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26 Oct 67

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of COINS Committee Meeting of 20 Oct 1967

1. The COINS Committee met at NPIC on 20 Oct 1967. A list of those attending is inclosed.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. [redacted] DIA COINS Committee member is leaving DIA, and appointment of a successor is still under consideration. [redacted] will probably act as principal DIA COINS Representative until a permanent representative is named.

4. The principal purpose of this meeting was to conduct a survey of users information retrieval methods and languages being developed by the different COINS agencies for internal use; and to discuss various approaches to providing increased COINS information retrieval capability by the employment of a user oriented computer language. Dr. Lawrence Roberts of the DOD Advanced Research Projects Agency, a recognized authority in computer sciences was invited to attend the meeting to offer any assistance he can to aid the COINS Committee in its consideration of the user language problem. Also attending the meeting was Dr. John Egan, Staff Asst., Office of Special Asst. (Natl. Intel.) Director Defense R&E, Off of Sec. of Defense.

a. [redacted] briefed the group on DIA formatted file retrieval language. [redacted] presented the CIA language TORQUE, and [redacted] presented the NSA TILE language.

b. One factor common to all of the retrieval languages described was the necessity for users knowledge of the existence of specific files and names for interrogation, file structure and content, date level, etc.

c. Dr. Roberts presented a brief description of a nationwide computer network sponsored by ARPA which will link together many diverse, multiple access computer systems of independent agencies and universities engaged in research. Some of the potential uses of this network are:

- (1) Access to a language or computer utility not available locally.
- (2) Remote use of a large program eliminating local reprogramming.
- (3) Remote bulk computing power for a local machine which provides interactive input and presentation.
- (4) A centralized program library with directory service and documentation storage.

Dr. Roberts has been involved in many of the same problems being faced by the COINS Committee. Among these are the user language problem and providing for multi-level security. Dr. Roberts expressed the opinion that development of a common COINS users language was not practical at this time.

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d. CONCLUSIONS: From the various presentations and discussions some conclusions can be drawn.

(1) There is a need for a computer assisted instruction (CAI) capability to be included in each of the participating systems which at a minimum permits COINS users to request the following information.

(a) A list of files available for interrogation in a specified system (e.g., at DIA).

(b) A list of elements of information in a specified file

(c) A list of files in which specific data elements or data element sets are included (e.g., Soviet surname) and the agency system in which they are included.

(d) A list of "canned" interrogations that can be used against a specific file or set of files.

(e) A description of information in specified fields.

1 Finite list of data items (e.g., Soviet military rank abbreviations)

2 Recording conventions when no such finite list exists.

(2) Initially in COINS, data retrieval can be accomplished by the use of sets of "canned" interrogations.

(3) For those desiring greater retrieval capability, individual COINS agency retrieval languages can be learned and applied.

(4) A limited COINS common language capability should be made available to permit users to:

(a) Specify file or files

(b) Specify limited search criteria using simple Boolean and, or, not expressions

(c) Select all applicable records from specified files and move to the local system for follow on processing using local language.

(5) At a future date possibly develop translator systems.

5. The next COINS Committee meeting was scheduled for Friday, 3 Nov at NSA.

[Redacted Signature]

Executive Secretary  
COINS Committee

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