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~~TENTATIVE~~SUBJECT NUMBER

USCIB: 28.1/7 Item 2 of the Agenda for the 115th Meeting of USCIB,
held on 20 May 1955.

Subject: Evaluation of Plan ADVANCER (USCIB 28.1/6).

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (General Cabell), noting that this matter had been placed on the agenda by the CIA member, asked if Mr. Sheldon wished to comment further upon the report.

MR. SHELDON said that he had no comments; however, he would like to amend the report in the following manner:

1. On page 1, last paragraph, change the final period to a semicolon and add the following statement "however, this finding is not a definitive answer to the question."
2. On page 5, 4th complete paragraph, change the period after the final word ("purposes") to a semicolon and add "however, this finding is not a definitive answer to the question."

The above amendments were approved.

OGA

GENERAL ERSKINE then referred to recommendation "b" in paragraph 9 of the covering memorandum submitted by the CIA member (enclosure with USCIB 28.1/6) and suggested that it be amended to read as follows:



The CHAIR then recommended that the final phrase of General Erskine's amendment ("...under the general coordination of USCIB") be changed to read "...but with USCIB continuing to act as the central coordinating body."

This recommendation was accepted.

In view of this decision, Mr. Sheldon agreed to withdraw recommendation "c" on page 3 of the covering memorandum.

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In response to the Chair's invitation for further comments, GENERAL CANINE raised questions concerning the purpose of continuing the Exercise, and the intended disposition of knowledge obtained through its operation. He acknowledged that CIA has done a "workmanlike job" with regard to the four stations concerned, but said that he is not clear on what it is hoped to accomplish by continuation of the project.

MR. ARMSTRONG traced the background of the project, explaining that the original proposal had been made by his Department in an effort to obtain assistance for the VOA program. He recalled that after considerable discussion in USCIB there was a compromise resulting in the authorization of a pilot operation under CIA auspices. He continued by stating that the original objective has almost been lost sight of, and that the project must now be evaluated in light of its value to other U.S. communications activities rather than to the VOA.

OGA

The ACTING CHAIRMAN said that the principal use of the operation today is to serve our communications managers.

GENERAL CANINE, agreeing with the Chair, said that action taken should, in his opinion, be based fundamentally on our intelligence interests.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN said that he felt reasonably sure that if the communications authorities of the Government were to agree unanimously that there is no further requirement for this type of information the Department of Defense would be glad to abandon the activity.

GENERAL CANINE said that he thought it incumbent upon the Board to recognize, in its findings and recommendations, that the ADVANCER program has swerved considerably from its original concept and now represents an effort akin to Weapons Systems Evaluation.

CAPTAIN TAYLOR reviewed the Board's position in light of the original request by the Secretary of Defense, pointing out that USCIB had been requested to advise the Secretary of the results of the pilot operation and in the light of these results, convey its views on implementation of ADVANCER. It was his belief that the Board should now respond to this original request, and that the report before the Board is appropriate for this purpose.

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GENERAL CANINE was of the opinion that the report is not responsive to the original question raised by the Department of State; he added, however, that we may now be relieved of that responsibility.

CAPTAIN TAYLOR, commenting that this is probably true, explained that the original emphasis of the program was lost before the Secretary of Defense became actively involved.

GENERAL CANINE, reiterating his view that the Department of State is entitled to satisfaction, asked Mr. Armstrong if his Department would be satisfied with the proposed action.

MR. ARMSTRONG replied that his Department is incapable of being satisfied because the original mission was incapable of fulfillment under present technical capabilities. He said that he considers the report an excellent job, and added his opinion that there remains a great deal further to be done in this field.

GENERAL ERSKINE said that he is not convinced that a [] is not, or cannot be, used for transmission of communications and suggested that the program be continued until this point can be cleared up.

The CHAIR then raised the question of assumption of the ADVANCER responsibility by the Department of Defense and asked when the transfer of such responsibility from CIA should be made. He suggested that a change-over date of 1 January 1956 be agreed, with the understanding that the transfer would be phased in advance to permit the Department of Defense to take over completely on that date. He explained that CIA is willing to continue beyond 1 January 1956 if necessary; however, it would be of great assistance to be able to look to that date to complete phasing out the program.

In the absence of objection to this arrangement it was agreed that the details would be worked out in an exchange of letters between the CIA and the Department of Defense.

DECISION: (20 May 1955) USCIB agreed to:

OGA

(1) Note the CIA report on the ADVANCER/PILOT operation as amended at this meeting.

(2) Forward the report to the Secretary of Defense with its recommendation that []

[] with the Department of Defense taking over responsibility for such ADVANCER activity as is continued in the future, but with USCIB continuing to act as the central coordinating body.

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