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9 January 1956

SUBJECT: Review of Existing Provisions for The Development and Coordination of Information Requirements and Collection Tasks in Implementation of DCID 4/5

REFERENCE: IAC-D-50/5, 20 January 1955

1. You requested that in consultation with the representative of the other agencies I undertake a review of the existing provisions for the development and coordination of information requirements and collection tasks in conformity with established Priority National Intelligence Objectives.

2. While there are many details which bear upon this subject matter, the following are major factors which help us to put this problem in perspective:

a. Priority National Intelligence Objectives DCID 4/5 have been approved by the IAC. They indicate the fundamental direction which our intelligence efforts should take in regard to national security.

b. In many cases departmental objectives which arise from departmental needs are coincident with the priority objectives, though, of course, not in all cases.

c. The IAC now has a well-established procedure for the approval and review of annual and quarterly programs for the production of National Intelligence Estimates, provision being made for flexibility to meet the changing and urgent needs of the National Security Council. Gaps in intelligence in NIE's are highlighted thru the post-mortem procedure.

d. Some mechanisms already exist, such as the Economic Intelligence Committee and the Scientific Estimates Committee, which make it possible to develop coordinated research programs on subjects required to support the estimating program or other security programs of interest to more than one department and in some cases mainly relevant to a single department. These coordinated research programs also provide collection guides where necessary. In other areas of intelligence, such as political, telecommunications/electro-magnetic warfare and guided missiles, similar coordinating mechanisms do not exist and the feasibility of establishing such has not yet been examined, except in the field of guided missiles which, as you know, is now under consideration. In addition, it should be recalled that each of the intelligence producing units among the IAC agencies has a research program designed to fulfill its various responsibilities to community or national programs as well as departmental needs.

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3. It is reasonable to inquire whether there is a need for greater central direction or coordination and more detailed accounting in the deployment of research resources in respect to Priority National Objectives. I do not believe so, except as special problems arise. In such cases we should deal with them as nec essary. Furthermore, I believe no new overall machinery is required in the coordination of research for the purpose of providing better guidance for the collection of intelligence information.

4. Associated with each research office in the intelligence agencies and centrally for each agency there are well established units with quite similar procedures for acquiring the raw data and intelligence information which the intelligence producers need by levying requirements on appropriate reference or collection facilities. "Requirements" officers are in a sense middle men who are essential because of the size of our research organization and our collection organizations as well as their remoteness from one another. The requirements officers must understand the needs of research, the resources available and problems of collection. Their objectives are to provide a clear request to the collector for intelligence information needed for research, to guard against duplication and to work out proper priorities with the collectors. There is not complete assurance that the coordination among requirements officers of the various intelligence agencies is as effective as it might be or that the coordination between requirements officers and representatives of collection facilities is the most effective possible. It should also be noted that collectors collect information which they have not been specifically requested to obtain, some of which when disseminated may give rise to requests for additional collection along the same lines. A fuller description of the coordination of requirements is submitted as TAB A.

5. I have discussed this matter with the IAC representatives concerned at some length. After consultation with the heads of their agencies they advise me:

a. That their respective agency's requirements are responsive to DCID 4/5 although, of course, their responsibilities also include requirements not covered by that Directive.

b. That in their view the existing arrangements for the coordination of requirements, where necessary among the agencies, are adequate, and,

c. That, in their opinion, no new overall coordination mechanism or procedures are required.

6. In these discussions it was recognized that there are specific programs in which every effort is made to base the coordination of guidance upon DCID 4/5, such as the SEC/JAEIC program, the Interagency Priorities Committee for Clandestine Collection and the USCIB program. It was recognized also that individual collection administrators are plagued from time to time with shortages of funds and personnel, the need for arbitration of conflicting demands on limited resources and other weaknesses. Many questions remain unanswered concerning the steps taken by collection facilities in implementation of DCID 4/5, particularly with respect to the extent and effectiveness of coordination among the major collection facilities.

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7. Another aspect of improvement in collection is the coordination of assets available to the US missions abroad as they proceed to act on the requirements served from Washington Headquarters. A review of reports from the Chiefs of Mission to the Department of State indicate that coordination in the field is generally effective and that systematic efforts are being made for improvement.

8. In the context of DCID 4/5, certain conclusions can be drawn from the examination made to date on this matter:

a. It is not possible to judge whether the Priority National Intelligence Objectives have been translated into terms that are meaningful to and can be used effectively by the collection agencies.

b. There is not sufficient evidence available to judge whether coordination among collection agencies is the most effective possible

c. There is doubt as to whether coordination between requirements functions and the collection functions is as effective as it might be.

d. Some segments of the intelligence community have made progress in the coordination of requirements and the assignment of collection tasks.

e. It is necessary to inquire further whether there is a need for greater central direction and coordination in the development of information requirements and the allocation of collection tasks in implementation of DCID 4/5.

Recommendations:

in terms of DCID 4/5,

9. In view of the critical importance of the end product which results from requirements and collection activities, it is essential that such weaknesses as do exist in these programs be remedied immediately. It is therefore recommended that the DCI direct the Special Assistant for Planning and Coordination to conduct, on a continuing full-time basis, an intensive examination into the nature and scope of coordination in the fields of requirements and collection and to make recommendations in connection therewith.

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