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Memorandum L-46

Digital Computer Laboratory
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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5-15-60

SUBJECT: GROUP LEADERS' MEETING June 9, 1952

To: Group Leaders

From: David R. Brown

Date: June 11, 1952

Attending: Jay W. Forrester, D. R. Brown, S. H. Dodd, R. R. Everett,
H. Fahnstock, W. H. Taylor, C. R. Wieser, P. Youtz

- Agenda:
1. Budget
 2. Whittemore Building
 3. Meeting with Dr. A. G. Hill
 4. Manufacturers for Air Defense Computer
 5. Personnel

1. Budget

Fahnstock will have a report on the budget for next week.

2. Whittemore Building

Grant's and Nickerson's shops have moved to the basement floor of the Whittemore Building. The Machine Shop will move from the Barta Building to the basement of the Whittemore Building next week. No expansion of the shops is planned. At the present time, Grant has 23 men, Nickerson 9 men and Prentice 7 men. No telephones have been installed on the third and fourth floors yet. The men working on this were put on another job. We will try to get them back as soon as possible. Taylor requested that a few machine tools be put on the second and third floors of the Whittemore Building. A drill press on each floor is probably needed most. Brown stated that he probably would not wait for power to be installed on the third floor but would move as soon as telephones were available. A large Burroughs power supply will be adequate for several months to provide power for magnetic core testing.

3. Meeting with Dr. A. G. Hill

On June 3, Dr. Hill met with Forrester, Brown, Everett and Taylor to discuss transistors and magnetic materials. Hill suggested that we get together with Prof. Adler's group to plan fundamental research on magnetic materials and see what assistance can be obtained from other members of the Institute. The second meeting will be held on June 10, which will be

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attended by Prof. Bitter and some members of Prof. Adler's group.

4. Manufacturers for Air Defense Computer

Taylor stated that he had a chance to talk with MacPherson of IBM on the problems of production of the Air Defense Computer. MacPherson was very interested. IBM now has twelve per cent of its personnel on government military work and would like to have this work in the digital field rather than the analog field as at present. MacPherson will contact Forrester if IBM management is interested. We should hear between one week and one month. Forrester stated that the trouble with IBM would be its traditional secretiveness. We should by all means look into the problem of finding a suitable manufacturer very soon. A number of companies need to be considered. Any suggestions should be brought to Forrester's attention. However, we must avoid indiscriminate discussion of this problem with different manufacturers who might create considerable disturbance in competition and pressure to receive the job.

5. Personnel

Dodd stated that he and Wieser had made a study of the Cape Cod program and the staff available to do the job. The possibility of transferring one or two senior men to the WWII program was considered. They found that no experienced staff could be transferred without seriously cutting into the Cape Cod program. The Systems Group might be able to train some men in systems work and teach them to appreciate the problems in obtaining reliability. It would take about six months to train a man like Olsen or Best and about one year to train a new man. Methods of training the WWII staff in systems work and computer circuit design were discussed. This training will require careful planning and consideration by staff who have had experience with systems work with WWI. No formal training program is planned.

Forrester gave the decision that a transfer from WWI to WWII did not seem in the best interests of the laboratory and that Taylor should make assignments and train men on the basis that no such transfers should be made. Forrester also asked that the assignment of new, untried men to responsible positions be made on an interim basis that leaves the way open for future rearrangement if the assignment should prove unwise.

Taylor stated that he needs a good systems man. If he does not get O'Brien, he will give special attention to some promising staff member now in the group to train him for the systems work. The WWII group will need to develop a closer contact with the Cape Cod program; this will be especially important because many of the important decisions will be made by these two groups together.

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Dodd stated that the Systems Group would be interested in keeping informed regarding equipment planning for WWII. Forrester pointed out that this will be very desirable since the present systems group may be the group which will have to operate WWII or design a WWII.

Signed David R. Brown
David R. Brown
Secretary

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