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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI ~~SECRET~~

FROM : SAC, WFO (134-4659) (P)

SUBJECT: CHANGED
 (NORMAN RAY RUNNION)
 PSI - DESECO - R
 (OO:WFO)
 (Norman R. Runnion)

~~REC-15~~
 EX-116

DATE: 10/24/62

9/14/98
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The above title is marked changed to indicate RUNNION's full name as indicated by his signature on his passport photograph.

ReWFOlet 9/18/62 setting forth background information concerning RUNNION with request for Bureau authority to conduct a "sounding out" interview. ReBulet 9/24/62 authorizing such interview.

As indicated in re WFO letter, RUNNION is a journalist in the employ of United Press International (UPI) as well as a member of the National Press Club (NPC), Washington, D. C.

RUNNION was interviewed on 10/15/62 by SA TOLLET JACOBSON, JR., who is personally acquainted with him. During the conversation RUNNION evidenced a cooperative and friendly attitude.

It was ascertained during the interview that RUNNION has some slight degree of acquaintance with YURIY V. BARSUKOV, Washington correspondent for "Izvestia", news organ of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. He did not know BARSUKOV by name but recognized a photograph of him and stated he had been under the impression that this individual was the Tass correspondent at Washington, D. C. He said he has merely a speaking acquaintance with BARSUKOV, having first seen him in Washington, D. C. about one year ago. RUNNION said it is his assumption that BARSUKOV and other Soviet newsmen attend White House press conferences and briefings here at the Department of State. He mentioned having seen BARSUKOV at one such briefing. He also mentioned having

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[seen him recently at a press conference on the occasion of the visit to Washington, D. C. of KONSTANTIN G. PYSIN, Soviet Minister of Agriculture. [RUNNION] said he, himself, eats lunch everyday at the NPC and he estimates that BARSUKOV lunches there about three times a week. He said that on occasion he has happened to sit at the same table with BARSUKOV. He said he assumed BARSUKOV considers him as a reporter but is not aware of which news service employs him. He described BARSUKOV as a personable individual who has an excellent command of English although he speaks with an accent. He expressed the opinion that BARSUKOV is shy by nature.] (S)

[RUNNION] said he is not acquainted with any other press representatives from Soviet bloc countries to the best of his knowledge. He said he believed he had once met a Yugoslav newspaperman and he also recalled that a Polish journalist was present at Cape Canaveral while he, [RUNNION], was there in connection with coverage of a rocket launching. He remarked that this Pole was the first representative of a so-called Iron Curtain country to be present on such an occasion. (S)

[RUNNION] recalled that while working as a newspaperman in [London, England], he was acquainted with a correspondent of Tass (official Soviet news agency) who appeared to be endeavoring to [cultivate RUNNION] on a social basis. [RUNNION] indicated there was no doubt in his mind that this Tass man was endeavoring to utilize [RUNNION] as a source. (S)

It is noted that in discussing BARSUKOV, [RUNNION] laughingly remarked that if the U. S. Government were to make a case against BARSUKOV and have him expelled from the U. S., such action would no doubt result in the expulsion of an American reporter from Moscow. In this connection, reference was made to recent expulsion of American diplomats from the Soviet Union, apparently on a retaliatory basis. (S)

In this connection, it appears probable that [RUNNION] has in mind the interest of [UPI] with regard to possible expulsion of some one of its representatives from the USSR. This probability will be borne in mind in the event of further interviews with [RUNNION]. (S)

Also in the course of conversation, he remarked that a [UPI] newspaperwoman named ALINE MOSBY at one time was

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stationed in Moscow. He said that on one occasion while stationed there, Miss MOSBY was found unconscious and partially disrobed in a gutter. He said she was jailed overnight at that time and the incident was mentioned in "Izvestia". (RUNNION) said it was his understanding that upon her release the following day Miss MOSBY was examined at the American Embassy and it was determined that she had been drugged. He said she had been charged with drunkenness although she did not drink. (RUNNION) said that this episode was considered an attempt by the Russians to place UPI at a disadvantage, so that in the event UPI should in the future incur the displeasure of the Soviet Government, they could concoct a similar incident and have Miss MOSBY expelled from the USSR with resultant publicity. He said that to avoid such an eventuality, UPI transferred Miss MOSBY to another post, thus terminating her career in Moscow.

(RUNNION) also related an alleged incident concerning an unidentified British newsman who, it was stated, returned to his apartment in Moscow one night where upon as he walked in the door the lights were switched on and a nude man was seen lying on the bed. At this point flash bulbs went off and Russian agents present in the room addressed the British reporter by name with the obvious intent of blackmail.

(RUNNION) in his conversation, made it clear that he understands that the Russian journalists are official representatives of the Soviet Government and that as indicated above, he is under no illusions concerning possible methods of operation engaged in by the Russians. It is noted that (RUNNION) possesses a considerable degree of intelligence and has indicated a favorable disposition toward the FBI. During the interview he volunteered that although he has little information concerning BARSUKOV, he could, with complete discretion, obtain some information concerning BARSUKOV's working activities from mutual acquaintances in the journalistic field. Definite instructions were not given to (RUNNION) in this connection but it is contemplated that on the occasion of further contact with him, efforts will be made to develop his assistance along these lines.

It is noted that results of background investigation concerning (RUNNION) have been set forth in re WFO letter including results of credit and criminal record checks at

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Washington, D. C.; check of files of the Passport Office, Department of State; the Security Office, Department of State; and CIA.

The FBI Identification Division advised on 10/16/62 that on the basis of information furnished, it was unable to locate a record of (NORMAN RAY RUNNION) in its criminal or (S) civil files.

It is further noted that on the basis of friendly acquaintance of SA JACOBSON with the (RUNNION) family as a result of (occupying adjacent) apartments for a considerable number of months, there is no indication of domestic difficulty or instability on the part of (RUNNION) and his wife. (S)

In view of the above, it is contemplated that UACB, (RUNNION) will be recontacted at which time there will be discussed with him (the possibility of his cultivating a more substantial acquaintance with BARSUKOV on the basis of their frequent presence in the NPC and their common interest in the profession of journalism.) It is further contemplated that at the same time consideration will be given to the possibility of developing (RUNNION) as a possible source for use against other subjects who frequent the NPC as set forth in reWFOlet. (S)

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