

CODIB-D-82/6
1 June 1961
Limited Distribution

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD
COMMITTEE ON DOCUMENTATION

Study of USIB Information Processing Activities

1. In accordance with my statement at the last CODIB meeting, I am passing to each member a copy of my briefing note to Mr. Dulles on our proposed Community survey.

2. Feel free to use it as you think best in briefing your own superiors.



Chairman

Attachment

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF CENTRAL REFERENCE

1 June 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Study of USIB Information Processing Activities

REFERENCES:

- a. DCID 1/4: Committee on Documentation, 26 June 1959.
- b. CODIB Second Annual Report to USIB, 30 June 1960, pp. 15-18 (CODIB-AR-2, USIB-D-39.3/2).
- c. USIB-M-115, para. 5.
- d. CODIB Progress Report to USIB, 1 March 1961 (CODIB-D-73/2; USIB-D-39.5/5).
- e. USIB-M-144, para. 10.c.

ENCLOSURE: CODIB-D-82/5, 1 June 1961, subj: Terms of Reference for Study of USIB Information Processing Problems.

BACKGROUND

1. On 7 March, the USIB directed the Committee on Documentation
"to prepare a plan for conducting a study of the information processing activities of the Intelligence Community. The study should seek to establish and define long-range goals, with particular emphasis on considerations attending the use of automatic data processing and the development of compatible systems. The plan is to be submitted to the USIB for approval." (USIB-M-144, para. 10.c.)
2. In response to this directive, CODIB has prepared the attached plan. It has the unanimous approval of each member of our Committee.

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DISCUSSION

3. The action proposed under this outline plan is entirely consistent with the objectives of CODIB under its present USIB charter. While the action was initiated by CODIB, it should be noted that developments since we took the initiative have confirmed the wisdom of going ahead. The Congress is taking an increasing interest in the information processing problems of the Government (and the U.S. as a whole), the Bureau of the Budget is likewise increasingly concerned, as is the reconstituted President's Board on Foreign Intelligence Activities.

4. The present effort is also responsive to the position taken by the Joint Study Group, which saw the need for (a) bringing into balance the development of automatic data processing equipments and the techniques for effectively utilizing them; (b) a more effective coordination of major efforts to develop automatic systems to store and retrieve information; and (c) a considerable strengthening of USIB's long-range planning effort (JSG Report, pp. 125-131).

5. We have restated our individual and collective needs for this study in various parts of the proposed plan (see especially paras. 2 and 11), and have also set forth the prospective results (see paras. 27-31).

6. It would be foolhardy to mislead you by saying that this is an easy task, which can be inexpensively accomplished, and which will for certain yield impressive economies. To the contrary, the task is a difficult one, I judge

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more difficult than any study yet undertaken in the Intelligence Community.

7. Qualified people to carry out this assignment are scarce now and would be in increasing demand during the course of the survey. The survey itself will be costly in time and money, particularly when the costs of dislocation of operating personnel contacted in carrying it out.

8. As to the promise of results, these may well not fully materialize. Quantitative data is of considerable less importance than qualitative judgments in this situation. Much will depend upon how good a group can be assembled, how well they work, and how much cooperation its members are given. In this case, better no effort than a half-hearted one.

9. But we have no choice. This effort, or something like it, was needed long ago. Now it is imperative. Failing this, we can carry on as we have in the past - nibbling on the edges of our problems - but one might well conclude that it may hardly be worth the effort if past accomplishments are any guide.

RECOMMENDATION

10. That you fully support the present proposal and seek for it the full support of your colleagues on the Board.

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Assistant Director
Central Reference

cc: Assistant for Coordination, DCI
Members, CODIB
Executive Secretary, USIB
Secretary, CODIB

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