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30 August 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Inspector General

SUBJECT : Proposed Approach to OER Survey

1. It is still some time before we will get at the OER survey, but it is worth while to record some preliminary views on how to proceed. This memorandum is for that purpose.

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2. There are [] people in OER. Two inspectors should be able to handle it fairly expeditiously, depending on the approach that they take. [] and I have discussed this in general terms and there are certain things that we think we can try.

3. It is unlikely that we will find any serious personnel problems in OER. There may be some complaints that present management is impersonal, with the promotion to the top of professional economists who may be more in the mold of the analyst than the manager. If this is the case it is doubtful that it will pose a serious problem. The office has a high professional standard and should be fairly stable. With this thought in mind we believe that we can devise more of a program of sampling interviews, than one of interviewing everyone in depth. We could announce our plan in advance and circulate a notice on our readiness to interview personnel who might otherwise be missed, and who want to talk to us. We can probably handle the survey by talking to no more than half the officer personnel.

4. Areas on which we can concentrate suggest a further possible method of limiting the scope of the survey. These are listed below:

a. Requirements. How are requirements developed and handled.

(1) How are they validated.

(2) How does the office plan the balance of its program between current reporting and policy support and the more tedious and long-range research on basic economic problems.

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- (3) What steps has OER taken in formulating collection requirements on economic reporting.
- b. Validation of findings. What procedures are established for reviewing conclusions, determining the accuracy of reports, and benefiting from this review.
- c. Validation of usefulness.
 - (1) What steps are taken to verify that reports are in fact "on target" and useful to the components for whom they are intended.
 - (2) What relation is there between dissemination of final reports and their intended use.
- d. Controversial issues. What steps are taken to review the findings on subjects relating to controversial public issues.
- e. Professional standards. What program is there in the office for acquiring new blood and for advancing the professional qualifications of personnel already on board.

5. It may be that in our first interview with the DDI he will add to our list of subjects. The inspection may produce some additional ones. We obviously will want to be able to speak on the organization of OER to accomplish its mission, but we will develop an appreciation of that through our general interviews. By and large this should insure that we cover the essential issues without bogging down in a number of collateral questions. It is an approach that strikes me as being particularly suitable for this office.

[Redacted Signature Box]

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