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CHIVE/C-99-66  
29 April 1966

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Central Reference**  
**SUBJECT : CODIB Task Team V Report**  
**(Biographics)**

In response to your request, the following are some of my views on the position to be taken with regard to the CODIB Task Team V paper on Biographics:

1. I agree with the CODIB Support Staff's recommendation that the report should not be forwarded to USIB. My reason would be not so much any concern that the Task Team failed to carry out its USIB-assigned responsibility, since the injunction "to develop a biographic intelligence processing plan" is relatively nebulous, but rather because the Task Team failed to make sufficiently meaningful recommendations to warrant USIB action. Recommendations 1-4 are deficient since they do not demand action but simply request the various agencies "to continue to strive for," "study the feasibility of," "consider the approach to," etc. The remaining recommendations are either more of the "getting to know you" type (i.e., 5, 6, 9) or are so loosely formulated that they raise more questions than they resolve (7, 8).

2. I would also agree with the majority of the criticisms made in the attachment to the CODIB Support Staff's memo CSS/MM-76. There seems little doubt that the Task Team failed to accomplish the goals set forth in its terms of reference as defined in Annex 6 of the Team Report.

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3. As to what course of action should be taken assuming the Task Team report is rejected, I would, first of all, counsel against any follow-on activity that is not directed at some concrete, realizable goals. And by "realizable" I mean both politically as well as technically. For this reason, I would not support Gagon's proposal to establish a task group to work in the positive intelligence biographic area since he apparently has no specific concept in mind as to how the existing system might be improved. If, indeed, he has such a concept, I would still take no action unless the plan not only makes sense but there is some reasonable prospect that parochial interests will be surrendered to the larger good, if such be required in order to accomplish the objective sought. Certainly, his proposal, as presently stated, that is, "to describe adequately the present positive intelligence biographic systems" and to use this as the "basis for making recommendations for improvement," fails to meet any of the tests I have in mind.

4. Actually, there would appear to be few ways in which the positive biographic intelligence picture could presently be improved. Complete centralization is probably not only politically unfeasible, but likely to increase communication and response time without the establishment of appropriate communication networks including facsimile transmission, etc. Other potential improvements, such as the adoption of common record formats, vocabularies, etc., would be relatively meaningless until the extant systems are automated. Minor changes could be effected now which would help things somewhat, but direct contact between the systems concerned could accomplish these as well as any formal task team effort. Consequently, I would not recommend any immediate CODIB activity in the PI biographic area.

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5. If action is to be taken, I would recommend that it concentrate in the CI world. Here, there are not only more substantial and pressing problems, but practical solutions which are realizable given an attitude of goodwill. Of great significance is the fact that many of these systems are nearing full automation which emphasizes the need to standardize if the inherent advantages of the new machine capabilities are to be realized. Technically, there is no reason at all why telecommunication links could not be established between these file systems, why common record formats could not be agreed upon, a standard name check form devised, etc. Only the lack of any overriding command authority stands in the way of real progress, and yet, without such, or a commitment on the part of the agencies concerned to accept the recommendations of a study team, there is little point in launching another study.

[Redacted]

Chief  
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