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7 May 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

FROM: Executive Assistant

SUBJECT: Long-range Planning

(tomorrow)
1. On Thursday, the Executive Committee will meet to discuss an ExComm Staff proposal (attached) for an Agency planning process. Because of your special interest in long-range planning (and the inadequacies of such planning at the Agency), I believe you should review this paper and speak with Frank prior to the ExComm meeting.

2. The paper sets forth four options for Agency planning ranging from a fully decentralized system with minimum DCI/DDCI role (Option I) through a fully centralized system including establishment of a DCI/DDCI formal planning board which would provide specific planning guidance to the Directorates through the DCI/DDCI (Option IV). Option II represents the current system and Option III (the recommended course) proposes building on existing processes-- that is, establishment of an Agency-wide mechanism to better integrate and guide the current heavily decentralized planning system.

3. I believe this paper reflects very much the fact that it was put together, as acknowledged, not just by the ExComm Staff but also with the deep involvement of Directorate planning chiefs. The result is a proposal that protects as much as possible the existing, Directorate-specific system and exhibits considerable disdain for a wider DCI/DDCI role in Agency planning and for Agency-wide planning in general. For example, in reference to Option IV (fully centralized system), the paper states, "The DCI/DDCI span of control would be further broadened, and their control over Directorate-level planning probably enhanced beyond acceptable levels." (One might ask "acceptable to whom?") I am deeply concerned that this approach will set in motion development of an Agency planning process that the paper itself acknowledges is likely to be unsatisfactory. To wit, on page 6, in reference to recommended Option III, the authors note, "A possible disadvantage of the proposed process is that adding this responsibility incrementally to those of currently existing staffs may result in an inadequate product." You have referred repeatedly to the need for a genuine Agency-wide long-range planning process or system. Option III preserves the fundamental elements of the present, four-Directorate planning process with only a veneer of Agency-wide planning.

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4. Such a system as that recommended in Option III would not, it seems to me, address fundamental, cross-Directorate substantive questions. Could it effectively address whether overall resources in both collection and analysis need to be redirected more toward economic intelligence and substantially increasing the capabilities and size of OER? Could this type of system produce an overall Agency plan for crisis management in the years ahead? Other such questions easily come to mind, and include:

5. My impression is that the existing process, including the ExComm and its staff, is heavily weighted toward budgetary and management issues without sufficient attention to the substance of our work as suggested above, as well as trade-offs between technical and human collectors, overseas problems, and so forth. The ExComm seems to do very well in issues such as pay, computer usage, recruitment, and so forth. But the approach the ExComm Staff recommends for the new Agency planning process in my view retains far too much decentralization; denies the DCI/DDCI a central role; relegates long-range Agency planning to a part-time function for all planners but the ExComm Staff; and likely would not bring sufficient focus to bear on substantive vs. budget/management issues. What is needed, in my view, is a full-time, interdirectorate long-range planning/policy planning staff. The core of such a staff probably is best to be found in the ExComm Staff--which would need to be expanded somewhat to give it the capability to address the type of issues cited above and that you have in mind. The RMS group under [] is not appropriate for this CIA role and neither is the presently constituted ExComm Staff. Establishing a policy/planning staff

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is one of the goals [] and I recommended you take on with priority. This would be a lasting change and a good one if done correctly. It also is a good place to get a foothold for the "one-Agency" concept. ~~This is also a~~ centralized planning organization, with subordinate Directorate planning staffs, is essential. The DCI/DDCI must have the last word on planning for the future.

6. I recommend that you either attend the ExComm meeting tomorrow afternoon or at least speak to Frank to express your concern with the shortcomings of the recommended option in the planning paper, and to convey your general preference for a planning system more in the direction of Option IV (a full-time centralized system) than Option III (the present system with add-ons), and why.

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Robert M. Gates

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P.S. This notion should then be pursued actively

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