

## \*\*\* CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE DEPARTMENT \*\*\*

*This paper cancels T.C.S. O.I. 59-14 dated 2 April 59*

1. Confusion arises from time to time in the use of the word "CONFIDENTIAL" to classify letters. "CONFIDENTIAL" is a security classification with a precise official meaning:-

"Documents, information or material, the unauthorized disclosure of which, while not endangering to national security, would be prejudicial to the interests or prestige of the nation, any government activity or individual or would cause administrative embarrassment or difficulty or be of an advantage to a foreign nation".

2. From the foregoing it will be readily appreciated that the use of such phrases as "Personal and Confidential" to classify letters is inaccurate and confusing because it is a combination of two classifications. Similarly, in "Strictly Confidential", the first word is redundant.

3. When the contents of an official letter are such that its circulation be limited to those officers directly concerned in taking action on it, it should be enclosed in an envelope addressed to the responsible officer and marked "To be opened by addressee only". This envelope is then enclosed in an outer envelope marked with the full address.

4. It must be understood that any letter marked "Personal" or "Private" will be dealt with as a personal letter. Under no circumstances may the contents of personal letters be interpreted as an official instruction or request for official action. The effect of this is that any official action discussed in "Personal" or "Private" correspondence cannot be put into effect until formalized in official correspondence.

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