

7 January 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Henry S. Rowen
Chairman, National Intelligence Council

SUBJECT : How We Could do a Better Job (and
Obstacles to Doing so)

Products

Formal Estimates (59 last year) are the most visible. The greatest difficulty we face is in the quality of the drafters we can find. Proposals: to line up a competent drafter before getting committed to estimates and get the heads of the appropriate agencies/directorates to assign the drafters to this task. Such work also needs recognition and reward.

I also am committed to making estimates shorter and crisper (with the main exception of the major military estimates for which considerable length is inescapable). We should do more short, policy relevant, SNIEs at the expense of longer "country" papers that are not directly tied to policy issues (and that are probably not much read either).

Our record on meeting Estimates schedules is poor. We need to be more explicit about assigning priorities to estimates and more realistic in scheduling.

Our Estimates are often properly criticized for being poorly written and not presented in a lively format. We need a good Senior Editor and Director of Production, who would be supported by the existing production staff and we need help on improving our formats.

Informal Papers are mainly of two types: Contingency (warning-type) papers on potentially important events that may or may not be highly likely, and Forecasts, events that are prettly likely to happen. These papers have the important attribute that they present the NIOS view of what will -- or might -- happen, not diluted through coordination. These products are more important than is generally recognized and their production arguably should be more regularized and have more standing inside the Community.

NFIB Process: Two suggestions:

- o As we are now planning, have brief NFIB discussions of selected estimate topics while they are at an early stage in preparation.
- o Also, we should have early preparation of draft Key Judgments and circulation by you to the Principals to get their attention.

A Neglected Activity

Many NIOs have the potential for doing so, but tend not to generate ideas on information-related actions for the D0 Covert Action Staff. Someone in the NIC might be charged with promoting this activity.

Budget and Space

The NIC will have inadequate funds for consultants and travel for the rest of this FY -- because we didn't ask for enough two years ago in the budget cycle -- but FY 84 looks okay. On space, we don't have enough to house the Analytic Group at full strength and don't yet have an office for the NIO/S&T.

The Several NIO Activities and Priorities Among Them

The main activities are:

- o Support for you on current issues.
- o Oversee the production of national estimates (and prepare other products as noted above).
- o Support of consumers (which takes around 50% of the time of several NIOs).
- o Help guide collection activities.

Each NIO has worked out a division of his time that seems to best meet what you want, but maybe it isn't right in some cases. This might be an item for discussion at a meeting with them sometime soon.

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