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Subject: ARRB Interviewed William Horbaly (Revised 11/12/96)
THIS IS THE FINAL VERSION, FOLLOWING MICHELLE'S EDITS/CORRECTIONS. MEETING REPORT DOCUMENT'S AUTHOR: Douglas Horne/ARRB Date Created: 11/08/96 Meeting Logistics Date: 11/07/96 Agecny Name: Witnesses/Consultants Attendees: Mr. William Horbaly, Michelle Combs, Douglas Horne Topic: ARRB Interviewed William Horbaly (Revised 11/12/96) Summary of the Meeting On Thursday, November 7, 1996, Michelle Combs and Douglas Horne travelled to Charlottesville, Virginia to interview Mr. William Horbaly, an individual who was employed at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow from 1959-1964. We first asked Mr. Horbaly to give us a brief summary of his career prior to, and during, his employment at the U. S. Embassy in Moscow from 1959-1964. He said that during World War II he was a U.S. Army junior officer in light tanks in Europe; after the war, he eventually received a Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Chicago. He said that because of his family's Eastern European ethnic origins, he had developed a proficiency for slavic languages, and could speak Czech, Slovak, and Russian. He explained that he had become a self-made expert on farm practices in (newly communist) Czechoslovakia, after winning a fellowship and doing research there for a year, and writing his dissertation on that subject. He said that in 1951 he was hired by the CIA as Branch Chief of the Soviet Geography Branch, and held that job through 1958. (This was on the intelligence/analysis side of the house, not the operations side.) Even though head of the Soviet Geography Branch, he said his branch made many contributions to the study and analysis of Soviet agriculture. As an aside, he mentioned that while working as Branch Chief of Soviet Geography for the CIA, he ended up briefing Francis Gary Powers and other U-2 pilots on "escape and evasion" in the event they were captured; he made clear that he did not brief any U-2 pilots regarding photographic targets--only on escape and evasion. While at CIA, Mr. Horbaly said that a senior official, a Mr. John Clark, recommended that he accept a job with the Department of State and go to Moscow to serve as Agricultural Attache at the U. S. Embassy. Mr. Horbaly said that he decided to apply for and accept that position with State because of his interest in, and knowledge of, Soviet and Eastern Bloc agriculture and languages. He said he served two tours of duty at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow of about 2.5 years duration each, as follows:-First tour: 1959-1962, as Agricultural Attache, working for Department of State.-Followed by Home Leave in the U.S.-Second Tour: 1962-1964, as a member of the Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service. Mr. Horbaly made very clear, when asked by his interviewers, that he was NOT working under cover for the CIA while performing his agricultural duties in Moscow. He said that no one at the CIA ever approached him at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and asked him to do any work, and that if they had, he would have refused. He said he shifted "hats" during his second tour of duty because one
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