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2 March 1967

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Inspector General's Report on Foreign
Intelligence Collection Requirements

REFERENCE: Your Memo, ER 67-207, 18 January 1967

1. The subject survey (redacted report) is addressed to the problem of intelligence requirements. It is a well-written, balanced document and the best study on this subject that I have seen. The recommendations set forth are, for the most part, sound and, if implemented, should materially improve the requirements process. I do not believe, however, that the so-called information explosion can be remedied or controlled by improving the requirements process alone. The critical problem here is the management of collection resources. In this respect, an effective requirements process is an essential tool; it is not, however, the final solution.

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Conclude

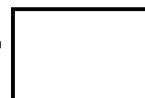
2. The (redacted) report points out that CIA is collecting too much information and, like the rest of the Intelligence Community, "it makes up for not collecting enough of the right kind of information on the most important targets by flooding the system with secondary matter." It is a regrettable fact of life that the value or success of a collection resource is judged more often by the quantity of the material produced than by the intelligence content. This is perhaps understandable, since quantity can be measured mechanically and non-contentiously, whereas quality involves subjective, and often highly biased judgments. It is a further fact of life that a collection resource, once established, will continue to collect to the limit of its capability--against targets of highest priority if possible, but if not, then against targets of any priority which may be used in justification of its collection mission. As noted in the (redacted) report: "Once we develop a capability we use it and it develops a life of its own, with a momentum and imperatives which control us rather than we it."

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3. There are two approaches which, if adopted, would in my opinion, measurably increase the capability of the Intelligence

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Community to cope with the information explosion by establishing management controls, based on intelligence priorities, on the collection resources. The first is to promote the concept of selectivity at the source of collection. This is, of course, not a new idea but it must be given fresh stimulus and greater facility for implementation. In effect, the collector must be told what not to collect as well as to emphasize the need for attention to top priorities only. This objective is probably easier to achieve in the field of technical collection where receivers can be tuned to pick up only signals of certain clearly defined parameters or cameras programmed to photograph only a limited number of top priority targets. It is clearly much more difficult to effect this selectivity where the human element prevails and where the understandable concern exists that the collector in the field is not capable of evaluating which piece of information should or should not be transmitted to Headquarters.

4. I believe, therefore, it is not unreasonable in this connection to consider establishing some sort of quota system to be imposed upon individual collection resources. Such a concept would no doubt be viewed as arbitrary and to a degree it is; I believe, however, that the information explosion is a problem of such dimensions that hard decisions must be made to deal with it. A quota system would not be immutable but would serve as a guide for management in programming collection activities. Since the quota would in most cases be something less than the capability of the resource to collect, it should force management to concentrate on higher priority collection targets. The quota concept would apply both in the tasking of collection assets as well as in the transmittal of information, once collected, back to Headquarters. If requirements are refined and validated in line with recommendations of the [REDACTED] report, it should not be too difficult for the manager of a collection facility to determine if the information collected falls in Priority I, II or somewhere else. Quotas could be adjusted periodically in relation to the quality content of the information collected; thus, the mines producing higher grade ore would receive higher quotas than those producing low grade ore which would be accorded lower quotas. In such a system as this, there is obviously a risk that a key piece of information might be collected but languish in a forward area. Through proper application of an intelligence priorities system, however, this risk should be minimal and is probably no greater than having the same information lying unnoticed in a sea of unanalyzed data in an analyst's in-box. In

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any case, I believe the time has come where the Intelligence Community must accept the risk of missing a possible "nugget" in order not to be buried in the slag heap.

5. The second approach which I propose is to establish some sort of a community mechanism for a coordinated management of collection resources. Experience has shown that it is much easier to create a collection resource than to terminate one. [REDACTED] is a case in point. In fact, positive action to close out low yield collection resources is rare indeed. I believe the Intelligence Community must take steps to correct this situation if the information explosion is to be brought under control. Specifically, USIB, at the time it considers any requirement which involves establishment of a new collection resource, should simultaneously review existing resources to determine those which might be eliminated in order to maintain an acceptable level of collected information. By acceptable here, I mean a volume of data which can be effectively processed, analyzed or utilized by exploitation capabilities available to the Intelligence Community.

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6. As an example, USIB now has before it certain proposals for the collection of ABM intelligence. These proposals include several new collection resources which will produce a high volume of data to be processed by the Community. I would propose that, before approving any new collection resource, USIB should ascertain which of the existing collection resources producing roughly the same volume of data to be processed should be eliminated so that the overall processing load is maintained in balance. In order to assist USIB in making such determinations, a Resources Coordination Board might be established which would maintain an inventory of collection resources together with other pertinent data in this connection. Here again, the Intelligence Community will be faced with certain actions which might be considered arbitrary. As before, however, I feel that, unless management faces up to its responsibility and is willing to make bold decisions, the Intelligence Community will continue to drift on in the direction in which it is now headed. As the [REDACTED] report points out, "The information explosion has already gotten out of hand...its deleterious effects will certainly intensify as well, unless it is brought under rigorous control."

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7. With respect to the recommendations of the survey pertaining specifically to the CIA SIGINT Officer, I submit the following:

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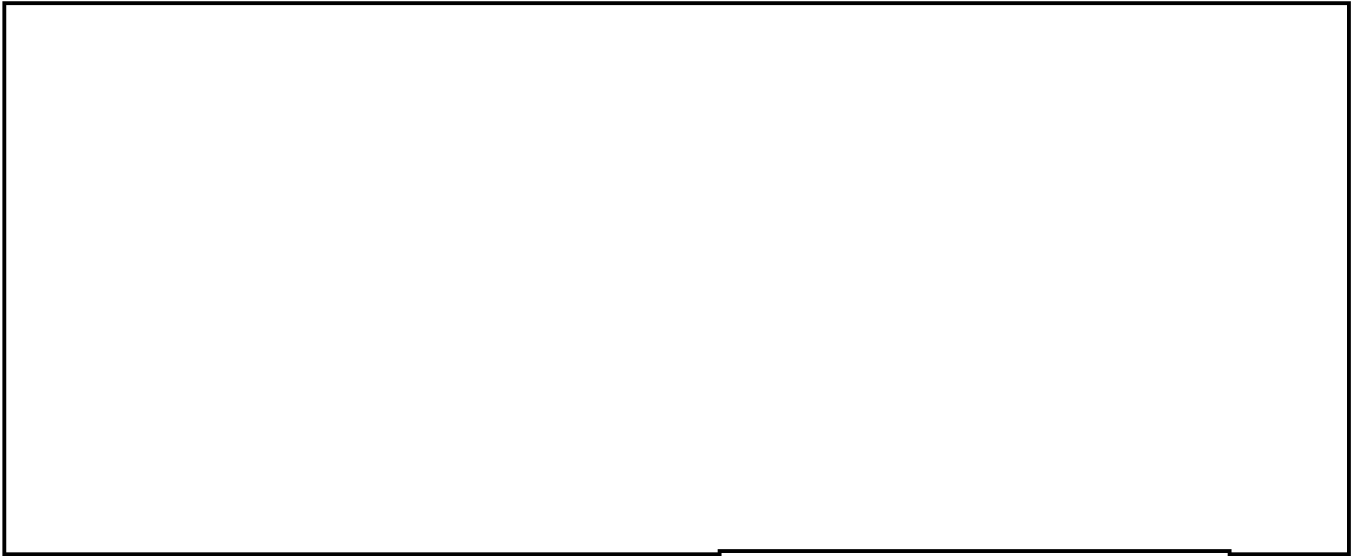
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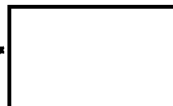


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CODEWORD ROUTING SHEET

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1	CIA SIGINT Officer		2 Mar 67
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☐ Approval ☐ Information ☐ Signature
☐ Action ☐ Direct Reply ☐ Return
☐ Comment ☐ Preparation of Reply ☐ Dispatch
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REMARKS:

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APPENDED DOCUMENT CONTAINS CODEWORD MATERIAL

Appended document contains classified information within
the meaning of Section 798, Title 18, United States Code.

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