

CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT BOARD

Minutes of Meeting Held
15 November 1946, Room 214 Hq.

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Presents:

Lt. Colonel James M. Libby
Lt. Colonel James H. Frier
Captain V. C. Ashcoe
Captain H. Coombs
Captain A. Campbell
Lt. Leville J. Elwood
Dr. C. Kullback
Mr. Alfred T. Rose

Mr. Charles B. Deeter
Dr. A. Sinkov
Mr. John L. Sullivan
Mr. F. B. Rowlett
Mr. Lark Rhodes
Miss G. Kirtland
Mr. D. Glenn Starlin, Chairman

1. FLETCHER CASE

Mr. Starlin announced that he had written a resume of the Fletcher case from the beginning, and forwarded it to Colonel Hayes, indicating that it was the Board's recommendation that charges of inefficiency be sustained. Colonel Hayes has approved the findings of the Board and has directed that Mr. Fletcher be separated in accordance with War Department and Civil Service regulations. Mr. Starlin read the letter which has gone forward this date to Mr. Fletcher stating the Board's decision and action to be taken. Mr. Starlin indicated that Mr. Fletcher must answer the letter within seven days and if his answer is considered inadequate, he will be separated within thirty days of the date he receives the letter. In keeping with War Department regulations, Mr. Fletcher has a right to file a grievance and have the local Grievance Committee investigate the case. This can be done within thirty days of his receipt of the letter charging him with inefficiency.

Mr. Starlin stated that he has received both a phone call and a letter from Mr. Claude L. Lawson, Chairman of the Veterans Preference Committee, American Legion, Department of the District of Columbia who expressed interest in the case as he had been informed that there had been unjust discrimination against Mr. Fletcher in rating the efficiency of his work performance. As a word of explanation, Mr. Starlin pointed out that if Mr. Fletcher is separated for inefficiency, he will lose his veterans preference. Mr. Starlin talked with Mr. Lawson about the case and indicated that final action is still pending. Mr. Lawson said he would take the matter up with Mr. Overholt of the Civil Service Commission if the final decision were adverse to Mr. Fletcher.

Mr. Fletcher, in an informal conversation this date, indicated that as a citizen under the Constitution he has a right to bring the case to court and that in giving testimony he would not be bound unduly by security regulations. Mr. Rowlett suggested that the Board make up its mind on what to do in case he does violate security. However, Mr. Rhodes stated that he did not think anything we did would hold unless the intent to do evil against the United States was involved. As to how much classified material he had access to, Mr. Lester stated that when Mr. Fletcher first came to AS-71 he had access to the entire Legal files but that since his return he has had access to very little.

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2. COMMITTEE REPORT ON JOB TITLES

Copies of this report were passed out at the last Board meeting for review by the Board members. Mr. Starlin stated that he feels that practically all of the series that are suggested in this report can be covered under the Civil Service Handbook of Occupational Groups and Series of Classes, Federal Position Classification Plan. It seems to him that if the Board wants to break down more definite job titles and series within our own Agency it would be an excellent idea but he does not feel that Civil Service would be interested. The series of classes which Civil Service already has established are broad enough and yet definitive enough for us to include all positions here in a proper number series. Mr. Starlin indicated that one immediate concern in presenting this suggested change is that the basic document used in the study was ASF Manual #204 dated July 1945, which is the Army Service Forces interpretation of jobs as outlined by Civil Service. If we do not accept what they have said, we are in danger of criticizing what someone in higher authority has done. It would seem better to refer to Civil Service Handbook of Occupational Groups and Series of Classes, Federal Position and Classification Plan as the basic document used in the study rather than ASF Manual #204.

In order to explain how emphasis can be placed on type of work done by the series in which a position is placed, Mr. Starlin read the description of the Electrical Engineering Series and then the Cryptography Series. He indicated how similar types of professional positions could be put under Electrical Engineering Series, P-84C if the emphasis were on engineering or under Cryptography Series, P-1318, if the emphasis were on cryptography or cryptanalysis. We could call the position Electrical Engineer (Cryptologic), Cryptologic Engineer or some other appropriate title as long as the series number remains accurate. This approach would mean definition and coordination of job titles within the Agency under existing series of classes rather than requesting new series from the Civil Service Commission. Mr. Starlin asked the opinion of the Board members regarding the foregoing statements.

Mr. Rowlett raised the point as to whether or not we still need this. Mr. Starlin replied that if we are interested in getting some revised standards to those that exist already, it would be advisable to set up many of these when we request standards of the Commission for operation under schedule E. Captain Mashcoe indicated that he believed the engineering jobs should come under engineering group, all of which come under the BCO series but Mr. Starlin maintained that if the cryptologic aspects are emphasized then it could well come under the Cryptography Series, P-1318. Captain Mashcoe stated that the committee feeling was that since we have lived a life of lies, why continue, and we should now make an attempt to fit the jobs in their true categories. In addition, he feels that now we have a chance wherein we can properly classify our people and suggested that the job title of Cryptologic Engineer be set up. Mr. Sinkov said that if there were only one or two exceptions to the series which have been laid down by the Commission you could easily see where it could be squeezed in where it would fit but here there are a number of unusual positions and he feels that we should have these jobs categorized under one proper heading. Mr. Rowlett stated that it seems that there are some good arguments for setting up a separate series but asked if any other branch of government has done what has here been suggested by the committee, and, if so, then we stand to benefit from their experience. Since it would be impossible to answer the question at this particular meeting, Mr. Rowlett suggested that we consider the advisability of finding out what the Bureau of Standards and NCA have done. Captain Mashcoe stated that that is one of the proposed studies which the committee has yet to undertake.

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Mr. Sinkov indicated that he felt that when Civil Service and 'SF made up definitions of series they did not have in mind the problems which exist here. He asked Mr. Sterlin why he felt that the suggested action of the committee represents a threat to the people who prepared ASF manual #204 and a feeling that we are getting out of line in recommending a change. Mr. Sterlin answered that specialists had done a comprehensive study and had theoretically considered all problems involved in publishing the information contained in manual #204. Mr. Sterlin stated that he didn't wish to make a point of it but rather to bring it up as a matter to be considered for discussion. There may be no cause for concern with regard to it.

In reference to Mr. Fowlett's question as to what NCA has done, Mr. Sterlin stated that our Classification and Wage Administration Section has a list of all job titles and grades of civilian positions at NCA. As far as he could recall there are titles that correspond to cryptologic engineer.

In answer to Mr. Sterlin's question as to which he would prefer to be called - Electrical Engineer or Cryptologic Engineer, Mr. Leeter said that in view of the fact that a man may like to get out of this Agency the title, Electrical Engineer, would be more beneficial but if a man could be bumped from a job by another electrical engineer less experienced he would rather be called a Cryptologic Engineer.

Mr. Leeter then asked, "Fundamentally what are the problems this paper is to solve?" Mr. Sinkov stated that in his opinion it was a question of whether or not we want to have these special jobs and types and whether it will be an easier or more convenient way of handling personnel appointments within the Agency. Mr. Sinkov said that he felt that since we have so many exceptional jobs it is necessary that we set up a new category for the convenience of all concerned.

Mr. Rowlett suggested that the Board consider paragraph 3 of the memorandum prepared by Mr. Friedman stating what the sub-committee was set up to do and indicated that he felt that the committee report should include a discussion of what was found as well as the conclusions they have drawn. In order that the whole problem may be discussed intelligently, Mr. Rowlett felt that all items set down for the committee to explore should be completed before action is taken on the subject report. Captain Washoe stated that this was the intent of the committee but that the delay was due to the fact that operational activities on the part of the people on the committee had occupied their time.

Mr. Sinkov raised the thought of what, in the mind of the Civil Service Commission, is implemented in the fact that this Agency is being granted Schedule B and asked if this means that the Agency is in a special category and needs special handling. Mr. Sterlin answered that the Civil Service Commission would probably rather handle it as a special category in that they recognize the specialized nature of the work done here to the extent that they are willing to grant us Schedule B authority. Mr. Fullback asked if we get Schedule B could we get a job title not listed in Civil Service Manual and in answer to that, Mr. Sterlin said that we could but we must have some series number assigned to it.

Mr. Leeter stated that one of the sub-committee assignments is to investigate job titles and make recommendations to a committee headed by Mr. Friedman, but that it is not clear in his mind what Mr. Friedman would do with the information. Mr. Rhoads explained that the report was prepared by a working committee (of which he was chairman) of the Coordination Committee for Classification and Wage Administration of which Mr. Friedman was chairman. It was forwarded to the latter committee and approved by the individual members thereof. Mr. Rhoads, then acting for Mr. Friedman who was abroad at the time, forwarded the report to the Chairman of the Civilian Employment Board who had appointed the above named committee. Mr. Rhoads further stated that as he understands it, Mr. Sterlin has placed the report on the agenda of the Civilian Employment Board for approval, modification or rejection. Then Mr. Leeter indicated that it seems that if the

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Civil Service Handbook is going to be the deciding factor in this case then the committee should consider descriptions of job series as they exist in that book, and except the recommendation of Mr. Rowlett that the committee now go ahead with the next paragraph to investigate what other agencies are doing. Mr. Rowlett put his suggestion as a motion moving that the study as outlined in paragraph 3, item c, in original instructions to the committee be carried out by the sub-committee and a report be made to the Civilian Employment Board, at which time the present report will be considered along with other recommendations made by the committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Starlin and without further discussion, was carried.

APTITUDE TESTING REPORT

Mr. Starlin stated that he had sent forward some time ago to the Staff a request that aptitude testing be instituted. It was returned stating that they concurred generally with the conclusions of the study but asked that additional investigations be made and returned. Mr. Starlin then read a paper which he requests be sent forward stating that the Civilian Employment Board recommends that USA needs a testing program and that the program be approved. It answered the questions asked by the Staff regarding the original recommendation and it specifically recommends that a test program be initiated with Mrs. Janet Corn appointed to the job of Test Technician. Mr. Rowlett suggested that the paper be tucked around to the Board members so that they can get a better understanding of what it says. Mr. Starlin said this would be done.

4. QUESTIONNAIRES - SUPERVISORY TRAINING

Mr. Starlin stated that at the last Board meeting Colonel Hayes had recommended the establishment of a supervisory training program and had asked the Board for any suggestions or comments regarding the questionnaire which was distributed at that time. Dr. Sin'ov felt that the questionnaire as it now stands will accomplish the necessary purposes but Mr. Rowlett said that he had come to the conclusion that we are not going to get very much out of it because two of the questions put supervisors in a bad light with their supervisors. He suggested that the wording be changed in such a way as to present a desire on our part to have the good supervisor know what good things he has done. By studying the tricks, techniques and procedures that have produced results which are good, we can use these as examples of what to use throughout the Agency. Dr. Kullback asked what had happened to the cards which were printed some time ago which listed the responsibility of the supervisors to the individual and the individual to the supervisor and suggested that we revive those cards. Mr. Rowlett continued that he feels that a positive approach should be used. Dr. Sin'ov stated that in his Division they have considered the question at great length and have agreed that the idea of having some Civil Service authority come from outside to give a lecture on what constitutes good supervision would be a waste of time. Mr. Rowlett disagreed, stating that properly chosen outside representatives are desirable. Mr. Rowlett indicated that we have a problem of whether we are going to better the supervisory positions or are going to start the implementation of the program by taking a segment at a time. He feels that if we eliminate the evil of making out efficiency reports incorrectly, we shall eliminate one spot of infection and that this is just a probe to find out other sore spots. He suggested that the Agency go ahead and have the efficiency rating treated in a training course with or without outside instruction.

Mr. Starlin stated that the idea of getting answers to the questionnaire is to avoid a general supervisory program and concentrate on specific items mentioned as needs. Col. Frier suggested that a meeting of all supervisors would get more information than would these questions. Dr. Sin'ov felt that it would be best solved by individual approach and that if the Division Chief would take an employee aside and point out his shortcomings much more could be accomplished than through meetings or papers.

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At this point in the meeting Mr. Sinkov indicated that he felt that employee complaints made to counsellors should be discussed with the Division Chiefs so that they may know what the people do not like about their work. Mr. Rowlett complained that he has never received any information as to action taken on efficiency ratings or grievance hearings but Mr. Starlin said that such case reports are sent to the personnel officer of the Division who should brief the Chief on the case if it is considered necessary. It was then recommended that all grievance cases and other cases of similar nature be addressed to the Division Chief rather than to the personnel officer. Col. Frier said that most cases handled by counsellors deal with complaints against wash rooms and cafeteria, etc. He feels that when we get through with the questionnaire we will not have anything upon which to base a training program because trying to improve a supervisor technically does not improve his personality. Mr. Kullback added that he could not visualize any questionnaire which would have helped in Research and Development Division in certain specific problems. Mr. Rowlett stated that if we conduct a course in efficiency ratings it would tend to minimize the rating and he feels it a good idea every now and then to make attempts to keep efficiency ratings on a standard. Miss Kirtland feels that one thing which may be accomplished by a supervisory training course is to alter the general negative attitude which exists on this post toward Civil Service and much of its administrative procedure, for until this is overcome we shall not have a general betterment in policy. In Mr. Rowlett's opinion, one of the biggest supervisory problems is conversion of military to high-grade civilian jobs when persons so converted do not necessarily have supervisory know-how.

After extended discussion it became apparent that a general program of supervisory instruction was not sanctioned by most Board members but rather it was felt that we should look to cooperation within the group of Board members and when an individual finds some way of overcoming a problem, he make it known to the rest. Then, indicated Mr. Starlin, the Board feels that the general supervisory program is inadvisable. It was stated opinion that a course of supervisory training would accomplish little. Mr. Kullback said that supervisory training should go on at all times and if it requires training and supervision, every supervisor should train the individual under him and try to help him out as much as possible. Mr. Sinkov said that there should be a general awareness that supervisory problems exist and we should do something about it and, too, there should be an interchange of information and problems. He then recommended that the discussion be continued at the next Board meeting. In spite of the fact that several Board members were of the opinion that distribution of a supervisory questionnaire was not a good idea, it was suggested that the questionnaire be revised and tucked to Board members for review and comments as to whether the form should or should not be distributed.

L. Glenn Starlin
 L. GLENN STARLIN
 Chairman, Civilian
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