

OTR 76-6157  
25 February 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT : Annual Report of the Language Development  
Committee for FY 1975

REFERENCE : Memorandum for DCI, from Chairman, LDC,  
15 Sept 1975, Same Subject (DDA 75-4387)

1. The referenced report recommended that the CIA Management Committee be asked to consider several actions to improve the foreign language capabilities of appropriate Agency employees. The recommendations were not given formal approval until five months after the submission of the report, but its findings have had a significant impact. There has been sufficient progress, particularly in the Operations Directorate, to lead us to recommend that the Management Committee not take up the report and its recommendations.

2. I would like to give you a status report on each of the report's three recommendations. The first concerns intensification of efforts to hire officers with a verified language skill of S-3 (intermediate speaking skill) or better. Agency recruiters do appear to be sufficiently aware of the importance of identifying prospects with good language skills, but are confronted with several obstacles or problems. They include:

a. Our CT experience indicates that individuals who are currently majoring in foreign languages generally do not possess the other attributes that are of great importance in selecting potential operational officers;

b. There has been a decline in general foreign language study in our colleges as foreign language study ceases to be a degree requirement;

c. Today, second and particularly third generation immigrants are not learning foreign languages in the home;

d. With the ending of the draft, fewer young people are learning foreign languages while serving in the military.

3. The second recommendation suggested a higher priority be put on language training; in this area there have been noteworthy developments:

a. As a direct result of the LDC report, the DDO has requested the Area Divisions to give him a special report on their respective language capabilities. Mr. Nelson's personal interest in language training has had a salutary effect; in March the LLC will have a record enrollment of 135 full-time students and around 240 part-time students.

b. The DDO Training Task Force, which earlier reviewed operations training, is now reviewing language training and has reported twice to Mr. Nelson on this subject. The LLC is providing the Task Force with extensive support in the form of analysis of language capabilities by unit, grade, etc.

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c. [REDACTED] has met with senior officers in each of the DDO Area Divisions. He has been assured of their support in conducting language training. He and his department chiefs have emphasized to the Area Divisions the importance of student selection and keeping officers in language training for an entire course if the desired proficiency level is to be obtained. SE Division has adopted a practice we should like to see adopted by all Area Divisions. Each SE language student now receives a formal memorandum from the Division Chief informing him what the Division expects; this has contributed to the current excellent results we are obtaining in our Russian instruction.

d. The DCI recently requested the DDI for a special report on language capabilities in his Directorate.

4. The third recommendation in the LDC Report provides for a re-examination of language designated positions. As Chairman of the Language Development Committee, I have requested this review and it is now under way in the Operations and Intelligence Directorates.

5. We believe these developments indicate there is sufficient attention focused on the Agency language problem at this time and that further pressure would not add significantly to the efforts to improve the situation. Therefore, I recommend that consideration of the 1975 LDC Report by the Management Committee be deferred until the LDC has had an opportunity to review the results of the current initiatives and that it incorporate the findings in the FY 1976 report.

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Chairman, Language Development Committee

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APPROVED :

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Date

DISAPPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

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