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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

SECRET SENSITIVE

6 AUG 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: National Security Agency
ATTENTION : Mr. James E. Lear, M-5
SUBJECT : U.S. Defector Bernon Ferguson Mitchell

Not Martin

1. The information which follows was provided by Rudolf Shepteleovich Tenenbaum, a Jewish emigrant from the Soviet Union who has obtained a U.S. immigrant visa and plans to resettle in the New York City area during August 1975. Born on 16 April 1938 in Leningrad, he was a technical translator and English language teacher in Leningrad from 1960 until his departure from the USSR in May 1975.

2. In 1973, when Tenenbaum was seeking an American who could speak to some of his English language classes, he was introduced at the house of a student in Leningrad to Bernon Ferguson Mitchell, an American who had defected to the Soviet Union in 1960.

3. Tenenbaum visited Mitchell several times during the period between 1973 and May 1975. Mitchell lived in Leningrad at Prospekt Rimskogo-Korsakova Number 16, Apartment 1, in a large private house; his telephone number was 16-58-80.

4. Mitchell is married to a woman named Galina, last name unknown, who is dean of the piano faculty at the Leningrad Conservatory. They have no children.

5. Tenenbaum states that Mitchell is very unhappy, drinks a lot, regrets his defection, and would like to return to the U.S. or some other English-speaking country.

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Mitchell dislikes Soviet life, speaks little Russian, and is unable to read Russian books. He receives a pension of approximately 500 rubles (about US\$715) a month, and has regular visits from the KGB.

6. In May 1973, when Tenenbaum was teaching English to a number of prospective Jewish emigrants in Leningrad, he was subjected to a recruitment attempt by the KGB which wanted him to report on alleged Zionist instigators of the Jewish exodus from the USSR. Tenenbaum refused to report on his students, rejected this attempted recruitment, and subsequently openly recounted the recruitment attempt to four groups of his students totalling about 40 Jews. Tenenbaum felt that this was the best way to ensure that the KGB would never bother him again.

7. When he later described his reaction to the recruitment attempt to Mitchell, Mitchell told him he had acted wisely, particularly in revealing his signing of a secrecy agreement which the would-be KGB recruiter had dictated to him.

8. Just prior to Tenenbaum's departure from the Soviet Union in May 1975, he again visited Mitchell to return a book. On that occasion Mitchell was morose, and asked how he could leave the USSR illegally. Mitchell mentioned using the documents of a sailor on a foreign vessel as one possibility in this regard.

FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS:

George T. Kalaris
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