National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001

Date : September 21, 1999

Reply to
Attn of : Dan Jansen, NHP

Subject : CIA Transfer of Computer Equipment to NW and NL

To   NHP
: NHT
   NH

This memorandum pertains to an impending transfer by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of up to six computer workstations to provide access to digital images, optical character recognition (OCR) text, and associated metadata of documents for which the CIA has declassification responsibilities. At the request of David Langbart, NWML, I met with representatives of the CIA's document declassification operation on September 8, 1999, to discuss the transfer. My notes on this meeting are attached to this memorandum. I also attended a meeting between NW, NL, and CIA representatives to discuss two draft Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) covering the transfer. The final draft of one of these MOUs is also attached.

These systems contain images, text, and metadata for two different sets of materials, as of yet unaccessioned records destined for NW and materials already in the possession of NL. There are three systems to be transferred to NW, two containing declassified materials and one containing classified materials at the TS-SCI level. The attached MOU covers the two NW systems containing declassified materials. The classified system is not covered by the attached MOU and no date has been set for its transfer. I discussed a number of issues relating to NARA's ability to maintain classified computer systems with the CIA (see my notes on the September 8, 1999, meeting).

The MOU states that the two NW systems containing declassified materials are to be transferred on October 1, 1999. In my meeting with the CIA, I raised a large number of issues relating to these systems, which are to be placed in NARA's research room complex

for public access. We discussed the following issues: date of transfer, lack of a NARA policy regarding public access to computers in research rooms, computer security, ownership of the equipment, Y2K compliance, the number of machines, printing capacity, responsibility for maintenance and data loads, the resource intensive nature of the CIA's proposed method of loading data, backup devices, system and user documentation, the long-term growth of data volume and the need for reconfiguration of the systems, establishment of appropriate user accounts, complexity of the software for public use, initial configuration of the machines, and the importance of placing the subset of materials offered on these machines in proper context. Please see my notes on the September 8, 1999, meeting for an in-depth discussion of each issue. The CIA is intent upon accomplishing this transfer by October 1, 1999, and NW and I agree that the MOU is basically acceptable since it contains provisions for the CIA maintaining ownership of the machines and responsibility for maintenance and a provision that the entire project be reevaluated in six months with either party having the right to terminate at that time.

As noted above, the machines proposed for transfer to NL contain images, text and metadata pertaining to materials already in NL possession. All three systems proposed for transfer to NL units (the Kennedy Library, the Eisenhower Library, and, later, the Johnson Library), contain materials classified at the TS-SCI level. I have noted the issues relating to the transfer of these machines in my notes on the September 8, 1999, meeting. A separate MOU is forthcoming from the CIA regarding transfer of these systems. I will forward it when I receive a copy. At a later date, the CIA will begin digitizing at the Ford Library and will propose a system for that unit as well.