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THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, R & E

21 February 1949

Chief, Global Survey Group

Subject Coordination of ORE 41-49

1. ORE 41-49 was requested by the Office of the Secretary of Defense as a matter of the "highest priority". The requestor, however, also indicated that thorough coordination was desired. The estimate, therefore, was produced with scrupulous regard for consultation and coordination with the departmental agencies at each stage in its preparation. The cooperation received from those agencies must be assumed to have been the optimum, in view of the importance of the subject, the distinguished sponsorship of the project, and the priority assigned. Experience in this case, therefore, may be taken as a fair example of the best to be expected in the execution of DCI 3/1.

2. A detailed chronology of the preparation of ORE 41-49 is appended hereto. It may be observed that, although this project was regarded as a matter of the "highest priority", three weeks elapsed between our receipt of a definite statement of the problem and the final coordination of the desired estimate. Yet actually the essential estimate was produced in the course of 30 hours (2000, 1 Feb., to 0200, 3 Feb.). Subsequent discussion produced no substantial change in this draft, although the expression of its intent was considerably improved in the revised version completed on 5 February. All the discussion that occurred in the two weeks between 4 and 18 February neither altered the substance of the estimate nor significantly improved its expression. The real work was done, then, in one week, but its publication was delayed for two weeks longer by the procedure of "coordination."

3. It is to be noted also that most of this delay occurred in the process of final, formal coordination, after we had taken special care to insure that the text submitted would be agreeable to all the agencies concerned. We had not only revised the first (3 Feb.) draft to satisfy the designated representatives of those agencies, but had submitted the revised (7 Feb.) draft to them to make sure it was satisfactory. The third (10 Feb.) draft, submitted for formal action, had the explicit concurrence of all the designated representatives, yet eight days were required to complete action on it. Actually, three agencies were reasonably prompt in returning formal concurrences. The difficulty at this stage arose from the fact that, in the normal procedures of the Air Intelligence Directorate, the third (10 Feb.) draft was the first to receive high level consideration in that agency.

4. This experience, I believe, will support the following conclusions:

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a. Except in special cases, consultation with the agencies prior to preparation of a first draft is substantively profitless.

b. Working level consultation with substantive specialists from the agencies on a first draft is profitable in clarifying expression, if not in modifying the substance of the estimate.

c. By this procedure a substantially coordinated estimate can be produced in about four days.

d. Further consultation at this level is likely to result only in unnecessary delay over issues of literary taste rather than of substance.

e. All schemes for quick "coordination" (e.g., DCI 3/1), being written by persons without practical experience, ignore practical consideration of what happens after a coordinating meeting has adjourned. It may take a day's hard work to reintegrate a text that has been hacked over in committee. It may also take most a day to reproduce a revised text, even by ditto, and to distribute it.

f. Even with the utmost endeavor (as in this case) to effect complete coordination in advance, the present procedure of final, formal coordination is haphazard and cumbersome, an obstacle to true coordination. The only remedy in my opinion, is that previously proposed by me (memoranda of 16 Oct. 1946 and 15 April 1947), coupled with a complete reindoctrination of the members of the IAC and their designated representatives.

LUDWELL L. MONTAGUE

cc AD/ORE
S/PP
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