

## Background Essay on the Establishment of the CIA

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Truman Presidential  
Museum & Library

The CIA evokes images of clandestine activity, spies hiding in corners and covert overthrow of unfriendly government regimes. However, when Truman established the organization in 1947, he envisioned something much different -- a sort of daily newspaper, informing him of developments around the world that could impact American policy. Yet even during Truman's own presidency, the CIA did evolve to become much more than a news agency for the President as covert operations began in earnest early in the agency's history.

The CIA grew out of a wartime agency, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which was established to help win World War II. From the onset, the OSS was intended to be a temporary agency with plans to dissolve it upon the end of the War. However, as tensions grew with the Soviet Union, many within the OSS were determined to keep it intact. By the end of the war, it was clear a Cold War was emerging, and Americans were "behind the game" with intelligence gathering, unlike the Russians, who'd been engaging in covert operations for years. While a need for intelligence was clear, debate raged over the role of this agency, as well as who would govern it and how it would be funded. Finding a leader was difficult as well. Military leaders strongly objected to former OSS officials taking the lead, noting "There were the men who'd slept through Pearl Harbor." However, should the agency be civilian-led, all major decisions and funding, in order to be consistent with American democracy, would need approval from Congress. This could be problematic for a secret agency.

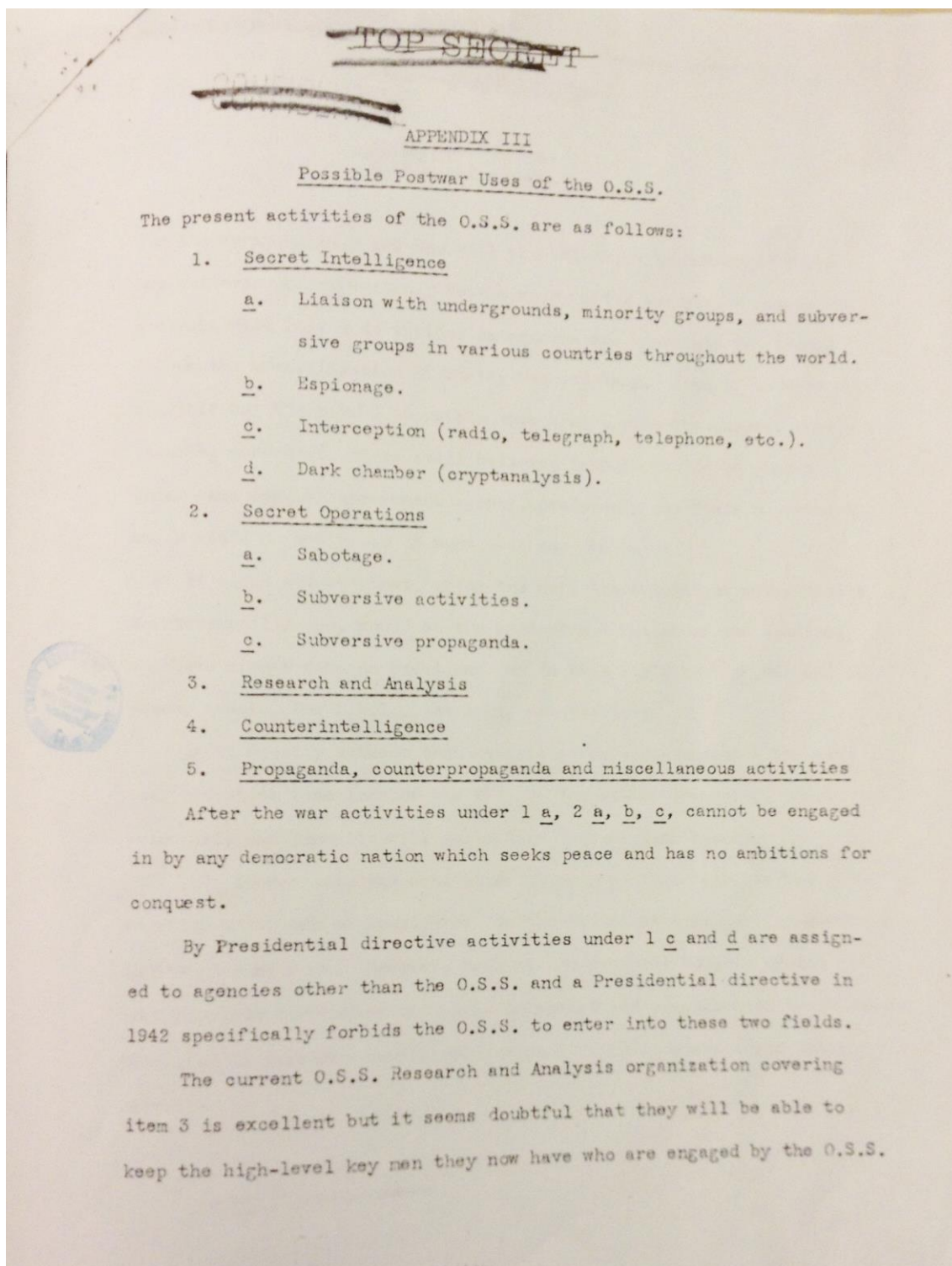
The establishment of the CIA as we know it did not appear overnight. It was the product of debates among military, state and defense leaders, with input from the public, thanks to key leaks that took the issue to the newspapers. Coming off of World War II (and the defeat of a totalitarian Nazi regime), many Americans feared our own government would become what we just had defeated. Truman himself had similar concerns, but as the Cold War heated up, he became more open to its development. After much discussion and debate over structure, Truman finally signed the National Security Act in September 1947, which gave birth to the CIA.

While Truman had intended to establish an agency that correlated all intelligence and delivered reports to the President, he soon realized that under the Cold War structure, the agency would become more than that. Moreover, Americans who once had feared the establishment of such an agency began to embrace it as a necessary tool to winning the Cold War. Still, the establishment and use of the CIA, during the Truman administration and subsequent presidencies, remained a topic of controversy, begging the question of its role in a transparent democracy while facing a totalitarian rival in Soviet Russia.

***Essential Question: What is the role of a secret intelligence agency in a transparent democracy?***

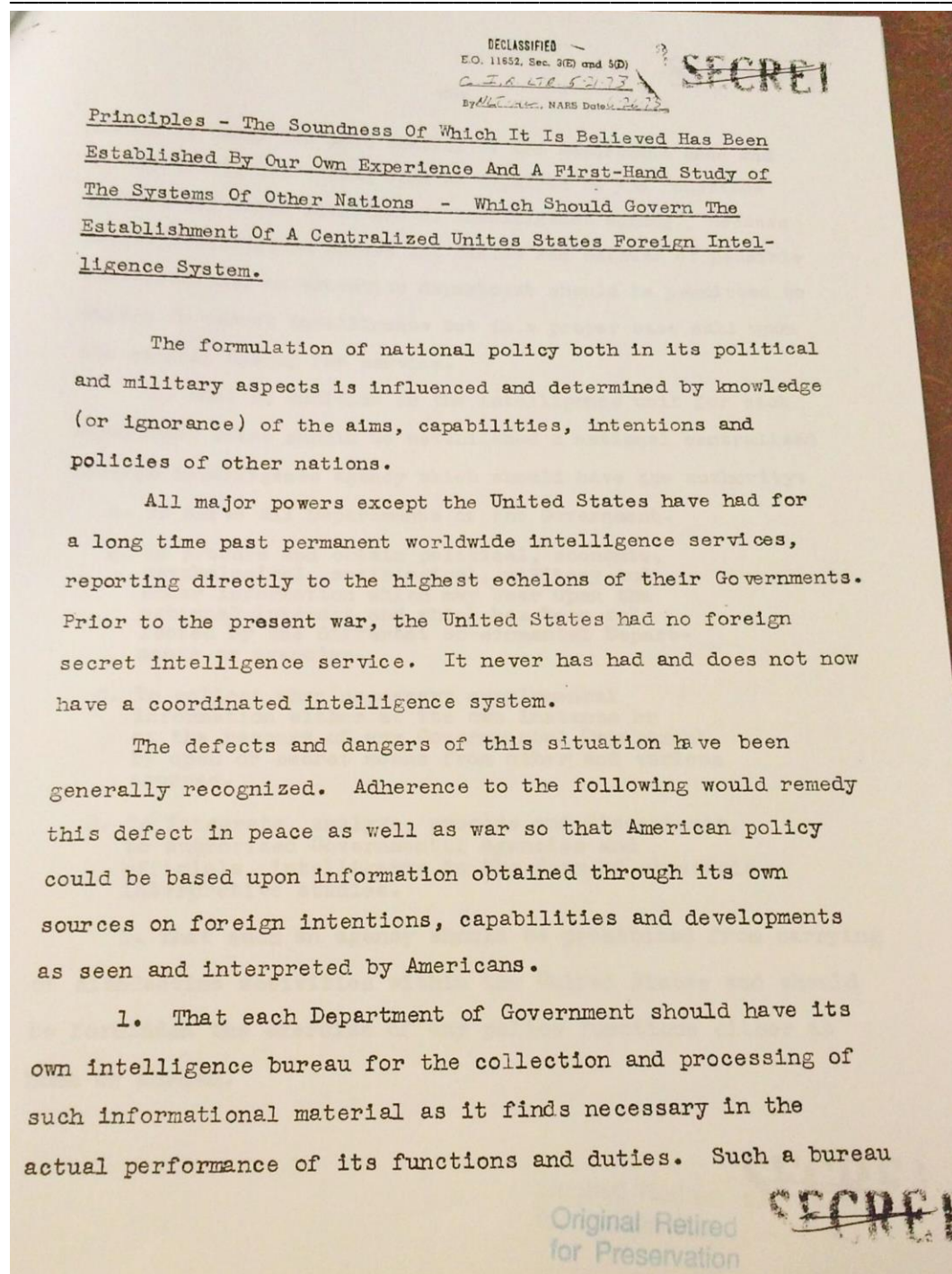
## Source 1

Source Information: Excerpt A from Colonel Richard Park Jr. Report on the O.S.S.



## Source 2

Source Information: William Donovan (Director of OSS 1945) proposal for post-war intelligence agency outlined in memo to Mr. Harold D. Smith (Director of Bureau of the Budget) August 1945





~~SECRET~~

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By                     , NARS Date 6-26-75

should be under the sole control of the Department head and should not be encroached upon or impaired by the functions granted any other Governmental intelligence agency. Because secret intelligence covers all fields and because of possible embarrassment, no executive department should be permitted to engage in secret intelligence but in a proper case call upon the central agency for service.

2. That in addition to the intelligence unit for each Department there should be established a national centralized foreign intelligence agency which should have the authority:

- A. To serve all Departments of the Government.
- B. To procure and obtain political, economic, psychological, sociological, military and other information which may bear upon the national interest and which has been collected by the different Governmental Departments or agencies.
- C. To collect when necessary supplemental information either at its own instance or at the request of any Governmental Department by open or secret means from other and various sources.
- D. To integrate, analyze, process and disseminate, to authorized Governmental agencies and officials, intelligence in the form of strategic interpretive studies.

3. That such an agency should be prohibited from carrying on clandestine activities within the United States and should be forbidden the exercise of any police functions either at home or abroad.

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### Source 3

Source Information: Telegram, George Kennan to James Byrnes ["Long Telegram"], excerpt, February 22, 1946. Harry S. Truman Administration File, Eley Papers.

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It should not be thought from above that Soviet party line is necessarily disingenuous and insincere on part of all those who put it forward many of them are too ignorant of outside world and mentally too dependent to question (\*) self-hypnotism, and who have no difficulty making themselves believe what they find it comforting and convenient to believe. Finally we have the unsolved mystery as to who, if anyone, in this great land actually receives accurate and unbiased information about outside world. In atmosphere of oriental secretiveness and conspiracy which pervades this government, possibilities for distorting or poisoning sources and currents of information are infinite. The very disrespect of Russians for objective truth---indeed, their disbelief in its existence--- leads them to view all stated facts as instruments for furtherance of one ulterior purpose or another. There is good reason to suspect that this government is actually a conspiracy within a conspiracy; and I for one am reluctant to believe that Stalin himself receives anything like an objective picture of outside world. Here there is ample scope for the type of subtle intrigue at which Russians are past masters. Inability of foreign governments to place their case squarely before Russian policy makers---extent to which they are delivered up in their relations with Russia to good graces of obscure and unknown advisers whom they never see and cannot influence---this to my mind is most disquieting feature of diplomacy in Moscow, and one which western statesmen would do well to keep in mind if they would understand nature of difficulties encountered here.



## Source 4

Source Information: Correspondence from Paul A. Neuland, May 6, 1947, with attached newspaper articles; Central Intelligence; Subject File; Elsey Papers.

DATE #2  
JUN 15 1947

# U. S. SETS UP 'GESTAPO'; 1500 SECRET AGENTS

## State Dept. to Run New Agency

BY WALTER TROHAN  
(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Washington, June 14—A bureaucratic empire of more than 1,500 secret agents, reaching into the far corners of the world, is being set up in the national capital under the noses of economy minded Republican senators and congressmen.

The new unit is the central intelligence group, which was created in the state department to correlate, evaluate, and disseminate intelligence information in the interests of preserving national security.

Between 1,500 and 1,800 agents are being sent thruout the world. Some of these will wear army and navy uniforms, but will not be subject to military control in any way. Others will be in civilian clothes.

On the basis of early operations the unit is expected to dwarf the controversial war time office of strategic services, "cloak and dagger" intelligence agency, which drew wide criticism.

### Act Like Gestapo Agents

Agents of the CIG have begun operations on the pattern of the soviet secret police, the MVD, or Nazi gestapo agents, both of whom usurped diplomatic and intelligence functions.

Already the CIG has forced the war department to liquidate its world wide secret intelligence work and has effected the disbanding of the federal bureau of investigation's extensive undercover system in South America.

CIG members have frankly described G-2, army intelligence; ONI, navy intelligence, and the FBI foreign operations as "rivals" and consider their first task is to dispose of other American intelligence units.

protest against his resignation in his embassy. A CIG operative frankly told the ambassador that he considered himself outside the latter's jurisdiction and would take orders and submit reports only to CIG headquarters in Washington.

### Agents Are Supreme

High CIG officials have said that their operatives will be above military and naval attaches. A youthful uniformed CIG operative may issue orders to a general or an admiral on duty at an embassy, a CIG official said.

The FBI acknowledged that its Latin-American organization was disbanded and the last of its secret operatives returned in April. The liquidation of the FBI system was brought about by CIG over protests of American diplomatic missions that the FBI had made many friends and maintained valuable liaison with officials of the governments in which they operated.

Since the enforced withdrawal of the FBI, CIG agents have not used the channels of communication established by the FBI. In the Nicaraguan revolution, the state department received up to the minute reports on the progress of disturbances.

### Army Had Own System

The army's world-wide intelligence system was an independent system having no connection with American diplomatic establishments and offices abroad. It gathered invaluable data on the strength and intentions of enemies and potential enemies.

The CIG is not yet authorized to operate on a Presidential directive. It proposes to spend 30 to 40 million dollars, which does not show in the budget because the unit expects to draw on the army, navy, state department and on funds placed at the personal disposition of the President.

The Presidential directive establishing the unit was issued Jan. 22, altho the directive was composed of high sounding words, it was recognized that the agency was created to analyze information regarding war plans and potentials of foreign governments.

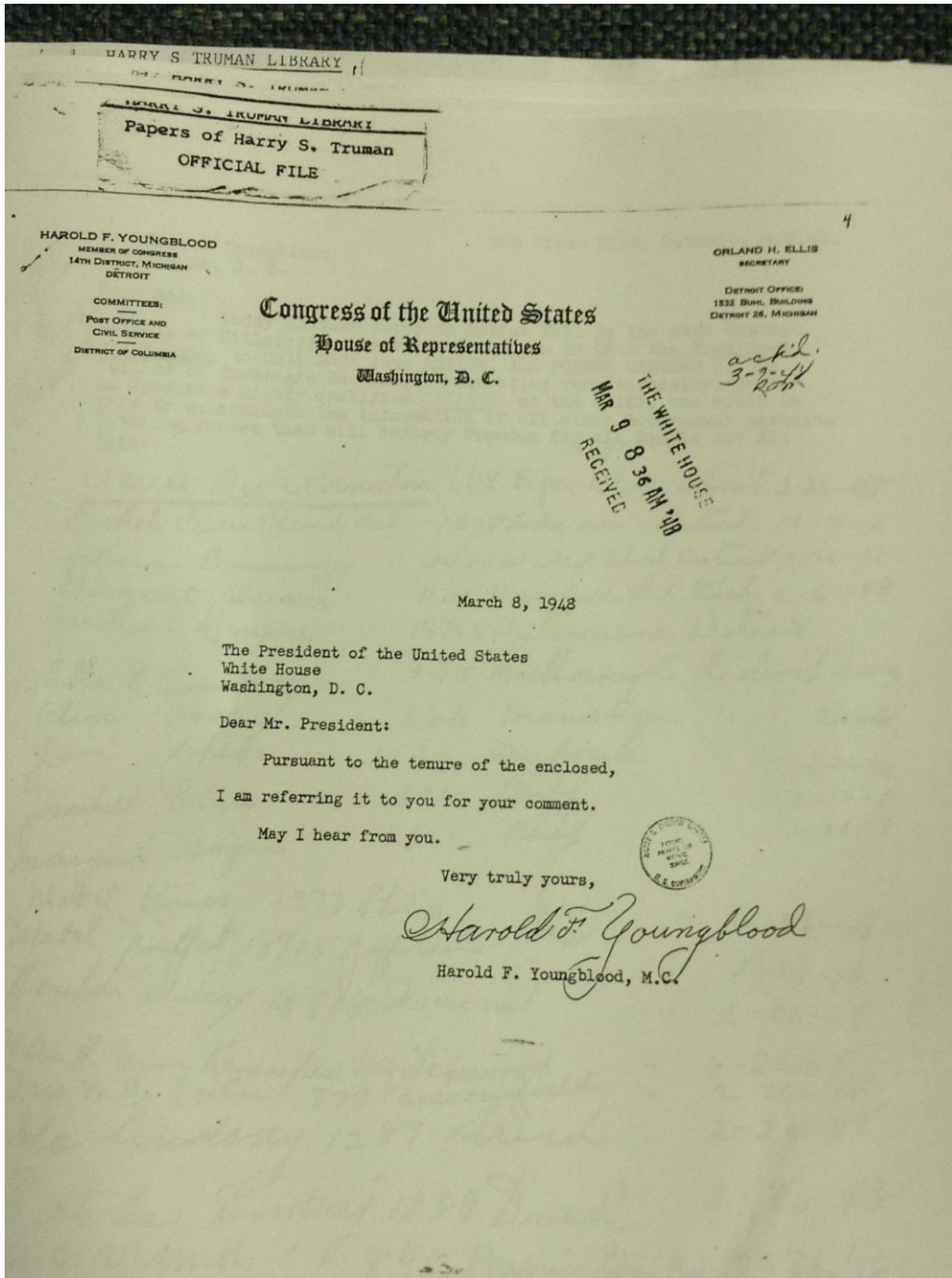
### Sets Up Own Spy System

The avowed purpose of the unit was to correlate and study information made available to the President by government departments. However, the new agency promptly found a loophole in the charter which enabled it to establish a world-wide system of collecting information as well as evaluating what others collected.

A joker in the directive gave the unit the right to perform "services of common concern" as compared to more efficiently accomplished locally. Heads of CIG decided that

Source 5

Source Information: Congressman Harold F. Youngblood, R-Detroit to Harry S. Truman, March 8, 1948 with attached petition reply from Matthew J. Connelly, Truman's Appointment Secretary





668 Piper Blvd, Detroit, 15, Mich.

Mr. Harold Youngblood  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Today another European Nation fell by the same Gestapo methods of Hitler!!! May we count on you to URGE the President, Mr. Truman, to Call BACK into ACTION, ALL FORMER MEMBERS of the "Office of Strategic Services", requesting very earnestly, that he appoint a highly qualified CITIZEN as the CHIEF, who would be able to co-ordinate the information of all other Government Agencies battling forces that will destroy Freedom for all People for All Time.

*File to President*

- Clarence Lee Johnston, 668 Piper Blvd, Detroit. 2-26-48
- Estel Beukendall 1318 Lakeview Detroit 16-7144
- Flora Erving 2400 W. 44th Blvd Detroit 2-26-48
- Margaret Weiner 1131 Maryland S.P. Mich. 2-26-48
- Janette E. Greene 14765 Hillbourne Detroit
- Ella N. Cummings 325 Marlborough C Detroit 2-26-48
- Clive Hoag 484 Franistique " 2-26-48
- Jane Stebbins 1133 Deckerston " 2-26-48
- Jeanelle Edme 821 Philip " 2-26-48
- Margaret Hayes 821 Philip " 2-26-48
- Mabel Kines 1377 Philip " 2-26-48
- Mabel Huffat 8925 Jefferson " 2-26-48
- Ronald Wilcox 15704 Fairview " 2-26-48
- Ellen H. Van Kesteren 414 Lakewood " 2-26-48
- Mrs W. G. Perlon 879 Beaconfield " 2-26-48
- Ira Lindsay 1289 Drexel " 2-26-48
- Bertha Lindsay 1289 Drexel 2-26-48
- Mrs. C. V. Mills 842 Barrington Rd. 2-26-48
- Emona L Lindsay 1289 Drexel ave 2-26-48



March 9, 1948

1290-B  
Miscel

My dear Mr. Youngblood:

This is in acknowledgment of your letter of March eighth with the enclosed petition transmitted to you by Miss Clarice Dee Johnston. x

The President thought you might like to tell Miss Johnston that there has been established a Central Intelligence Agency, provided for in the National Security Act of 1947. As you, of course, know Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter has been appointed Director of this Agency.

Very sincerely yours,

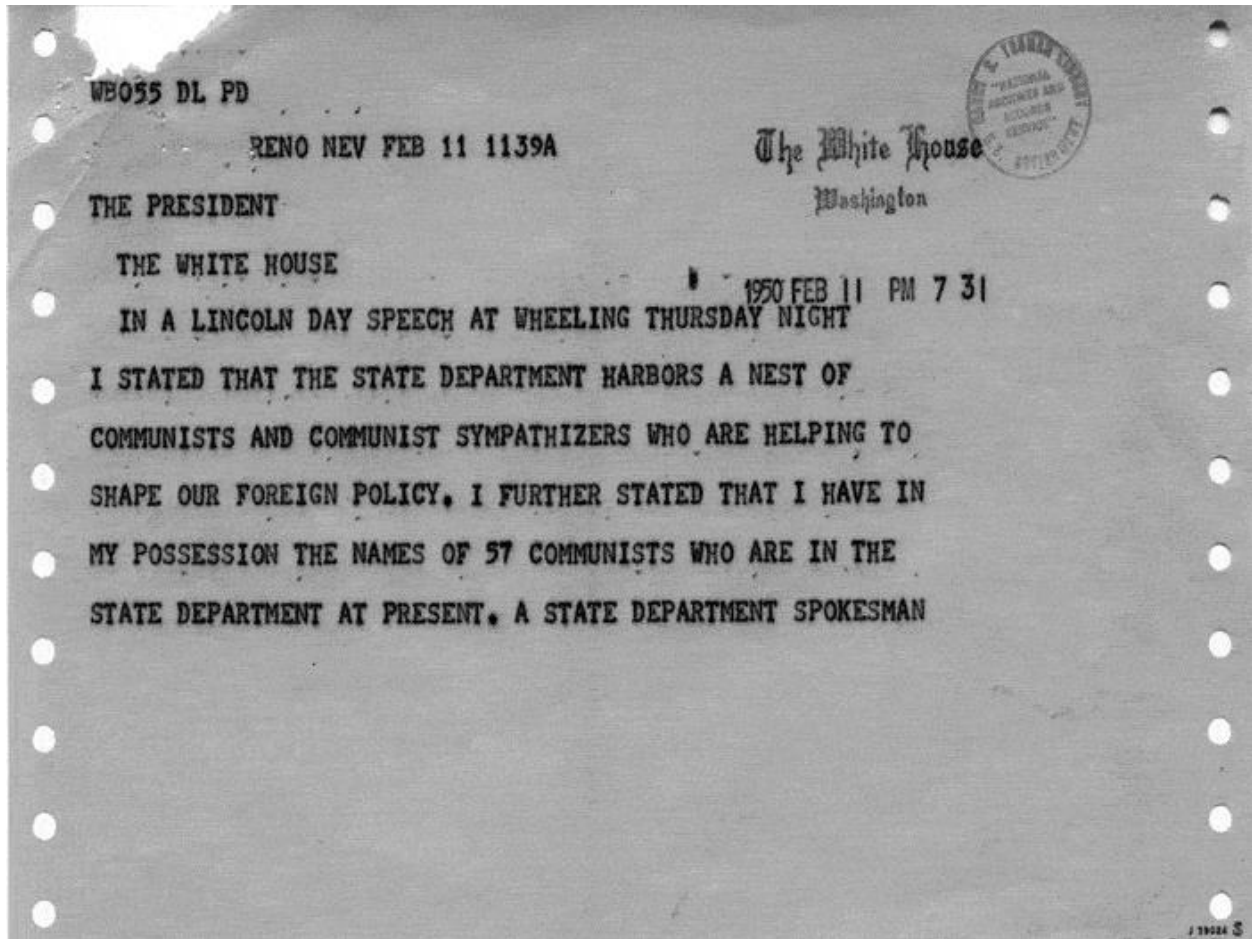
MATTHEW J. CONNELLY  
Secretary to the President



Honorable Harold F. Youngblood,  
House of Representatives, x  
Washington, D. C.

Source 6

Source Information: Telegram, Joseph McCarthy to Harry S. Truman, February 11, 1950, with Truman's draft reply; McCarthy, Joseph; General File; PSF; Truman Papers.



... TLY DENIED THIS AND CLAIMED THAT THERE IS NOT A SINGLE  
COMMUNIST IN THE DEPARTMENT. YOU CAN CONVINCED YOURSELF OF  
THE FALSITY OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT CLAIM VERY EASILY.  
YOU WILL RECALL THAT YOU PERSONALLY APPOINTED A BOARD TO  
SCREEN STATE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
WEEDING OUT FELLOW TRAVELERS. YOUR BOARD DID A PAINS-TAKING  
JOB. AND NAMED HUNDREDS WHICH IT LISTED AS "DANGEROUS TO  
THE SECURITY OF THE NATION", BECAUSE OF COMMUNISTIC  
CONNECTIONS.

WHILE THE RECORDS ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO ME, I KNOW





APPROXIMATELY THAT OF ONE GROUP OF APPROXIMATELY 300 CERTIFIED  
TO THE SECRETARY FOR DISCHARGE, HE ACTUALLY DISCHARGED ONLY  
APPROXIMATELY 80. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WAS DONE AFTER  
LENGTHY CONSULTATION WITH ALGER HISS. I WOULD SUGGEST  
THEREFORE, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT YOU SIMPLY PICK UP YOUR  
PHONE AND ASK MR. ACHESON HOW MANY OF THOSE WHOM YOUR  
BOARD HAD LABELED AS DANGEROUS, HE FAILED TO DISCHARGE.  
THE DAY THE HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE EXPOSED  
ALGER HISS AS AN IMPORTANT LINK IN AN INTER-NATIONAL  
COMMUNIST SPY RING, YOU SIGNED AN ORDER FORBIDDING THE





S

TATE DEPARTMENTS GIVING TO THE CONGRESS ANY INFORMATION IN REGARD TO THE DISLOYALTY OR THE COMMUNISTIC CONNECTIONS OF ANYONE IN THAT DEPARTMENT, DISPIE THIS STATE DEPARTMENT BLACKOUT, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COMPILE A LIST OF 57 COMMUNISTS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT. THIS LIST IS AVAILABLE TO YOU, BUT YOU CAN GET A MUCH LONGER LIST BY ORDERING THE SECRETARY ACHESON TO GIVE YOU A LIST OF THESE WHOM YOUR OWN BOARD LISTED AS BEING DISLOYAL, AND WHO ARE STILL WORKING IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT. I BELIEVE THE FOLLOWING IS THE MINIMUM WHICH CAN BE EXPECTED OF YOU IN THIS CASE



(1) THAT YOU DEMAND THAT ACHESON GIVE YOU AND THE PROPER CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE THE NAMES AND A COMPLETE REPORT ON ALL OF THOSE WHO WERE PLACED IN THE DEPARTMENT BY ALGER HISS, AND ALL OF THOSE STILL WORKING IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT WHO WERE LISTED BY YOUR BOARD AS BAD SECURITY RISKS BECAUSE OF THE COMMUNISTIC CONNECTIONS.

(2) THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES COULD A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE OBTAIN ANY INFORMATION OR HELP FROM THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT IN EXPOSING COMMUNISTS.



FAILURE ON YOUR PART WILL LABEL THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF  
BEING THE BED-FELLOW OF INTER-NATIONAL COMMUNISM. CERTAINLY  
THIS LABEL IS NOT DESERVED BY THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF  
LOYAL AMERICAN DEMOCRATS THROUGHOUT THE NATION, AND BY THE  
SIZABLE NUMBER OF ABLE LOYAL DEMOCRATS IN BOTH THE SENATE  
AND THE HOUSE

JOE MC CARTHY U.S.S. WIS..



Draft

~~Mr. Carthy~~ →  
file

My dear Senator:

I read your telegram of February eleventh from Reno, Nevada with a great deal of interest and this is the first time in my experience, and I was ten years in the Senate, that I ever heard of a Senator trying to discredit his own Government before the world. You know that isn't done by honest public officials. Your telegram is not only not true and an insolent approach to a situation that should have been worked out between man and man but it shows conclusively that you are not even fit to have a hand in the operation of the Government of the United States.

I am very sure that the people of Wisconsin are extremely sorry that they are represented by a person who has as little sense of responsibility as you have.

Sincerely yours,

[HST]

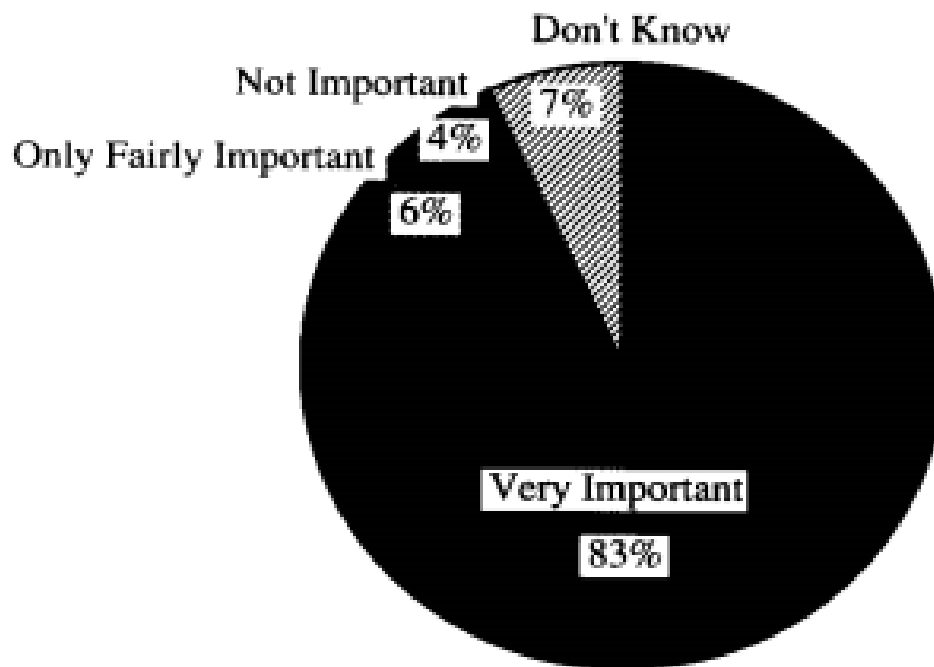
Source 7

Source Information: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, April 1950.

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## CONTAINMENT

**Question:** In general, how important do you think it is for the United States to try to stop the spread of Communism in the world—very important, only fairly important, or important at all?

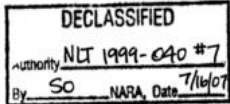


**Source:** Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, April, 1950.



Source 8

Source Information: Central Intelligence Agency Report on Iranian Political Situation 12 October 1951



~~SECRET~~

*Jean*

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

12 OCTOBER 1951

FROM: [REDACTED] EO 12958 3.4 (b)(1)  
SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF IRANIAN POLITICAL SITUATION



(IT IS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED THAT NO DISTRIBUTION OF THIS REPORT BE MADE OUTSIDE OF THE AGENCY.)

1. BACKGROUND.

A. XENOPHOBIA. IRAN NOW IS ANTI-WESTERN BUT IS VIOLENT ONLY IN ITS MANIFESTATION AGAINST THE BRITISH BECAUSE THEIR PRESENCE IN IRAN UP TO THIS TIME HAS BEEN MORE SUBSTANTIAL THAN THE PRESENCE OF ANY OTHER WESTERNERS (FOR EXAMPLE, THE ANGLO-IRANIAN OIL COMPANY, BRITISH BANK AND BUSINESS FIRMS BACKED BY A LONG HISTORY OF BRITISH INTERESTS IN IRAN). MOSSADEQ CAME TO POWER ON A WAVE OF XENOPHOBIA, THE FORERUNNER OF WHICH WAS THE ANTI-RAZMARA AND ANTI-COURT MOVEMENT (RAZMARA AND THE SHAH DESCRIBED AS SERVANTS OF THE BRITISH). IF THE UNITED STATES SHOULD CONTINUE TO SIDE SPECTACULARLY WITH THE BRITISH (FOR EXAMPLE, HARRIMAN'S REFUSAL TO PASS TO THE BRITISH MOSSADEQ'S "ULTIMATUM," AND THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE \$25,000,000 EXPORT-IMPORT BANK LOAN), THE BRUNT OF ANTI-WESTERN FEELING COULD EASILY COVER THE UNITED STATES AS WELL AS GREAT BRITAIN.

B. DICTATORSHIP OF THE STREETS. THE MOSSADEQ GOVERNMENT IS THE PRISONER OF THE "STREETS." THE "STREETS" ARE COMPOSED OF TWO MAIN GROUPS: THE FOLLOWERS OF MULLAH KASHANI AND THE TUDEH PARTY (WITH SATELLITE FRONTS), BOTH OF WHICH ARE EXPLOITING TO THE FULLEST A WAVE OF GENUINE NATIONALISTIC FEELINGS OF A BROAD SECTION OF THE UPPER MIDDLE CLASS. ALTHOUGH KASHANI'S FOLLOWING IS POSSIBLY MORE NUMEROUS THAN THAT OF THE TUDEH, THE FORMER HAS NEITHER THE ORGANIZATION, DISCIPLINE, NOR REVOLUTIONARY AND CONSPIRATORIAL TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE OF THE LATTER. ACCORDINGLY, OF THE TWO THE MORE POWERFUL IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE TUDEH PARTY.

C. THE TRADITIONAL IRANIAN POLICY IS TO MAINTAIN THE BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND GREAT BRITAIN. THE IRANIAN POLITICAL PENDULUM IS NOW SWINGING DANGEROUSLY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION BUT GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES THE IRANIAN SHOULD REACT AND TURN TOWARD THE WEST FOR SUPPORT (PROVIDING THE WEST IS NOT REPRESENTED BY GREAT BRITAIN ALONE).

2. MOSSADEQ'S GOVERNMENT HAS POWERFUL POPULAR SUPPORT.

A. MAJLIS OPPOSITION TO MOSSADEQ COLLAPSED ON 30 SEPTEMBER 1951. ABDUL RAHMAN FARAMARZI ANNOUNCED THAT THE OPPOSITION WOULD CEASE TO ATTACK THE GOVERNMENT AS LONG AS THE OIL DISPUTE WAS UNDER CONSIDERATION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. SOURCES BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE COLLAPSE OF THIS OPPOSITION IS FINAL. THE SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE IS A FACE-SAVING EXCUSE. THE OPPOSITION HAS GOTTEN "OUT ON A LIMB," DEPENDING UPON BRITISH POWER AND ROYAL COURT SUPPORT. BOTH FAILED TO COME THROUGH WITH THEIR SUPPORT AND THE OPPOSITION DEPUTIES FEAR FOR THEIR VERY LIVES.

~~SECRET~~

### Source 9

Source Information: Ambrose, Stephen (historian), *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938*, revised edition 2010.

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In the Third World, however, the application of a little force or a little money could have dramatic results. Allen Dulles's first triumph came in 1953 in Iran. Premier Mohammed Mossadegh had, in the view of the Dulles brothers, drawn too close to the Tudeh, Iran's Communist party, and would have to be overthrown before he made a deal with the Russians. Mossadegh had already nationalized Iran's oil fields, to the consternation of the British, who previously had enjoyed a monopoly on Iranian oil production. Mossadegh was also thought to be a threat to Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlavi's retention of his throne.

Allen Dulles decided to save Iran by sending his best agent, Kim Roosevelt (Theodore Roosevelt's grandson), to Teheran, along with General H. Norman Schwarzkopf (father of General Norman Schwarzkopf, who led the U.S. Army during the Gulf War of 1991), who had organized the Shah's secret police after World War II. (Organizing and equipping the police force and army of small nations was another method of control often used by the United States in the Cold War.) Roosevelt and Schwarzkopf, spending money as if they did not have to account for it—as they did not—organized demonstrations in the streets of Teheran that overthrew Mossadegh, who went to jail, and brought the young Shah back from exile. The new Premier then divided up Iranian oil production to suit the West: The British kept 40 percent; American oil companies got 40 percent; the French got 6 percent; and the Dutch 14 percent. It would be years before the Iranians tried again to take control of their own resources, and then it would be the Shah that the CIA saved who would do the taking. Meanwhile, however, the Communist tide had been stopped.

Source 10

Source Information: Interview of Harry S. Truman 1961-62, as presented in Plain Speaking; the Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman by Merle Miller

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THE CIA

I SAID earlier that Mr. Truman was not much given to second thoughts, and I learned not to expect any. But one morning as we were yet again waiting for a cameraman to change film, I said, *Mr. President, I know that you were responsible as President for setting up the CIA. How do you feel about it now?* A few days earlier we had been discussing the Bay of Pigs fiasco.

"I think it was a mistake. And if I'd known what was going to happen, I never would have done it. I needed . . . the President needed at that time a central organization that would bring all the various intelligence reports we were getting in those days, and there must have been a dozen of them, maybe more, bring them all into one organization so that the President would get *one* report on what was going on in various parts of the world.

"Now *that* made sense, and that's why I went ahead and set up what they called the Central Intelligence Agency.

"But it got out of hand. The fella . . . the one that was in the White House after me never paid any attention to it, and it got out of hand. Why, they've got an organization over there in Virginia now that is practically the equal of the Pentagon in many ways. And I think I've told you, one Pentagon is one too many.



"Now, as nearly as I can make out, those fellows in the CIA don't just report on wars and the like, they go out and make their own, and there's nobody to keep track of what they're up to. They spend billions of dollars on stirring up trouble so they'll *have* something to report on. They've become . . . it's become a government all of its own and all secret. They don't have to account to anybody.

"That's a very dangerous thing in a democratic society, and it's got to be put a stop to. The people have got a right to know what those birds are up to. And if I was back in the White House, people would know. You see, the way a free government works, there's got to be a housecleaning every now and again, and I don't care what branch of the government is involved. *Somebody* has to keep an eye on things.

"And when you can't do any housecleaning because everything that goes on is a damn *secret*, why, then we're on our way to something the Founding Fathers didn't have in mind. Secrecy and a free, democratic government don't mix. And if what happened at the Bay of Pigs doesn't prove that, I don't know what does.

"You have got to keep an eye on the military at all times, and it doesn't matter whether it's the birds in the Pentagon or the birds in the CIA."\*

\*I should add that publicly Mr. Truman continued to uphold the CIA. This was one of the few areas in which what he said publicly differed from what he said privately.

On a disastrous day at the Army Command and General Staff School that Bob Aurthur described in detail in the August, 1971, issue of *Esquire*, Mr. Truman was asked about the CIA by a young Army officer who was a veteran of Korea. On that occasion Mr. Truman said, "When I took over the Presidency he received information from just about everywhere, from the Secretary of State and the State Department, the Treasury Department, the Department of Agriculture. Just everybody.

"And sometimes they didn't agree as to what was happening in various parts of the world. So I got a couple of admirals together, and they formed the Central Intelligence Agency for the benefit and convenience of the President of the United States. . . . So instead of the President having to look through a bunch of papers two feet high, the information was coordinated so that the President could arrive at the facts.

"It's still going, and it's going very well."

On the other hand, now that I've looked at it again, that's pretty faint praise.

Moreover, it has recently been revealed that as far back as February, 1947, General Marshall in a memorandum to President Truman said of the agency five months before it was set up: "The Foreign Service of the Department of State is the only collection agency of the Government which covers the whole world, and we should be very slow to subject the collection and evaluation of this foreign intelligence to other establishments, especially during times of peace. The powers of the proposed agency seem almost unlimited and need clarification."



## Document Discussion Questions:

### **Source 1: Source Information: Excerpt from Colonel Richard Park Jr. Report on the O.S.S.**

**\*\*Note:** Col. Richard Park was a trusted military, bipartisan advisor to both FDR and Truman. This document is part of a long report on the O.S.S., submitted to Truman in April 1945. Prior to U.S. involvement in World War II, Park had served in the Soviet Union as the assistant military attache, attached to the Soviet Army. After Pearl Harbor, Park returned to Washington, serving in the map room. He also attended Yalta with President Roosevelt as military advisor.

1. What is Col. Park's view on the role of a secret intelligence agency in a democratic society?
2. Consider Col. Park's experience in the Soviet Union might have shaped his views on a secret organization.

### **Source 2: Source Information: William Donovan (Director of OSS 1945) proposal for post-war intelligence agency outlined in memo to Mr. Harold D. Smith (Director of Bureau of the Budget) August 1945**

**\*\*Note:** *Source 1, Col. Park's report on the O.S.S. focused mainly on the problems of the O.S.S., with scathing comments on the conduct of Donovan.*

1. Compare and contrast sources 1 and 2. On what points do the documents agree and on what points do they differ?
2. What might you hypothesize Donovan's relationship to Col. Park to be?
3. How might Donovan's experience in the O.S.S. have shaped his position on the role of a secret agency in the United States after World War II?
4. Why might this document be addressed to a budget director? What does that tell you about some of the early debate over the CIA?
5. Which document, source 1 or source 2, do you believe most persuaded Truman?

### **Source 3: Source Information: Telegram, George Kennan to James Byrnes ["Long Telegram"], excerpt, February 22, 1946. Harry S. Truman Administration File, Elsey Papers.**

*Note: Kennan served as ambassador to Moscow and is generally seen as the architect of containment.*

1. What is Kennan's view of the Soviet Union?
2. How might Kennan's argument support or refute the need for a central intelligence agency?
3. To what extent do you think Kennan's document shaped Truman's decision regarding the formation of the CIA?

#### **Source 4**

**Source Information: Correspondence from Paul A. Neuland, May 6, 1947, with attached newspaper articles; Central Intelligence; Subject File; Elsey Papers.**

Note: The article references the "CIG," which stands for Central Intelligence Group. This was an early name for the secret intelligence agency that later would become the CIA under the National Security Act.

1. How does the headline of this article convey a particular perspective on the organization of a secret intelligence agency?
2. Why is the term "Gestapo" important in examining this document?
3. What evidence does the author provide to support the position on the CIG forming?
4. How might World War II have shaped the position presented in this article?

**Source 5: Source Information: Congressman Harold F. Youngblood, R-Detroit to Harry S. Truman, March 8, 1948 with attached petition reply from Matthew J. Connelly, Truman's Appointments Secretary**

1. This document contains a petition, as well as the accompanying memo and Truman's response via his secretary. Why might Youngblood have submitted this document to Truman?
2. Youngblood was a Republican Congressman. Why is that information important? What does it reveal about Truman's relationship with Congress?
3. Based on the reply of Truman's secretary, Matthew Connelly, do you think Youngblood knew the CIA already had been formed? If so, why do you think he submitted the petition to Truman? Explain your reasoning and any questions this document raises.
4. Compare and contrast this source with the tone of the newspaper article presented in Source 4. Not quite one year had passed between the publishing of

source 4 and the submission of source 5. What does that illustrate about the pace of changing public opinion during the Cold war?

**Source 6: Source Information: Telegram, Joseph McCarthy to Harry S. Truman, February 11, 1950, with Truman's draft reply; McCarthy, Joseph; General File; PSF; Truman Papers.**

1. What prior knowledge do you have of Joseph McCarthy? (Consider prior class periods, as well as the video presented in this lesson.)
2. What is McCarthy's tone in the telegram? What are your thoughts about whether this is an appropriate way to address the President?
3. How does Truman respond to McCarthy? Why do you think Truman never sent his response?
4. What do these two documents reveal about the historical context under which Truman was making decisions regarding the use of the CIA?

**Source 7: Source Information: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, April 1950.**

1. Compare this document with earlier documents on public opinion (sources 4 and 5). How did public opinion shift as the Cold War progressed?
2. How might Source 7 relate to Source 6?
3. What events between 1945 and 1950 might contribute to the public opinion illustrated in this document?
4. How might this document relate to the creation of a secret intelligence agency?

**Source 8: Source Information: Central Intelligence Agency Report on Iranian Political Situation 12 October 1951**

Note: The CIA's involvement in Iran often is seen as the first successful mission of the CIA.

1. Why was Iran an area of concern in 1951, according to this document?
2. What do you think is the key phrase in this document that illustrates how the Cold War shaped the use of the CIA?

3. What part of this document would be of greatest concern to Truman, given his foreign policy goals?

**Source 9: Source Information: Ambrose, Stephen (historian), *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938*, revised edition 2010.**

\*\*Note: This document is a secondary source. It details the use of the CIA to orchestrate the overthrow of Premier Mossadegh and the implementation of the Shah. The document is intended to give information about the Iran coup to provide understanding for this CIA action. If a teacher prefers to share this information in another way, this document easily could be omitted.

1. Ambrose is a historian, so this document is his interpretation of the events in Iran. How would you describe Ambrose's analysis of this event?
2. In what ways do events in Iran support Truman's major foreign policy goal?
3. Although the Iran Coup d'état occurred during the Eisenhower years, it was organized during the Truman administration. Given what you know about Truman, to what extent do you believe Truman was involved in the decision to use the CIA in this way? Explain your reasoning.

**Source 10: Source Information: Interview of Harry S. Truman 1961-62, as presented in *Plain Speaking; the Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman* by Merle Miller**

1. Nearly ten years after leaving office, how did Truman describe his position on the CIA? What was his opinion of what the CIA had become and how Eisenhower used it?
2. We've all heard that "hindsight is 20-20." How do you think that idea might be illustrated in this document?
3. Truman was a student of history and was well aware of his historical legacy. To what extent do you think this document reflects that fact? Do you think Truman may have felt differently during his presidency? Why or why not?



# The Secrecy Spectrum, Part 1

As you read the documents, determine where to place them on the “Secrecy Spectrum” below, based on the degree to which you believe the document illustrates that position on the essential question. Be prepared to explain your reasoning.

**Essential Question: What is the role of a secret intelligence agency in a transparent democracy?**

A secret intelligence agency has NO place in a democratic nation.

A secret intelligence agency should exist to gather information.

A secret intelligence agency should promote the expansion of democracy in a peaceful manner.

A secret agency should promote the interests of the U.S. by whatever means necessary.

## The Secrecy Spectrum, Part 2

Consider your personal beliefs about the role of a secret intelligence agency in a transparent democracy. While we no longer are in an ideological conflict over the spread of communism, we know the CIA is at work today. For example, recent debates include the gathering of information on average American citizens in order to combat terrorist threats at home. Do you believe such activity as wire-tapping or accessing email is acceptable in a democracy? Should Americans know that the CIA is doing such things, or does the government have a right to secrecy in order to keep Americans safe? Consider how all of these points relate to the essential question and complete the spectrum based on your own beliefs. Be prepared to explain your reasoning.

**Essential Question: What is the role of a secret intelligence agency in a transparent democracy?**

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A secret intelligence agency has NO place in a democratic nation.	A secret intelligence agency should exist to gather information.	A secret intelligence agency should promote the expansion of democracy in a peaceful manner.	A secret agency should promote the interests of the U.S. by whatever means necessary.
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