

In reply refer to Initials
and No.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON

April 8, 1947

From: Vice Chief of Naval Operations.
To: Commandants All Naval Districts less Sixteen,
Commandant, Potomac River Naval Command, and
Commandant, Severn River Naval Command.

SUBJECT: District Intelligence Personnel, Employment of.

1. From letters, reports, and other sources, it is evident to the Office of Naval Intelligence that District Intelligence Personnel are being utilized to a considerable extent as action agencies. The basic concept of the Naval Intelligence service is that it is an agency for the collection of information, its evaluation, and its dissemination to those agencies which are interested and which take action. It is not sufficient to gain the information, the information should be gained, processed, and disseminated in ample time to permit effective counter-measures. Employment of Naval Intelligence personnel in administrative activities engulfs the Intelligence service with administrative details and correspondence pertaining thereto, which can only be accomplished at the sacrifice of its primary mission. Several forms in which these diversions have manifested themselves are discussed hereunder:

Disqualified Radio Operators

(a) One District Intelligence Officer recently requested that in addition to the copy of the Secretary's order directing removal of disqualified operators that is sent to the Commandant, that a copy be sent direct to the District Intelligence Officer, since the removal of these individuals at times was a question of hours, and in view of the fact that the District Intelligence Officer was charged with effecting this removal.

(b) Another District, in reply to a letter from the President of the A.C.A. requesting a list of radio operators who had been disqualified by the Secretary, advised him that this list could be obtained from the Office of Naval Intelligence and that information should be sought from that Office.

(c) While it is true the Office of Naval Intelligence furnishes to the Departmental Qualification Board for Commercial Radiocommunications Personnel data in its possession on persons associated with civilian radio activities, this is the sole participation of the

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Office of Naval Intelligence in this question. The Departmental Board makes recommendations to the Secretary of Navy. After approval by the Secretary, the orders directing removal are issued by his Office. Appeals and subsequent correspondence are likewise handled in his Office.

(d) The undesirability of associating the Office of Naval Intelligence with actual removals should be manifest, since it throws into the limelight the agency by which information is obtained, and time spent in answering appeals and protests is time lost in gathering additional information.

Personnel Security

(e) Some Districts have set up or contemplate extensive B-10 (Personnel Security) Sections. Under date of 30 March, the Secretary of the Navy made decision to transfer the internal security of industrial plants, exclusive of those actually operated by the Navy, to the War Department. While there may be a few such plants over which the Navy will desire to retain responsibility, this is doubtful. Such plants, if any, will be announced to the cognizant Naval District. Directives have been, or will shortly, be issued advising the Naval Districts of this transfer and of the participation in this new arrangement of Naval personnel. It is believed that such Naval personnel as is involved will fall almost exclusively to those engaged in security activities. Therefore, it would appear that the necessity of creating or maintaining large B-10 (Personnel Security) Sections or a large number of undercover informants within plants having Naval contracts will disappear.

Merchant Marine Suspect List

(f) When this list was disseminated, it was intended as a warning to District Intelligence personnel that the Office of Naval Intelligence had in its possession certain information which might make the employment of the individuals listed undesirable under certain conditions. Instructions in the letter of transmittal indicated that District Intelligence Officers should endeavor to seek all information available and then evaluate this information in light of the prospective employment of the ship and the nature of its cargo and passengers. Manifestly, it is not practicable to prescribe fixed standards that would insure uniform action by all the District Intelligence Officers and keep apace with changing world conditions.

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However, some uniformity of action is desirable. It would not necessarily be inconsistent if the District Intelligence Officer recommended the removal of an individual from one ship but interposed no objection to his becoming a crew member of another ship in the same port. Since information adverse to the individual is to be evaluated in view of the employment of each specific ship, a different decision might naturally result when the same man is considered for two ships whose prospective itineraries are quite different and whose passengers and cargo differ considerably in the prosecution of the war. It is believed that in all cases where there is serious doubt in the mind of the District Intelligence Officer as to the propriety of permitting an individual to sail, this has been and will continue to be resolved in favor of the safety of the ship, her passengers and cargo. However, it is believed that if, in disseminating to the other District Intelligence Officers, information that certain specific individuals have been removed and this information contains in general the nature of the cargo and passengers and the general employment of the ship, such as coastwise, intercoastal, transiting or to enter active war zone, that this exchange of information will in itself tend to standardize the recommendations made by the District Intelligence Officers to their respective Captains of the Port.

(g) There have been indications that some Districts were of the opinion that some sort of appeal board should be set up to hear appeals in the District. The necessity for such boards is not apparent. An individual is removed because, in the opinion of the District Intelligence Officer, his presence on board a certain ship for a certain trip would be inimical to the interests of that ship. An appeal would not restore him to that ship for that trip. The District Intelligence Officer would have to recommend to be consistent, similar action in all cases of equal importance to the national effort, but this action is not a permanent bar for the duration of the war to the man following the sea in other quarters or different trades. Furthermore, the District Intelligence Officer is acting in the interests of protecting lives and valuable tonnage, neither of which would seem to be appropriate for discussion since the responsibility for both, when the ship is on the high seas, is very definitely borne by the Navy Department.

/s/ T. S. Wilkinson,
T. S. Wilkinson,
By direction.