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2 October 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Foreign Intelligence

SUBJECT: TDY to Mexico City

1. After taking a good look at LIENVOY and LIFEAT, I would agree with the persons I talked with in Mexico; they maintain that any well-run tap operation should produce substantial intelligence information, provided the targets are of intelligence interest, and provided also there are people at the station who look for it and are able to recognize it. The case of LIFEAT is interesting in this respect: It has been deprived of its most productive lines in favor of LIENVOY, and yet its intelligence production compares favorably, with that of the other productive taps, except LIENVOY.

2. Mexico has people who can detect any little item of intelligence significance. This includes the Chief of Station, who goes over the highlights of the previous day's take every morning and marks certain items for action by station case officers or reports officers; The reports officers work on copies of the take at the same time.

3. There are several aspects of LIENVOY that make it an excellent operation and an outstanding producer of intelligence. I will describe them in detail when my notes get here from the station. The principal factors in the success of LIENVOY seem to be the following.

a. The agreement made with top Mexican officials, unlike many such agreements elsewhere, is as much in effect today as it was at the start: the targeting is not based on personal politics; the intercept staff has stayed on the job; the equipment is considered to be on loan from CIA.

b. The native monitoring staff has reached a peak of effectiveness that everyone at the station praises very highly.

c. The station is organized to handle the take speedily as soon as it comes in. The Chief of Station, the case officers, the reports officers, all work on it at the same time and exchange views on hot items. They do not let reports backlogs accumulate.

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d. Each new item on a target person is linked to a past history; what appears as a fragmentary bit in a conversation becomes a meaningful development in a continuous story. Continuity on the job makes this possible.

e. The equipment is kept in good working order by complete cleaning and checking of each unit once a month. The 32 units in use today are those installed in 1959.

4. A detailed description of LIENVOY and its counterpart LIFEAT should provide good models with which to compare other tap operations. It should give criteria for good procedures. It should give some idea of the desirable size of such operations, considering the available targets, the size of the station, and the other tasks and operations of the station. It should show what the station puts into its tap operations and what it gets out of them. LIENVOY and LIFEAT are an interesting example of two interacting operations, one joint and the other independent.

5. My stay in Mexico was as interesting and fruitful as it was enjoyable. And I hope it was not too great a burden on the station.

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cc: C/WH/3

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