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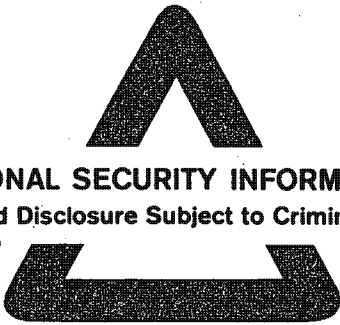
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MEMORANDUM FOR:

Phil —

This is part of a
coordination set. *no. but I
enjoyed
reading it.
Brings back
old memories*
Any suggestions?

Frank
18 *SEP* (DATE)

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The Johnson Era ^{opens} ~~continues~~

For most employees of the Federal government, work continues unchanged when a new President moves into the White House. Employees of the Bureau of Reclamation, the Labor-Management Services Administration, or the Commodity Exchange Authority all go about their jobs in their accustomed ways, though changes of administration policy can ultimately have an effect. Even the pattern of most intelligence work--collection and the production of finished intelligence for a considerable number of officials--remains undisturbed. But for those who are turning out intelligence specifically for the President, everything is apt to change as soon as a new Chief Executive takes over. How wide-ranging will the new President's interest in foreign countries and in international relations be? How much appetite will he have for intelligence? Will large and frequent servings be in order, or modest portions only as absolutely required? Will he want merely facts, or facts plus interpretation and analysis? Separated or homogenized? Is he willing to read a regular intelligence document, or does he prefer to be briefed?

In each of the previous administrations, OCI had established a satisfactory channel directly to the President. However, the system had never carried over from one incumbent

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to the next. Eisenhower did not want the personal weekly briefing from the Director that Truman had received; the General preferred to ^{rely on the} ~~continue the weekly~~ weekly meetings of the National Security Council. Kennedy did not like to use the NSC with any regularity. Instead he found just what he wanted in the personal, daily intelligence Checklist devised for him five months after he entered office.

The Checklist system worked so well with Kennedy that OCI and the Director naturally hoped to continue it with Lyndon Johnson, especially as it became apparent that Johnson, like his predecessor, was not going to have regular NSC meetings. Eventually OCI succeeded, but after many months of frustration. It was only when he had a firm hold of his administration and when certain foreign situations forced themselves upon his attention that President Johnson discovered the usefulness of a daily current intelligence document.

For a few days after the assassination of President Kennedy, R. J. Smith took the Checklist to DCI McCone at East Building at 8:30 a.m. The Director then held a staff meeting, after which R. J. Smith personally took the Checklist to Bromley Smith and Gen. Clifton in the White House. The briefing of President Johnson from the Checklist, however, was done by McCone, who saw the President daily for about three weeks after the assassination. ⁴⁶/₁

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Although OCI had provided more detail and background information than usual in its first intelligence books for President Johnson, McCone on 24 November passed the word through DDI Cline that there should be more but shorter items. McCone said the President expected that topics appearing in the Checklist would be followed up in later issues; therefore, OCI should make even negative reports. On that day, Cline said that the Checklist should cover military activity in South Vietnam, the fighting in Laos, Soviet ICBM developments, and problems in the Berlin air corridors and Venezuela.

On 5 December, the President held a meeting of the NSC to which the chairmen and ~~majority~~ ^{minority} leaders of the leading Congressional committees were invited. Most of the guests had to be hurriedly briefed on COMINT. Clinton B. Conger, Chief of OCI's Presentations Branch and the office's briefing drafter, put together the intelligence presentation on the Soviet military position, which was presented by DCI McCone. Conger was present at the briefing to handle the charts on the easel. Before the meeting started, the President gave a nod and in came his photographer, Okimoto. He began shooting pictures left and right. McCone was aghast, finally looking around at Conger, who had managed to turn over a map of the Soviet ICBM sites before the first picture was taken. A week later there was similar NSC meeting on China.

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Johnson did not have a large number of NSC meetings, but when he did they normally began with an intelligence briefing, usually prepared by Conger on the basis of materials from OCI, OSR, and OER, as appropriate. 47/

Around the middle of December, when McCone stopped seeing the President daily, the White House staff tried to get the President to read the Checklist. They were largely unsuccessful, although McGeorge Bundy was able to do some oral briefing, Checklist in hand. On 16 December, Gen. Clifton told OCI's John Heidemann, "If we can't penetrate this sort of wall today or tomorrow, we'll just have to try something else." Occasionally things went well. On the 18th, Clifton said that the staff had finally managed to get the President to read "the books"--probably two or three issues.

At Christmastime, the President went to his Texas ranch and shortly after Christmas had Chancellor Erhard as a visitor for several days. The PICL was cabled to the ranch each day. The report was limited to notes covering important developments and any information that might be useful in the talks with Erhard. The President returned to Washington on 5 January, and the next day Gen. Clifton, who had been at the ranch, told Heidemann that he had been able to get the Checklist to the President with some regularity once Erhard had gone.

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On 8 January, however, Clifton was having difficulties again--the President had not read the intelligence document since leaving Texas. Clifton thought there would be a little let-up in the press of business after that day's State of the Union speech. He asked Philip Kennedy for a special report, briefly treating important and still-current problems that were covered in the books the President hadn't read. Clifton thought, in fact, that it would be good to try the system of giving the President a summary of significant intelligence twice a week.

OCI quickly put together an experimental President's Intelligence Review, covering the period 4-9 January. This was taken by Richard Lehman, Assistant for Special Projects, to Gen. Clifton on 9 January. Clifton thought the Review was the best solution to the problem of the President's intelligence reading. He and Bundy were agreed that the President would not accept a daily intelligence briefing. The President had instructed Clifton that the DCI was to see him whenever he wished but that otherwise the President relied on Bundy and Clifton to stay on top of the intelligence. Because the President was likely to ask them with no warning for the latest word, the daily Checklist had to continue. Clifton suggested that the Checklist periodically include a special blue- or green-bordered page containing an operational report. ⁴²
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The next morning Gen. Clifton called Lehman to report that the White House was very pleased with the Review, and wanted it continued. It had been tried on the President at breakfast and it had "worked like a charm." ²⁶3/

Because the President was not reading the Checklist every day, DCI McCone wanted it sent to a few more high-level officials beyond the small circle of readers in Kennedy's time--the Secretaries of State and Defense, McGeorge Bundy at the White House, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Therefore he obtained permission in February to extend the dissemination to four additional top officials in the State Department, two more in Defense, one on the Joint Chiefs staff, plus the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney-General. ⁵⁰4/

Besides doing the semi-weekly Review and the PICL, OCI was writing memoranda in response to requests from the White House staff, and DCI McCone was briefing the President from time to time. The Checklist writers still took the publication to Bromley Smith and Gen. Clifton each morning and received their comments, plus occasional playback from the President. When unusually interesting items in the PICL caught his eye, Clifton would make a point of bringing them to the President's attention. On 21 January, for example, he was taken with an item featuring quotable statements by

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Khrushchev. (For example, the Soviet chairman had been bragging about new rockets, but said, "All the same, you cannot put a rocket into soup.") A few days later, when it looked as though war would break out on Cyprus at any time despite a strong US mediation effort, Clifton instructed OCI to keep the White House "up to the minute" on developments. "Hours will make the difference," he said.

Gen. Clifton told James Hanrahan on 28 January that he had talked with the President about the Intelligence Review and Mr. Johnson had said it was just fine. He found it a very valuable supplement to his occasional briefings from the DCI and he wanted it continued without change.

On 25 March the President's plans to spend a weekend in Texas prompted Gen. Clifton to comment that Mr. Johnson read his intelligence while at the ranch; he was often up and asking for it by 8:15 a.m. But it was hard to catch him in Washington. The next day Clifton said that it was not necessary for the OCI representatives to meet him at 9:30 a.m., the book did not move upstairs that fast. He asked that the meetings take place at 10 in the future.

Early in 1964, the President drew his aides Bill Moyers and Jack Valenti into the intelligence picture. He wanted one of them present when he read the Review at breakfast and he was reported occasionally as discussing Checklist items with them. Although the PICL writers continued to

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meet and talk with Bromley Smith and Gen. Clifton, it began to look as though Moyers and Valenti were taking the documents to the President.

James C. Graham, Acting AD/CI, took up with DDI Ray Cline the possibility of inviting Moyers to CIA headquarters for lunch and a briefing. Cline first wanted to discuss the White House problem with McCone, and asked Graham for a little memorandum on how things were going. ⁵¹5/ OCI drew up a statement for Cline making the principal points that it had no way of knowing whether it was meeting the President's needs because it had no feedback from him, in contrast to the situation under Kennedy. The reason for this was that OCI's contacts at the White House did not deal directly with the President on intelligence matters. OCI hoped to be able to establish close links to the President's immediate staff. ⁵²6/

Things remained in a confused state for the next few months, with only occasional indications that OCI's presidential publications had hit the mark. Clifton commented in May that the Review was the best means of reaching the President, although he said the PICL registered at times when Valenti was interested in an item. There were days when the President read and initialed both the Review and the PICL. One day when the PICL was heavy on the side of bad news, Clifton said, "It's no wonder the President doesn't

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want to read this stuff--it annoys you." From mid-year on, Mr. Johnson made frequent campaign trips around the country. Clifton, who was usually with him, said he had more luck getting the President to read his intelligence on the return flights than on the way out, when Mr. Johnson was studying his speeches.

As the election neared, Secretary of State Rusk expressed some concern to McCone about the security of the Checklist and seemed to prefer that dissemination be limited to the President, Secretary of Defense McNamara and himself. McCone passed the word down and also conveyed his feeling that the President should read the Checklist daily, or have it read to him, and should not depend on the semi-weekly Review. ^{SS} 7/

AD/CI R. J. Smith responded in a memorandum of 5 November 1964. He believed that the Agency would have a graceful way of dropping some of the Checklist readers if the publication were to undergo a transformation in which it would acquire a new name, a new cover, and a new format. It would become President Johnson's publication, specifically designed to meet his needs. To increase the chances of its being read by the Chief Executive, it would be produced to conform to the President's working habits and would be delivered in late afternoon. Smith noted that the Review, which Mr. Johnson "usually reads," was timed for his evening perusal. Smith

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also noted the importance of finding a way to establish direct contact with the President so that OCI could get feedback and thus avoid writing in a vacuum. 8/

The PDB Appears

Smith's proposal for a new publication was accepted and was rapidly put into effect. The last Checklist was dated 30 November 1964 and the next day the first issue of the President's Daily Brief (PDB) was delivered to the White House. In substance it resembled the PICL, but it had a fresh appearance--chiefly because it was printed on legal-sized paper--and it came out late in the afternoon instead of early in the morning. Jack Valenti sent this first issue back to McGeorge Bundy saying that the President read it, liked it, and wanted it continued. Dissemination was cut back, so that the only persons receiving the PDB outside the White House were the Secretary and Under Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary and one Assistant Secretary, the Treasury Secretary, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and Gen. Carroll, the head of DIA.

The semi-weekly Review was dropped, but by 16 December the DCI ordered that a summary of OCI's Current Intelligence Weekly Review be included with each Friday's PDB. The summary, titled Highlights of the Week, lasted only until 26 February 1965, having failed to arouse presidential interest.

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In the ensuing weeks and months, OCI was naturally watching for indications of the success or failure of the restyled daily for the President. On 13 January, PDB writer Thomas Patton noted that Bromley Smith wrote "The President" in the upper right corner of Copy No. 1. Patton asked whether Smith would like OCI to type this on. No, said Smith, putting it on in long-hand gave it a human touch.

On 18 January, the Brief went from a legal-sized to a letter-sized document as a result of discussions between McGeorge Bundy and Ray Cline. Bromley Smith said he liked the new format and he thought the South Vietnam item was "exactly right." ^{it} ~~He~~ reported very briefly and generally that Saigon had a new cabinet. The President, Smith said, was not interested in the names of generals and ministers and didn't follow such details.

Further experiments in page size followed a talk McCone had with the President, but nothing came of them. There was even a sample Brief that the President could put in his pocket, though the thought of having sensitive material handled this way made Bromley Smith groan.

In mid-February, Bromley Smith said that the Vietnam situation report, which OCI had begun sending to the White House daily at 8 a.m., was proving to be very useful; it was going up to the President every morning.

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It should not be imagined that the PDE writers always transacted their business with Fromley Smith in tranquillity. Occasionally there was a certain amount of commotion around Smith's office because of people coming and going to different meetings in the White House. One day Smith closed his door, explaining that

Bundy might be able to work this way with all the Indians charging in all the time, but I can't, especially since I was here till after 11 last night waiting for the President to leave.

The Impact of Santo Domingo

On 24 April 1965 events took place that had the effect of improving the standing of OCI publications in the White House. On that day an uprising began against the provisional government of the Dominican Republic. The US fear that Communists might seize control of the country led to the prompt dispatch of Marines to Santo Domingo. By coincidence, the day they landed--28 April--was also the day that Admiral William Raborn was sworn in as DCI, succeeding John McCone. President Johnson could hardly get enough intelligence on the Dominican situation, and Admiral Raborn was determined to provide the best service possible. The day after he took office, the Admiral ordered the establishment of a CIA task force on the Dominican Republic under E. Drexel Godfrey, chief of OCI's Western Area. As directed, it provided

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"complete and around-the-clock CIA intelligence support to the White House." Its first task each day was to brief Raborn to put him in readiness to deal with calls from the White House. Periodically throughout the day and night it issued round-up situation reports, and when necessary, spot reports of particular developments. All these reports were teletyped to the White House. They were read by Mr. Johnson, who was now described by Bromley Smith as a President "who eats up information." OCI, of course, continued to put out its regular publications. It was during the Dominican crisis that word was received that the President's Daily Brief had taken firm root in the White House. Bill Moyers said on 21 May that the President read it "avidly." ⁵⁶ 9/

The increased tempo of intelligence service to the Chief Executive prompted further consideration of the proper way to get material to him. DDCI Richard Helms and DDI Ray Cline agreed that the NSC Staff (McGeorge Bundy, Bromley Smith, and the White House Situation Room) should be the place of entry for intelligence for the President, although information copies could be sent to Moyers and Valenti. Helms and Cline said that a "greased channel" through Bundy should be established for the PDB and any other reports the DCI wants to be sure the President sees. ⁵⁶ 10/ AD/CI Jack Smith commented on 20 May that a "greased channel" already appeared to exist for the PDB. ⁵⁷ 11/

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The hectic atmosphere in the spring of 1965, with the Dominican situation coming on top of growing difficulties in Vietnam, caused the men in the White House to ask more of intelligence and to react to it more sharply. Bromley Smith said the President has a "very short reaction fuse." He wanted to hear first from official sources and not from the press about major developments, so rapid dissemination was essential. Smith also warned that OCI would soon be asked to report on every coup and to cover all present and potential trouble spots with high precision. He said that in the future, OCI's reports would not say that the Valencia regime is shaky, but that "Valencia is going to be overthrown by a coup on the umpteenth July by X in Toonerville." Since this would be asking the impossible in most cases, Richard Lehman, OCI's Assistant for Special Projects, went to see Bill Moyers. He explained that OCI could write 50 pages of intelligence warnings a day, thereby taking out insurance against any possible contingency, but that the office did not believe this would really serve the President. Lehman said OCI tried to be highly selective in warning of coups and the like. Moyers expressed understanding of OCI's difficulties, and the fire died down. 12/ This episode had an amusing sequel about eight months later when Bromley Smith pondered the series of army coups in the republics of West Africa.

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He said he didn't think the President wanted or needed to be informed in advance of every threatened coup. "Otherwise," he said, "you could fill the book with that sort of thing."

The system for supplying current intelligence to President Johnson was now working better than previously. To be sure, OCI did not benefit from the steady presidential playback it had enjoyed under John Kennedy. On the other hand, OCI was fairly confident that the President was reading the PDB regularly, and the writers on the PDB team received useful suggestions, criticisms, and reactions--usually from Bromley Smith--when they delivered the publication each day.

One day in June 1965 the first paragraph of the lead item in the PDB said "Accumulating information suggests that Hanoi is bringing North Vietnam to a state of semi-mobilization." The second paragraph explained that Hanoi's action was far short of classic mobilization for offensive operations; OCI considered the move defensive and was therefore inclined to discount the view of one British expert who thought a large-scale attack would soon be made across the 17th parallel. President Johnson and Gen. Clifton at the time were at the LBJ ranch. Late in the afternoon, the PDB received a phone call from Bromley Smith, who said that Gen. Clifton had called from the ranch. He had been shaken by the first sentence of the Vietnamese item and was concerned about the whole piece. The President was out on the lake and was not

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expected back for several hours. Clifton at first felt he should summon the President to shore. Smith discussed the matter with the PDB writer, Thomas Patton, and there was further conversation with Clifton, who decided simply to add the word "but" after the first sentence and continue with the somewhat reassuring second sentence. The case was a vivid illustration of the potentiality of the PDB for causing excitement in the White House entourage.

Foreign developments often provoked spirited reactions from Bromley Smith, but it was not often that he expressed ~~surprise~~ in the nature of the intelligence he was reading, substantiated apart. One such occasion, however, came when the PDB ran an item about dissension between ¹¹[Rumania] and the Soviet Union. [An intercept²⁴] revealed that [Ceausescu⁶] and [Maurer⁶] had complained to [Shelepin⁶] that the USSR acts on the international scene without consulting its allies, just as in Stalin's time. The ⁸[Rumanians] cited the 1962 missile adventure in Cuba and Soviet positions on disarmament. ⁶[Shelepin] agreed that more coordination was needed. Smith was particularly interested in this item and remarked to PDB writer Archer C. Bush that it was "fantastic" that this kind of information could be obtained.

OCI produced many memoranda upon request by White House personnel, who were often directly conveying the President's

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wishes. For a considerable period of time, both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had been trying to find a means by which the supposed desire of some West European countries to share in the ownership and control of nuclear weapons could be satisfied. The scheme that finally came to have official backing was the proposed multilateral nuclear force (MLF) of surface vessels with jointly owned nuclear weapons. The ships were to be manned by mixed crews of personnel from most NATO countries. Washington officialdom was sharply divided over this proposal and the pro- and anti-MLF forces steadily bombarded the White House with their arguments. Towards the end of 1965, the White House asked OCI for an "objective" report on the status and implications of the plan. The President's advisers sent the word that they were "ecstatic" over the memorandum drafted by Joe L. Zaring. Soon afterwards, President Johnson dropped the MLF idea as politically unfeasible and militarily unnecessary.

Bromley Smith now and then modified or rewrote PDB items when he felt that they might confuse or unduly alarm the President. In December 1965, for example, President Johnson ordered a halt in the bombing of Vietnam in the hope of getting negotiations started. A PDB item reported that Hanoi had broadcast a tough restatement of its position, making no reference to the pause in air strikes. Smith, afraid that this would be taken as a rebuff to the President's

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efforts, reworked the text to avoid this interpretation since the broadcast did not constitute a fully official government statement.

Quite clearly, the White House staff cringed at bad news from Vietnam. When the PDB reported in April 1966 that "the political situation appears to be rapidly worsening" in South Vietnam, and averred that Ky might soon have to take drastic measures to restore authority or make major concessions to the Buddhists, Smith remarked that the article was pessimistic and that he had later information. It was, of course, one of the perils of the PDB operation that the White House sometimes had fresher reports from the field. Smith handed John Heidemann cables reporting that Ky was going to formulate a new constitution and that the State Department looked upon this as hopeful. Heidemann agreed that OCI had written in ignorance of this information, but added that offhand he would not be optimistic.

A few days later Smith read in the PDB that "There was no real improvement in the situation today..." and said "You're going to break the President's heart; he thinks things are much better today." When he finished the whole disheartening report, he tossed the book in the air, whistled, and said, "We'll have fun tonight. But that's no reason for not writing it as you see it."

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Smith had cause for unhappiness again when the PDB had to report that a Pakistan official felt that his country was drifting apart from the US and would probably establish closer relationships with the Soviet Union. Smith told PDB writer Allen Valpey that this article was a "shocker" and that Walt Rostow would be disturbed by it. (Rostow had replaced McGeorge Bundy in April 1966.)

Although John McCone had not taken up a White House suggestion that the President's daily give occasional coverage to CIA activities, Admiral Raborn as DCI did adopt this practice. Bromley Smith reacted negatively to these reports, however, apparently believing that President Johnson did not like them. He particularly objected in 1966 to a PDB Annex explaining enthusiastically how CIA used a portable ultra-violet light device in Vietnam to detect guerrillas who had recently handled weapons before mingling with innocent villagers. Smith did not want the Agency to "advertise" in the PDB. He believed that if the President should be informed of some CIA activities, the DCI should send him a memorandum.

Late in July 1966 Bromley Smith said that he had some ideas about the PDB and would like to get together with all the writers. By this time R. J. Smith was DDI, E. Drexel Godfrey was D/OCI and Richard Lehman was DD/OCI. Bromley Smith met with them and the PDB writers in the Langley,

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building on 3 August. He prefaced his remarks by expressing his satisfaction with the way the President was being served; he had no criticisms. He explained, however, that while the President "tolerates" anonymous documents, he is much more responsive to a personalized paper. He wondered whether the Brief could be signed by Mr. Helms, now DCI. Then it would become a personal link between the President and the Director. In regard to content, Smith said the PDB did not have to alert the President to impending crises over which he would have no control. Rather, Smith thought the PDB could be most useful by rendering pithy judgments on situations with which the President is or will be faced. Smith said these judgments would be accepted; OCI did not have to support them with argumentation or evidence. Smith emphasized that the Brief writers had to be fully up on US policies and should read presidential speeches. He thought the President was kept adequately informed of Vietnamese military developments by other means; the PDB should carry more Vietnamese political and economic items. Smith urged that the Brief increase its coverage of Europe and said that Panama was another subject high on the priority list. ²⁹ M/

Helms did not take up the idea of personally signing the PDB, but OCI promptly set about adopting Smith's suggestions as to content. Smith soon commented that he noticed the change. ³⁰ M/

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The DDI Operations Center, under the executive direction of the D/OCI, has superseded the Watch Office in 1965 and played its role in supplying current intelligence to the White House. Whenever any information of great importance came in at night, the Senior Duty Officer would have the White House Situation Room informed immediately. On most of these occasions the SDO and the Watch Officers were aware that the President was personally taking an interest in the developments. Sometimes the initial report opened up a sequence that involved many incoming messages, calls to and from the White House, and hours of intensive work. A classic example occurred when King Constantine made his abortive attempt to overthrow the Greek junta in December 1967. The Operations Center got the word about 3 a.m. that Constantine planned to move within the next five hours. Neil Huntley, the SDO, alerted DCI Helms, who told Huntley to call Walt Rostow at his home, brief him, and carry out any instructions of Rostow's. Rostow asked that the White House Situation Room be informed that he was on his way in and would wake the President when he got there. Meanwhile, Rostow wanted copies of the relevant cables sent to the White House by LDX. About 7 a.m. Rostow called the Operations Center to say that he had not received any follow-up reporting from the Embassy or CIA station in Athens. He asked Huntley to telephone the station and find

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out what was going on. COMMO then set up a telecon with the chief of station. Huntley went down to COMMO, kept the red-line to the Operations Center open, and the Senior Watch Officer in turn kept the secure line to the White House open. After the chief of station gave an updated situation report, Rostow fed questions to him and received answers via the Senior Watch Officer, Huntley, and the communicator. ⁶¹12/

The Final Arrangement

A major alteration in the PDE system occurred at the end of February 1967. Seemingly all that was involved was that President Johnson decided that he would rather get the Brief in the morning than in the evening. This change in delivery time, however, forced other changes. The President wanted the Brief at 6:30 a.m., just before he began reading the newspapers. This meant that OCI's closing time on the book was 5 a.m. Nonetheless, the PDB had to be written in full knowledge of what was in the morning press. As E. Drexel Godfrey commented, the schedule put "the highest premium on making the publication up to the minute." ⁶²13/

Because the Brief now had to be delivered to the White House Situation Room by 6 a.m., there was no longer a member of the President's staff up and available to receive the book and comment on it. This meant that there was no point

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in having the PDB writers make the trip to the White House. From this time on, the PDB was delivered by couriers. To make up for the loss of the morning conversations with Bromley Smith, an OCI staff member would visit him occasionally to check on how things were going, and there was also communication by phone.

Shortly after the changeover to the new schedule for the PDB, Bromley Smith, commenting on the President's reaction, said emphatically that "we are much more certain now that he's reading it." He also made a point he was to make several times subsequently, which was that he disapproved of annexes to the Brief. He was afraid that if the Brief were burdened with an annex, the President would put it aside for later reading--and then not get back to it. In Smith's view, the PDB should be of a length which the President could whip through quickly. It would be better, he insisted, if annex-type reports were sent down separately. Smith thought it was an excellent idea for the Brief to summarize the conclusions of "important" national estimates. 16/

Smith continued to admonish OCI writers now and then about the words and phrases they employed in the PDB. He admitted that it was hard to know where to draw the line, but he did not like "hopping mad," nor, on another occasion,

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did he care for a description of India as an "unwilling bride." As a rule of thumb, he said the writers should avoid seeming frivolous or light-hearted.

At the President's request, OCI on 7 September 1967 began to attach to the Brief a Special Report on North Vietnam that dealt mainly with the effects of the war. The only copy to go outside of the Agency was addressed: "For Bromley Smith - Eyes Only for the President." Beginning with the issue of 6 October, this Special Report carried a new section on North Vietnamese treatment of ^{US} political attitudes toward the war, expressed in statements and demonstrations.

In November DCI Helms talked with Drexel Godfrey and Richard Lehman about the PDB. The Director expressed great satisfaction with both the Brief and the Special Report. He said the latter was "really hitting the mark." He urged that OCI try harder to come up with items on the personalities of men familiar to the President, who Helms said, thinks in terms of personalities. Helms also asked that the PDB give more attention to coming visits of world VIPs to Washington and to each other.

No major changes in the PDB were made during President Johnson's time after the introduction of the Special Report

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on North Vietnam.. To all appearances, the Brief had evolved into a document satisfactory to the President, and it kept serving its purpose throughout the rest of the administration.

All OCI analysts who have worked on the PDB are familiar with a photograph of President and Lady Bird Johnson sitting in the White House in dressing gowns. Mrs. Johnson is holding their first grandson, while the President is looking at the President's Daily Brief. This homey picture epitomizes the position OCI hoped the Brief occupied in the White House. And perhaps it did.