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Text of Katzenbach Letter

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23—Following is the text of Under Secretary of State Nicholas deB. Katzenbach's letter to President Johnson on the Central Intelligence Agency:

With respect to your inquiry of yesterday, I wish to assure you that Secretary Gardner, Mr. Helms and myself will be able to complete our inquiry into the relations of Government agencies and private organizations operating abroad in the very near future. I anticipate that it will be possible to report our conclusions and recommendations early next month.

In the interval, there are certain basic facts with respect to past activities of the Central Intelligence Agency in this area which should be underscored.

When the Central Intelligence Agency lent financial support to the work of certain American private organizations, it did not act on its own initiative but in accordance with national policies established by the National Security Council in 1952 through

1954. Throughout it acted with the approval of senior interdepartmental review committees, including the Secretaries of State and Defense or their representatives. These policies have, therefore, been in effect under four Presidents.

The support provided by the Central Intelligence Agency enabled many far-sighted and courageous Americans to serve their country in times of challenge and danger to the United States and the free world.

Furthermore, the Central Intelligence Agency has been, and continues to be, indispensable to the security of this nation. It is vitally important that the current controversy over its support of certain private organizations not be permitted to obscure the value, or impede the effectiveness, of competent and dedicated career officials serving this country.