

12 March 1970

A COINS POSTURE

Comment

1. The effect of a 2 year postponement of the COINS evaluation would be a tacit recognition that COINS can and will supply a useful and desirable service to the intelligence community. Stated another way: If the DCI approves a 2-year delay, he would be approving COINS as an pseudo-operational Community system.

Some CIA people will be very upset that they are being crammed into a costly inter-agency activity without benefit of a court hearing, i.e., an evaluation of COINS this year.

Recommendation

1. The DCI should inform DIRNSA that based on experience to date there appears to be some good reasons for continuing to provide a community service whereby ^{members of the community can} [those who wish to, may,] through the use of terminal equipment connected to local computers, interrogate files of information held locally or at some other agency.

2. Consideration should be given to providing resources to those members of the Community who have expressed in explicit terms their desire for this service to the DCI's Executive Agent for COINS. COINS designers and developers should give priority to improving the system in those ways which will best serve those with a demonstrated need.

3. Agencies which have not surfaced or developed a need for a COINS like service should be permitted to enter an inactive status

regarding system participation. If by so doing such agencies will deprive system users in other agencies of fast access to information files, arrangements should be made to satisfy their users needs by placing such files on the computer system of an active COINS participant, or whatever other arrangement is suitable. *by*

4. Agencies may become inactive with regard to either supplying files or using the files of others. For example, State Department is in the COINS network as a user, not a contributor of files. Inactivity of either kind is expected to be of temporary nature. As the supplementary recommendations are acted on, the system will become much more attractive as a community utility.

5. Those agencies which elect to become inactive both as users and contributors to COINS, should become observers on the various panels and working groups which meet regularly to address COINS problems, procedures, and activities.

6. Agencies should, by the end of calendar year 1970, make their desires regarding their future status in COINS, known to the DCI through the COINS Executive Agent. Should the Agency request permission to change its status in the COINS network an appropriate justification and explanation must be provided. Where appropriate, Agencies changing their status must also provide at that time, their plans for supplying the service requested of them by other members of the Community.

6. Arrangements for changing membership status in COINS must be worked out with the COINS Executive Agent and approved by the DCI at least 6 months before the effective date. This includes changes which cause a Community agency to become less or more active.

7. The establishment of COINS as an operational system as a direct transition from its role as an Experiment cannot be accomplished without identifying management controls which will ensure its continued growth as a responsive and efficient Community utility. The present array of panels and working groups appears to be adequate. It is recommended however that agencies other than NSA contribute people to serve as chairmen of some of these inter-agency groups in order to reinforce the Community image and to relieve NSA of a continuing drain on its resources.

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