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(U) Harry Truman did not set up the first postwar central intelligence organization solely because “all [he] wanted was a [classified] newspaper” prepared by a “global news service, delivering daily bulletins.”¹ Having next to no experience as a consumer of intelligence when he suddenly took office in April 1945, however, he was distressed to find “no concentration of information for the benefit of the President. Each department and each organization had its own information service...walled off from every other service.”² “[T]he needed intelligence information was not coordinated in any one place. Reports came across my desk on the same subject at different times from the various departments, and these reports often conflicted.”³

(U) Accordingly, when Truman created the Central Intelligence Group (CIG) in January 1946, the first duty of the new Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) listed in the presidential directive was to “Accomplish the correlation and evaluation of intelligence relating to the national security, and the appropriate dissemination within the Government of the resulting strategic and national policy intelligence.”⁴ This bland language immediately caused an interdepartmental dispute over its meaning and, by extension, the potential role the DCI would have in providing information for presidential-level foreign policy deliberations.

(U) The first DCI, R. Adm. Sidney Souers, understood that “the President wanted him only to go through the dispatch traffic and make a digest of significant developments...there was no intention that he should interpret these dispatches or advise the President on any matters of foreign policy. His report was intended to be purely factual...” Truman’s military representative, Adm. William Leahy, agreed. “The President wanted the information from all three departments (State, War, and Navy) summarized in order to keep himself currently informed.”⁵

(U) Secretary of State James Byrnes, however, contended that as the President’s chief foreign policy adviser, he and not CIG was responsible for reporting his department’s information to the White House. Byrnes felt so strongly on the point that he made his case personally to Truman. The President conceded that diplomatic information generally was not considered intelligence, but that it was information he needed and therefore was intelligence to him and would be

¹ (U) Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 3.

² (U) “Remarks of the President, 21 November 1952,” in *The CIA under Harry Truman*, ed. Michael Warner (Washington, DC: CIA History Staff, 1994), 471.

³ (U) Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs, Volume 2, Years of Trial and Hope* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1956), 56.

⁴ (U) Truman letter to the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy, 22 January 1946, in *CIA under Truman*, 29-30.

⁵ (U) “Minutes of the First Meeting of the National Intelligence Authority,” 5 February 1946, Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945-1950: Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1996; hereafter *FRUS: EIE*), 328.

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included in the daily product.⁶ At the second meeting of the interdepartmental body that oversaw CIG, the National Intelligence Authority (NIA), the members approved a directive charging the CIG with "Production of daily summaries containing factual statements of the significant developments in the field of intelligence and operations related to the national security and to foreign events for the use of the President..." The Department of State insisted on preparing its own digest as well that included some analysis, so Truman had two summaries on his desk each day—still, an improvement over all the unorganized cables, dispatches, and reports he had faced before.⁷

(S) To carry out the CIG's responsibility, DCI Souers assembled a production team, obtained cables and reports from other departments, and produced the first *Daily Summary (DS)* a week after the NIA issued its directive.⁸ The publication, produced by the Office of Reports and Estimates (ORE), was crude by modern standards, consisting of two mimeographed pages containing six items arranged in three categories—General, Europe-Africa, and Far East. (The geographic designations changed depending on the daily content.) The production staff considered that the most important story of the day (worth five paragraphs) concerned "alleged secret agreements" between the United States and the Soviet Union that "agents of 'some Russians' in Switzerland" were offering for sale in Paris. Given the rudimentary publishing process CIG then had, the *DS* contained no graphics and used no color. Although it was classified Top Secret, it was not based on all-source reporting. Its editors relied on State telegrams and news dispatches and occasionally used HUMINT reports. They did not get SIGINT for several more months and then could use it only to corroborate other information; not for six more years, in a renamed daily publication, were intercepts directly cited. By the end of 1946, *DS* writers were including brief comments and interpretations in their pieces.⁹

(U) The *DS* seldom ran to more than four pages and never more than six to avoid becoming a reading burden to its recipients.¹⁰ Its early dissemination to around 15 recipient individuals or offices in December 1946 had grown to 24 by February 1948 and 31 by August 1950. They included the President and his chief of staff; the Secretaries of Defense, State, and the Army, Navy, and Air Force; the service chiefs and their intelligence directors; and the National Security Council (NSC), the director of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the chairman of the National Security Resources Board, and some of their senior deputies.¹¹

⁶ Ibid.; (U) Arthur B. Darling, *The Central Intelligence Agency: An Instrument of Government, to 1950* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 81-82.

⁷ (U) Minutes of the NIA's second meeting, 8 February 1946, in *CIA under Truman*, 34; NIA Directive No. 2, "Organization and Functions of the Central Intelligence Group," 8 February 1946, History Staff Files, Job 84-00473R, box 3, folder 2. The members of the NIA were the Secretaries of War, State, and the Navy, and a representative of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

⁸ (U) *DS*, 15 February 1946, in *CIA under Truman*, 39-40.

⁹ (U) G. Fred Albrecht, "Keeping the President Informed: Current Intelligence Support for the White House," DDI Historical Series OCI-5, October 1973, 12 [S]. CIA analysts had more leeway with the *Weekly Summary*, first published in June 1946, which was also supposed to avoid assessments but had a format that made that restriction hard to enforce. Woodrow Kuhns, "The Office of Reports and Estimates: CIA's First Center for Analysis," *Studies in Intelligence*, 51:2 (2007), 28 [U].

¹⁰ (U) G.S. Jackson, "Development of CRS-ORE[,] February 1946-July 1947," ms. dated 10 April 1952, History Staff (HS) Files, Job 83-01034R, box 1, folder 22.

¹¹ (U) C.E. Olsen (Assistant Director for Collection and Dissemination, CIA) memorandum to Chief, Dissemination Branch, CIA, "Distribution F of Standard Distribution List (Dissemination of CIA Daily Summary)," 10 February

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(S) The delivery and briefing process for the *DS* also were very different from today. CIG and, after September 1947, CIA sent the publication to the White House each Monday through Saturday afternoon (except federal holidays), and President Truman read it in the evening. Sometimes he discussed it with his senior staff the next workday morning.¹² On most days, Leahy briefed Truman on intelligence matters; a CIG or CIA representative was not present. As of 1950, James Lay, deputy executive secretary of the NSC, and R. Adm. Robert L. Dennison, Truman's naval aide, briefed the President using the *DS* along with State Department and COMINT material.¹³

(S) Truman was pleased with the publication, "which, in the opinion of his intimate staff, makes him the best-informed Chief Executive in history on foreign affairs," according to a contemporary news account.¹⁴ In December 1946, Leahy said the summaries were "entirely satisfactory," and Leahy's aide noted that his opinion "could be accepted as the opinion of the President on this point."¹⁵ The first documented instance of direct presidential feedback came just over one year after the first issue of the *DS*. According to a White House aide in February 1947, "the President considers that he personally originated the Daily, that it is prepared in accordance with his own specifications, that it is well done, and that in its present form it satisfies his requirements. . . . The President normally reads every item in the Daily with interest."¹⁶ So did Secretary of War Robert Patterson, who read it "avidly and regularly," but not every senior consumer was as pleased. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal thought the *DS* was "valuable" but not "indispensable," and Secretary of State George Marshall stopped reading it after two weeks because he already had seen most of what it contained in State traffic and had his aide only flag the most important items.¹⁷ Leahy had expressed some dissatisfaction that over time the publication's contents seemed to have become "designed as much for the information of [policy and war] planners as for the President," and DCI Roscoe Hillenkoetter later said he thought "these summaries are pretty poor"; but Leahy added that Truman "was pleased with the

1948, copy in HS files; Theodore Babbitt (Assistant Director, Reports and Estimates) memorandum to DCI Hillenkoetter, "Requests for Increase in Daily Summary Distribution," 7 August 1950, CADRE no. C03001778 [C]. The NSC determined who was on the distribution list, establishing early on the practice of White House control over the dissemination of the presidential product. DCI Hillenkoetter memorandum to Carlisle N. Humelsine (Director, Executive Secretariat, Department of State), "Distribution List, Daily Summary," 18 February 1948, CADRE no. C03051464 [S].

¹² (U) Deforest van Slyck (Deputy Chief, Intelligence Staff, Office of Reports and Estimates [ORE]) memorandum for Assistant Director, ORE, "Conversation with Rear Admiral Roskett re C.I.G. Daily and Weekly," 19 February 1947, HS Files, Job 84T00286R, box 3, folder 2.

¹³ (S) Albrecht, "Keeping the President Informed," 20, 29 [S]. After the Korean War broke out in June 1950, Truman also began receiving a daily report on military developments in the conflict. The publication was later called the *Daily Korean Summary* and the *Korean Daily Bulletin*. Ibid., 26.

¹⁴ (U) Arthur Krock, "The President's Secret Daily 'Newspaper,'" *New York Times*, 16 July 1946.

¹⁵ (U) Assistant Director, Office of Collection and Dissemination, "Adequacy Survey of the CIG Daily and Weekly Summaries," 9 December 1946, CADRE no. C02178880 [S]. A May 1947 survey with the same title by the same author contained very similar comments from Leahy about Truman's views on the *DS*. CADRE no. C02178875 [S].

¹⁶ (U) Ludwell Montague (Chief, Intelligence Staff, ORE) memorandum to Assistant Director, ORE. "Conversation with Admiral Foskett regarding the C.I.G. Daily and Weekly Summaries," 26 February 1947, HS Files, Job 84T00286R, box 3, folder 2 [S].

¹⁷ (U) Assistant Director, Office of Collection and Dissemination, memorandum to Assistant Director, ORE, "Adequacy Survey of the CIG Daily and Weekly Summaries," 7 May 1947, CADRE no. C02178875 [S].

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contents...even going so far as to read the cables attached to his copy.”¹⁸ Truman later recalled that “Here, at last, a coordinated method had been worked out, and a practical way had been found for keeping the President informed as to what was known and what was going on.”¹⁹

(U) CIA, established on 18 September 1947, inherited CIG’s current intelligence responsibilities under NSC Intelligence Directive No. 3 (NSCID-3) of 13 January 1948. After defining current intelligence as “that spot information or intelligence of all types and forms of immediate interest and value to operating or policy staffs, which is used by them usually without the delays incident to complete evaluation or interpretation,” NSCID-3 stated that “The CIA and the several agencies shall produce and disseminate such current intelligence as may be necessary to meet their own internal requirements or external responsibilities.”²⁰

(U) Notwithstanding the White House’s evident satisfaction with how CIA carried out its current intelligence duty, a survey group that the NSC commissioned to examine the new Agency was highly critical of the *DS*. In their report published in 1949, Allen Dulles, William Jackson, and Matthias Correa—prominent lawyers with past associations with intelligence—described it in language that could have been used in later unfavorable assessments of presidential products. The *DS* was

a fragmentary publication which deals with operations as well as intelligence, without necessarily being based on the most significant material in either category...[T]here is an inherent danger that it will be misleading to its consumers...because it is based largely [90 percent] on abstracts of State Department materials, not in historical perspective, lacking a full knowledge of the background or policy involved and with little previous consultation between the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department. Moreover, it is incomplete because it is not based on all the most important materials.

Occasional CIA comments “appear gratuitous and lend little weight to the material itself.” Most damningly, the report recommended that the *DS* be discontinued in its present form, calling it wasteful, duplicative, and beyond the Agency’s area of responsibility.²¹

(U) Around the same time, the *DS*’s reliance on diplomatic traffic became an issue for the State Department, which noted that the Defense Department and the military services provided little material for the publication but received nearly three-fourths of the externally distributed copies.

¹⁸ (U) Donald Edgar (Chief, Interdepartmental Coordinating and Planning Staff, CIG) memorandum to Assistant Director, ORE, “Program for ORE,” 13 January 1947; “Minutes of the 10th Meeting of the National Intelligence Authority,” 26 June 1947; both in *FRUS: EIE*, 480, 772.

¹⁹ (U) Truman, 58. Truman’s reaction to the *Weekly Summary* was less clear, but ORE regarded the absence of criticism as tacit approval: “It appears that the *Weekly* in its present form is acceptable at the White House and is used to an undetermined extent without exciting comment indicative of a desire for any particular change.” Montague memorandum to Assistant Director, ORE [U].

²⁰ (U) National Security Council Intelligence Directive No. 3, “Coordination of Intelligence Production,” 13 January 1948, 2, CADRE no. 03439425.

²¹ (U) Allen W. Dulles, William H. Jackson, and Matthias F. Correa, “The Central Intelligence Agency and National Organization for Intelligence: A Report to the National Security Council,” 1 January 1949, 85, 86, CADRE no. C02232632 (declassified 1 August 1991).

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As a result, State was increasingly reluctant to provide CIA with sensitive diplomatic cables, thereby devaluing the *DS*. Certain military information was also kept from the publication because senior commanders regarded it as operational rather than intelligence material that should not be widely shared. In late 1950, R.J. Smith, the head of CIA's current intelligence unit, proposed that the Agency "make urgent efforts on a high level...to have the sensitive cables of the Defense Department made available to CIA."²²

(S) Even though the White House had not indicated that it thought the *DS* was inadequate or that it was prepared to do without such a product, efforts commenced inside the Agency in late 1950 and early 1951 to implement the Dulles-Jackson-Correa recommendations, placate State, reorganize the analysis function according to new DCI Walter Bedell Smith's preferences, and enable the Agency to produce a better daily all-source publication for the president. After some discussion among analytic managers about which component would have the responsibility for preparing it, and talks with State about including sensitive traffic in it, trial runs for a replacement product began in February under the auspices of the recently organized Office of Current Intelligence (OCI). When the new publication was ready, Smith suspended production of the *DS* after five years on 27 February 1951.²³

(U) The result of these trials, the *Current Intelligence Bulletin (CIB)*, premiered the next day. It had the same number of items as the usual *DS* (six) and used the same regional categorization and layout, but the pieces were longer and included comments, source references, classifications, and in some cases COMINT, and the product looked neater because it was prepared using offset printing, not mimeography.²⁴ (Graphics would appear in 1954 after OCI acquired a studio camera.)²⁵ In a memo accompanying the *CIB* that went to President Truman, DCI Smith wrote,

It is hoped that the broad representative current intelligence presented in the new Bulletin, with immediate comments of analysts, will be of more comprehensive value to you. It should be emphasized that the comments do not necessarily represent the mature appreciation of the Central Intelligence Agency and have not been coordinated with the other agencies represented on the Intelligence Advisory Committee. They are

²² (U) Babbitt memorandum to Chief, COAPS (Coordination, Operations and Policy Planning Staff), "Content and Distribution of the CIA Daily Summary," 7 April 1950, CADRE no. C02178869 [declassified 2006]; R.J. Smith (Director, Publications, ORE) memorandum to Assistant Director, ORE, "Contents of the CIA Daily Summary," 21 September 1950, in *CIA under Truman*, 337-38.

²³ (U) James Q. Reber (Acting Assistant Director, Office of Intelligence Coordination), Memorandum of Conversation, "President's Daily Summary," 4 January 1951, CADRE no. C03440054 [S]; R.J. Smith memorandum to W.L. Langer (Chairman, Board of National Estimates), "The CIA Daily Summary," 9 January 1951, HS Files, Job 84-00473R, box 5, folder 12 [S]; Albrecht, "Keeping the President Informed," 22-34 [S]; G. Fred Albrecht, "A History of the Central Intelligence Bulletin, 1951-1967," DDI Historical Paper OCI-1, May 1967, 3-16 (declassified in 1999); "Memorandum of Conversation: CIA Daily Summary," 5 February 1951, and Reber, "Memorandum of Agreement Between the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of State: Re SS Cables," 19 February 1951, Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950-1955: The Intelligence Community* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007; hereafter *FRUS: IC*), 91-92, 96-97; untitled NSC notice, 27 February 1951, CADRE no. C00011678 [S]. OCI came into existence on 15 January 1951. Examples of the trial-run publications are in Directorate of Intelligence (DI) Files, Job 79T00975A, box 1, folders 1-18 [S].

²⁴ (U) In *ibid.*, folder 19 [S].

²⁵ (U) Albrecht, "History of the CIB," 29.

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actually the first impressions of CIA on “spot” information, and are subject to later revision.²⁶

(S) The first *CIB*s were flown to Truman in Key West, Florida, where he was vacationing. On 8 March, he wrote to Smith that “I have been reading the Intelligence Bulletin and I am highly impressed with it. I believe you have hit the jackpot with this one.”²⁷ The next day, Associate Director for Current Intelligence Kingman Douglass noted that “High compliments have been received from many of the small list of privileged recipients,” and by the end of April, Smith could tell the head of OCI that the *CIB* “seemed to be exactly what was required.”²⁸

(U) The *CIB*’s “privileged recipients” numbered very few at first. Besides the President, copies went to the Secretaries of State and Defense, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the three service chiefs. After a year, the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe (NATO’s military commander), the NSC, the intelligence chiefs of the Army and Air Force, the head of the Armed Forces Security Agency (responsible for military SIGINT), and State’s COMINT office were added.²⁹

(S) CIA did not provide a daily briefing to the president. Instead, Truman’s senior military aide—Adm. Leahy and then R. Adm. Dennison—met with him most mornings to discuss national security matters and noteworthy items in the daily publication. After the Korean War began in June 1950, the president met with the NSC every Thursday and received intelligence updates from the DCI. Later in 1950, Truman began seeing Smith separately every Friday morning. On those occasions, the DCI gave his own appraisal of the situation in Korea, which he avoided doing at the NSC meetings. In early 1951, the DCI started bringing to the White House each Friday a black loose-leaf briefing book, with “For the President” stamped on the cover in gold, that contained summaries, serials, memoranda, and, after it began publication, the *CIB*.³⁰

(U) In a farewell speech to CIA officers two months before he left office, Truman expressed his gratitude for how well the Agency had kept him apprised of world affairs through the *DS*, *CIB*, and other intelligence products.

When I became President...there was no concentration of information for the benefit of the President. Each department and each organization had its own information service, and that information service was walled off from every other service in such a manner that whenever it

²⁶ (U) “Memorandum From Director of Central Intelligence Smith to President Truman,” 28 February 1951, *FRUS: IC*, 103.

²⁷ (U) Truman letter to Smith, 8 March 1951, reproduced in Albrecht, “Keeping the President Informed,” between pp. 35 and 36.

²⁸ (U) Douglass memorandum to Chief, Current Intelligence Division and Chief, Special Information Center, 9 March 1951, DI Files, Job 91T01172R, box 4, folder 13 [S]; “Staff Conference: Minutes of Meeting held in Director’s Conference Room...30 April 1951...,” HS Files, Job 84T00286R, box 1, folder 22 [S].

²⁹ (U) Albrecht, “History of the *CIB*,” 18-19.

³⁰ (U) Albrecht, “Keeping the President Informed,” 41 [S]; John L. Helgerson, *Getting To Know the President: CIA Briefings of Presidential Candidates, 1952-2004* (Washington, DC: CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2012), 9-10 [U]. After his appointment in August 1951, Deputy DCI Allen Dulles handled the briefings when Smith was absent.

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was necessary for the President to have information, he had to send to two or three departments to get it, and then he would have to have somebody do a little digging to get it.... This Agency puts the information of vital importance to the President in his hands.... You are the organization, you are the intelligence arm that keeps the Executive informed.... I am briefed every day on all the world, on everything that takes place from one end of the world to the other.³¹

³¹ "Remarks of the President to the Final Session of the CIA's Eighth Training Orientation Course....," 21 November 1952, in *CIA under Truman*, 471-72 [U].

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