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6 May 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support
THROUGH : Chief, Support Services Staff
SUBJECT : Chairman's Report on Records Management Board

1. Attached is the quarterly report of the Records Management Board which I believe shows significant improvements. Its four recommended proposals require approval in principle before action may be initiated.
2. Effective operation of the Board continues to be impeded by:
 - a. the loyalty of members to the components they represent;
 - b. the normal job responsibilities which prevent members from giving full attention to the business of the Board as an Agency mechanism; and
 - c. the lack of staff support for the Board and its individual members limits their studies of problems and recommendations for solutions.
3. During this quarter I pointed out to the Board that five areas deposit more than 70% of the total 100,000-cubic foot volume at the Records Center:

DDP/RID	21,000
DDI/OBGI	20,000
DDS/Finance	12,000
DDI/CRS	11,000
DDI/NPIC	7,000
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	71,000 cu. ft.

Of all 59 depositors, greater time and effort should be given these five and to a lesser degree some eight others with 1,000 to 3,000 cu. ft. each. The remaining 46 components deposit less than 10% of the volume at the Records Center and need little concern. The Board members objected. They explained the great effort being made and insisted that these five should not be singled out:

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GROUP 1 Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

- a. The DDI representative indicated OBGI and CRS promised to eliminate 8,000 and 4,000 cu. ft. respectively and to focus on them might be resented and counterproductive.
- b. The DDS representative explained that the Office of Finance is required to keep payroll records 56 years and vouchers 12.
- c. The DDP representative stated the 21,000 was not RID's, it represented deposits from the entire Directorate. RID cannot subdivide the total into Area Divisions because all but two Divisions send old records to RID where they are boxed together and sent to the Center as an RID deposit.

4. Later, I showed the members that these same five areas also had more than 65% of the volume of records now in the Headquarters buildings. (See list attached). I insisted that such major problem areas should have total Records Management Programs with two or three high-level Records Officers rather than partial Programs with unqualified, part time title holders. I suggested we urge Management to focus on these major areas. Again the vehement responses objected to their being singled out:

- a. The DDP representative said DDP has a superior Records Program with an RMO in each Area Division and a CS Records Committee of Division Chiefs with the DDP himself as Chairman. They also have trained and assigned another 240 CS Records Officers to screen paper-by-paper all CS files, in addition to their regular duties.
- b. The Office of Finance Executive Officer has been working on their records problems and they recently sent their Registry clerk to a 2-week records course and appointed her to be the Records Management Officer.
- c. The DDI representative said they have RMO's and Blue Ribbon Records Panels. Also he felt certain NPIC would soon make a policy decision about the location for its Vital Records and this might move 3,000 cu. ft. of films out of the Center.

While concentrated attention to these five areas seems to be a logical next phase for the Board's effort, the atmosphere and attitude of individual members are such that a directive to proceed in this way would be counterproductive.

5. After the defense comes the counter attack. The DDP Board representative was especially critical of the DDS Directorate Program and the Agency's Central Staff. He felt they were too small to do the size job they faced. He feels they should offer more records training,

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policy guidance, systems surveys, and assistance with forms and equipment. He said the DDP Program Staff includes a GS-16, 15, 13, and 11 plus clerical support. The DDS Program, he went on, with an equal volume of records has a part-time GS-13 alone. On the Agency's Central Records Staff I have the remaining half of him part time plus another 13 and two 12's with two clerks. The DCI representative protested that he is far too busy with his cables to be able to supervise the Records Program in any other offices in the DCI area. He said he has no time or staff for surveys and little time for meetings. The DDI representative is a full-time GS-13 but without any staff and only borrowed clerical support. The assigned DDS&T representative is their Registry Chief, GS-11. Without an overall Centralized Program and Records Career Program, each member responds to the requests, priorities, and direction of his own supervisor consistent with the present decentralized Program policy.

6. A separate and perhaps more effective deterrent to progress of the Purge is the controlling influence of the CI Staff over the retention of records beyond government requirements. This has been particularly important in the cases of DDP/RID and the Offices of Finance and Personnel. Coordination meetings with CI concluded that unaccepted Personnel Applications, required to be kept two years, will be kept indefinitely and Financial Expense Accounting Vouchers, required to be kept twelve years, are to be held 30 years. An even more striking CI influence is in the exacting review procedure the DDP/RMO reported:

"These CI responsibilities led to the formulation of strict criteria regarding document destruction ... Destruction is carried out through a painstaking, tedious process beginning with a paper-by-paper review by a qualified desk individual prior to a recommendation for destruction and continues through at least two more check points before a document is physically destroyed."

There is no Agency Policy or regulation giving CI Staff the role they have assumed controlling records retention. They derive it from their counter intelligence mission.

7. The members are certain the Purge is not the long-term solution to the Agency Records volume. All of them contributed to the temporary successes of the Purges in 1957-58 (15,000 cu. ft.), 1963-67 (55,000), and 1969 (13,000) as well as the 1968 three-month Office Cleanup Campaign (18,000). Most of the members are dedicated, hardworking Records Managers in the professional sense. They believe the total Program is valid and can succeed if someone is available to run it in the office concerned.

8. I believe the Board should continue to function. It serves as a channel to the decentralized programs. It is responsible for stimulating and implementing the current screening effort which must continue

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indefinitely, preferably in the formal Purge environment. This Board system is the best available forum to develop and evaluate new alternative solutions for the Agency Records Problems as long as the present policy, structure, and regulation prevail. Its long term role, and the solution to the other problems described in earlier paragraphs, cannot be solved by the Board itself in the present environment. I would hope that the study group you have asked [redacted] to create will offer recommendations to deal with these as well as the other problems identified by the Chief, SSS in his briefing a few weeks ago.

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Chairman
Records Management Board

Attachments:

Volumes of Records List
Board's Quarterly Report

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