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Approved For Release 2005/01/27 : CIA-RDP64-00046R000100160009-5

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : Inspector General
SUBJECT : Survey of CIA Briefing and Debriefing Systems

A. BRIEFING

1. The Agency's briefing functions have been examined for the purpose of determining the validity of the generally expressed dissatisfaction with the manner in which they are being performed. The term "briefing," as used in this report, is defined as the act of imparting classified information concerning CIA, its activities and the product or result of those activities to persons other than staff members of the Agency. This report does not consider such related programs as the orientation of new employees, the indoctrination or re-indoctrination of staff members, and the briefing of dependents of overseas personnel. This review has been limited to briefings conducted in Washington headquarters and does not include consideration of briefing activities performed in the domestic or foreign field.

2. The imparting of information concerning the Agency and its activities is a daily occurrence which takes many forms. It may be a formal presentation of substantive intelligence to a government body, the indoctrination of government officials whose duties are related to the Agency, the deliberate disclosure of information concerning clandestine activities to those who need to know, or the informal conversations with outsiders who can be of service to the Agency. This activity, commonly called briefing, is participated in or conducted by the components of all three major areas of the Agency and the Office of the DCI, and its extent is practically immeasurable. No uniform, Agency-wide procedures have been established which are applicable to all types of briefings and no authoritative statement of over-all Agency policy on this subject has been issued.

3. For the purposes of this review, Agency briefings have been placed in two broad categories: (1) those which are given with some degree of regularity to organized groups participating in intelligence activities or which have an interest in Agency affairs, and (2) those given on a personal basis to individuals having a potential for usefulness to the Agency. The first category includes the presentations given to the President, the NSC, OCB, the White House Staff and the IAC and USCIB and their sub-committees. These are usually substantive or operational in subject matter and are conducted separately or jointly by components of the DD/I and DD/P. Also included are the lecture courses on intelligence subjects given by the Office of Training to military schools such as the Naval Intelligence School, Strategic Intelligence School, the Armored School and the Air Command and Staff College. Special briefings have been conducted by the DD/P for the Doolittle Committee and by all components of the Agency for the Clark Task Force. Briefings are also given to government agencies which are not primarily

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concerned with intelligence activities but which are involved in Agency affairs such as the Bureau of Budget, Civil Service Commission, Bureau of Employees' Compensation and, on occasion, to the Departments of Treasury and Justice. In addition, some presentations have been made by the Office of Training to non-governmental organizations which have included the Political Study Group of Washington, Fordham University and the Armed Forces Chemical Association.

4. Responsibility for organized group briefings within the Agency is divided. The DCI conducts the briefings of the President and the NSC. Current intelligence briefings such as those given the White House Staff are the responsibility of OCI. Other components of the DD/I area are responsible for conducting or contributing to substantive briefings of IAC sub-committees. Representatives of the DD/P elements have responsibility for conducting or participating in briefings that concern clandestine activities or covert operations and DD/S components are principally responsible for briefings given to such organizations as Bureau of the Budget and BEC. The only responsibility assigned by regulatory issuance is that of briefing outgoing military attaches by OTR which is contained in

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5. In general, organized group briefings are handled in a satisfactory manner. Those which are regularly scheduled have developed established procedures over a period of years and their performance is accepted as a matter of course. Others are usually scheduled sufficiently far in advance to permit adequate planning and programing, and coordination is effected by the component having the major interest in the briefing. Although minor differences may occur, the absence of authoritatively assigned, centralized responsibility does not impair the competent performance of the group briefing function.

6. Unfortunately, this is not true of the second category, the personal briefing of individuals. A large number of persons, both government employees and civilians, are given classified information on the aims and activities of CIA. Among these are:

- a. Personnel of other departments and agencies of the Government stationed in Washington who are required to deal with the Agency in the performance of their normal duties;
- b. Officials of State and Defense Departments and other government offices assigned to duty overseas;
- c. Legislators involved in Agency affairs;
- d. Traveling U. S. officials from Executive and Legislative Branches;
- e. Private citizens capable of providing information of intelligence value or support to Agency operations; and
- f. Officials of foreign governments on duty or visiting in Washington.

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7. Individual briefings cover a wide variety of subjects and usually must be tailor-made to meet a specific purpose. The Clandestine Services have attempted to standardize the briefings which they conduct by means of prescribed outlines contained in [redacted]. One outline pertains to service attaches and other service personnel and another is appropriate for Ambassadors, Chiefs of Foreign Missions and principal officers of State, Defense, and other agencies. This instruction designates the PFC Staff as the focal point for coordination of briefings within the DD/P but makes no provision for over-all Agency coordination. The outlines are useful to establish a pattern of briefings in a limited field but it would be impractical to try to develop a standardized formula which could be applied to all occasions. Each briefing must be designed to obtain the maximum usefulness from the individual for all the Agency and not just one segment.

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8. The Agency's current method of briefing individuals is lacking in direction and control. Arrangements for briefings are made in many parts of the Agency and, too frequently, without reference to or concern for the interests and needs of other components. The Office of Central Reference is notified by the Departments of State and Defense of outgoing service attaches and Foreign Service officers. These notices are circulated throughout the Agency and if sufficient interest is generated in any individual a briefing is arranged. OCR makes no effort to determine who should be briefed nor to what extent. It is a passive form of direction in which the initiative is circulated along with the notices. Any component which has an interest in briefing an outgoing government official then proceeds on its own and no active or effective coordination is accomplished. The Office of Training gives orientation lectures to military attaches at the Strategic Intelligence School but does not participate in the particularized briefings conducted by other offices. OCR, for example, briefs groups of military attaches in the functions of their Biographic, Industrial and Graphics Registers and makes all arrangements with the SIS direct. The responsibility for briefing Foreign Service economic reporting officers has been unofficially assigned to OCR and for scientific aspects to OSI. But over-all responsibility for all briefings has not been fixed.

9. As a result of this lack of direction and control the Agency is not getting the full benefit of the services available to it. Insufficient attention is given to the potential for usefulness to the Agency of other government officials and even when the potential is recognized it is seldom developed to its fullest extent. There is a lack of aggressiveness in seeking out individuals, government or non-government, who are in a position to advance the accomplishment of the Agency's mission. An added deficiency in the present method of briefing is the danger of divulging too much information about Agency activities. Broad programs given to groups of persons will invariably include subjects which are not pertinent to the needs of individuals and will result in the unproductive and unnecessary disclosure of classified information.

10. No accurate statistics are available of the number of individual briefings performed within the Agency annually. The PFC Staff, DD/P, has reported that during calendar year 1954 they conducted or coordinated a total of 215 briefings of non-CIA, U. S. governmental personnel alone. This does not include briefings performed by other Agency components which did not

require coordination with the DD/P nor does it include briefings of non-governmental individuals. Incomplete statistics for 1955 indicate an even larger number of briefings were conducted and it is anticipated that the total will be higher in 1956. Many of them were of the "high_level" variety for high ranking military officers, Ambassadors and other members of the Diplomatic Corps, Members of Congress, Directors of government agencies and even the Vice President. All of them were of sufficient importance to the Agency to warrant the most careful attention.

11. The Agency lacks a central facility having responsibility and authority to develop and direct a sound briefing program. Such facility is necessary to ensure that the Agency makes the best use of persons who are in a position to further its mission. Personal briefings must be carefully planned so that the individual receives the thorough and accurate indoctrination he needs to permit him to act effectively and at the same time guard against the disclosure of more information than he needs to know. Programing must be performed efficiently so that the briefings are conducted smoothly with the appropriate people in attendance. Coordination between Agency components must be accomplished effectively so that their best interests are served. There are many people in the Agency, expert in their fields, who are capable of imparting their knowledge proficiently. The need is for a centralization of responsibility and authority in a single place where the personal briefing function can be managed and controlled. A competent manager is required rather than a substantive expert. It should be his responsibility to determine who should be briefed; plan the briefings to meet the needs of each individual case; program and schedule them efficiently; and have sufficient authority to effect the necessary coordination between the major areas of the Agency. He will be responsible for conducting all personal briefings but will draw on all appropriate components for the needed substantive and operational competence.

12. Briefing is an Agency-wide function which transcends the interests or responsibilities of any one component or area. The need to effect coordination between elements of the Agency under the command of the three Deputy Directors and the authority to draw upon the Agency's best resources dictates that the function be performed at the level of the Office of the DCI. An added factor in favor of this determination is the large number of briefings of high level government officials in which the DCI or HDCI participate. The Agency officer to whom this responsibility is assigned should be at least in grade GS-15, have a broad knowledge of the Agency's activities and interests, and possess a high degree of managerial skill. The performance of the briefing function should not be assigned a subordinate position within an operating or producing component because unhappy experience has demonstrated that Agency-wide coordination cannot be accomplished effectively at the level of a component of one of the major areas.

B. DEBRIEFING

1. The term "debriefing" is freely and rather loosely used throughout the intelligence community as the antonym of "briefing," i.e., the removing or extracting of information as opposed to the imparting or divulging of information. In this report, it is used to describe the act of extracting

information of intelligence value by interview and interrogation from individuals who have knowledge of subjects of interest to the Agency.

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2. This function is now being performed in much the same manner as the function of briefing described in the first section of this report. Agency Regulation [] enunciates the policy of debriefing returning government officials whose experiences abroad have provided them with information or opinion useful to intelligence and assigns responsibility for the arrangement of debriefings to OCR. Through its Liaison Division, OCR obtains notification of the return to Washington of the overseas personnel of other agencies of the Government. This information is passed to OCI, ORR, OSI, and OBI in the DD/I area and to RQM/OIS in the DD/P area. In addition, the Office of the DCI is notified of the return of Ambassadors. If any of these components express an interest in an individual, a debriefing session is arranged through the liaison facilities of OCR. This is the usual procedure, although at times the regular liaison channels of OCR are avoided and direct arrangements are made by the interested component of the Agency. Elements of the DD/P area frequently prefer to conduct their own debriefings particularly if subjects of operational interest are to be discussed. If a private citizen is to be debriefed, the arrangements are usually made by Contact Division, OO. The responsibility for conducting the debriefing rests with the office which has expressed the major interest in the individual. The initiative for bringing about a debriefing is supplied by an office having well defined but specialized interests rather than a centralized authority responsible for attending to all the interests of the Agency.

3. Those debriefings which are arranged by this method are frequently conducted in an unsatisfactory manner. The debriefing of a prominent official may be attended by a large number of persons many of whom are motivated more by curiosity than an interest in his intelligence potential. A large audience at a debriefing is unmanageable. Questions are asked at random and subject matter changes with confusing rapidity. Invariably one questioner will dominate the interview, consuming much of the allotted time in the relentless pursuit of a topic of very narrow interest and effectively preventing the full exploitation of the source. To produce the best results debriefings must be conducted on a personal basis with only intelligence officers having related interests in attendance.

4. Poor results are also caused by inexperienced intelligence officers who are incapable of conducting a debriefing in a professional manner. An inept interrogator who has not properly prepared himself for the interview cannot help but fail to achieve his purpose. Efforts are often made to use intelligence requirements which are inappropriate to the competence of the source and he finds himself unable to answer the questions put to him but thoroughly capable of answering questions which are not asked. Only intelligence officers who are experienced in interrogation as well as expert in substantive matters should participate in debriefings.

5. Not all returning government officials are suitable for debriefing. Many engage in activities in areas where the Agency's knowledge is sufficiently complete and little or nothing could be gained by their debriefing. Others

might be deficient in background or training so that their competence would be questionable. Some are unapproachable for security reasons. Returning officials must be selected by a careful analysis of their potential to produce information of value to the Agency and it must be done with all of the Agency's interests in mind. However, high-level government officials should always be debriefed if only for the public relations benefits to be gained.

6. The Agency's debriefing function suffers from the same lack of direction and control which applies to the briefing function. The absence of a centralized authority having responsibility for developing and directing a debriefing program has resulted in the inadequate and often incompetent performance of this function. The two functions of briefing and debriefing are so similar in nature and so closely related that they could be performed best under a single administrative authority. It would provide the continuity necessary to ensure that those who are briefed are also debriefed.

7. The responsibility for the briefing and debriefing of non-governmental individuals has been assumed by Contact Division, OO, as a part of their function of the "collection of foreign intelligence information within the United States from selected business and other non-governmental organizations, unaffiliated individuals and aliens" as assigned by [redacted] Occasionally, OO/C brings non-governmental individuals of unusual competence or potential to Washington Headquarters for briefing or debriefing. The arrangements are made by OO/C with other Offices or components usually supplying the appropriate substantive competence. Ideally these functions should be combined with the briefing and debriefing of governmental individuals to complete the centralization of authority and responsibility. It is considered inadvisable to effect such a consolidation at this time, pending the completion of the IG surveys of OO and OCR. Those surveys may indicate the desirability of consolidating governmental and non-governmental exploitation by revising NSCID-7 and reorganizing internally. It would be better at this time to limit the responsibilities of the central administrative authority to governmental individuals until such time as it has demonstrated the capacity to assume added functions.

8. It is recommended that:

a. The regular and well-established briefings of organized elements of the Government continue to be conducted as at present;

b. There be established a central authority responsible for the development, direction, and supervision of a sound Agency program for the combined functions of the personal briefing and debriefing of government individuals;

c. For this purpose, there be established the position of CIA Briefing and Debriefing Officer in the Office of the DCI; and

d. An authoritative statement of over-all Agency policy on briefing and debriefing be published. (Proposed statement of policy attached as Tab "A")

Lyman B. Kirkpatrick
Inspector General

Recommendations contained in paragraph B. D. are approved.

Allen W. Dulles
Director of Central Intelligence

Concur

DD/I
on assumption that Tab A remains
subject to further study as to details.

Concur subject to further study of details
of proposed Regulation.

SIGNED

MAR 21 1956

Assistant Deputy Director (Support)

Concur in principle, subject to
further consideration and coordination of
the details of the proposed Regulations.

R. Michael Helms
RMI

DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)