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4 March 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: John N. McMahon
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Requirements Process

1. An examination of our requirements process reveals that technology drives the process in the imagery and SIGINT areas and demands fairly structured, clear-cut systems. These systems have been refined over the years and are working well. Some education is needed to ensure that all analysts know how to exploit the intelligence tools available to them. The recent DDI reorganization and our hoped-for influx of new analysts make this all the more necessary. The HUMINT requirement process is less structured and somewhat amorphous, but the very nature of the business makes a clear-cut mechanism unrealistic. We have identified areas needing improvement, and we will continue to chip away at them. For the most part, however, we realize these improvements will come at the margin.

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2. PHOTINT. The imagery requirements process that has evolved over the years enables us to focus the finite capabilities of our technical collection systems on our most important intelligence needs. COMIREX (Committee on Imagery Requirements and Exploitation), in consultation with its member agencies, develops an Intelligence Community-approved set of standing search and surveillance imagery requirements that are under constant review and revision. DDI, DDO and DDS&T officers also develop requirements, both for aircraft and satellites, based on day-to-day intelligence and operational needs and crisis situations. They forward these requirements to component photo liaison officers, who in turn, pass them to the DDI Imagery Tasking Center, which operates around the clock. As they do for all requirements, DDI ensures the information being requested is not already available and that the appropriate collection system is being tapped. After this screening, the requirements are forwarded to the Ground Station. There, Community representatives daily review both standing and ad hoc requirements, refine them, determine priorities, and forward them through the COMIREX machinery to the technical system operators for implementation. This process provides close interaction between the analysts and the collectors, validation and integration of requirements according to priorities, and quick responses when required. In general, it works well.

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3. Given the long lead times necessary to develop new technical collection systems, DDI and DDS&T also focus on gearing up for long-range requirements. DDI elicits from the analysts their projected long-range requirements that

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might call for developing new technical collection systems or techniques. Such requirements are then presented to the DDS&T for factoring into R&D designs. Through this interaction, DDS&T manages to remain responsive in developing systems to satisfy long-range analytical collection requirements.

[REDACTED]

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4. The imagery requirement process could be finetuned somewhat by an aggressive education campaign to ensure that all analysts are aware of how the system works and exploit it to help them produce better intelligence. The DDI is aware of this need and has already developed an in-house training course to familiarize new analysts with the imagery process.

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5. SIGINT. The SIGINT requirement system is also well structured. At the Community level, your SIGINT Committee, in consultation with member organizations, develops the NSRL (National SIGINT Requirements List). This is reviewed and revised regularly. This same SIGINT structure develops your ten-year SIGINT Guidance, which produces a prioritized set of SIGINT goals for the next five years to enable system developers to be responsive to projected long-term requirements.

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6. On the day-to-day front, DDI again screens requirements provided by analysts. These are reviewed by the DDI member of SIRVES (the DCI's SIGINT Requirements Validation and Evaluation Subcommittee), who then forwards them as appropriate to NSA, the program manager, for implementation. NSA reviews all collection assets available [REDACTED] and is the final arbiter regarding priority and implementation. When overhead collection systems are involved, DDI forwards the analysts' screened requirements to [REDACTED] which reviews them and forwards them to NSA. NSA again determines the appropriate priorities and trade-offs for implementation.

[REDACTED]

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7. Presently, the SIGINT requirements process is effective. Again, the DDI is aware that some analyst education is required to ensure it is exploited to the fullest.

[REDACTED]

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8. HUMINT. The dynamics and human factors that come into play in our HUMINT effort work against a streamlined, orderly requirements process. Two parallel mechanisms actually exist, a formal system and an informal one. At the national level is the formal one, NFIB approved DCID 1/2 priorities, National Intelligence Topics, and the Department of State's priority country list provide the framework from which Community HUMINT requirements are derived. The IC Staff Office of HUMINT Collection initiates national HUMINT collection plans based on the above national guidance.

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Some skepticism exists in the Agency regarding the utility of these plans, particularly since it would not be wise to identify in such a plan specifically where we have good sources.

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9. Internally, analysts forward their human source requirements to DDI Area Requirements officers. The latter ensure the requirements are valid, assist the analysts in refining them, ensure that the right collection machinery is tapped, and assign priorities. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] They are also maintained in a computer file, which facilitates regular review for revision or revalidating. [REDACTED]

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10. On the DDO side, Collection Objectives, based on the national guidance outlined above, as well as operational and counterintelligence needs, are developed and serve as the basis for DDO Station Operating Directives. The Directives also provide the framework for specific collection requirements on DCD offices. These are all reviewed and revised regularly as needs dictate. The DDO evaluates how responsive each station is to these requirements. [REDACTED]

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11. The recent effort to project long-range HUMINT requirements, which will now be integral to our new long-range planning process, could also be considered part of the formal requirements process. In anticipation of building our 1984 program, a DDI working group developed long-range collection requirements to support anticipated analyst needs. These were then provided to the collectors to determine which ones could be satisfied with existing capabilities and which ones would require developing new capabilities. Once those capabilities are approved, the collectors can develop their 1984 programs accordingly. [REDACTED]

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12. Most requirements, however, are generated through the informal network of contacts between analysts and collectors. Analysts pass on requirements in their day-to-day contacts with their DDO/Division [REDACTED] State, FBIS, DIA, etc., counterparts. Collectors also advise analysts of new collection opportunities, and solicit analyst requirements for these sources. When aggressive, innovative officers exploit this informal system to the maximum degree, it is extremely effective and responsive. When analysts and collectors are less imaginative and have not developed the good working relationships essential to accomplishing both of their tasks, the system breaks down. We definitely need more work to correct this. [REDACTED]

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13. Both the DDI and DDO realize that constant refining of the HUMINT requirement process is necessary for it to produce maximum intelligence benefits. A number of areas for improvement have been identified and people are working the problem. First, analysts have to do a better job of defining their requirements and working the appropriate collection systems, both through the formal and informal networks. Training courses can help both in OTE and DDI. Bob Gates will be placing management emphasis on the importance of such training. [REDACTED]

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14. Political requirements have been one of our weakest areas, and the DDI has to concentrate on doing better here. For openers, they have put former employee [REDACTED] on contract to bring DDI [REDACTED] together to determine how to improve our performance. (Arrangements are now being made for analysts to participate in a [REDACTED] conference in April on political

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reporting.) [redacted] is also developing some ideas for both the DDI [redacted] on how to make [redacted] interaction more productive. [redacted] conferences on specific policy issues to [redacted] officers in developing the right questions and to make analysts aware of potential sources is one possibility. Elevating DDI requirements to more strategic issues appropriate for access to executive suites is another. Incentives for [redacted] officers to collect political perceptions of executives as well as specific facts need to be developed.

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[redacted] efforts to identify [redacted] risk analysis capabilities has potential [redacted]

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[redacted] produce better intelligence. [redacted]

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15. Both DDI [redacted] need to be reminded (they have been) [redacted] is responsible for collecting intelligence from non-NFIB agencies. Feedback to analysts on the collectors' success against requirements is also needed to shore up the system. DDI and DDO are focusing on this area. In addition, I think we need more linkage between the formal and informal collection systems to ensure that priorities are in order. [redacted]

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16. I will continue to monitor these ongoing efforts and to work with the Deputies to identify other possibilities for tightening up our HUMINT requirements process. Because of the nature of the beast, the difficulties in developing sources and adjusting rapidly to new requirements, it will never approximate the clear-cut structure and responsiveness of technical systems. (C)

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[redacted signature box]

John N. McMahon

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