

26 March 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

(FROM LEHMAN)

SUBJECT : Conversation with Bill Bundy

1. Following up your exchange of letters with Bill, I had lunch with him in New York yesterday. He has some very firmly held ideas, and ones that you should take seriously.

2. As a member of the Board of National Estimates during the period of its strength in the late 1950's, he believes strongly in the value of such an institution. He is aware of its deterioration in later years and believes that, if it is reestablished, devices such as fixed terms of membership should be used to avoid ossification. He emphasizes, however, that for such a Board to do its job, it would be necessary to recruit people of national reputation, and he cautions that this would be extremely difficult to do in the last few months of an administration.

3. Bill is also convinced of the value of a drafting staff. This, too, is based on his experience of a number of years ago, and he has not had any exposure to the analytic organizations since they matured. I would therefore not put too much weight on this advice.

4. Bill's overriding concern is to rebuild the links between the national intelligence assessment organization and the intellectual world outside the Community. He is aware, as are we all, that these links have sadly deteriorated in recent years. The Community has no monopoly on wisdom or knowledge. He believes that the close association of the organizations responsible for national assessments with clandestine activities is at the root of the present antagonism. An entirely separate organization, a "Federal Assessment Administration," would be able to deal with the academic world without the "albatross" of espionage and covert action around its neck.

5. I explored how his proposals could be adapted to the position in which the Executive Order puts you as the senior national intelligence officer. Bill thought that a Board, if the proper people could be recruited and if it answered directly to you (as you have already decided), could provide the foundation on which a new relationship could be built. He would go much further, however. He would also separate the DDI from CIA and make it a national assessment organization answering directly to you. This in effect is a Model VI that carries Model V to its logical conclusion. It is, I understand, one of the proposals of the Senate Select Committee. The arguments against it are, of course, that it is expensive, would break up fruitful working relationships within CIA, and might open the door to further dismemberment of the Agency.

6. We also discussed an alternative, removing the DDO from the Agency and establishing it in some independent manner. I argued strongly against this on the grounds that there were few volunteers for carrying the albatross, and he did not dispute me on that.

7. We ended with his urging that you go slowly in this field and that you try to do as little as possible this year. I think this is good advice as far as recruitment of stars for a Board is concerned, but in the present situation, because the decision on how everything is to be done has been dumped in your lap, you cannot say "Let's do it the old way" without effectively committing yourself. You do not have to do everything at once, but you have to decide where you are going. I agree wholeheartedly with Bill's view that the isolation of the Community from the outside world must be ended. We shall become increasingly introverted and decreasingly useful if we do not stay in the mainstream of American intellectual life.

RICHARD LEHMAN

YES — BUT NOT
REPLACE THAT
MAINSTREAM — WHICH
IS A VERY COMPOUND
CURRENT.

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