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29 October 1958

7/22 (Thought on Interviewing
TOB)

Ed:

Our lunch of yesterday, in addition to pleasantly nourishing my physical and social being, provided food for thought.

The problems raised by your proposal with reference to the CSO go quite aways beyond the issue of whether or not the A&E Staff will have its Friday afternoon. Some pretty fundamental problems of role and coordination get involved.

Let's take the clearly practical side first. As matters stand now, there are at least three kinds of people who might be interviewing the JOT's during the two weeks they are in the CSO. Your plans contemplate interviewing everyone of them at least once. If I understood you correctly, you are thinking of getting a second interview during the week following the course. The JOT office personnel will certainly be talking to these students during this week, and very likely during the preceeding two weeks. The A&E Staff represent the third source of interviewers. While, in principle, there is nothing wrong with multiple interviews, provided they are extremely closely coordinated, the short time span here leads me to believe that the net result will be confusion in the minds of the JOT's and greater uncertainty concerning the meaning of what the JOT's are reporting. Further, as a purely practical matter, the full report of training preceeding the CSO will not be in CSO instructors' hands until the course is half over.

In terms of the entire program, my understanding of the roles to be played by the A&E Staff, the Schools, and the JOTP office are as follows:

- a. The A&E Staff will be responsible for the assessment of the JOT's, not as a short-range proposition, but as a continuous one running throughout the program. This Staff would also serve as the means of coordinating the information that was being received from the instructors to the end that a final report containing recommendations might be given to C/JOTP in time for his office to make the necessary decisions during the week following the CSO.

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b. The role of the schools was to (1) provide the JOT with knowledge which would help him make a decision in his own best interests, and in addition, provide, through the A&E mechanism, observations which might be relevant to the final decision C/JOTP must make. The A&E role was implemented at the outset of the program by providing a maximum of two days for making its followups after initial assessment. The Staff is using but one of these days, the final half day being planned midway in the CSO. The reason for picking this time was that it was the latest time that would permit a report to C/JOTP at the beginning of the break.

This conception is clearly and basically different from yours, at least as I understand it. It has implications for the specific role each person plays in his contact with JOT's. It has implications for the kind and amount of material that should be available at certain times in the program. What is wanted is a maximum number of independent judgments and a minimum amount of confusion to the JOT's. Some of the questions which concern me are:

a. The danger that some highly gifted individuals, and who are most appropriately placed on the DD/I side, will consider themselves second-class citizens. The A&E Staff has taken the position with the JOT's that its role is to help them find the best possible placement for each one of them within the limitations imposed by the number that can go to the DD/P, that in its advisory role to the C/JOTP, the A&E Staff would make its recommendation with this principle in mind.

b. The danger of confusion brought about by well-nigh simultaneous interviewing covering much the same ground. Without extremely careful coordination among the three offices concerned, this can lead to erroneous evaluation of the information received.

A major point in the A&E conception of the program was, that as training and assessment progressed, decisions would become clear for more and more people, and that towards the end of the program there would remain very few about whom there was serious question, either in my Staff's mind, or in the mind of the C/JOTP. The questions concerning these few would be decided by how they reacted to the material presented in the CSO. I should hasten to add that my feeling that there would be few concerning whom there were questions by the time they reached the CSO is not based

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on any feeling that the material to be presented is not a highly important part of the program. It is based rather on the belief that those suited for the DD/I will have been already identified, and that those clearly unsuitable for the DD/P will also have been identified. The large majority will work through their own problems of adjustment as they hear the material in the CSO, and proceed to the DD/P much in the way the vast majority of those who have taken preceding Operations Courses have.

While this note clarifies, I think, the sources of my feeling of confusion at the moment, it does, I believe, clearly point to the necessity of getting some basic decisions from the Director of Training, or rather in my view, finding out whether there are to be changes in basic decisions that were made at the outset. I'm planning, therefore, to take this problem up with Matt so that all of us can then bend our efforts to making the program a success.



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