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23 May 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Plans)  
SUBJECT: Oleg V. Penkovskiy

1. There has been a lot of speculation in foreign and U. S. press as to the fact that Penkovskiy may have been a double agent and that the documentary material might have been disinformation.

2. In the event that this comes up in your briefing of the Vinson Committee, you might find the attached helpful and I am sending it along for inclusion in your package which Elizabeth is holding for you for this purpose.

Howard J. Osborn  
Chief, SR Division

Attachment

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

31 MAR 1992

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Bona Fides of the Penkovskiy Operation

1. We have no reason to believe that Penkovskiy was a double agent or that any information he supplied us was wittingly provided to him as deception material by Soviet authorities.

2. Throughout this extraordinary operation, a recurrent question for us, and one also in the minds of analysts trying to cope with the resultant flood of classified Soviet documents, has been the possibility of Soviet deception. This possibility was given serious consideration each time we received new material from Penkovskiy. During the numerous long personal meetings we had with him we used subtle and varied tests of his loyalty and his information; we also checked the intelligence provided against all other information available to the intelligence community. He always passed all of the tests which could be levied on him personally and his information has stood the tests of time and comparative intelligence.

3. On the basis of these checks and counterchecks together with our familiarity with the methods and purposes of Soviet deception operations, we have concluded that there is no possibility that this case represents planned deception, build-up for deception, fabrication, or double agent activity. Rather it represents the most serious penetration of Soviet officialdom ever accomplished and one that will hurt them for years to come.

