

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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June 24, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Clark M. Clifford
Chairman, President's Foreign Intelligence
Advisory Board

SUBJECT: Bugging of the U. S. Embassy, Moscow

During my recent trip to Moscow I visited the American Embassy and had a number of conversations with Mr. Musser who has the responsibility for assuring that the building is secure against listening devices. I also examined a number of key offices in the Embassy building, including several in which microphones had been found, and examined the special secure rooms that have recently been installed. I formed the following judgments regarding the present situation.

1. There is no convincing basis for concluding that additional listening systems do not exist in the building.

2. The soundproof rooms and the special room containing the teletype equipment appear to be secure, though the former are not electrically shielded. The lack of shielding is probably not serious because the rooms are in the interior of the building and under guard at all times so that the use of microphones or of electromagnetic listening devices in them would be extremely difficult.

3. The physical security of the building seemed a bit less than adequate. For example, it was possible for us to go in and out of the room housing the telephone switchboard with no one but the telephone operator--who I believe was a Russian girl--seeing us. I understand that at night no one is in the room. Physical security is complicated somewhat by the fact that the building is also the residence for Embassy employees and by the fact that the local guard staff is very small; none the less this is a problem that should receive attention.

4. Mr. Musser is extremely competent but the task at the Embassy is more than any one person could handle at this time.

I would recommend the following measures:

1. Provide Musser with some assistance. He has had some help from the American forces in Germany from time to

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time but when I was there he was working by himself. Because of the housing shortage the Embassy is reluctant to add to the staff. The fact is, as I have already said, in spite of Musser's outstanding ability he cannot do the job that now must be done without substantial continuing assistance. He also needs additional equipment.

2. A very complete physical examination must be made of any room that is to be used for confidential conversations. This should include x-ray or neutron examination of the walls, floors and ceilings if possible. Possibly other techniques can be found which would also help locate hidden equipment.

3. If x-ray examination is not feasible, physical examination of the outside of the building should be considered.

4. In critical areas new wall surfaces should be provided. Expert advice is needed to determine whether plastering or paneling would provide the best protection.

5. Dr. Land's proposal for inducing masking sounds into the walls should be pursued. It should be possible to introduce such sounds directly into the walls without creating objectionable sound levels in the rooms. This should be investigated before a decision is made regarding new wall covering.

6. Screening should be provided against electromagnetic-reflection listening devices.

7. The possibility of providing continuous monitors for signals from such devices should be investigated.

8. More effort should be made to understand the purpose of the microwave signal directed at the Embassy, or failing in this, to stop it. It is hard to understand why we have been so unconcerned about it.

9. An effort should be made to insure that the telephone system cannot be used as a distribution system for listening devices.

10. I understand that head sets and microphones exist that permit secure conversations. Though they may be awkward they should be used for confidential discussions held outside of the secure rooms until greater confidence can be established in the security of the building.

11. I believe that there is a desperate need for a

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professional group in the government to develop protective techniques for our embassies. Such a group should work with or at least have full access to a group whose task is to develop sophisticated penetration devices so that its work is effectively directed against all of the real threats that can be imagined.


Dr. Jerome B. Wiesner

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