

24 May 1978

*Panel**Mid Career**Panel.*AGENDA

1. Increased reporting and analysis requirements competing for limited resources.
2. Lack of uniform Automated Data Processing planning and policy in the Agency.
3. Need to develop a capability to use new methods of analysis.
4. Uniform promotion system.
5.
6. Perspectives on management selection.

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PROBLEM: The increasing volume of information being collected and managed, some of it in real time, and the increasing number of analytical and reporting requirements being levied are fiercely competing for the Intelligence Community's limited resources. The restructuring of resources to meet these demands is resulting in a decrease in the quality and amount of intelligence analysis.

DISCUSSION: The increase over the years in "all source" data collection and management is obvious to most everyone in the Intelligence Community. Now with the availability of near real-time data from emerging systems, we are faced with an as yet unanswered challenge to both our data base management and analytical capabilities. This near real-time capability has further heightened the demand for fast analytical response, as well as contributed more data which has to be stored, manipulated and assimilated during detailed analysis. This competition for resources is further exacerbated as new international problems arise such as terrorism, energy, SALT, etc. This type of problem demands in-depth study. For the future, an even greater emphasis may be placed on data collection and management systems, and even more demanding analytical efforts are anticipated.

Conversely, the resources available in the Intelligence Community to meet these growing concerns do not appear to be increasing. As a result, the daily effort to meet these growing demands often means the restructuring of analytical and data collection and management resources. All too frequently this restructuring has inefficiently sacrificed resources. Such restructuring manifests itself in the overemphasis on fast response analysis to the detriment of in-depth study, the use of analysts as data base managers, the proliferation of disparate data bases, and data bases which are not accessible to analysts-- or even in a format they can use.

As the competition for these limited resources increases, new ways of efficiently dividing and managing these resources will have to be developed. Some efforts, although sporadic, have already been made in this direction, e.g., computer-aided analysis, increased coordination of data base information, and greater user access to various data bases. To date, however, such efforts seem to have been resisted, almost subconsciously, resulting in less than adequate support and implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Determine an equitable allocation between data base collection and management resources and those needed for intelligence analysis.
2. Enforce compatible data base formats.
3. Establish systematic integration of data base information.
4. Establish a review and enforcement authority "with teeth."
5. Make data base information readily accessible and usable to analysts.
6. Make more training in computer assisted analysis mandatory for analysts.
7. Provide necessary support to make the above training meaningful.
8. Provide for closer screening and prioritization of analytical requirements.

Agency top management has previously recognized these problems. The D/DCI on 16 December 1976, in a memorandum to the EAG, identified ADP issues which should be studied so that positive steps could be taken to improve central management of our total ADP program. The ODP, on 15 July 1977, provided the EAG with a paper addressing the balance that should be achieved between centralized and decentralized ADP resources in the Agency.

Two of the six main recommendations included in this paper were:

c. "Responsibility for comprehensive Agencywide ADP planning, both short term and long term, should be assigned. The plan should include those decentralized components not now included, and should identify clearly what has been excluded, and why. The review and monitoring functions should also be assigned, and performed jointly with the EAG. A new component, probably at the DDCI, should be assigned these responsibilities."

d. "Responsibility should be assigned for formulating ADP policy for the Agency and monitoring its execution, and for representing the Agency's interests to outside organizations. This would cover ADP standards for Agency-wide use and Agency participation in Community or inter-agency ADP activities. The new component in paragraph c. above would be the logical place for these jobs."

In this paper, ODP recognized the many complex issues involved in reviewing ADP with the Agency. The paper provides a detailed discussion of many of the problems and provides meaningful solutions. Apparently, however, the EAG has fully carried out only one recommendation in that paper, i.e., paragraph e. "The responsibility to conduct a feasibility study of an Agency Career Service for professional ADP employees should be assigned."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Instruct the EAG to reconsider the recommendations set forth in the ODP paper discussed above.
2. Create an Agency authority for ADP control.

This authority would review proposed developments, act as a forum for users and developers and have the responsibility for coordinating Agency ADP resources. It must be given the power to make its decisions stick, otherwise it will become yet another link in the bureaucratic chain.

PROBLEM: The lack of uniform ADP planning and policy in the Agency.

DISCUSSION: The Agency's ADP equipment consists of a mix of centralized and decentralized facilities valued at about \$70 million. This large investment has been made without the benefit of a uniform policy or plan for ADP within the Agency. Overall Agency ADP policy or planning does not now exist. In addition there is no single person who can speak with authority on our ADP policies and procedures. The Director, Office of Data Processing (ODP), is the Agency's representative to the Information Handling Committee, yet the D/ODP controls only about 50% of our ADP resources. [redacted] does give the D/ODP authority for reviewing and coordinating proposals for acquisition of ADP equipment, but according to ODP this regulation has been ineffective, both as a planning mechanism and as a control mechanism. The D/ODP also has no authority over the acquisition of ADP equipment for National programs. [redacted] is being revised to strengthen the authority of ODP, yet it still will not apply to National programs.

Insufficient coordination of ADP systems and proposed ADP projects is resulting in duplication of effort and an intensified internal competition for resources. Each ADP development is considered an individual effort. Each is vying for its own cut of the available resources. Relationships and commonalities between proposed and existing systems is not an obvious issue in the review process.

First-line ADP developments may often appear to overlap in functional areas. This is not necessarily faulty planning or bad systems analysis. What is bad, is the lack of coordination from an Agency perspective that allows mutual areas of processes of common concern to be developed separately. This duplication of effort further reduces available resources and often results in a "reinventing of the wheel." For example, three known ADP developments--CRAFT, SAFE, and the Operations Center's Crisis Management Center--have many similar functional requirements. Each is pursuing its own solutions in its own way. A more positive approach would be the pooling of resources to solve a common problem, or at least a sharing of information among the participants.

The objective is not to stifle innovation but rather to be more effective in our approach to ADP development. Why waste time and effort to solve a problem that has been solved or analyzed elsewhere? This is not to say that the Agency should set a "mold," forcing all requirements to adhere to predetermined specifications or available/existing systems or processes, rather that there are distinct advantages to be gained from coordinating functional system requirements.

The responsibilities of this office would require a staff of several members. An individual cannot hope to satisfy the need. The staff members should be experienced in systems analysis and knowledgeable about Agency functional areas. Staff members need not be those with strong computer hardware and/or software backgrounds. The responsibility of this authority is to review and coordinate the functional characteristics of ADP developments, not to dictate implementation methods. This technical expertise must be available to the staff when needed but should not form the basic evaluative thrust.

If such authority were created, ADP developments could be reviewed for coordination not only at their inception, but also during the development cycle to assure adherence to approved requirements.

3. Review the policy of excluding ADP resources of National Programs from normal Agency review procedures. This review should determine if the requirements of can be applied to National Programs.

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--The educational background and styles of analysis of many employees of the analytical offices are not compatible with these attempted approaches. Emphasis has been on stressing intuitive styles, and sometimes even excluding analytic styles in some programs. It is difficult to find true experts in some of these methodologies within the Agency.

--Managers have rewarded "superficial" or "show-and-tell" efforts rather than serious applications of methodologies. A two-day conference in Artificial Intelligence can receive a lot of interest while the OGCR ERAC effort (which is a serious attempt at improving the analytic effort) receives a lot of criticism.

--There is some organizational discomfort resulting from these attempted changes. New ways of doing things can cause changes in existing power structures and challenges to lines of authority which are naturally resisted. New ways of doing things created a need either to reeducate existing people or replace them with others, adding to this resistance.

--Develop a group responsible for determining Agency-wide requirements and for implementing a final decision. This group could be subjected to "sunshine laws." It should be composed of both "users" (desk analysts and their managers) and "experts" (computer experts, modelers, etc.) in equal power balance. The group needs to be headed by a dynamic and powerful individual.

--Develop a group (or groups) that are capable of doing the work. A decision must be made whether a central pool of experts or several pools of experts to be used by all analytical offices would be developed.

--An effort is needed to retrain existing people and to hire new people with proper talents to get the right type of experience in the Agency.

--The interactive capabilities of the CIA (office to office communication, interoffice projects, etc.) need to be increased.

PROBLEM: Need to develop a capability to use new methods of analysis.

DISCUSSION: The changing environment of intelligence analysis (increasing amounts of data, real-time data, problems of international scope, etc.) have created requirements for more complex and comprehensive analysis. Past and current policy makers recognize the need for changes in the way we do analysis. In a recent discussion, Mr. Colby expressed the regret that he was not in control of the CIA long enough to incorporate new approaches in the Agency's analytical efforts. Mr. Carlucci expressed the need to refocus a part of analytical effort toward the longer term rather than just this day's problems. The DoD's Joint Research and Development Objectives Directive expresses a critical need for improved Methods of Intelligence Analysis.

There are a number of analytic methods available that can be used to improve our product. Some of these methods have been around for a number of years and have been tried in the past. These methods have tended to focus in on the "scientific method" and zeroed in on issues of lesser interest. Other methods which are becoming available allow for the integration of intuitive and analytical approaches. These methods allow us to include "feelings" and soft estimates along with hard facts in a structure which can capture the essential parts of the problems of large scope that face us. Typical of these techniques are:

System Dynamics. This is a simulation technique which allows the analyst to capture the dynamic (or unfolding) nature of an intelligence situation. Several models have been built in the CIA [redacted]

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Decision Analysis. This method evolved from the writings of John Von Neuman and allows for the capturing of utility of factors and probabilistic elements of the real world. The approach has been used in the DoD in addressing Indications and Warnings problems.

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There are several groups in the CIA who are attempting to use such methodologies. These attempts are separate efforts and are not united in objective. Efforts to make these approaches an integral part of our analysis appear to be floundering at this time. Although there are a number of people within the Agency who have pushed such methodologies, there is resistance in several of the analytical offices. There are a number of reasons for this resistance.

PROBLEM: Ramifications associated with adoption of the Uniform Promotion System.

DISCUSSION: This system would offer more formalized, uniform and expanded career management, increase headroom through the exercising of existing Agency regulations regarding marginal performers thus facilitating upward mobility Agencywide, provide the employee with a better understanding of the promotion criteria, and create a more receptive climate for lateral movement among directorates.

We do perceive some potential problems with the proposed system and would like to offer some recommendations.

While normal attrition may sustain the annual promotion rates, it may nevertheless become necessary in some Offices to separate people to create headroom. The written record (Janney & Carlucci memos) and the statements made by the DCI seem to conflict with respect to the lower percentile to be considered for separation, i.e., lower 3% versus up to 10%.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Agency should ensure that all who are vulnerable to being cut should be notified immediately upon being so identified.

Some offices have large numbers of personnel at the journeyman grade levels (linguists, PI's, and commo specialists) who spend most of their careers at those grade levels doing productive work. Their skills are acquired over many years at great expense to the Agency and are very difficult to replace. While it may be possible to identify a genuinely marginal element within the lower 3% initially, subsequent exercises may well identify persons performing in the Valuable Contribution (VC) category. This could well mean separation of significant numbers of persons for whom the retirement option is several years away. This could have an adverse effect on Agency morale and be detrimental to the recruiting program through bad press.

2. Recognize the fact that there are in the Agency specialists who neither desire nor are suited for supervisory positions, but who nevertheless perform adequately at the journeyman level. Make it clear to these people that, as long as they are fairly rated in the VC category, they need not fear dismissal in an effort to maintain pre-established flow-through rates.

While a promotion model may be a good projection at the time it is developed, aberrations in the attrition rate or position cuts decreed by Congress could require modification of the model.

3. It is felt that the system should specifically incorporate a provision for annual review of the promotion model to allow refinement based on most recent data.

The irrevocable (unless overruled by the DCI) decisions by the promotion panels deprive the office chief of desirable flexibility as regards promotions and assignments. The failure to incorporate senior management views at the time of panel deliberations could increase the number of appeals to the DCI for exception to the panel recommendations.

4. Views of senior management should be incorporated in the ranking exercises for GS-13's and above by either including them on the panel or establishment of a senior career board to review and validate panel recommendations.

Promoting all grades on an annual basis could result in undue delays in promoting new employees. For example, a GS-07 hired 3 months before the annual promotion exercise would have to wait 15 months before being considered for a GS-08. In addition, a GS-09 hired 4 months after the annual GS-09 exercise might not be considered for promotion to GS-10 for 20 months where minimum-time-in-grade guidelines are followed. This could adversely affect the morale of new employees since it would be difficult for managers to hold out prospects for early promotion.

5. Schedule promotions at 6-month intervals through GS-10 or enable managers to ignore MTG guidelines for new hires.

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PROBLEM: Past inattention to management selection and development has left the Agency ill equipped to cope with change.

DISCUSSION: In spite of a number of strong indications that the fortunes of the Agency are on the upswing, a current of disquiet continues to influence attitudes at the working level. Agency management has ignored and, in many instances, encouraged this sentiment in a display of resistance to change, an unwillingness to entertain new ideas, and a readiness to look for more constraints that in fact exist.

Examples of this attitude can be found in all directorates. In spite of its obvious need, it is difficult to hear a word spoken in NITC's defense, even in NFAC, despite its role in establishing the primacy of the analytical product. Complaints of overstaffing and stagnant careers have been endemic to the DDO, and yet the people who were most frustrated now speak of the old days as if they were ripe with opportunity. The idea of establishing a system of steady and regular access to promotions is viewed with great suspicion. New legislation and executive orders intended to clarify operational parameters are cited as justification for inaction. The list seems endless.

These are the symptoms, the core of the problem is the dearth of assertive, accountable leadership at all levels. The Agency, historically, has placed great emphasis on bench level skills as a criteria for advancement. Chiefs in NFAC are selected for their analytical expertise; those in the DDO are selected for their operational talents. Thought should be given to qualities of management and leadership in selecting supervisors; these qualities should not be the result of chance or acquisition after the fact.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The problem does not lend itself to quick solutions, but several steps can be taken in the near term in an attempt to develop a consensus, and in the long term to promote management development.

1. A course similar to the Mid-Career, but shorter, should be established for the GS-15 to 16 levels. The reason for selecting this stratum is that, in spite of its vital role in the management chain, its members frequently have not been privy to developments in the Intelligence Community for as many as 10 years. Unlike the Senior Seminar, all individuals in this category would be encouraged to attend, particularly those who are based outside the Washington area. The course should be designed to last three weeks, address developments in the Agency, Community and world affairs, and include a meeting with the DCI.

2. A concerted effort should be made to return authority and responsibility to this same level of management, if only in a consultative capacity. Over the years, more and more authority over such matters as the analytical product, promotions and assignments have been concentrated at the office/division and directorate levels. The branch, field and office chief operates in an environment that is becoming increasingly circumscribed, dampening initiative and promoting frustration.

3. Future reorganizations, wherever they occur in the Agency, should encompass management control as well as analytical and/or functional objectives. Past reorganizations have tended to be justified on the basis of the task to be accomplished without incorporating management control and accountability.

4. In the longer run, training criteria should be established to qualify for succeeding levels of managerial responsibility. Present training requirements are not taken seriously; even when they are, they apply more to promotions not position assignments. Anyone interested in qualifying for management positions should know in advance what is required to compete; training should be accomplished before the fact.

5. Valid aptitudinal requirements should be established for classes of management positions. Once established, management courses should be structured to contain more management aptitude assessment, and the results made part of the individual's personnel file. Present training courses require nothing of the participants but attendance. OTR should be required to make these same courses available to those stationed outside Washington, either by video tape, correspondence courses, or regional seminars. Performance in these courses should be considered in making future assignments.

6. There must be a top down commitment to the long range development of management talent. Every level of management should be held responsible for taking affirmative action toward this goal, similar to EEO accountability. The present PDP is treated by many senior managers as a paper exercise, perhaps because it concentrates on numbers rather than substance. Performance criteria should be developed against which an individual would be rated for management potential. This would require well-reasoned assessments from rating officers beginning at the lowest supervisory levels; in the case of active supervisors/managers, their potential for greater responsibility would be assessed against past performance.