

8/10/66

ATTACHMENT

SUBJECT: Declassification of Special Collection of Soviet Military Thought

1. We consider that publication of The Penkovskiy Papers has done a rather creditable job of drawing world-wide attention to Soviet espionage and SIS activities and that we have, for a change, the initiative in a major segment of the propaganda field. The climate is favorable for trying to maintain the momentum that The Penkovskiy Papers has achieved. The next step should be one related to the book. We feel this is logical because the name, Penkovskiy, is now a familiar one, it is news and therefore can get into print without undue effort, and any subsequent and related efforts will help keep the book an active and saleable item.

2. A reasonable way of utilizing these factors would be to declassify the Special Collection of Soviet Military Thought and related items obtained from Penkovskiy on Soviet strategic thinking. As you know this comprises about 5,000 pages, which have been published in 130 clandestine service reports of which 89 have been released to NATO services. Placing this material in the public domain would serve, we believe a variety of purposes, none of them immediate and spectacular but all of them significant for the long term.

A. Firstly, the mass of the material, its subject matter and the level of its classification totally dispel the charge that Penkovskiy was a minor agent of limited access. For the same reasons, the charge that The Papers were fabricated in the West would be mitigated, we believe. To have the whole collection available for open research would incline skeptics to grant that certainly Penkovskiy's channels to the West permitted a high rate of flow for information and, furthermore, that the source materials supplied by Penkovskiy were substantial and, consequently, adequate to fill a book like The Papers without resort to other sources or to the author's imagination. Note that this argument deals only with the question of the authenticity of the work, not with the identity of the editor. We grant that making these articles available to the public would not strengthen the CIA disclaimer of sponsorship for The Papers. We doubt, however, that the disclaimer would be at all

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inspired. Declassification would come half a year after the storm of controversy in the press. It would be done without fanfare and it would only substantiate a point already alleged in the book, "I have sent (the entire Special Collection) to my intelligence contacts." (p. 25, Doubleday Edition). Naturally, no official attribution to any source or intelligence service would be made at the time of declassification. As noted in paragraphs one above, we would expect the collection to be linked in the press with Penkovskiy of course, but would expect that the controversy of the fall would not revive. State news rarely attracts editors.

B. Secondly, the Corpus as a whole should have a growing influence on the understanding of Soviet military plans among scholars, journalists, disarmament advocates and so on. The single lack of anything more trenchant than the Sokolovskiy book from the Soviet side in comparison with the enormous Western literature on the subject has influenced many people to assume that only Western planners deal in such concepts as pre-emptive war.

C. Thirdly, among the mass of material there are some particular articles that can be especially exploited; these would be best introduced into the public domain, accompanied by the full collection.

D. Fourthly, we believe that the product of scholarly research into this material would probably be of intelligence value in other fields, some of them remote from military strategy, such as sociology and internal Soviet politics.

3. As an explanation for declassification of the materials, if one could be made, an official of the Agency, overtly releasing the material, could note privately that the documents in question are known by the Soviets to be in Western hands by implication from Penkovskiy's trial and from the specific statements in the Penkovskiy Papers.

4. If your service is amenable to the proposal, we would proceed along the following lines:

A. Prepare a complete set of the collection in English and in Russian in a format devoid of our clandestine service references, numbers, etc. The Russian copy would be

a photographic copy of the original.

b. Notify the OSIA of our intention according to ordinary procedures and without fanfare.

c. Arrange for the Library of Congress to announce the availability of the matter according to their customary procedures. We anticipate that this will confer an aura of scholarly respectability on the documents and will diminish the odds for charging that this is a CIA propaganda move.

4. In making this proposal, we have considered many factors, including the realization that such a move will help the intelligence community's assessment of the Penkovskiy case, and that several liaison services will become aware that we did not pass all the reports to them. We do not consider these problems as persuasive enough to abandon the proposal. We still have on hand sufficient numbers of copies of the reports of this type that were not passed to liaison services to complete the distribution to them, if deemed necessary. We doubt that there would be such interest in them for liaison, however, and are therefore reluctant to undertake the job, but we have no objection in principle to doing so.

5. The concurrence of your service in the proposal outlined in paragraph four above is requested as soon as possible. Should your service prefer to declassify the material and surface it, we should be happy to support you in any way we can.

7. An early reply will be appreciated.