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~~(S)~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.



March 15, 1969.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (EYES ONLY)

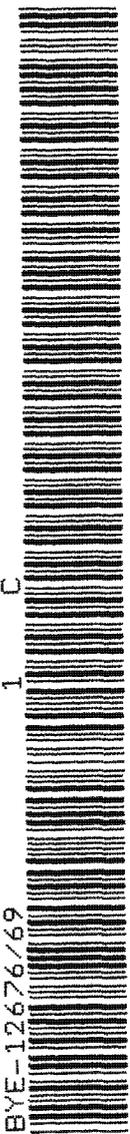
SUBJECT: Intelligence Program Management

The attached discussion is in response to your request for my views as to how the management of the intelligence programs of the Department of Defense might be improved. Because of my assignment as Director of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) which entails the responsibility for management of the National Reconnaissance Program (NRP), I am of course best informed as to the particulars of that program. As Assistant Secretary for Research and Development of a military department, I have also participated in various aspects of the management of the other two military intelligence programs, the Consolidated Cryptologic Program (CCP) and the Consolidated Intelligence Program (CIP). However, my detailed knowledge of the latter programs is by no means complete and my comments and recommendations as they affect the latter two programs may accordingly have less validity.

I hope you find this discussion useful and would be glad to talk to you further about it if you so desire.

Alexander H. Flax

Alexander H. Flax



Attachments

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INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The DOD Intelligence Programs

Although the NRP, the CIP and the CCP are all termed "programs," it is essential to realize the important differences in function, management and command relationships which exist between these several aggregations of activity.

The NRP has a single integrated organization, the NRO, which is responsible for the line management of the program as a whole in all of its aspects. On the other hand, the CIP and CCP each includes activities which are organizationally much more diverse. The CIP and the CCP comprise a large variety of projects and programs under varied management and command arrangements involving the Services (through the Service Staffs, cryptologic, development, procurement and operating agencies) as well as the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Unified and Specified Commands. The DIA has the central role in those centralized management functions which are exercised for the CIP while the NSA has a similar role for the CCP. Budget and program control are exercised through these different chains of command and management and no single individual, short of the Secretary of Defense, has direct management responsibility for either the total CIP or the total CCP. The term "program" is applied in these cases to identify a functional program-budget review by a committee which is conducted on primarily an annual basis, although there is some monitoring of budget continued on throughout the year.

The NRP on the other hand comprises a program which is also subject to integrated program-budget reviews (on a more frequent than annual basis) but which is, in addition, centrally managed as a single program by the Director, NRO under the guidance of the NRP EXCOM and under the direct control of the Secretary of Defense. As stated in the DOD/CIA Agreement of August 11, 1965, "the NRP is a single program, national in character, to meet the intelligence needs of the Government for the development, management, control and operation of all projects, both current and long range for the collection of intelligence and of mapping and geodetic information obtained through overflights (excluding peripheral reconnaissance operations)."

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The scope of CCP and CIP activities is much broader than that of the NRO, in that the NRO is charged only with collection of photographic and signal intelligence obtained by covert overflight of areas denied to other means of collection. A very limited amount of processing of collected information is done by the NRO prior to dissemination of collected information to exploitation, evaluation, analysis and using organizations, but the NRO itself has no assigned responsibility for exploitation, analysis or the production of finished intelligence. The CIP and the CCP on the other hand include activities serving all phases of the intelligence process from collection to production of finished intelligence. Requirements for the NRP come from the United States Intelligence Board (USIB) only and resources allocated to the NRO serve only the purpose of satisfying these requirements. The CCP and the CIP on the other hand are directed toward meeting requirements not only of the USIB but of the JCS, the Unified and Specified Commands and Theatre Commanders. These differences between the requirements authorities for the NRO, CCP and CIP (which are to a large extent made necessary by the differences in the needs being met by these organizations) lead to substantial differences in the management of these programs. For example, the Service cryptologic agencies are under the management of their parent Services and their budgets are included in the Service budgets. The need for this arrangement arises from the fact that the Service cryptologic agencies must also carry on COMINT and ELINT related activities for the deployed forces of their parent Services which must be responsive to the direction of the JCS and the Unified and Specified Commands and lie outside the scope of national requirements. The National Security Agency (NSA) has overall technical and operational control of those Service activities which serve national (USIB) or broad DOD objectives. However, the NSA is not responsible for the line management of the collection agencies within the Services except as NSA exercises the program budget control through participation in the annual CCP review and other program budget actions which occur between reviews. Similarly, the DIA does not exercise line management of Service intelligence collection and exploitation organizations. The DIA provides DOD-wide guidance and coordination for intelligence programs but has line management authority and control only of those organizations specifically assigned to it. Most of the intelligence collection resources are operated by Service components under command and control of the Service Staffs, the JCS, the Unified and Specified Commands and the Theatre Commanders.

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The NRO differs in another important way from other DOD collection activities. The NRO is not solely a DOD organization although the Secretary of Defense is designated as the Executive Agent for the management of the NRP. Under the DOD/CIA Agreement of August, 1965, the NRO is a single national program including the activities of both the DOD and the CIA "for the development, management, control and operation of all projects, both current and long range for the collection of intelligence and of mapping and geodetic information obtained through overflights (excluding peripheral reconnaissance operations)." Within the DOD, in accordance with DOD Directive TS-5105.23, all project managers report directly to the Director, NRO without intervening layers of Service or Agency staffs and field command management. Arrangements with the CIA provide for similar straight line management through the Director of CIA Reconnaissance Programs. While there are some DOD aircraft collection programs contributing to the NRP which have been specifically excepted by the Secretary of Defense from the full application of NRO management authority and which operate under the coordinated control of the NRO and other DOD elements, the only satellite collection program so excepted (presumably only during development) is the MOL.

DOD Directive TS-5105.23 which deals with the NRO provides that "The Director, National Reconnaissance Office will be given support as required from normal staff elements of the military departments and agencies concerned, although these staff elements will not participate in these project matters except as he specifically requests, and these projects will not be subject to normal Department of Defense staff review." It further provides that the Director, NRO will "keep the Director of Defense Research and Engineering and the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) personally informed on a regular basis on the status of projects of the National Reconnaissance Program."

There is a notion often expressed within the DOD that because the NRP budget is included in the DOD appropriations, the NRP is really a DOD program and should be managed in the same "normal" fashion as all other DOD programs. Since the CIA budget is also included in DOD appropriations, it can be seen that this reasoning is circular. In fact, since the NRO was created, the Bureau of the Budget has been systematically moving any funds in the CIA budget (other than personnel) having to do with overflight reconnaissance into the NRP budget. This was not

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done with the aim of excluding the CIA from such activities, but rather in order to bring all such activities under the centralized management control of the NRO and the NRP Executive Committee (EXCOM).

Thus, DOD intelligence activities consist of the NRP, an inter-agency program responding only to national level (USIB) requirements and operated by the DOD as Executive Agent, and the CCP and CIP which serve both national and other DOD needs and which involve both specific management responsibilities at OSD level exercised through program-budget review committees, and other management responsibilities exercised by DIA and NSA, and still other management responsibilities exercised by the Services.

Intelligence Requirements and Program Evaluations

There appear to be two main areas in which it is generally agreed that improved procedures for the management of DOD and National intelligence programs would be desirable. The first of these is in the establishment of requirements and the second is in the area of overall evaluation of ongoing as well as proposed programs which is essential to the translation of requirements into collection and exploitation programs. Neither of these functions is exclusively a DOD responsibility. The Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) assisted by the USIB has the central national role in the requirements area and the DCI has a staff for National Intelligence Program Evaluation (NIPE). However, since there is considerable overlap between the national intelligence requirements as defined by the USIB and DOD requirements, there is no clear way to separate these. The DOD contributions to the formulation of national requirements is through the DOD membership on the USIB and its committees. The DOD members of the USIB are the Director of the NSA and the Director of the DIA with the chief Service intelligence officers generally participating in USIB activities as non-voting members. The Director of the NRO is invited to sit with the USIB whenever a matter of common interest is under discussion but generally the Director of the NRO does not concern himself with requirements as such. The NRO as a matter of practice however works with the appropriate Committee of the USIB in providing an interchange of information on potential system capabilities and costs in relation to potential requirements.

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The Director of the DIA is responsible for the assembly, integration and validation of all DOD intelligence requirements and the assignment of relative priorities to such requirements in accordance with JCS and other DOD guidance. He is also responsible for cooperating with the CIA and other intelligence organizations for mutual support, common and combined usage of resources and elimination of duplication. However, to the extent that these requirements are melded with other requirements and promulgated by the USIB as national requirements, they flow directly to the NSA and the NRO as well as other Government intelligence organizations. All DOD intelligence organizations (DIA, NSA and NRO) are required to conduct their activities in accordance with the objectives, requirements and priorities established by the USIB. However, in general, the collection and exploitation programs established to meet USIB requirements are not subject to any detailed USIB control, since the collection programs may in fact, in the case of the CCP and the CIP, meet DOD objectives additional to those stated by the USIB. The DIA and the NSA therefore have responsibilities both for establishing, approving or coordinating programs and for contributing to the establishment of requirements. The CIA similarly, through the USIB, participates in the establishment of requirements and in the conduct of programs to satisfy those requirements. On the other hand, with regard to national programs, these functions are subject to the authority of the DCI for national requirements validation and to the Secretary of Defense for programs to meet the requirements. Only the Executive Committee of the NRP brings together for program review the senior management levels of the DOD and the DCI in the persons of the DCI himself and the Deputy Secretary of Defense so that both the requirements and the program resource questions can be considered simultaneously.

Since it is obvious that requirements cannot be realistically established without regard to the availability of resources with which those requirements can be satisfied, there have from time to time been suggestions that the EXCOM responsibilities be broadened to include authorities similar to what it has over the NRP to CCP and the CIP. Whereas most CIP and CCP activity is primarily concerned with annual program budget reviews, the NRP EXCOM maintains contact with all areas of the NRP from research and development through operations on a continuing basis, and meets whenever there is any significant question affecting the NRP including all approvals for initiation of new systems at such milestone points as review of requirements in relation to preliminary

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system configurations and costs, initiation of system definition, approval to proceed with full scale development, approval of major procurements, etc. At any of these reviews the issues of requirements versus cost can be considered.

Programs which are conducted outside the usual management and command chains of the DOD are subject to continuing pressure for "normalization." Functional staffs at all levels of management find such programs a continuing source of irritation and inconvenience whether or not the programs are successful (a subjective and relative judgement at best). Within the office of the Secretary of Defense, there has been a continuing effort by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Systems Analysis) to bring the NRP within the scope of Draft Presidential Memoranda (DPM) and Defense Guidance Memoranda (DGM). (Present DOD directives exclude the NRP from these and other standard program review formats.) In considering this, it must be borne in mind that the DPMs and DGMS are not simply essays, evaluations or analyses. They are part of the program budget management system and constitute decision-making mechanisms. The management system is such that the authority of the NRP EXCOM to review and approve the NRP budget would in effect be pre-empted by the "normal" processes. Even the management of the CCP and the CIP in this way would pose considerable problems.

Functional staffs, including the OSD staff, focus on particular aspects of any DOD activity or operation. In the case of forces and activities which constitute major concerns of one or another of the Services, the Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs have broad responsibilities in the formulation of the requirements, the allocation of resources, the management of research and development, procurement, logistics and the operations of forces and facilities as part of operational commands. Moreover, these officials have direct and frequent meetings with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and can discuss the pros and cons of any issue with them and with the senior OSD staff. Therefore, the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense have available to them on any major issue the judgments of persons having both functional and program responsibilities.

On the other hand, because intelligence organizations and activities are managed in the various ways described above with fragmentation of

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responsibilities for requirements, resource allocations, line management, and operational control there is no straightforward way in which the diverse factors bearing upon program decisions and the pros and cons of the issues could be brought under direct discussion at the Secretary of Defense level. No senior official at the Secretarial level of the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense has a major and sufficiently encompassing role in the overall intelligence management process to have the time, the motivation or the necessary information to present a balanced view. Moreover, unlike the problems associated with the force structure decisions which generally relate to operations to be conducted in the distant future, the intelligence program decisions even when they relate to projects in development are generally intimately connected with ongoing operations. Since most intelligence programs in the CCP and CIP and all of those in the NRP are directed toward peacetime intelligence acquisition rather than those which would occur upon the outbreak of major hostilities, informed decisions can only be made in the light of current problems and current operational experience.

The chain of participants in deriving intelligence information from collection to end use is long and complex. Moreover, the users in DOD and elsewhere often see intelligence information in "finished" form only with little, if any, indications as to which collection systems made major contributions to the end product. This is particularly true with respect to information derived from SIGINT. The net result is that evaluation of the importance and "value" of collection programs tend to be very subjective and are based on rather narrow and limited considerations, if indeed such evaluations are made at all. The feedback from evaluations to the development of requirements for new collection systems accordingly has the same disabilities and is further complicated by the fact that many DOD developments are undertaken by agencies far removed from either the collection or exploitation of intelligence.

Recommendations for Improvement of Intelligence Program Management

There has been much attention given to the subject of improving intelligence program management over the past several years. One recurring idea which has been discussed has been the expansion of the charter of the EXCOM to include review and approval of all DOD intelligence programs.

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The suggestion that the NRP EXCOM be broadened to include review of all DOD intelligence programs is grossly unrealistic. Aside from the fact the differences in management in the CCP and CIP from the NRP would pose numerous administrative problems and vastly expand the number of organizations and people involved with the EXCOM, there is also the fact that such an expansion of the function of the EXCOM would necessarily change its mode of operations.

In order for such a committee to function effectively in formulating and guiding a major program, it must have and hold the attention of top management in the agencies involved. This is the case with the NRP Executive Committee and is the key to its success in carrying out its responsibilities. An expansion of the scope of matters under the cognizance of this committee beyond the area now under its purview would only serve to dilute the attention to detail and the depth of understanding with which problems are considered. Adding the CIP and the CCP to the EXCOM's charter and expanding its membership to members of government departments not directly concerned with the implementation of the NRP would submerge the principals in a vast expansion of activity, result in increased delegation of responsibility for review and approval to lower staff echelons and would in effect "normalize" the operation of the NRP. Such action would not gain for other intelligence activities the management benefits which are apparently seen in the EXCOM method of operation; rather, it would lose such benefits for the NRP.

There have been numerous other previous recommendations as to how Department of Defense intelligence programs could be better managed. The rationale for such proposals usually begins by asserting that the NRP arrangement is relatively satisfactory, but the proposal itself then turns out to consist of a plan which would radically alter the method of managing the NRP and would result in a loss of many of the benefits of the present method of management. The notion of an expanded EXCOM is one example of such a plan. Another plan frequently proposed by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis is simply to put intelligence matters into the same set of management procedures and formats as are used for all other programs; as far as Systems Analysis is concerned, the problem will be solved when intelligence programs are covered by DPMS and/or DGMs. Insofar as the NRP is concerned I have repeatedly objected to this approach since it completely ignores the interagency character of the program and would establish unworkable dual lines of management. The specifics of the arguments

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against the Systems Analysis proposals are contained in the memoranda from the DNRO to Deputy Secretaries of Defense Vance and Nitze in response to initiatives by the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Systems Analysis) (Attachments 1 and 2).

The SIGINT area in particular has come in for much study and critical review. The Eaton Committee, which was established by the DCI at the request of the White House, put forward a draft report in which it was proposed that authority over the SIGINT programs of the NRP be given to DIA and NSA with DIA to be responsible for ELINT and NSA to be responsible for COMINT. Aside from the impracticality of this suggestion,

the proposal was very strange in that it would introduce into the NRP the very problems of fragmented management, command and operational control which the draft report identified in the CCP and was presumably attempting to correct. The NRO comments on the draft Eaton report are contained in Attachment 3. In view of these and other comments, the Eaton Committee did not include in its final report these recommendations to fragment the management of the satellite SIGINT programs. The comments in Attachment 3, however, are of more than historic interest since the Bureau of the Budget recently resurrected the very recommendations which the Eaton Committee dropped (BOB Paper of March 3, 1969, BYE 11659/69A). The Eaton Committee in its final report did call for more formal and standard arrangements for tasking and control of NRO SIGINT operations by NSA. NRO comments on this paper are given in Attachment 4 and are substantially to the effect that such working arrangements are formulated in detail for each NRO SIGINT program; the programs are different in character and nothing would be gained by attempting to standardize these arrangements. To the contrary, there would be a considerable loss of flexibility and effectiveness. Existing DOD Directives are adequate to define the responsibilities of the NSA and the NRO in satellite SIGINT programs.

Management of Intelligence Programs at Secretary of Defense Level

The Deputy Secretary of Defense has during the past two administrations been the principal senior officer of the DOD concerned with overall intelligence program management. However, the amount of time

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which the Deputy Secretary of Defense can spend on such matters and the amount of staff support which he requires depend to a very large degree on the division of duties between the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense. Under Mr. McNamara, Mr. Vance found it possible to devote enough of his own time to intelligence program management so that very little OSD formal directed staff study was conducted relative to the affairs of the NRO. Under the working arrangements which prevailed when Mr. Clifford was Secretary of Defense, Mr. Nitze found it necessary to increasingly rely on ad hoc staff working groups, particularly as the BOB raised major questions in regard to the validity of intelligence requirements. It should be noted that there is no separate review of requirements in relation to the resources necessary for their satisfaction conducted within the DOD when DOD requirements are forwarded to the USIB to be incorporated as national requirements. Such reviews tend to take place only when specific intelligence programs are proposed to satisfy the USIB (and internal DOD) requirements. There is considerable room for improvement in the procedures for relating requirements to resources even before the DOD inputs are made to the USIB. However, short of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, there is no authority within the DOD who can maintain a continuing and coordinated overview of such matters. This has led to many suggestions for additional OSD staff including the creation of an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence. While such an official could probably make major improvements in intelligence program management within the DOD, it is not at all clear that such a function would fit logically into the structure of Assistant Secretaries. For one thing, an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence would be concerned with a program, and on-going operations, not a staff function. For another, it does not appear that the size of the supporting staff required should be allowed to grow to that usually associated with an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

There are adequate staff resources available in the DOD components currently engaged in various intelligence matters (DIA, NSA, NRO, DDR&E, etc.) to carry out all necessary review, evaluation, analysis and coordination of functions if given proper guidance and direction. What is needed is an individual (Special Assistant) who for intelligence purposes could be alter ego to the Deputy Secretary of Defense. His staff should be very small (4 or 5 people at most). His duties and responsibilities would be not only to assist the Deputy Secretary of Defense in internal management affairs but also to act as the principal focal point

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for contacts with the NIPE staff of the DCI, the USIB and the intelligence community at large. The Special Assistant for Intelligence could provide guidance for the coordination of all DOD intelligence programs in a manner consistent with their separate and distinct management relationships. He would also endeavor to establish and improve procedures and techniques for overall program evaluation. At the present time, the Target Oriented Display (TOD) is the only method in use representing an attempt to accomplish this task. However, the Target Oriented Display has a great many weaknesses and great care must be exercised in attempting to draw conclusions affecting specific programs from it. The difficulties in drawing conclusions from the Target Oriented Display as it affects the NRP are illustrated in Attachment 5 which contains NRO comments on conclusions drawn from the TOD by OASD (Systems Analysis).

In summary, it appears that the coordination and integration of DOD intelligence requirements and programs can best be accomplished by a Special Assistant working closely with the Deputy Secretary of Defense. His staff should be small and he should rely heavily on tasking the staffs of DOD intelligence organizations already in existence for carrying out program evaluations, requirements validations and resource allocation studies. In the final analysis the management of intelligence programs because of their sensitivity, the existing relations with other government departments and the President's office, and the need for coordinating operations and activities scattered throughout the entire Department of Defense, will still require the personal attention of the Deputy Secretary of Defense. A Special Assistant for Intelligence can, however, make important contributions to doing the job more effectively.

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