

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: (U) RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic
Date: Thursday, September 03, 2020 10:09:59 AM

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]
Derived From: [REDACTED]
Declassify On: [REDACTED]
=====

I am concerned about politics seeping into this. There's no reason we can't say that we have [REDACTED] confidence, etc. That they have a preference. I don't disagree that the consensus view is most likely, but I strongly disagree that we can be so confident about it given [REDACTED] and all that has happened since then. I am troubled by CIA's comments at the recent COI.

[REDACTED]
National Intelligence Officer - Cyber
ODNI/National Intelligence Council

Secure: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Unclass: [REDACTED]
Unclass email: [REDACTED]
Tandberg: [REDACTED]

"The spice must flow."

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 3, 2020 8:56 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: (U) RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]
Derived From: [REDACTED]
Declassify On: [REDACTED]
=====

Is it just me, or are they basically saying we should self-censor our assessment on preference because it could be misused? They do have a preference, [REDACTED] that they're acting on that preference and we assess they think it's probably not worth the risk. If we can't communicate our thinking clearly, maybe we should just quit and go home.

National Intelligence Council/DNI Election Threat Executive

11

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, September 02, 2020 6:31 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: (U) RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic --- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]

Derived From: [REDACTED]

Declassify On: [REDACTED]
=====

Good evening,

FBI concurs on both the edit to the [REDACTED] language from [REDACTED] and with CIA and INR's language edits and concerns.

We've expressed our concern in coord on multiple products that the preference line, when included as a top line in products that are explicitly election related, could imply the opposite of the what community consensus seems to be – namely that activities are focused on policy preferences and that election related activity is not worth the risk.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Unit Chief

Foreign Influence Task Force – China

[REDACTED] (desk)

[REDACTED] (secure)

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 5:45 PM

To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: (U) RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic

Classification: [REDACTED]

In regard to the [REDACTED] sentence, I think if we are going to raise that we also need to preserve some of the caveats noted in the [REDACTED], especially if we use the NIC's proposed language.

"Unidentified pro-China influence actors [REDACTED] have been spreading English-language videos on US social media platforms that criticize the President's policies, promote socially divisive themes, and denigrate him, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] s // [REDACTED] u

[illegible]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]

Derived From: [REDACTED]

Declassify On: [REDACTED]

=====

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for offering your thoughts. At this point, I'm not sure it would be productive for me to address them one by one, though I do think you're mischaracterizing what it is we're asking for and our rationale for it.

We were hoping to avoid a dissent, hence this long email chain. Especially because the edits we'd like to see are about inserting IC-coordinated language, adding a caveat to a judgment but not changing it, and describing some relevant online content. In my experience, those are the types of things that can and should be worked out in coordination. But if we can't resolve them here, then we can consider a dissent.

[REDACTED]
Director, Election Threat Analysis
National Intelligence Council/DNI Election Threat Executive

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, September 02, 2020 4:33 PM

To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic --- [REDACTED]

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]

Derived From: [REDACTED]

Declassify On: [REDACTED]

INR supports using the original language.

Additionally, we want to highlight three concerns that we have here at INR as we've watched this exchange:

- [REDACTED] we believe our evidence for China not interfering in the U.S. election is stronger than you are acknowledging. We can and should make a judgement call about whether China is interfering, not leave it up to the reader to read between the lines.
 - [REDACTED] should not be used to justify a conclusion that "it could be happening but we just don't see it." This sets an artificially high bar for evidence—that we must possess empirical evidence to *disprove any possible alternative outcome*. This flawed logic could be used to justify any conceivable argument one wants to make, and implies more uncertainty than actually exists. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
 - In this case, we actually *do* possess positive evidence about China's intent—and it suggests China probably is not interfering in the election. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- China's influence efforts to shift public opinion on particular policy issues are not the same as election interference, nor are they intended to influence the election. We object to language that blurs the line between these two activities and implies interference is happening, without stating it directly.
- Lastly, based on the last interagency call and lack of dissent to the original draft, it appears there is relative consensus within the China-watching community (INR, CIA, NSA, FBI) about how to describe China's activities. If the NIC election threat team disagrees, then it would be more appropriate to insert these views as a standalone dissent to the majority view, rather than rewriting the community consensus every time we publish on this topic.

Thanks, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
INR/EAP, Department of State
[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 4:13 PM

To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Classification: [REDACTED]

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We think we need to keep the language on preference in. It illuminates why we're discussing China in this context in the first place and provides context for the rest of the para. That line has been IC-coordinated multiple times and briefed to a wide variety of customers—it's strange to suddenly stop using it, especially if you're going to mention risk calculus (why would risk calculus be relevant if they didn't have a preference?). This is important for providing a complete picture of China's considerations on this issue. And we have language for the other countries that shows what their preferences are. Our alternative was supposed to only apply to the second half of that first sentence, so apologies if that wasn't clear.

Thanks for putting the “pro-China influence actors” sentence back in the para. For that one, we ask you use the sentence we provided: “Unidentified pro-China influence actors [REDACTED] have been spreading English-language videos on US social media platforms that criticize the President’s policies, promote socially divisive themes, and denigrate him, [REDACTED]” We think we need to acknowledge the partisan nature of some of that content.

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the graphic, especially since it [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] efforts. We would be fine either including the sentence we tacked on below in the paragraph or in the graphic body itself where we discuss [REDACTED] but feel a separate paragraph about it is unnecessary given the [REDACTED] around the activity. Please see below for our suggested language.

[REDACTED] We assess that China prefers that the President does not win reelection, but we have [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We assess that China is not at this time trying to influence the outcome of the presidential election in favor of one candidate or another. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This assessment is based partially on [REDACTED] as well as judgements regarding Chinese leaders' risk calculus and overall understanding of the bilateral relationship. We assess Beijing uses extensive lobbying, economic measures, information derived from computer network exploitation, and increasingly strident rhetoric to [REDACTED] press US officials and federal and local candidates to support China's positions and perspective. Beijing also continues to criticize US policies, politicians, and perceived critics to shape a political and social environment in the United States that reflects China's positions and perspectives and defend against perceived attacks by the US. (CIA Note: Removed for redundancies.) China has been expanding its broad, whole-of-government [REDACTED] influence efforts ahead of November 2020 to shape the social, political, and policy environments in the United States and to pressure political figures at every level of government, efforts which we assess could be used to influence the 2020 election. However, we assess at this time China probably judges the risk of being caught interfering in the US election outweighs any potential gains. Unidentified pro-China influence actors [REDACTED] have been spreading English-language videos on US social media platforms that echo Beijing's rhetoric, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Let us know if this works for you and we will move it forward.

Thank you very much for your patience,
CIMC, EAPMC, CCI

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 02, 2020 1:37 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic

000001 000002 000003 000004 000005 000006 000007 000008 000009 000010 000011 000012 000013 000014 000015 000016 000017 000018 000019 000020 000021 000022 000023 000024 000025 000026 000027 000028 000029 000030 000031 000032 000033 000034 000035 000036 000037 000038 000039 000040 000041 000042 000043 000044 000045 000046 000047 000048 000049 000050 000051 000052 000053 000054 000055 000056 000057 000058 000059 000060 000061 000062 000063 000064 000065 000066 000067 000068 000069 000070 000071 000072 000073 000074 000075 000076 000077 000078 000079 000080 000081 000082 000083 000084 000085 000086 000087 000088 000089 000090 000091 000092 000093 000094 000095 000096 000097 000098 000099 000100 000101 000102 000103 000104 000105 000106 000107 000108 000109 000110 000111 000112 000113 000114 000115 000116 000117 000118 000119 000120 000121 000122 000123 000124 000125 000126 000127 000128 000129 000130 000131 000132 000133 000134 000135 000136 000137 000138 000139 000140 000141 000142 000143 000144 000145 000146 000147 000148 000149 000150 000151 000152 000153 000154 000155 000156 000157 000158 000159 000160 000161 000162 000163 000164 000165 000166 000167 000168 000169 000170 000171 000172 000173 000174 000175 000176 000177 000178 000179 000180 000181 000182 000183 000184 000185 000186 000187 000188 000189 000190 000191 000192 000193 000194 000195 000196 000197 000198 000199 000200 000201 000202 000203 000204 000205 000206 000207 000208 000209 000210 000211 000212 000213 000214 000215 000216 000217 000218 000219 000220 000221 000222 000223 000224 000225 000226 000227 000228 000229 000230 000231 000232 000233 000234 000235 000236 000237 000238 000239 000240 000241 000242 000243 000244 000245 000246 000247 000248 000249 000250 000251 000252 000253 000254 000255 000256 000257 000258 000259 000260 000261 000262 000263 000264 000265 000266 000267 000268 000269 000270 000271 000272 000273 000274 000275 000276 000277 000278 000279 000280 000281 000282 000283 000284 000285 000286 000287 000288 000289 000290 000291 000292 000293 000294 000295 000296 000297 000298 000299 000300 000301 000302 000303 000304 000305 000306 000307 000308 000309 000310 000311 000312 000313 000314 000315 000316 000317 000318 000319 000320 000321 000322 000323 000324 000325 000326 000327 000328 000329 000330 000331 000332 000333 000334 000335 000336 000337 000338 000339 000340 000341 000342 000343 000344 000345 000346 000347 000348 000349 000350 000351 000352 000353 000354 000355 000356 000357 000358 000359 000360 000361 000362 000363 000364 000365 000366 000367 000368 000369 000370 000371 000372 000373 000374 000375 000376 000377 000378 000379 000380 000381 000382 000383 000384 000385 000386 000387 000388 000389 000390 000391 000392 000393 000394 000395 000396 000397 000398 000399 000400 000401 000402 000403 000404 000405 000406 000407 000408 000409 000410 000411 000412 000413 000414 000415 000416 000417 000418 000419 000420 000421 000422 000423 000424 000425 000426 000427 000428 000429 000430 000431 000432 000433 000434 000435 000436 000437 000438 000439 000440 000441 000442 000443 000444 000445 000446 000447 000448 000449 000450 000451 000452 000453 000454 000455 000456 000457 000458 000459 000460 000461 000462 000463 000464 000465 000466 000467 000468 000469 000470 000471 000472 000473 000474 000475 000476 000477 000478 000479 000480 000481 000482 000483 000484 000485 000486 000487 000488 000489 000490 000491 000492 000493 000494 000495 000496 000497 000498 000499 000500 000501 000502 000503 000504 000505 000506 000507 000508 000509 000510 000511 000512 000513 000514 000515 000516 000517 000518 000519 000520 000521 000522 000523 000524 000525 000526 000527 000528 000529 000530 000531 000532 000533 000534 000535 000536 000537 000538 000539 000540 000541 000542 000543 000544 000545 000546 000547 000548 000549 000550 000551 000552 000553 000554 000555 000556 000557 000558 000559 000560 000561 000562 000563 000564 000565 000566 000567 000568 000569 000570 000571 000572 000573 000574 000575 000576 000577 000578 000579 000580 0005

So, here's a counterproposal to try to find common ground:

(b) (7)(C) We assess Beijing uses extensive lobbying, economic measures, information derived from computer network exploitation, and increasingly strident rhetoric to (b) (7)(C) press US officials and federal and local candidates to support China's positions and perspective. Beijing also continues to criticize US policies, politicians, and perceived critics to shape a political and social environment in the United States that reflects China's positions and perspectives and defend against perceived attacks by the US. China has been expanding its broad, whole-of-government (b) (7)(C) influence efforts ahead of November 2020 to shape the policy environment in the United States and to pressure political figures at every level of government, efforts which we assess could

be used to influence the 2020 election. However, we assess at this time China probably judges the risk of being caught interfering in the US election outweighs any potential gains.

We also disagree with excluding the language on [REDACTED], etc. We think this is the most notable new information on the China election story and should be addressed up front somehow in our current update. If we can't compromise on building that into the chapeau, then we'd like to add a separate paragraph with our comment on this.

██████████ National Intelligence Council note: Unidentified pro-China influence actors ██████████ have been spreading English-language videos on US social media platforms that criticize the President's policies, promote socially divisive themes, and denigrate him, ██████████

we have observed China-based actors spreading narratives regarding the election; so far, the campaigns have been small in scale, gained little traction, and were promptly shut down by social media companies. If these activities are directed or sanctioned by Beijing they could be the precursor to targeting the election

Director, Election Threat Analysis
National Intelligence Council/DNI Election Threat Executive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 02, 2020 11:31 AM
To: [REDACTED]

Age Group	Should Take Action (%)	Should Not Take Action (%)
18-29	95	5
30-49	95	5
50-69	95	5
70+	95	5

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]
Derived From: [REDACTED]
Declassify On: [REDACTED]
=====

Hi [REDACTED]

Thank you for your continued engagement on this issue. Below, please see our suggested language taking on board your comments about a desire to see an increased reflection of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as well as more description about what Beijing is doing at this time. Our language below also incorporates comments we received from the IC throughout the coord process:

We assess Beijing uses extensive lobbying, economic measures, information derived from computer network exploitation, and increasingly strident rhetoric to [REDACTED] press US officials and federal and local candidates to support China's positions and perspective, but at this time is not trying to influence the outcome of the presidential election in favor of one candidate or another. Beijing continues to criticize US policies, politicians, and perceived critics to shape a political and social environment in the United States that reflects China's positions and perspectives and defend against perceived attacks by the US. China has been expanding its broad, whole-of-government [REDACTED] influence efforts ahead of November 2020 to shape the policy environment in the United States and to pressure political figures at every level of government, which we assess could be used to influence the 2020 election if Beijing directed Chinese officials to do so. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] However, we assess at this time China probably judges the risk of being caught interfering in the US election outweighs any potential gains.

For transparency, below is how we parsed your suggestions:

[REDACTED] We assess that China prefers that the President does not win reelection. Although as of [REDACTED] Beijing did not intend to try to affect the election, Chinese officials have [REDACTED] that they could use to try to sway the outcome.

[REDACTED] (CIA Note: We are cutting

this because it does not parallel with the rest of the graphic, which leads with China's candidate preferences, rather than an assessment on potential Chinese actions. We also feel that the inclusion of [REDACTED] discussions is outdated for the [REDACTED] update.) We assess Beijing uses extensive lobbying, economic measures, information derived from computer network exploitation, and increasingly strident rhetoric to [REDACTED] press US officials and federal and local candidates to support China's positions and perspective, but is not at this time trying to influence the outcome of the presidential election in favor of one candidate or another. Beijing continues to criticize US policies, politicians, and perceived critics to shape a political and social environment in the United States that reflects China's positions and perspectives and defend against perceived attacks by the US. China has been expanding its broad, whole-of-government [REDACTED] influence efforts ahead of November 2020 to shape the policy environment in the United States and to pressure political figures at every level of government (CIA NOTE: Taken from NIC language.), which we assess could be used to influence the 2020 election if Beijing directed Chinese officials to do so. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (CIA NOTE: Taken from NIC language.) However, we assess at this time China probably judges the risk of being caught interfering in the US election outweighs any potential gains. Beijing has begun incorporating election-related themes and direct mention of political candidates into its efforts to influence US attitudes and policies on China, and we assess Chinese officials are aware that these efforts could impact the election. Unidentified pro-China influence actors [REDACTED] have been spreading English-language videos on US social media platforms that criticize the President's policies, promote socially divisive themes, and denigrate him; [REDACTED] however, we do not know if these campaigns are directed by the Chinese Government or if they are the work of individuals operating on their own. (CIA Note: We are cutting this because to our knowledge, the only campaign this refers to is the [REDACTED], which we as an IC have not finished evaluating, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], none of which we assess are authoritative. We include the [REDACTED] in the body of the graphic but don't feel it rises as of yet—pending further analysis-- to the level of inclusion in the chapeau). China has been expanding its broad, whole-of-government overt and covert influence efforts ahead of November 2020 to shape the policy environment in the United States and to pressure political figures at every level of government.

Please let us know what you think! We look forward to engaging further on this issue.

Best,
EAPMC, CIMC, CCI

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, September 02, 2020 10:19 AM

To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]

Derived From: [REDACTED]

Declassify On: [REDACTED]
=====

Hi all,

Thanks for your willingness to discuss this. For the China lead para, we think that the original and the alternative we talked about yesterday are too definitive, given the [REDACTED] about the

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]

We suggest the following, which is a combination of language from our recent NICA and your original. We think this better accounts for our [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We assess that China prefers that the President does not win reelection.

Although as of [REDACTED] Beijing did not intend to try to affect the election, Chinese officials have

[REDACTED] that they could use to try to sway the outcome. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Beijing has begun incorporating election-related themes and direct mention of political candidates into its efforts to influence US attitudes and policies on China, and we assess Chinese officials are aware that these efforts could impact the election. Unidentified pro-China influence actors [REDACTED] have been spreading English-language videos on US social media platforms that criticize the President's policies, promote socially divisive themes, and denigrate him, [REDACTED] However, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] China has been expanding its broad, whole-of-government [REDACTED] influence efforts ahead of November 2020 to shape the policy environment in the United States and to pressure political figures at every level of government.

For the two footnotes on 2016 and 2018, I suggest editing to say "which **would have been** inconsistent with **our understanding of** its strategic foreign policy objectives **at the time**" to be clear that this is our assessment and that it applies to past years. Again, we think there is more gray area with regard to what's going on in 2020 than the original implies.

Let us know what you think. Thanks.

[REDACTED]
Director, Election Threat Analysis

National Intelligence Council/DNI Election Threat Executive
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, September 01, 2020 2:17 PM

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Please coord by COB 9/1: 4 country election security graphic

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]

Derived From: [REDACTED]

Declassify On: [REDACTED]

=====

Hi [REDACTED]

Please see consolidated CIA comments on your inclusions and let us know if or when you would like to chat about the language.

Best,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, August 31, 2020 12:54 PM

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Classification:

Derived From:

Declassify On:

As always, thanks for the chance to coord. NIC comments are in the attachment. We'd like to see the China and [REDACTED] language again before we sign off. Happy to chat about our input on those or the other sections. Thanks.

National Intelligence Council/DNI Election Threat Executive

From:

Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 3:57 PM

To:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Classification: [REDACTED]

Classified By: [REDACTED]
Derived From: [REDACTED]
Declassify On: [REDACTED]

Please see attached for the latest edition of our graphic, "Election Security: Status of Adversary Efforts TO Influence the 2020 US Presidential Election, as of 25 August." This edition mentions **Russia, China, Iran, and [REDACTED]** Please send comments to the cc line by COB Tuesday, 1 September.

- Russia: [REDACTED]
- China: [REDACTED]

Thanks!

■

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

EEMC/RUMB/Strategic & Asymmetric Warfare

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Classification: [REDACTED]

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Classification: [REDACTED]

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Classification: [REDACTED]

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Classification: [REDACTED]

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Classification: [REDACTED]

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Classification: [REDACTED]

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Classification: [REDACTED]

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Classification: [REDACTED]

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Classification: [REDACTED]
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Classification: [REDACTED]
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Classified By: [REDACTED]

Derived From: [REDACTED]

Dated: [REDACTED]

Declassify On: [REDACTED]

Classification: [REDACTED]
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Classification: [REDACTED]
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Classification: [REDACTED]
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Classification: [REDACTED]
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