

29 June 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: D/DCI/NI

SUBJECT : The DCI's Estimates Advisory Panel:
The Question of Public Identification

1. The following views probably run counter to current consensus on the question of identification of Panel members. These thoughts are influenced by experience with the stable of consultants regularly used to advise on National Estimates from the '50s to the early '70s. That group had many distinguished members, as well as lesser ones. It was predominantly academic, drawn mostly from the Ivy League colleges at first -- though broadened in later years. The relevant point here is that privacy was maintained virtually without exception for 20-plus years. Had it not been, it is doubtful that the group could have been recruited or kept going -- even in those days.

2. Conceding the considerable PR and other advantages of publicly declaring the establishment of a panel; conceding also the difficulties of making public the existence of a panel and then keeping some or all of its members anonymous, I nonetheless wonder whether the anonymous option is not still, on balance, the least troublesome formula.

3. This view derives chiefly from the pitfalls I see in a panel, all of whose membership is to be publicly named:

a. Some proportion of desirable candidates (I would suspect quite a few) would be pleased to have a quiet, consultant relationship with CIA but would rather forgo it than be publicly named. (This includes some who are now in consultant status.)

b. Some of those most willing to serve publicly are not the most desirable or needed types, e.g., professional patriots and status-seekers.

c. To name all names would be to excite invidious comparisons, professional jealousies, etc., among those not invited. In the cattier circles of academia, foundations, and perhaps the business-industrial world, this could cut several ways -- but

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chiefly against the Agency and those Panel members chosen to the exclusion of others.

d. Once a panel was established and members made public, it would tend to take on some attributes of a "Board of Visitors" -- its members inevitably feeling some responsibility for judgments in the estimates. This could quickly lend itself to press exploitation and other hot potatoes. On routine papers, there would be no problem, but on controversial issues, known members of a panel may be hounded by press or Congress (or Congressional staffers) on their views and their roles, etc. If Panel members agreed with key judgments, they would feel pressure to defend themselves; if they did not, they would be tempted to disassociate themselves. In either case, it's a juicy news story.

e. The above problems in turn would create others between the Panel members, on the one hand, and the DCI/NIOs. On sexy issues ("Are the Soviets going for a first strike?" or "What are the long term intentions of the Italian Communists?") the question of who was chosen from the panel to participate in the critical estimate, why X was chosen in place of Y, was the jury packed?, etc., could all produce problems among Panel members and between members and the DCI's office.

f. No one should hold out hope that the press or public will make or appreciate much of a distinction between an advisory panel oriented to analytical/estimative judgments and one with less prosaic concerns regarding intelligence.

4. Perhaps I exaggerate these fears, but I think them tolerably real, and I'm sure that some valuable potential Panel members would even more so. I therefore suggest the desirability of allowing for at least some anonymous Panel members on the following principle: to let invitees know that the existence of the Panel would be public knowledge, that some members would be chosen who are willing to be acknowledged, and that the Agency would do its best to assure others of privacy if they want it.



National Intelligence Officer
for Western Europe

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Approved For Release 2004/05/13 : CIA-RDP91M00696R000500160009-6

TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE
TO: D/DCI/NI		29 June 76
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	
REMARKS: In regard to tomorrow's meeting on the Panel System and the question of publicity, I've set down what seem to me the main talking points for the anonymous option.		
FROM: NIO/WE		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	EXTENSION

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