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10 March, 1979

STAT MEMORANDUM FOR: [redacted]
Public Affairs Office

STAT FROM: [redacted]

SUBJECT: Some personal thoughts on a CIA museum

1. When we talked the other day, I promised to produce a thought paper on this subject. This is it. This paper is the synthesis of my thoughts, my research and experience, and my philosophy. Initially, a successful museum is defined functionally and operationaly in a series of premises. While this series may seem long and complicated, it was intended to be comprehensive. There are museums which exist without satisfying all these premises. They are usually on the scale of a large exhibit and are of little importance or repute, having but few visitors. Not all of these premises become operational at the onset, they should be provided for in the long range planning of every museum. These premises are followed by a detailed discussion of each premise in terms of our operational environment. Then some observations on administrative and miscellaneous matters are made.

2. A successful museum is:

a. a repository for a collection of items, which are acquired, indexed, stored, maintained, and protected from loss, damage, and the effects of time

b. a readily accessable place where there is an open and permanent display, according to some theme, of part of its collection

c. another place where specially certified visitors may study restricted items in the collection

d. able to sponsor mobile displays of parts of its collection and items loaned to it from other collections

e. capable of both designing and executing the design of its exhibits

f. a place where some study and research may be done by both scholars of repute and serious students of the discipline

g. able to host meetings and sponsor discussions and guest speakers

h. supported by members of an association which is financially self sufficient and provides financial support to the museum as well as public and political visibility for the musuem

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i. able to produce a program of activities to keep its associated members, attract other supporters, and serve the public interest

j. able to sell books, reproductions, and related items through a museum store

k. often related informally to one or more professional societies (in addition to the membership association) to provide dignity, decorum, authenticity

l. usually affiliated with a non-profit foundation to supply financial and moral support, this foundation is the unofficial mouthpiece of the museum and is able to "speak on behalf of the museum but not for the museum", in matters of public dispute and in soliciting exhibits and grants from appropriate sources

m. given strategic guidance by a group of directors who possess financial, political and technical means to advise the operating officials of the museum

3. The operational environment of today may be characterized as one which is open to the extent that sources and methods are protected and all else is subject to the sunshine of the Freedom of Information Act. This period of partial disclosure is one which permits unconstrained speculation by outsiders on every scrap of information. The results produce quantities of misinformation and negative public opinion results. It is unlikely to decrease in the near future. A display of authentic historical matter could do much to educate the public and counter the unfavorable image. The exhibition must be from some aggregation of items which do not have current national security implications.

a. There is a vast storehouse of historical artifacts which though presently dispersed, could be gathered together and augmented by items in our Historical Intelligence Collection of the Office of Central Reference, our archives, and corresponding entities of other members of the intelligence community. These would have to be carefully updated with exhibits of artifacts from incidents which have been opened to public vision. All artifacts would be either unclassified or downgraded from a classified status. They should be physically turned over to the museum for custodial responsibility. Protective custodial services would have to be provided by the museum staff. A museum collection might include the reproduction of Washington's letter, the report of such things as Lewis and Clark, or the Pike Expedition, George Washington's surveys, the message wrapped in cigars from the civil war, the message to Garcia, radio intercepts of messages to German submarines in World War I, wire taps on battlefield phone lines in France, the matter behind the "gentlemen don't read other gentlemen's mail" incident, work of the naval security group in breaking the Japaneese codes, Pearl Harbor artifacts, OSS data, the story of the part cryptology played at Midway, the photograph of Penemunde which showed the missilry, the Chinese logistic net that went from the US to the mainland during the Korean Police Action, incidents relating to the atomic secrets penetration of the 40's and 50's, the U2 incident, the Berlin tunnel, the Cuban missile crisis, the age of defectors (MacLean and Penkovski), the bug in the US Embassy, the ambassador's shoe, the incidents which prevented a repetition of the Soviet incursion into Czechoslovakia in Yugoslavia, our side of the congressional investigations, the pictures that appeared [redacted] and the downed Korean airliner, the bug on Kruschev's car telephone, the Sov DC missile tracking station here in D.C., the original statue of Nathan Hale.

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b. The display of this collection requires some degree of showmanship. Two important aspects are the theme or message and the exhibitional method. The theme organizes the collection into an integrated display. I would suggest that first there be a definition of intelligence and a description of its traditional methods of collection, a description of the intelligence cycle and the conversion of raw data into a finished intelligence product. The history of American intelligence should be presented in evolutionary form such as: The Colonial and Revolutionary period, the Western expansion period, the war between the states, pre-World WarI intelligence, combat intelligence of World War I, pre-World War II intelligence, the intelligence problem behind Pearl Harbor, World War II intelligence (sub-divided by theater and service with a special OSS separate exhibit), the expansion of intelligence into paramilitary and other activities, the rise of global responsibilities and of the increased part of technical intelligence such as the U2 and the satellite. The means of exhibition should follow the philosophy of the Franklin Museum in Philadelphia, an involvement climate with the museum visitor. Have a real bug in a seal with a bug in it "broadcast" conversations to another location to a small loudspeaker. I understand the Berlin tunnel fimally grew to huge proportions - if so have a replica and do a walk thru, show a movie of the U2 in flight, have a duplicate of the coin with the atomic secrets, have a diorama of part of the FBIS operation at station X somewhere in the mideast, walk the deck of the Pueblo and look thru portlights into the operations section, have a button one may push to activate an antenna in a diorama on elint collection, visit the Presidential briefing on the Cuban missile crisis with a tape of the briefing to the audience (located where the President is sitting). Somewhere in here should be an example of the awful uncertainty because the intelligence is not total and of the necessity to do something in the absence of the truth - perhaps the Gulf of Tonkin Incident. End with a replica of the Presidential messages and then the main entrance to headquarters and the Wall of Honor.

c. It may be feasible to have an exclusion area for special material such as the Psychological Warfare exhibit that used to be in the Library of Congress, perhaps certain classified products might be stored in a vault for use. This should not be overlooked as a consideration in the initial plan.

d. To reach the greatest number of people, some form of portability needs to be incorporated in a mobile visiting exhibition which could travel to proper exhibit sites such as the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, or the Golden State in San Francisco.

e. It takes showmanship and crafstmanship to produce a really topflight exhibition. The craftsmanship must be an integral part of the museum. It will have opening dates and schedules to be met and must be self sufficient with respect to resources and personnel. There is absolutely no form of resource and personnel sharing that will work properly unless it is for others to share the museums resources. Any other way will result in a preemption of effort directed toward the museums goals. There are some of these craftsmen assigned within the agency now, a small fraction of them could be used as seed-people to get things started. Maintenance of "hands on" exhibits is always heavy, but it is worth it.

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f. One of the attractions of a museum is its uniqueness. The collection is a rare and wonderous thing or it is not worth studying. It is this characteristic which makes the museum of value, no where else is there such a collection and to study it is something special for serious students and practitioners of the discipline. For example, I have a French Foreign Legion manual on Indochineese home made mines and booby traps from the 1950's. It was of considerable use to us in the 1960's. There are times when institutional memory is limited by records administrators, archivists and just the growth of information without a corresponding growth in storage capacity. There is a bit of lore that says we had to economize on space for map storage and the decision was made to destroy the maps of an unimportant island called Cuba just weeks before the missile crises. True or not, it is illustrative of another function of the archival value of museums and of the utility of having both a classified and an unclassified collection. Once committed to this concept, it becomes a waste not to be able to use the stuff for study and research. Several years ago I was faced with the problem of finding out just what was going on in a certain country on a day for day basis for several months. We had information based on the time it was reported to us, sometimes months after the actual date the event transpired, and never had the time, resources, and inclination to produce the equivalent of the NY Times Almanac for that country. This is just the sort of project that a researcher could do in a museum environment. Thus, this feature of limited study and research space, similar to graduate carrels in universities, is a small consumer of resources and holds the potential for a disproportionately larger payoff.

g. Facilities for conferences hold twofold payoff capability. First is the internal one. At present, we must travel a considerable distance to host a true professional type convocation for in-house personnel. A modest auditorium, and three or four smaller conference rooms, all capable of being made secure would, in conjunction with some number of larger carrels, make it possible to conduct a moderately sized conference. This facility could be made available to outside organizations, such as the Americal Political Science Association, with us as a sponsor with minimal impact on out present real estate. Under certain circumstances, such as on a space available basis, it might be made availavle to public use for a nominal maintenance fee. In this environment one could have speakers who would have created problems at the headquarters auditorium. It is essential to have this capability to support other functions of the museum.

h. Associational support is by far the rule rather than the exception. Membership provides to the individual such benefits as discounts at the company store, invitations to new exhibit openings before the crowd spoils viewing it, reduced rates to events, reserved parking, and a host of other things. It also establishes a corps of loyal elite supporters for political purposes. To mention a few there are: Smithsonian Associates, The National Geographic Society, Friends of the Natonal Zoo, Members of the New York Museum of Natural History, Members of the Chicago Art Institute, of the National Archives, and of the Foundation for the Preservation of Historic.... Don't knock it, it is great PR and like the company store it is usually staffed with volunteers from within the association. These also serve as docents to guide parties (and possibly accompany exhibits on the road). No less a place than the National Cathedral has them. Membership categories could be based on such things as clearance. Some would work only at the unclassified area, while others could work the secure area. They might also be used to maintain a reserve list of personnel who could become active in time of need to be called upon to help the museum and even the agency in times of particular need - such as backlog in FOIA cases or a sudden sequirement for additional staffing in a particular area. It would be sort of like the reserve forces of the military.

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i. To create a loyal and interested membership requires at least three things, periodic contact thru such things as a magazine, a program of events in which they may participate, and a way of taking them in on things which are going on so that they have a sence of both belonging and of participation in the victory of the moment. Remember, in a museum, the victory may have been twenty years ago. Nevertheless, they are made to feel that they participated in either the actual event, or its rediscovery and public announcement. This program is one which is self sufficient from a financial standpoint and may even be a source of special funds for purposes that may have been deleted from the museum budget. For example, the creation of a lounge for the staff and members, it may be the mechanism by which the contract for food service is obtained. There must be a place to eat. Staff, visitors, conferees, and visiting scholars all have to eat hence it follows that they must eat somewhere nearby. At the Smithsonian this facility grew so large that it had to divide. The staff still eat at the castle and Associates eat at the Associate Court in the Museum of Natural History - its a big deal and Mariott has the contract for both.

j. Another profitable concessionare activity to provide some form of financial self sufficiency is the "museum store". We have much to sell - for example: our products that are published by the Government Printing Office, the Atlasses are superb, FBIS reports, Things such as the attached translation from FTD and available through the National Technical Information Service of the Department of Commerce, and this new business which buys one copy of all FOIA products. They would probably be willing to manage the outlet just to get their foot in the door. As such they could be awarded the concession and pay a percentage to the association or to the museum. To cut overhead, partial staffing by association volunteers is not uncommon. In some cases, the volume of this activity became so profitable that it bought the printing presses from the museum just to run the high volume of company store business and in return for the convenience of colocation ran all the museum and association printing jobs at either cost or gratis. Just look at how the bookstore in the Smithsonian History of Science and Technology Museum has grown. Watch the volume of patrons at the Air and Space Museum Store. Study the counter of the National Geographic at Explorers Hall and figure the volume. This stuff pays off and in time, becomes so serious an enterprise that it is contracted out on a full time paid employee basis. Every item sold becomes a part of good public relations if they are selected with discretion.

k. Besides the membership association, which is essentially a cheering section of affecianados, a more serious and professional air is required to prevent the atmosphere from turning into some commercial venture or worse into a carnival. This dignity and decorum comes from the affiliation with the truely professional societies. We have a strong area here because we are a heterogenius organization and can affiliate informally with such groups as geographers, economists, political scientists, newspersons, historians, and scientific and engineering persons. The process is essentially one of cooptation by soliciting their opinions and ideas about the substantative items in the collection and accuracy in the way which they are exhibited. Both technical and substantive issues are resolved in advance. Often they also pull the teeth on political issues too. Suppose we would have an exhibit, as I think we should, on the problem of the revelation of information in a democracy, or on the abuse of secrecy where actions affect individual civil liberties. Certainly these are potentially hot issues, and yet they represent a historic problem which is relevent. Normal PR procedures recommend that these never be

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originated by the guy with egg on his vest. This places the initiative in the hands of the critics and a vociferous minority can spoil an otherwise good display by raising the issues. The inclusion of them as part of the event in conjunction with the legitimate presentation of constructive thoughts by a professional group could pull the opposition's fangs in advance. By coordinating visits of the mobile exhibitions with the local associate groups and having guest speakers in select professional groups in advance of an exhibit, one can prevent incidents and also stimulate attendance. There is no way to beat 'em because they are there so why not join 'em and co-opt their potential antagonism.

l. The museum must exist as a legal entity. To do so, some form of incorporation is necessary. Unless one is interested interested in tax problems and the like, it is easier to incorporate in a form which drastically reduces all this paperwork. The ideal form of this is to become a part of an existing entity. For this reason there is a great temptation to stay a part of the government, or to join another museum, or to affiliate with some other ongoing legal activity. Each has its merits and problems, most hinge around control, budget, and legally prohibited activities such as fund raising, gift giving, and political activity. The Smithsonian, for example is only half governmental. The creation of a foundation as a non profit corporation is a simple matter and it is worth doing. Suppose, for example that there was a desire to have the mobile exhibit visit Seattle but there was no money for this or some internal-to-the government reason absolutely prohibited it. The foundation, being outside-the government, could talk to some business in Seattle, such as Boeing Aircraft and ask if they could host such an exhibition. Because this business was doing business with the government it might be a conflict of interest situation for them to do so for a governmental entity, but not so for the foundation. Suppose there was a desire for the first camera used in intelligence work to be on display and that only Cannon Camera in Japan who manufactured the device still had one. It wopuld be a real problem to have them give the camera to the government intelligence community where it would be no problem at all to give it to a foundation. Likewise in the raising of funds, in the selection of men of importance to serve on the board and in the issuance of public statements, the foundation would be a necessary and desirable bufer. Contracting procedures are much easier when pervormed without ASPR's to constrain them. Contracts will be needed in all sorts of things. Any claims that might arise would be claims against the foundation or the museum itself rather than claims against the government. The parent relationship could be maintained by a contract between the government and the museum or its director. I suspect that all sorts of food, cleaning, and security services could be provided at more favorible conditions than those now provided by GSA.

m. Every major organization in this arena has a group of strategic advisors or direstors. They are usually the officers of the foundation, the director of the museum, and personalities of note. Law requires certain business meetings at least annually. Politics may require special ones in between. The "governors" usually include a member of each of the houses of Congress, some membership from within the offices of the presidency, a historian of note, representatives of the media in the form of a publisher and a station owner, someone from academia, and presidents or members of the board of some of the nations largest corporations. In our case, it would not hurt to have a lawyer, a religious leader, a labor leader, a college president, someone from another foundation, and someone from another museum. Other suggestions might

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include a scientist, a Nobel Laureate - Herb Simon would be fantastic, an ex-President or National Security Advisor, retired senior officials from the intelligence community - not too many to be suspect, and the chairman would be - ex officio - the DCI. The mechanism by which these people are selected is an interesting one. Usually there is a less important group, called something like an advisory panel, which is convened semi-annually to provide technical details and advice on more specific questions. Some have standing sub-committees where the object of study is ongoing. One serves his apprenticeship in these environs first. After it has been determined that he has his head screwed on right and will not prove to be an embarrassment or trouble maker, he is elevated to the more senior group. I know it sounds cumbersom but its worth the effort just to save later embarassment. Note that the mission of these groups is to advise the operating officials. This leaves the operating officials free to ignore the advice when operational considerations merit it. A couple of years back there was one of these little flare-ups at the Corcoran. It resulted in one advisory official and an operating offical in a fistfight on the "for insiders only" preview of the Russian Exhibition on loan from the Hermitage. It made the press, and someone resigned - very bad form. They did not have the apprenticeship organization, and someone made a poor selection of the person to occupy the position. Yes, it's worth it, the furor it caused in the arty circles had repercussions for weeks as people lined up and chose sides. This thing kept recurring in the art columns for a long time. Art is so un-newsy thay only the fight made the metropolitan section, but we are front page all the time.

4. The direct implications of these characteristics to the CIA involve resources and the amount of desired control to be exercised under two options: having the museum operated by a contractor, and having it operated by in-house personnel. These issues are addressed below:

a. Items in the collection would be procured by the museum and/or by the CIA for the museum. The CIA should specify the procedures for the care of the collection. Items on loan would have the treatment specified in the loan agreement. Those which were donated would probably have the terms specified in the grant. If operated by the CIA, one custodian would be required as a full time employee. His duties would be devoted to the artifacts. In addition, the exhibits would require construction and maintenance. The services of one wood-worker, one metal-worker, one electrician, one cabinet maker, and one commercial artist would be needed, as a minimum to care for the exhibits. There may be some advantage to procuring these services contractually. Lastly, two positions to serve the museum functions should include a librarian, and either an archivist or historical researcher.

b. While it is important that the loaction should not be coexistant with functional intelligence buildings, this condition reduces direct control. There are some interesting possibilities: the old OSS headquarters building near the South Building, a part of the building on F Street, something on Lafayette Square, and the Army and Navy Club which is renovating its entire building to make several floors available for commercial use (Farragut Square is a good tourist location). The important thing is accessability to the people who will want to visit the museum. The safe house on the eastern shore which is now for sale would be ideal, except for this problem of accessability.

c. The restricted part of the museum should be built in to facilitate control under both CIA and contractual operation. Some impact on the size of the security force is expected but beyond my means of determination. The number of positions would be the same under both alternatives.

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d. Mobility is a state of mind. It should be incorporated into every exhibit. It increases problems of control and would necessitate having a security officer who could also serve as an administrative assistant to the custodian, in addition to providing the supervisory security function required in paragraph c above.

e. Design capability requires the assignment of one designer. Control of the design effort would be much easier if the Agency kept the museum in-house. It would be harder to request that the museum's resources be applied to augment the Agency's if the museum were a separate entity. To ease this problem, a Basic-Ordering-Arrangement (BOA) contract could be let whereby the CIA would task the contractor who operates the museum to perform the desired services.

f. Study areas impact on floorspace resource requirements. They have little effect on personnel, control, and identity of the museum operator.

g. Meeting capability - the same as f. above.

h. There are at least three organizations which would be willing supporters of this museum. The problem is to combine them into an integrated, viable organization. This requires one person to administer the organizational roster and account for dues. The special membership category could be controlled by using a micro computer, as a fringe benefit of the regular membership operations.

i. The program of exhibits, speakers, and mobile exhibitions would be normal functions of the museum staff as part of their regular duties. Control is easier if the staff are in-house personnel. The closeness of this association may inhibit the type of activities and people who would participate. If the museum were operated under a contract, the Agency could task for desired activities but would have a problem in vetoing other activities.

j. The sales store impacts on floorspace. It should be an intrinsic function of the museum staff. If the staff are Agency employees, it would probably be better to have the sales store operate under contract with either a business or with the membership organization.

k. The relationship with professional societies is another museum staff function and would be best facilitated by direct CIA control if the professional societies feel comfortable with this arrangement. To preserve the CIA interest in this activity, the museum staff security officer should be involved.

m. Directors are usually easily recruited. Their duties are specified in the charter. Appropriate verbiage prevents problems of control. Resources are minor, some funds for an annual meeting (perhaps a banquet) and minor clerical support from the CIA, with most coming from the museum staff. Under both alternatives, once appointed - control is lost.

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5. The above suggests that a musuem is feasible. Personnel needed at the start would be a curator, a secretary, and a designer. They should come up with a detailed concept within three months. If approved, the concept would serve as the basis for determination of accurate floorspace and personnel requirements. This should take another month. Based on this, a specific schedule involving location acquisition, and schedule of exhibit completion could be completed along with the time-phased expenses. I would guess another two months would be required for this.

The Navy Memorial Museum has 3000 square feet of floorspace and is administered by a staff of ten. Because it is part of the Navy Historian's Office, ita budget is buried among other line items and is hard to detect. Commander Damon, the director says this is low by national standards. My impression is that our situation requires a staff about double this number.

One thing which the study must address is the feasability of having the museum operated under contract. I see no great objection to having the work done under contract as long as the agency retaines sufficient control of the project to protect its interests. This would not be difficult, for example, the Curator or Deputy Curator could be the principal duty of an agency employee. One of the major duties of the employee would be to administer the contract under which the museum is operated.

Another specific item to be studied would be the specific museum functions to be implemented. The time phased sequence of these, along with their respective costs would be an appropriate topic reported upon by the study.

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