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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

S3-03453

April 26, 1983

SPECIAL

LEGISLATIVE REFERRAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Liaison Officer

- Department of Education
- Department of State
- Department of Commerce
- ✓ Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT: Department of the Army proposed testimony for April 27, 1983, on H.R. 2708, "A bill to further the national security and improve the economy of the United States by providing grants for the improvement of proficiency in critical languages, for the improvement of elementary and secondary foreign language instruction, and for per capita grants to reimburse institutions of higher education to promote the growth and improve the quality of postsecondary foreign language instruction".

The Office of Management and Budget requests the views of your agency on the above subject before advising on its relationship to the program of the President, in accordance with OMB Circular A-19.

A response to this request for your views is needed no later than 4:00 p.m. today, April 26, 1983.

Questions should be referred to Fred Fischer (395-5880) or to Naomi Sweeney (395-3881), the legislative analyst in this office.

*omc - 4-27 - OMB noted we had not been given sufficient time to respond.
kad*

Naomi R Sweeney
Naomi R. Sweeney for
Assistant Director for
Legislative Reference

Enclosures

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND LABOR ON SIMON FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEGISLATION
BY MG WILLIAM E. ODOM, ACoFS FOR INTELLIGENCE
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
27 APRIL 1983

Mr. Chairman, I am again grateful for the opportunity to appear before you and your colleagues today. The issue at hand, support to Language Education, is a critical one in need of serious and urgent attention. Judging from the bill you are introducing, it is clear that you also believe that it is time to take action to shore up our nation's pool of linguists and the educational base that supports it. I highly commend that action, and I want to offer whatever support I can to this vitally needed endeavor to provide support at both the State secondary schools, colleges and universities.

The availability of qualified linguists is absolutely critical for effective operations of the Army. Given the large number of languages with which we may have to deal for various contingencies, the military cannot afford to train all personnel required. We must depend on civilian institutions to provide many of these people. This is especially true for low density requirements for Third World countries which could expand rapidly in a crisis situation.

The need for area experts to provide adequate intelligence collection and analysis continues to be of the highest priority. I believe that working knowledge of the language is essential for

true area expertise. Many of our intelligence collection requirements can only be met by having fully qualified linguists. The requirements for such personnel will remain for the foreseeable future.

The Army also has a need for large numbers of liaison personnel with some knowledge of particular foreign languages. In almost any scenario we will be required to coordinate with friendly host countries and with allied military forces. Everything from logistics to combat operations will depend upon accurate communications between U.S. and foreign personnel. In NATO alone the U.S. will find itself conducting operations with fourteen other countries speaking many different languages. It will be critical that the plans of U.S. units be clear to an adjacent allied unit and equally critical that the U.S. unit fully understand the plans of the allied unit. We cannot expect to find English speakers in all the allied units to allow this rapid exchange of information. It will be necessary to provide U.S. liaison officers who can speak and read whatever language is required in key allied headquarters. While the Army can train a certain number of such personnel to meet this critical requirement, our efforts are greatly simplified when we are provided qualified personnel from our civilian educational institutions.

As you are well aware since World War II the Army has had responsibilities around the world. Accordingly, emphasis has shifted from one area to another from time to time--frequently on very

short notice, complicating the problems of providing adequate numbers of trained linguists. It is simply not possible to anticipate every crisis in sufficient time to establish the necessary language training program and train enough people to meet such needs. Europe has been and will remain our central focus for the foreseeable future, and the requirements for both West European and East European languages will continue to be of the highest priority. Of course, these are the most widely taught languages in our civilian schools, and this has eased our training problem for this area. These programs should not be reduced to make room for others because the large requirement for European linguists will remain. Recently heightened U.S. interest in Southwest Asia has greatly increased our needs for Arabic, Farsi and other languages which had not previously enjoyed a high priority. Even though our military presence in Southeast Asia has been reduced, that part of the world is still of significant importance, and area specialists and linguists are required.

Because of the large number of activities which require language qualified personnel and the fact that many of these personnel, especially officers, are managed by their technical skill rather than their language skill it is difficult to calculate our requirement in precise numbers. Likewise plans change due to new mission requirements further compounding this problem.

However, we in the Army recognize that our needs can never be fully met through in-service training. Civilian institutions must provide quality language and area studies programs to provide us a source of trained personnel to meet some of our requirements. This is very important in peace time, and it is absolutely vital for mobilization.

Once again I wish to thank the sub-committee for allowing me an opportunity to express my opinion and concerns for this issue.