 030-032, 110-113, 240-248, 500-532)

1. The Department and other interested agencies have approved a new program aimed at improving and increasing collection of biographic information on potential leaders in foreign countries, particularly those in the new and emerging nations and the Latin American nations. This program calls for participation of Foreign Service, Department of Defense, and [redacted] collectors, with their collection efforts to be coordinated within the context of the Country Team. Appropriate collection guidance support will be furnished by the Biographic Register (INR/CS/ER), in conjunction with other components of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, with the Country Director concerned, and with the Defense Intelligence Agency.

2. The intelligence community has become increasingly concerned by evident weaknesses in community collection of such biographic information. There have been a number of instances where sudden coup or other governmental changes have catapulted to power whole new groups of leaders, about whom little or nothing was known. Experience has shown that biographic data on such leaders--of both the personal history and personality assessment sorts--are among the first information called for by officials responsible for assessing the consequences for and determining the future course of United States foreign policy. Moreover, certain components of the intelligence community have a vital need for such data in planning and conducting field activities. Those who may take power through sudden or dramatic change are of course not the sole concern. Early biographic coverage of

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Enclosure: Program for Collection of Biographic Information on Potential Leaders

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FORM DS-323

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Approved by: [Signature]	Drafting Date: 1/17/67	Contents and Classification Approved by: INR:TRughes
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personalities likely to achieve power through more legitimate and traditional means is also of real importance; so is the identification of persons who could be helped to achieve leadership positions in their country through the provision of training and the systematic attempt to open new channels through which persons could rise to leadership positions.

3. An outline of the contemplated program is enclosed. It does not alter existing authorities and responsibilities for biographic information collection; nor does it entail any changes in existing reporting, dissemination, or distribution mechanisms. Responsibility for the overseas aspects, including the coordination of collection efforts, will be lodged with the Chiefs of Mission. Briefly, this program will require:

a. that the Foreign Service, Department of Defense, and [REDACTED] of Country Teams join in drafting target lists of potential leaders (see paragraph 3 a of the enclosure).

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b. that Foreign Service personnel (including USIS and AID officers), Department of Defense personnel (including Attache, Military Assistance Advisory Group, and other DOD personnel represented on the Country Teams), [REDACTED] collect biographic information on the target personalities, with collection efforts to be coordinated within the context of the Country Team (see paragraph 3 d of the enclosure).

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c. that the Biographic Register prepare certain commentaries on the target lists as substantive collection guidance, soliciting appropriate contributions from the Bureau of Intelligence and Research and the Production Center of DIA (see paragraph 3 c of the enclosure).

d. and that the Biographic Register further prepare appraisals of reporting response on the target personalities (see paragraph 3 e of the enclosure).

4. Posts will recognize that the potential leader target of this program covers those elements of specific and continuing interest to the local youth committees. As such, it is intended that one important function of the program will be to provide the coordinated, mission-wide biographic collection support long called for by the Inter-Agency Youth Committee.

5. The Defense Intelligence Agency is currently revising its basic instruction on biographic reporting (DIA Instruction 58-13), referencing this message and incorporating the new program. [REDACTED] has informed us that [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] will be prepared to cooperate fully in implementing the program and to render such support, assistance, and coordination as may be requested by Chiefs of Mission in order to ensure its success.

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CA-_____PROGRAM FOR COLLECTION OF BIOGRAPHIC
INFORMATION ON POTENTIAL LEADERS1. The "Potential Leader" Target

a. "Potential leaders" are defined as those individuals with a significant potential for achieving leadership positions (1) of political importance or (2) with substantial political influence attaching. What comprises "leadership positions" will vary a good deal from country to country. The key positions of a country's national government and armed forces are only the beginning consideration. It will be necessary to consider many other positions with substantial political influence attaching--in regional and local government, at levels below the top command in the military and security forces, and in political parties, labor unions, student and youth groups, religious organizations, public opinion media, commercial and industrial circles, etc.--depending on the political forms and traditions of the particular country.

b. Similarly, what constitutes "significant potential" for achieving leadership positions will vary greatly from one country to another. In the more advanced and politically stable nations, many "potential leaders" can be identified at fairly early stages of their careers--careers that tend to progress in orderly, more-or-less predictable steps to the leadership positions which interest us. However, in the case of new and emerging nations, there have been all too many instances of meteoric rises to power--where identification of the potential leader was less dependent on his particular "rung-on-the-ladder" at the moment and more on his native abilities, his motivation, his will and drive for power, and the opportunity presented him. In such countries, the complex process of identifying "significant potential" must take into account the fact that an important ingredient--education or some type of training--may well be missing. Often it will be desirable to include such individuals among the potential leaders.

c. While community interest in "potential leaders" is of world-wide scope, this program will concentrate on certain country situations more than others. The new and emerging nations of Africa and Asia, together with the countries of Latin America, are viewed as the areas requiring immediate and intensive treatment under this program. In most Western European countries (with important exceptions, such as Spain) the problem is less acute and the relative abundance of information will permit an approach in greater depth. The Communist countries, posing special collection problems, require a different approach from that outlined here. (Guidance relating to collection of biographic information on Soviet Bloc officials is contained in CA-1471 dated August 6, 1964, and in CA-9179 dated March 15, 1966.)

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d. Nothing in this program is intended to replace or affect current community biographic efforts with regard to the present top governmental and military leadership of foreign countries. It is assumed that those individuals--the Chiefs of State and Government, cabinet-level officials, top military commanders, etc.--will continue to be covered as before. This program is viewed as a supplement to and natural extension of those efforts.

2. Information Interests.

a. Biographic information interest in potential leaders includes not only personal history information (name, nationality, date and place of birth, residence, position, career, family history, physical description, etc.), but also personality assessment data. The former is of course the essential preliminary--and there have certainly been cases enough involving the sudden emergence of new regimes where even this minimal sort of biographic coverage was lacking. But improvement in the collection of personality assessment data should be particularly emphasized. There is need to know not only who the potential leader is, but also what makes him "tick." The information required here includes but goes beyond the mere cataloguing of personal habits, mannerisms, and traits. It is essential to know what sort of political behavior to expect of him should he come to power, who and what are likely to influence him, and how best to deal with him.

b. Besides the necessary accumulation of biographic data in Washington, other vital interests may be served as well. A post's list of potential leaders could, for instance, serve as a basic reference in planning the effective use of United States Government resources by all elements of the mission.

3. Program. A cooperative and coordinated community program is contemplated along the following lines:

a. The Chief of Mission will request the Foreign Service, Department of Defense, and [redacted] members of the Country Team to draft for that country a "Potential Leaders Biographic Reporting List" (PLBRL). (The PLBRL is envisioned as a simple target list of those personalities in a given country deserving of community attention as to their leadership potential. There may be some instances, however, where it will be desirable to list a category of personalities, owing to the political import of the entire category and to the lack of sufficient basic identifying data to sort out its individual members. For example, for a country with a coup-prone Army, the Country Team may wish to include a category such as "all Army post commanders" or "all troop commanders at the battalion-level or higher." The PLBRL is intended to serve as the guide for the mission's efforts to probe deeper into the society and increase substantially biographic coverage of the "comers" at an early stage in their rise to positions of influence.) The PLBRLs should be prepared and submitted to the Department within ninety days of receipt of this message.

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b. The Biographic Register (INR/CS/BR) will publish the PLBRL as a target reference list for both collectors and concerned customers.

c. Following such publication, the Biographic Register will prepare a commentary on the PLBRL, covering (1) the completeness of the target list and (2) the status of community holdings on the targets listed. In drafting this commentary, the Biographic Register will solicit appropriate contributions from the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the Country Director concerned, and the Production Center of DIA. The commentary will then be made available to the Country Team as substantive collection guidance supplementing the PLBRL.

d. Foreign Service personnel (including USIS and AID officers), Department of Defense personnel (including Attache, Military Assistance Advisory Group, and such other DOD personnel as are represented on the Country Team), and CAS personnel will collect biographic information on target personalities, with such collection efforts to be coordinated within the context of the Country Team. Such coordination will include consideration of which collector's capabilities can most profitably be employed in covering the various targets and periodic assessment of progress in obtaining the desired biographic coverage. (It is hoped that a good deal of the desired collection can be realized through the systematic exploitation of existing assets of Foreign Service, DOD, [REDACTED])

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e. The Biographic Register will further undertake, after the program has been in effect for a period of time sufficient to judge response (on the order of six to nine months after publication of the PLBRL), to prepare an appraisal of the reporting response on PLBRL personalities. This will be made available to the Chief of Mission, as well as to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the Country Director concerned, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and [REDACTED]

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f. The PLBRL will be revised annually. The revision process will begin with a thorough review by the Country Team, taking into consideration field collection experience to date and the commentary and later appraisal of reporting response provided by the Biographic Register.

g. No new reporting or dissemination mechanisms are envisioned under this program. All information collected under the program will be handled through the existing reporting mechanism of the actual collector, with normal field and Washington dissemination including dissemination to the appropriate community repositories for biographic information, where it may be retrieved as needed.

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