

Cable summaries, Sterling tenure

Exhibit	Cable date	Meeting date	From/To	Bates	Notes
GX17	1/19/99	1/12/99	NY to Langley	C2914-2916	Contacts with Iran Operational security Action, one paragraph redacted (the latter money issues?) Just Sterling
GX18	2/4/99	2/2/99	NY to Langley	C2918-2921	Action and comments on Merlin's discomfort redacted Ref to 1/19 cable "However" as substitution Just Sterling
GX19	2/16/99	2/6/99	NY to Langley	C2926-2927 (1 cable gap)	Request HQS input on response Sterling has been to Langley in interim, handed off draft of response Ref to 2/4 cable Concern about prolonged inactivity (note approval of export control pending) Just Sterling f/up 2/23
GX20	2/26/99	2/24/99	NY to Langley	C2932-2933	Request HQS review of letter Merlin objects to resume, wants to avoid including physical address No mention of money Ref to response from Langley Sterling alone
GX21	3/1/99	2/24/99	NY (Mr. S 2) to Langley	C2935-2937 (1 cable gap)	Record Sterling pay 1/3 of Merlin 1998 salary (\$20,000) Redacted paragraph on compensation Recommend \$250 raise for Merlin Sterling alone
GX22	3/22/99	3/16/99	NY to Langley	C2941-2942	Action FYI Ref cable from Langley (on raise?) Merlin mailed resume and letter to Iranian Institution 4 separately "M/2" sent email explaining 2 separate letters (ref to Mrs. Merlin?)

					Reminder for Merlin to bring correspondence to meetings Sterling tell of \$1,000 month raise Sterling alone
GX23	4/12/99	4/6/99	NY to Langley	C2944-2946	Action status of approvals? More salary discussion Ref to 3/22 cable on contacts from Iranian Institution 4 Merlin respond w/o okay II4 had received resume but not business deal letter Merlin concerned abt location tracking via emails, pitches starting email using other phone number Mostly redacted paragraph on money Reference to M/2 agreement (again, to Mrs. Merlin?) Sterling alone
GX24	5/13/99	5/5/99	NY to Langley	C2948-2949	Note incorrect data in both heading and body of cable Merlin sends letters to II4 from both NJ and CT Ref 4/12 cable "[M] should expect a visit from Mr. S who will provide an update on the definite direction of the project. [M] understands that there are aspects of the project that require certain approvals beyond the purview of C/O." Sterling alone
GX25	5/28/99	5/25/99	NY to Langley, Office 5	C2951-2952	Action, paragraph 4, much of 5 redacted Bob S with Sterling Next steps: make contact with Iranian Subject 1 Bob S tells Merlin he'll have to travel to Vienna "or another appropriate venue" Next meeting 3 weeks
GX26	6/9/99				Export Control letter approved
GX27	6/29/99	6/17/99	NY to Langley	C2954-2955	Action FYI Just Sterling Merlin has problems finding III1 Next meeting ~7/5/99
GX29	7/23/99		NY to Langley	C2957-2958	Action: Please process App extension Most of paragraph on App request redacted

					Sterling getting Merlin approved for next step 2 Refs to Langley letters
GX28	7/28/1999				Enabling Technology letter approved
Note big break: July to November					
GX30	11/5/1999	11/4/99	NY to Langley	C2963-2964 1 cable gap	Action FYI Merlin has been AWOL for past few weeks: missed 10/4/99 meeting Next meeting scheduled 11/14/99 Merlin gets new passport, Green Card application being processed Iteration 1 of device letter
	11/18/99				Sterling asks for a transfer
GX31	11/24/99	11/18/99	Langley to NY, Vienna for Info	C2966-2967	Action: Advise per proposal below Iranian Subject 1 is in Vienna, Merlin has passport, has email from Iranian Subject 2 Ref to cable from Vienna Missing first paragraph (about Individual 1's appearance in Vienna) First of two cables on same meeting (see below) Bob writes Raises poss of Sterling going to Vienna
GX32	12/1/99	11/18/99	NY to Langley, Vienna for info	C2969-2970	Action redacted Ref to 11/24 cable Sterling's version of same meeting Bob S describes in florid language Includes verbatim copy of email from IS2
GX33	12/16/99	12/14/99	NY to Langley, Vienna	C2972-2973	Action redacted Redactions of letter; not included verbatim M expresses concern abt carrying letter into Vienna, suggests maybe someone meet him Bob S and Sterling
GX34	12/20/99	12/19/99			Sterling's IG complaint regarding request for transfer
GX35	1/12/00	1/10/00	NY to Langley	C2978-2980 1 cable gap	Action: see below Note 3 page cable skipped in series Said someone would meet, But Merlin says he told his wife so it's okay

				<p>Verbatim letter (closest thing to book)</p> <p>“Suggest this letter can be pared down a bit to remove the puffery language included by [M]. Defer to HQS on final version of the letter.”</p> <p>Merlin and Sterling discuss leaving two letters (to get IS1’s attention)</p> <p>Financial issues</p> <p>Merlin calls on 1/11 saying will not proceed unless finances dealt with</p>
GX36	1/14/00		Langley to NY	<p>C2982-2983</p> <p>Action: desired dates for Bob S visit</p> <p>Ref 1/12 cable</p> <p>“His proposed letter, now in its fifth iteration, shows real progress. We agree with [Sterling’s] comments that the verbiage needs to be tightened up still further to make sure the Iranians understand what he has and on what terms. He should say explicitly that he is offering the schematic and associated parts list free to prove that he can provide further information, and acknowledge that what he is providing initially is incomplete. There should be a very clear message that he expects to be paid for the rest of the details they will need if they want to build the device. We believe the package should be addressed to [Iranian Subject 2 at Iranian Institution 1], and that both an e-mail and a letter be sent to him saying that [M] will drop off a package of information for him at the Vienna Mission. A second letter addressed to [Iranian subject 1] by title only [redacted] can accompany the package, with an explanation that [M] has been in e-mail correspondence with [IS2] (copies included) and has promised to send him some important information, followed by a request that IS1 make certain the information reaches IS2 or any other interested party. Each iteration of his draft letter is better than the previous one, so C/O’s patience seems to be paying off. It is worth our while to take the extra time to make sure he finally gets it just right, since the letters will have to do much of the work for us with the target.”</p>
GX37	2/17/00	2/14/00	Langley- NY, Vienna info, CIA offices 7, 8	<p>C2985-2986</p> <p>Action paragraph, paragraph 7 redacted</p> <p>Describes Merlin balking over money, walking out, then calling Bob S 2/15</p> <p>Reaffirms the cover letter + letter approach</p> <p>“C/O will stress that we need a full and detailed report on his visit and</p>

				reception” Bob S suggests Mrs. Merlin involved Describes packet, claiming all are labeled in Russian (this conflicts w/Merlin’s claims), one line redacted David Shedd signoff
GX38	2/22/00	2/21/00	NY to Langley, Vienna	C2988-2989 Ref 2/17 cable Action: FTR Details of monetary resolution redacted Carry only sanitized version of letter [redacted] Reiterates cover letter plan, addressed to IS1 Redaction of “pitfalls” of using emergency number, claim Merlin won’t use it Set up March 9 meeting
GX44	3/10/00	3/9/00	NY to Langley, Vienna, Offices 7, 8	C2991-2992 Action paragraph redacted Claims he provided explicit directions Merlin used emergency number 7 steps versus 4 Very clearly addressed to IS1 (no mention of cover letter) Follow-up email, check mailbox
DX3	3/13/00	3/9/00	Langley to CIA offices 9, 7, 8, 5, Info NY and Vienna	Illegible, could be 115-116 Ref 3/10 cable Action:: Relay to “local intel svc” at 7,8,9, please relay ref to office 9 Above teatline description redacted Apparently for liaison services (so possible share w/Israel?) Bob S in showiest voice Packet addressed to head of mission by title, not name Would need to recontact at PO Box in NY area [redacted] Claims Merlin emailed before and after “Appreciate your advising us of anything you may learn about the Iranian reaction” Signed by Shedd
GX45	4/6/00	4/5/00	NY to Langley Info, CIA 5, 8, 7, 9	C2997-2998 1 cable jump Action for the record “[M] was met” (Bob S mentioned, more than one C/O present, then C/O singular) Ask if [M] would be willing to do more work

				Signs agreement
GX46	5/5/00		Langley to NY, Info CIA 8, 5, 7, 9	Action: Concur re: C/O change planning Refs: two TS docs from CIA 8 Got into right hands, couriered them back All Bob S signoff
GX47	5/25/00	5/24/00	NY to Langley, CIA 11, Info CIA 5, 7, 8	Action FT Did not alert to Iran, but warned to be more vigilant Late June meeting NJ FUP debriefings on Russian intel fr 1996
GX103	3/11/03		Langley to NY	Surveilling Iranians for CP1 approach 2 refs, no location listed, both 2003 Almost entirely redacted Bob S surveilling to preserve unilateral approach

Two versions of the November 18, 1999 meeting

Bob S				Sterling
November 24, 1999				December 1, 1999
From: Langley				From: CIA Office #2 (NYC)
To: CIA Office #5 [Vienna] INFO, CIA Office #2				To: Langley (INFO), CIA Office #5
Subject: Iranian Subject #1 is in Vienna				Subject: Merlin (M) – 18 November meeting
Ref: 99 7877792 (from CIA Office #5 -- Vienna)				Ref: 99 7916024 (Bob S' November 24, 1999 cable)
1) Action: Advise per proposal below.				1) Redacted.
2) Redacted.				2) On 18 Nov, C/O [Jeffrey Sterling] and HQS Officer [Mr. S.] held a meeting with [M]. during the meeting more details on the modalities of the forthcoming approach to [Iranian Subject 1 (IS1)]

	<p>were ironed out. [M] also provided an update on his staking to acquire proper travel documentation. [M] also provided information on latest e-mail contact he has received.</p>
<p>3) During an 18 November Meeting with [M] Officer [Jeffrey Sterling] and HQS CPD Officer [Mr. S.], [M] provided two pieces of good news. The first was that he has obtained a new [Country A] passport (which he showed C/O's) and will soon apply for an Austrian visa. His possession of a Green Card should facilitate the issuance of the latter. The second and more significant development was an e-mail dated 7 November which [M] had received from [Iranian Institution 1] Professor [Iranian Subject 2 IS2]. [IS2] said he had been going through old e-mails and found a 1998 message from [M]. He asked [M] to respond and provide more information about himself. [M] did so in a generic fashion. This contact from [IS2] provides an excellent opportunity to ease [M]'s (and his disinformation packet's) way in to [Iranian Subject 1 (IS1)] who until recently was also [at Iranian Institution 1] and is still featured on its website.</p>	<p>3) At the onset of the meeting, [M] noted that he has received his renewed [Country A, likely Ukrainian] passport. [M] said the process took approximately three weeks. He is still awaiting the reentry permit from INS. [Mr. S] then provided [M] with additional information that should be included in the letter which will be included in the package being prepared for IS1 in Vienna. [M] agreed to make the necessary revisions. In preparation for a possible mid-January '00 trip to Vienna, [Sterling] and [Mr. S] instructed [M] to proceed with obtaining a visa for travel to Austria. As it may be necessary for [M]'s wife ([Mrs. M]) to join him on the trip to Vienna, [M] is to undertake the same process to obtain a renewed [Country A, likely Ukrainian] passport for his wife.</p>
<p>4) Shortly before he prepares to launch in Vienna (see below RE timing and mechanics) we will have [M] advise [IS2] via e-mail that he is going on vacation in Vienna with his wife and will stop by the Iranian IAEA Mission there with a packet of interesting information for [IS2], asking IS2 to alert the mission to expect [M]. When he shows up at the mission, [M] will have the packet containing the [CP1] disinformation in an envelope addressed to [IS2] and will ask to see [IS1] to make sure the package gets delivered to the right man. [IS1] is likely to acknowledge that he too is from [Iranian Institution 1] and that he knows [IS2]. This will let [M] plant his story (of repeated efforts to find a receptive audience in Iran) more firmly and give the Iranians a chance to see that [M] is indeed a Russian and a nuclear weapons veteran. Even if {IS1} does not see [M] presenting a package with a known addressee at a prestigious Iranian [redacted] institution can only help advance our plan to have the information taken seriously.</p>	<p>4) During the meeting, [M] mentioned that he had received the following email from [Iranian Subject 2 (IS2)] from [Iranian Institution 1] dated 7 Nov: Dear [M] I was reviewing my old mails. I found you last year email. I want to know more about you. Could you let me have more information regarding your work, your hobby, your interest, etc? Regards, [Iranian Subject 2] [IS2]'s email address is [redacted]</p>

<p>Per discussion at HQS and with [Sterling], we believe it best to send [M] to Vienna with his wife in early January (after the Austrian Christmas pause and the Islamic holiday of Ramadan, which begins on 9 December and ends on 8 January) to make the approach to [IS1]. His wife, [Mrs M], was instrumental in getting him to cooperate with [CIA] in the first place and is a definite calming influence on him. [M] is no one's idea of a clandestine operative and we believe it wiser to refrain from meeting him while he is in Vienna. That said, he needs to be thoroughly prepared. One option – contingent on available resources – would be for [Mr S] and [Sterling to] visit Vienna during the first week of the New Year [redacted] so he can given the rather differently-oriented [M] as much concrete detail about where he has to go and what he has to do as possible. [1 line redacted]</p>	<p>5) Feel this is a fortuitous turn of events for the operation, as a preliminary thought, the contact from [IS2] can be exploited to either provide another person to present the material to, or somehow utilize this contact to provide a more definite entree to [IS1] for [M].</p>
<p>6) We have meanwhile directed [M] to obtain an Austrian visa, a new [country A] passport for his wife, and a visa for her too. He is also redrafting his cover letter, which we want to make the right points including the new references to [IS2], while retaining his wonderfully cracked English diction. We told him to prepare a Russian version too to make sure he gets the point across in one language or the other. All in all things are shaping up well for the approach to [IS1], which we will conduct at the earliest opportunity.</p>	

Bob S' two versions Mission Accomplished

<p>3/10/00 internal version</p>	<p>3/13/00 tearline version</p>
<p>To: Langley, CIA 5 (Vienna), CIA 7, 8</p>	<p>To: CIA 9, 7, 8, NY, INFO Vienna</p>
<p>3) [M], who as addrees will recall is involved in this operation not because of any special agent skills, but because of his genuine background as a Soviet nuclear engineer, had difficulty finding the Iranian mission to the IAEA despite explicit directions from [Mr. S] who had himself [viewed—probably originally cased] the building in preparation for the approach. This difficulty resulted in [M]'s using</p>	<p>1) We would like to take this opportunity to update you on our fire set delivery operation. On 3 March '00 our asset, a former senior engineer at the former Soviet Union's Arzamas-16 facility, deposited a packet containing the plans for a nuclear weapons firing set at the Iranian mission to the IAEA in Vienna. Our asset visited the Iranian mission facility several times, but did not find any one present in the</p>

<p>his emergency [redacted] plan to call [Mr. S]'s cell phone, and from his hotel phone rather than from a public phone as instructed. Making the best of a bad situation, [Mr. S] kept the conversation commercial and told [M] that he indeed had been provided with the right address and that he simply had to go inside the building. A rather sheepish [M] acknowledged at the 9 March meeting that once he did so he found the mission, though he noted with petulance that it was up seven steps rather than the four he had been told to expect.</p>	<p>office on 2 or 3 March during his visits. He accordingly placed the packet in the locked mail box immediately adjacent to the door of the mission inside its host build at 19 Heinestrasse in Vienna's Second District.</p>
<p>4) Having finally located the mission after several very obvious searches in the vicinity, [M] at one point noted that there was someone in the office, but on that occasion he had not brought the document package with him. When he returned on two subsequent days he found the office unoccupied and finally left the package, very clearly addressed to Iranian Subject 1, in the locked mailbox right outside the mission door. Acting on his own initiative, he took a series of photographs of the building, entrance way, mission door, and the locked mailbox, and presented these to C/Os. At least we know he found the right place at last.</p>	<p>2) The packet was addressed to the head of mission by title, but not by name. It included a letter which explained something about the asset's background and an explanation that he had access to very valuable information about the design and construction of nuclear weapons, of which the firing set plans were a sample. He noted (truthfully) that the plans were not complete and that the Iranians would need to recontact him at a post office box in the New York area [redacted] if they want the rest of the information. He made it clear that he would expect payment if the Iranians want his help to complete the plans. The asset asked that the packet be delivered to a professor in Tehran, with whom the asset had been conducting an occasional e-mail dialogue, saying that he did not know whom exactly he ought to contact. The asset e-mailed the professor before and after the Vienna trip to alert him to expect a packet of valuable information</p>