

STATINTL

13 September 1966

TITLE

OTR / JACK (COMMENTS ON REPORT - INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS STUDY GROUP)

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Dear

I appreciate your invitation to comment on the outline of your "Preliminary Report" to the DDS on the work of the Instructional Systems Study Group. Following are my reactions. Although most are reactions which merely reflect my own need for clarification, one or two are of potentially basic importance. So let me begin with these.

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Relation of the report to the contract. The contract exists solely, as I understand it, to support the work of the ISSG. Shouldn't there be a more explicit tie-in between your report and the work of the contract. The objectives listed in the contract include "analyzing" current training programs, determining training objectives desired by "the school", analyzing student abilities and needs, "determining the value" of present methods to meet training needs, surveying the methods and materials available to meet these needs, developing criteria "to present solutions to training needs", and reviewing current off-the-shelf material. Because these objectives are not elaborated, or made explicit, I should think your report might include a statement of what they are, or have become, as a result of your deliberations with the contract. The main thrust of the work of the ISSG, it seems to me, must either be based on these objectives, or suitable modifications of them. Only in this way will we be able to evaluate the progress we're making. Perhaps, for example, you will need more time to complete the first stage of the work. I think we'd be in a better position to sell management if we could state specifically how far along we are on each of our objectives. I realize that this report is only a preliminary one, but I feel it should contain the structure of the final one. Perhaps the report, for example, could begin with a statement of the problem, a brief review of what has been done so far (establishment of the ISSG and hiring of the contract), and then a substantive section in which, objective by objective, you indicate the progress made.

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JOB NO. [redacted] BOJ NO. [redacted] FLD NO. [redacted] DOC NO. [redacted] & NO CHANGE
IN CLASS [redacted] CLASS CHANGED TO: TS S C RET. JUST.
NEXT REV DATE: 4/1/80 REVISIONS: 29225 TYPE DOC. 01
NO. PGS: 3 [redacted] ORG II ORG CLASS: U
REV CLASS: 4 REV 0001 ABLE: MR 79-3

Organization of the substantive part of the report.
Under your "substantive" section, which you call "possible courses of action", you offer management a choice of courses of action that they might take with respect to the use of PI in the Agency, ranging on a rough continuum from no action to potentially wide-spread use. Such an approach seems to assume that management will be confronted with only one or two decisions of relatively major significance. I believe that we already have been given the green light to explore new ways of teaching (principally, PI) and that we should report facts, and expert judgments, regarding the applicability of particular approaches to particular training programs, objectives, or courses. As you suggest, cost estimates should be a prominent part of such an analysis. Go/no-go decisions would then be more realistic and meaningful. With such an approach, desirable but non-existent programs could be suggested, including recombinations of existing courses. In other words, such an approach should not limit you to what already is ongoing in the way of Agency training.

Suggestions regarding assumptions. It occurred to me you might wish to consider including several other assumptions: that there will continue to be a shortage of qualified instructors; that foreign language training is first priority, with the other areas coming in the order in which you have listed them in your section on possible courses of action; that training is of particular importance to an intelligence agency, for which we cannot hire already competent professionals; that high quality training is of special importance to us, who have some critical responsibilities involving the national security, e.g., the Cuban missile crisis.

Miscellaneous suggestions. (1) Under section on assumptions, substitute "in assigning" for "for use as" in paragraph 3. Also, insert "and will adopt them", following the word technology in paragraph 4. (2) Among possible courses of action, it seems to me important to make the point that we should arrange for systematic follow-up of all changes recommended, adopted, and introduced in training programs as a result of the ISSG effort. This should mean the accumulation of end-of-course and past-course performance with and without

the change. This is looking beyond the objective of the ISSG, but it may not be too early to lay the groundwork for a proper evaluation of the effectiveness of its work. How otherwise are we to make soundly based decisions?

Jack