

FEB 8 2001

Mr. Edmund Cohen  
Director, Office of Information Management  
(D/OIM)  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, DC 20505

Dear Ed:

The National Archives and Records Administration has completed its review of Operational Activity (OPACT) files. We have determined that all documentation from all OPACT files warrants preservation and eventual transfer to the National Archives. For the records dating to October 1999, when the new recordkeeping system went into effect, the paper files are designated as permanent. For the period dating from October 1999, the electronic recordkeeping system is designated as permanent along with any documents associated with files on the system that are maintained only in hard-copy.



We have made this decision after thorough review of the records and CIA's screening program. We have concluded that the screening taking place under the current schedule results in the destruction of some files and documents that warrant permanent preservation. We found instances where policy, management, development, and planning documents, as well as other significant documentation of a substantive nature, are being destroyed, even though the schedule only authorizes the disposal of duplicate and non-record material. We also concluded that the files contain virtually no documentation that is non-record. We acknowledge that the OPACT files do include some records that relate to administrative matters as well as duplicates of intelligence reports found elsewhere.

However, allowing the files to be screened for this material can lead to the disposal of records that should be retained, and, in fact, has had this result. We also believe that destroying duplicates and administrative documents results in a loss of context

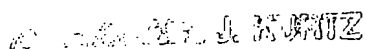
that adversely affects the research value of the permanent material. The OPACT files document some of the most important and sensitive activities of the U.S. Government and must be preserved intact.

We recognize that the conclusions reached here are different from those reflected in our evaluation report. Those conclusions were based on a limited review of just a few operational activity files. The revised schedule reflects the examination of a large number of files as well as a detailed and extensive review of agency regulations and guidance. We believe that it more accurately reflects the situation.

We would like to express our sincerest appreciation for the cooperation and assistance of CIA staff in carrying out this difficult and time-consuming review. Chris Olsen, [REDACTED] aided in (b)(3) completion of this project. [REDACTED] in particular was of inestimable assistance. She secured access to the files and related agency issuances and answered or secured answers to all of our questions concerning OPACT files. This project could not have been completed without her assistance.

Please call David Langbart on 301-713-7110 x235 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL J. KURTZ  
Assistant Archivist for  
Records Services - Washington, DC

Enclosure