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Attachment C

PLANNING GROUP FOR A MECHANICALLY INTEGRATED
REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

SUBJECT: Coding of Information Reports

1. The Intelligence Subject Code (ISC), the classification system used
by CIA since 1948, is also used by Air Force Intelligence in its Minicard
coding project, by the Strategic Air Command, by Shepherd Air Force Base,
and in part by Army's Signal Corps Intelligence Agency. In addition it is
used within the military organization of SHAPE and by five NATO countries.

2. The ISC has just been revised, cut back from 15,000 to about 5,000
entries, and will be distributed under CODIB auspices, probably in March.
It includes an area as well as subject code. It is expected that this revision
will improve that most important facet of the information processing cycle:
the quality and uniformity of input. This in turn should increase the reliability
of retrieval in response to information requests. It should be stressed, however,
that a revised ISC will by no means resolve all the problems of input. There is
widespread disagreement in information processing circles as to who should be
assigned the job of putting information into the system: the subject specialist
with professional status in indexing; the subject specialist with no indexing
experience and no great desire to index; or the trained indexer with a general
educational background. OCR employes the latter and is constantly trying to
improve his knowledge of specific CIA needs to increase input quality, but
this must be a reciprocal process with close contact with and guidance from
customers, coupled with greater understanding on the customer's part of the
capabilities and limitations of the system. Other attempts to control quality
and uniformity of input include verification of coded input by senior coding
analysts, the compilation of a coding dictionary, and the maintenance of a
coding manual.

3. The coding of a sample of 15,000 documents for the Minicard project,
testing the advantages or disadvantages of a Minicard system compared with the
existing Intellofax system, has just been completed. A retrieval test is now
underway.

4. It might be mentioned that the Air Force based their requirements
for Minicard equipment worth $2 million upon receipt of 1500 reports per week
but with their reporting housecleaning (para. 1, Attachment B) they are
actually Minicoding only 400 per week, or about 70 per day; OCR is concerned
with processing nearly 1200 per day. The Air Force equipment is by no means
being used optimally and perhaps a time-saving pooling effort could be under-
taken, with CIA coding State and its own reports, and Air Force coding those of
the Services.

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5.   OCR coding of ▮▮▮reports was stopped some time ago and has not
been resumed. Only 50% or so of the TDCS reports coded were released by the
area desks. Reports that were released often had information deleted or
added to them after the coding had been done thereby rendering the coding
inaccurate. In addition, dissemination was not made on the basis of the codes
and collection requirements were not altered. It was decided that OCR would
withdraw until it could be assured that its coding efforts would be applied
to that information which would be disseminated and incorporated in the
central reference system.

6.   Of possible interest to the Planning Group is a new OCR publication
reflecting some of the coding developments that have taken place in CIA to
make documentary information usable: CIA/CR-31, January 1960: "Document
Classification: Papers Presented at the Conference on Philosophy of Document
Classification in OCR." This 58 page document contains the presentations and
discussions of panels on the following four topics: a) The Intelligience Subject
Code; b) Classification Tools; c) Supplements to the Main Classified File;
d) Contribution of Machines to the Classification Process.