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Series 3
206-739

23 March 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Basic School

SUBJECT: Report on ORR Management Conference

1. This report concerns the Management Conference held at [redacted] from Monday, 27 February, through Friday, 2 March. It deals with the following aspects:

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- Origin and Preparation
- Conduct of the Conference
- Results
- Instructor's Comments
- Recommendations

2. Origin and Preparation. For approximately nine months preceding the Conference, the possibilities of intensive internal management training had been intermittently discussed by ORR representatives with Management Training. By January, 1956, Dr. Guthe, AD/RR, had discussed the proposal with his staff, and outside the Office at several levels, including that of the DD/I and the Inspector General. He was satisfied that the program was a sound risk, warranting a major expenditure of time. A firm date was requested of Management Training by ORR for late February, and after a check with the Operations School concerning the available accommodations at [redacted] the dates 27 February - 2 March were set. At the request of DD/I, one observer-participant each was sent by OSI and OCR. The other thirteen Conference participants were selected by the AD/RR and the Assistant to the A/D, [redacted] (See Tab A)

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At the first briefing of the Conference participants, Tuesday, 31 January, Dr. Guthe stated the underlying purpose of the Conference--to increase the long-term productive potential of the Office--and cautioned the group concerning certain inherent risks, among them taking the Conference for a week's lark, or on the other hand dealing in destructive personal criticism. The Chief, Management Training, briefly described the arrangements that were being laid on (see Tab B), made the initial, pre-Conference reading assignments, and told the members bluntly what security responsibility at [redacted] would be. They were not told the location, however, until the final briefing, given by [redacted] on 21 February. The last of the material to be used--student kits, charts, demonstration equipment, films, selected references on management, notebooks, and lecture material--was completed and bagged for shipment the week before the Conference.

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3. Conduct of the Conference. The business covered by the Conference is shown by the schedule (Tab C). In general, the instructional approach was to provide a basis in overt management doctrine for constructive criticism of the respective jobs which the participants are doing; to keep before the group a broad picture of management functions as a consistent, comprehensible pattern of responsibilities; to encourage them within this framework, to identify and analyze some of their fundamental, recurring problems; and, once this problem-solving approach to management problems had been established, to give the conferees full freedom to offer, exchange, and criticize ideas.

This was an extremely well-motivated, intelligent and articulate group of men. From the start they did not fight the frame of reference which had been established for the Conference, but took full advantage of the opportunity it offered to deal analytically and honestly with their problems on the job. The lectures typically turned, as had been hoped, into discussions, and discussions invariably ran longer than the allotted time. This was not entirely unexpected, and other items were dropped out of the schedule to make up time. The group worked hard and late, from ten to fifteen hours a day. An atmosphere of cheerfulness and group feeling was evidenced by good humor, scabrous limericks, and a total absence of personal bickering.

The task which required the most sustained effort was the production, during the first three days of the Conference, of four "situation estimates" each being written jointly by a committee of three or four members and each dealing with an assigned phase of management in ORR. Group writing was not a particularly efficient way to produce a paper, but it produced a great deal of thoughtful interchange among the men engaged in a given paper. The caliber and candor of these papers was high; they were regarded as sensitive from the management standpoint, and early in the week the Conference voted unanimously to have them destroyed after the critique session with which the Conference ended on Friday morning.

4. Results. The results of this kind of conference are extremely difficult to assess, but the reaction of all participants was highly favorable. For example, Dr. Guthe called it "an outstanding example of tailored training." An immediate effect was that the conferees were dead tired at the end of the week, as was the instructor. They were well pleased with the experience, so far as their critiques reflect their attitudes. (See Tab D) It is a reasonable estimate that communication and coordination in the top three echelons of the Office may be facilitated in a general way for a long time to come. It is believed that some of the Conference members made progress in solving specific management problems; some of them thought they had, and said so. The major results will have to be assessed by the A/D, however, over a period of several months. The program was aimed to provide a vehicle of communication for the management elements of the Office, and to make these elements more cohesive and more acutely conscious of their joint responsibilities. The most meaningful evidence of accomplishment in these respects will come only through actual management performance.

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5. Instructor's Comments. The major omission in the agenda of this Conference was the subject of interpersonal relations, specifically those between the supervisor and the analyst. There is not time in a one-week course to cover this subject adequately, and it was slighted in order to allow time to deal with other matters (particularly an orderly pattern of management functions, and the relationships of Branch, Division and Area personnel with their peers and superiors) with which the Conference was inherently better prepared to deal.

Advance preparation for the Conference, in spite of limited time and staff, was adequate. The Conference used something like fifty per cent of the total material which we were prepared to give them if available time and their interests had made it advisable. This is not an unreasonably generous reserve. To enable the Conference to pursue problems which specifically concern its members, the instructor must be willing to jettison some topics, and must be prepared to cope with a very considerable range of alternatives which may come up for discussion.

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The support for the Conference was more than adequate; it clicked at every point. From [redacted] briefing right on through to the return plane trip, the support arrangements were most effective. The staff at [redacted] was extremely helpful in every phase of the arrangements, both in the routine of checking in and out and in extras like providing a thermos jug of coffee for the group at mid-morning. [redacted] personal concern for the success of this venture was evident at many points. He gave the Conference the use of his own staff's conference room for a week, briefed the group on the operational training program, and arranged a tour [redacted] at their request. They acquired, as an incident to the Conference, enhanced respect for what is regularly being done [redacted] by the Office of Training.

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Security, a risk which had particularly concerned the D/TR, was well kept: no security violations were observed.

6. Recommendations.

- a. As far as the program of the Conference is concerned, no drastic changes are recommended in any future presentations such as the Conference now being requested by OSI in May. Shifts in emphasis on specific topics, as required, can be accommodated within the framework developed for this Conference.
- b. Use of a non-Headquarters site like [redacted] is essential to success in this kind of training activity.

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Chief, Management Training

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NOTES ON ORR MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

1. **What the Conference is:** A full-time 5-day conference of selected ORR officials, Staff and Division Chiefs through Assistant Director levels, dealing with typical management problems and management measures. Such a program was proposed several months ago by ORR, and a preliminary outline was developed for ORR consideration by OTR. After study and modification, the program has been adopted for a trial by the Assistant Director for Research and Reports, with the endorsement of the Deputy Director for Intelligence.

2. **The purpose of the Conference:** To provide time and favorable circumstances in which the group of supervisory officers in ORR can give thought, individually and in exchange with others, to the management responsibilities which to a degree they share in common: accomplishments, problems and prospects.

3. **When the Conference is to be held:** 27 February - 2 March, inclusive. The meetings are to be held away from Washington, but no travel time will be required before Monday morning, and, barring foul weather, none will be required after 1700 Friday afternoon. Full time, including evening work, will be called for from each participant.



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5. What participants will be called on to do: Essentially, to put assignments on the job into perspective as management problems. This can be done only by the individual participant for his own job, but the Conference will provide certain exercises and stimulation, among them:

- a. Advance reading. Slightly less than 600 pages of general background reading are strongly urged for all participants. Book sets are being made available to participants.
- b. Lectures. Four to six hours of Conference time will be devoted to lectures covering one or another phase of the theory of public administration.
- c. Supplementary reading. A kit, issued to each member of the Conference, will contain a sampling of current management periodical literature.
- d. Exchange of ideas in discussions. Case histories, reading, and supervisory problems will furnish the basis for the exchange of ideas and/or prejudices concerning management problems.
- e. Preparation of study paper estimating the present situation in ORR with respect to a particular aspect of management.

Total reading time required before the Conference is approximately 12-15 hours for an average reader, correspondingly less for a rapid reader. There will be relatively little free time during the week of the Conference. Discussion and reading can be counted on to fill most of the unscheduled periods.

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