

MEMORANDUM

March 26, 1970

TO: O/FSI - Mr. Howard E. Sollenberger

FROM: O/FSI/VTC - Ogden Williams

SUBJECT: Innovations at VTC

Recently, you instructed me to come up with a projection of "new departures" for VTC for the forthcoming year. This paper is by no means a response to that instruction, but rather is a brief and partial progress report on some of our present thinking.

1. Revision of the Basic Course. Effective the class commencing May 11, the Basic Course is to be "polarized" so as to place all general material in the first three weeks and place all CORDS-related material in the next three weeks. This is to permit non-CORDS candidates from parent agencies such as USIA, State and AID to send officers to a three-week general course if they so desire. To date only USIA has responded positively to this suggestion. As you recall, I requested assistance from Henry Loomis (a former schoolmate) who in turn focused the attention of his subordinate staff on this opportunity. Mr. Besom of USIA (FE/PER) visited us, and I expect that there will be some USIA input on May 11 and thereafter. This will help to restore the civilian/military balance in the Basic Course.

2. Revision of the order of the Basic, District and Extended Courses. I have asked Mr. Jones to chair a small committee of our faculty to study in depth the pros and cons of restructuring the order of these courses. For example, we will study whether it would be desirable and feasible to give long-term language students their language training plus Viet-Nam-related cultural studies prior to attending the Basic and District Courses. One purpose of this would be to overcome a present difficulty which is that the students now learn about CORDS operations in the Basic and District Courses and then spend 31 additional weeks heavily involved with language so that there may be some tendency to forget the material covered earlier. Also, under the new proposal, civilian language students would go to Viet-Nam with the military classmates with whom they worked in the Basic and District Courses, which is not the case at present. Another alternative would be Basic-Extended-District, in that order.

3. Instructor Training. We have researched the availability of the two-week course at the Instructor Training School, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, for our faculty members. The purpose of this course is to train instructors in classroom techniques, more effective delivery, instructional methods, etc. Depending upon the situation in each course in terms of instructor load at a given time, we might try out the Fort Belvoir program which is both of short duration and of convenient location, to see whether it is useful and appropriate.

As stated above, this is simply a "progress report" to let you know some of the things we are thinking about.

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